



messing about in **BOATS**

Special Features This Issue
"Delivery Trip for Annie's Toy"
"Dinghy in Winter" – "Crabbing With a Trot Line"

Volume 23 - Number 18

February 1, 2006



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On the Cover...

This reproduction of an Edward Hopper print of a catboat was of one of his works in an exhibition at the Hirschl & Adler Galleries, Inc. in New York City last year. We learned about it too late but the tiresome (his word) Bill Marsano sent us this publicity photo anyway to share with you.

Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor



My Commentary for this issue is headed up by a rare photo of me actually at work in our cosy (14'x8') second floor office (formerly our daughter's bedroom) in our home. That's a six-year-old secondhand Mac Power PC that I am at work at, in the foreground some manuscripts undergoing conversion into columns of 9-point type for subsequent layout on my layout table, an old flush door set up horizontally between two others set up vertically, forming a very nice work area.

The calendar at my right is the current Benjamin Mendlowitz Calendar of Wooden Boats to provide occasional inspiration. The rectangular frame behind my head contains a number of handwritten encouragements, copied off renewals from subscribers, which my daughter and her two daughters assembled into a sort of montage for me. Above the Mendlowitz calendar is a print of Winslow Homer's "Breezin' Up" which Jane gave me many years ago. In sum, a rather nice place in which to spend the time required still earning my living. I think I have solved the problem of how to finance our old age after a lifetime of chasing our dreams rather than financial security... keep on working.

Amongst the variety of tasks that comprise my work is that of book reviewing, or rather farming out book reviews. Books arrive here unsolicited from various publishers who think that perhaps some amongst you might purchase their latest nautical offering if they read about it (favorably, they hope) on our pages. I give free rein to those who undertake to do all the reviews I have no time nor inclination to do myself and publish their reviews, positive or otherwise.

One reviewer recently told me that she was informed by a reader who knew her that "the old guy" (how he refers to me apparently) won't be giving her any more books to review because of her negative opinions. Well, I don't happen to regard her reviews as negative, but rather as honest. I'd not want to be a party to puffery that encouraged any of you to buy a book and find it less than what our review implied.

Now I have received a book whose publisher has in mind avoiding negative reviews altogether. Along with the review copy and the usual publicity boilerplate extolling its virtues came a "Sample Book Review." Yup, Cape Horn Press out of Seal Beach, California, doesn't want to take any chances on what we might have to say, apparently, about their latest offering, *Sailing With Scoundrels and Kings*, by John Jourdane.

Perhaps they have heard from our writing teacher ex-reader about our tendency towards fatuous prolixity. Or perhaps they figure I am lazy enough to be happy to have

a review all ready to go with no effort at all on my (or a reader/reviewer's) part? I dunno, but I undertook to see what sort of review they felt we ought to publish.

"Hop aboard for a wild sail across the oceans of the world..."

"If you have an ounce of saltwater in your blood..."

I thought, well, is this not perhaps a bit exuberant? Read on...

"John Jourdane is one of the most experienced and respected offshore sailors..."

"Jourdane's highlights include being voted "Best Racing Navigator in the World..."

These credentials are no doubt intended to lend credence to what he might have to say in the book.

"There are moments of terror punctuated with funny incidents..."

"The book is non-stop action filled with hilarious stories and unforgettable characters..."

The reviewer wannabee's opinions of the author's first book (*Icebergs, Port and Starboard*) and this new book, his second.

Well, from all of this (and more, as they say) I conclude that the writer of this sample review has just hung out his or her ineptitude at reviewing for all to see. What I think I will do is have the book reviewed, if anyone out there would like to have a go at it, and run the forthcoming review opposite this sample review for all to see. It might be a rather good book, but I am just too put off by the effrontery implicit in providing a sample review to give it a fair chance. First call gets it.

While I'm at it, I have some other books available also:

Ralph Stanley... Tales of a Maine Boatbuilder

Working the Sea... Misadventures, Ghost Stories and Life Lessons from a Maine Lobsterfisherman

A Sailor's Notebook
Fast Powerboat Seamanship
Gold Bars... Chartering Your Boat for Money

Temple to the Wind... The Story of America's Greatest Naval Architect

Sailing Small... Inspiration & Instruction for the Pocket Cruiser

The Sailor's Hornbook... or abc
Building an Adirondack Guideboat
Notes Collected in the Adirondacks 1895 & 1896

The last two I feel deserve to be reviewed by someone with a personal commitment to the boat and the region. The rest are up for grabs.

This editor job is sorta fun isn't it?



Window on the Water

By Chris Kaiser

Guns of November

I'm paddling down a quite backwater, somewhere warm. The trade winds are messing up my hair and a bevy of enormous dragonflies are escorting me around the bend where I see the Captain sitting on his semi-beached kayak. He's reading and dangling his bare feet in the turquoise water. Giving my paddle one last push, I skim over the surface and join him.

Bang, the dragonflies disappear and the lorikeets and other birds erupt from the trees fringing our private lagoon in a colorful geyser. Bang, bang, the Captain mumbles something about staying off the water during duck hunting season and goes back to reading. Bang, bang, BANG! I erupt out from under the warm duvet, my feet hit the floor, and I stumble through the still dark house out to the Window on the Water to see who, what, and where these shots are coming from.

It has been raining cats and dogs all night, the deluge continues as I peer through the grey layers of low lying clouds and sleep-fogged eyes. Whoever is out there is very determined. Again the multiple reports of guns blazing over on Sandy Point prove that there are several determined hunters, or one really resourceful one with a Gatling gun set up in the dunes.

Unable to see anything through the pre-dawn murk, I return to bed and try to find my way back to which ever tropical isle I'd left the Captain on. Luckily, I was able to locate him just as he was pushing the Marshmelon into the gentle waves, ready to go for a sail and race the resident dolphins. The water shimmered, the dolphins obliged us by swimming up from the depths, visible for several fathoms in the crystalline water. They tail walked as fast as the gentle breeze was propelling us along, one large and playful one leaped over the boat between us, brushing me with an extended flipper and splashing the Captain with an artfully placed fluke on re-entry. The sound of that dolphin's splash was followed by more shots that startled the Captain and jibed the sail knocking me overboard. The warm tropical sea became the cold angry grey waves pounding the far side of Plum Island. I was fully awake and miffed at the intrusion to my only day to sleep in a bit.

The intervening time had not improved the weather conditions but the sky was a

much lighter shade of gray, somewhere between Confederate and Paine's. NO one else but a dyed-in-the-wool water fowler would be out in these conditions.

In years past I've seen all sorts of home-made camouflage dressing up the hunters' boats. I expected more of the same 'Hula skirted' rigs to greet my eyes. There were no cars with trailers parked in the lot and no flotilla of small craft claiming certain anchorages. What was out on the water was something out of a time machine.

Two craft were employed in the hunt. One had beached up on the shore just below the high water mark. The second craft was skimming along, making forays into the decoy field to retrieve the scatter-shot bodies of birds dumb enough to come within range of the shore guns. The boats looked for all the world like the original Higgins Boats which landed on Omaha Beach in Normandy 60 years ago. These are a bit smaller long boats with high sides and canted flat prows. Each vessel could hold a dozen men. The beached boat looked to have about eight hunters, four to a side. Each boat was dressed in the tattered camo-netting stretched along the transoms port and starboard. The gun battery set up on shore was methodically shooting as the birds flew in to check out the plastic competition. For all the sophistication and discipline, it didn't look like they were having a huge success.

My next thought as I watched the progress of the pick-up boat was perhaps this is a new commercial venture. Some enterprising soul has gotten a couple of smaller Higgins Boats and is taking out large shooting parties. A very wet safari this was, only the ducks that escaped could have been comfortable.

Over the course of a few hours the tide changed and the landing craft floated off to make a run up the Sound. Left behind were four hunters and their weapons, a few bags of gear, and no obvious game. The distance and drizzle kept me from seeing all the details but it looked from here to have been a less than stellar adventure. A man and dog in a smaller boat may have had better hunting, perhaps the big gunships kept the birds away, those dumb ducks aren't so dumb after all. I do have to hand it to the enterprising skippers, for a more social and safe way to get your goose those bigger boats would be hard to beat. It's just aggravating that so much fire power was let loose at once, the tropics dissolved in a barrage of lead from the guns of November.

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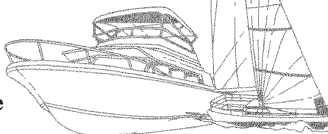
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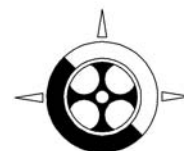
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Disasters &c. The Maritime World Of Marblehead 1815-1865

By John R. H. Kimball

Review by Kinley Gregg



Book Reviews

Disasters &c. takes its title from the generic heading of 19th century newspaper columns that summarized maritime mishaps. A typical example, excerpted from the *Boston Shipping List* of September 26, 1857, describes a loss in Central America: "Brig *Virginia*, of and from Mobile, at Belize, Hond, has been ashore at Omoa in a gale, sunk, and was pumped out at a very heavy expense. On arrival at B her funds were exhausted and she lay on the beach at St George Bay, 18th ult[imo], full of water."

The reader will immediately perceive that though this disaster is light on Marblehead content, it is rife with potential lawsuits. Who is responsible for the wreck? Does the crew get paid? With the proceeds of what? Who owns the salvage? And who's left holding the bag?

John R. H. Kimball, an attorney, is particularly interested in the legacy of Joseph Story on the development of American maritime law. A native of Marblehead, Story served on the Supreme Court for more than 30 years, assuming his seat during the War of 1812, which generated countless questions relating to privateers and the rights of seafarers. According to Kimball, "Story used his intimate and sympathetic understanding of seamen and maritime issues, gained from his early experience in Marblehead, to temper some of the rigidities of the ancient Admiralty law."

Granted, but this seems a rather tangential approach to local history. Much more evocative is the observation, relegated to a footnote, of a Captain Goelet, who remarked, "The greatest distaste a person has to this place is the stench of fish, the whole air seems tainted with it. It may in short be said it's a dirty, Erregular, Stincking Place."

In and of itself, Kimball's litany of litigation is fascinating. On a foggy day in 1870 a sailing ship collided with a fishing schooner anchored on the Grand Banks, killing nine of the ten men aboard the schooner. There was no right of compensation for wrongful death of the fishermen, but suit was brought to recover for damage to the schooner and the cargo of cod. In the sort of decision that gives rise to lawyer jokes, the schooner was found to be at fault because, when the fishermen heard the ship approaching, they had sounded a foghorn rather than ringing a bell as required by federal law.

Of course, anyone who judges a book by its cover is impatiently turning the pages waiting for a discussion of maritime Marblehead to break out. But Kimball's consideration of Marblehead history is largely limited to a recitation of the business ventures of Edmund Kimball, from whom the author is descended. Kimball's fishing schooners stand for all Marblehead fishing schooners, Kimball's skippers for all skippers. Marblehead's trade is Kimball's trade, and the decline of Kimball the decline of Marblehead. The last melancholy chapter details the disintegration and subsequent

sales in distant ports of Edmund Kimball's old and leaky clipper ships. *Disasters &c.* concludes with a bang-up explanation of bot-tomry bonds.

In sum, *Disasters &c.* has the air of a detailed genealogy playing dress-up in a legal text. Nonetheless, a researcher will find much of value. The six useful appendices include a Chronological List of Vessels Owned by Edmund Kimball. While one is uncertain whether this list typifies Marblehead interests, it nonetheless provides information; length, tonnage, rig, and so on, about local ships. Another appendix, Chronological List of Vessels Built in Marblehead, 1800-58, details construction activity. (Only two of the vessels listed, both schooners, were built before 1847, the year Edmund Kimball and his partners established a shipyard in the town). And the extensive bibliography will doubtless prove useful.

Illustrations likewise provide a wealth of information. An 1850 Plan of Marblehead identifies individual buildings, including those housing maritime industries such as ropewalks. Blunt's 1826 chart of the Grand Banks depicts not only land and shoals, but the Gulf Stream as it was then understood. Finally, pictures of Edmund Kimball's clippers, and the fanciful sailing cards which advertised their voyages, complement the author's account of his forefather's heyday.

Lighthouses of New England From the Maritimes to Montauk

By Donald W. Davidson
The Wellfleet Press, 1990
Foreword by HRH Prince Philip
128 pages, many colored & b&w photos
& illustrations
ISBN 1-55521-675-7

Reviewed by Hugh Ware

Another coffee table book about New England lighthouses, ho! hum. Not this one! Good photos, an intelligent text, and the author, a student of lighthouses for nearly 45 years and not a writer turning out another sellable book, does not repeat the usual guff about each light. Sure, he uses the same information other writers use, but his approach is refreshingly different, he gets into the nuts and bolts of lighthouses and lighthouse keeping.

Take one microcosmic example. Davidson addresses the bureaucracy that

kept the American lighthouse service behind its European and British counterparts for years. Officially led by the Secretary of the Treasury, the business was actually run for several decades by the fifth auditor, a bureaucrat named Stephen Pleasonton. This office-bound clerk was both a blessing and a curse. He kept the books well enough and he pinched the pennies, too. That was no doubt appreciated within the Treasury Department, but such penury was not greatly admired by any mariner struggling to find his way through fog or gale and looking for a bright light to tell him where he was.

Pleasanton's technical advisor was a Cape Cod-born retired mariner named Winslow Lewis. Most of the early lights used crude, sooty, inefficient lanterns. Then, in 1781, Frenchman Aime Argand invented the Argand lamp. It used an efficient tubular wick and, when backed with a parabolic reflector, gave off a light several hundreds brighter than a single candle. Captain Lewis developed his own version of the Argand lamp. His lamp and its inefficient reflectors didn't give off as much light as the Argand lamp (for technical reasons the book describes quite well) but Lewis sold his lamp to the U.S. government and American lighthouses had to use them.

By 1820, the British had reflectors that could make a single Argand produce the light of nearly 3,000 candles and, soon after, came the breakthrough invention of the Fresnel lens and now a single Argand could produce the light of 80,000 candles! But American lighthouses continued to use Lewis lamps and their reflectors until the Pleasanton/Lewis team passed out of office.

The author tells the stories of the New England lights extremely thoroughly and competently. Included is much information I have never seen before. This is a good book. An oldie but a goodie. I don't know if it still is in print but, if not, keep an eye out for it in used book marts.

The Lighthouses of Trinity House

By Richard Woodman & Jane Wilson
Foreword by HRH Prince Philip
Published by Thomas Reed Publications
A Division of the ABR Company Ltd, 2002
256 pages, many colour & b&w photos
& illustrations
ISBN 1-90405-000-X

Reviewed by Hugh Ware

I review several books each year, mostly about tugboat-related matters, and thus I was pleasantly surprised three years ago to receive a review copy of this lighthouse book from one of my favourite British publishers. The firm has since been sold and now operates under a different name but, no matter, this book merits even a tardy review. Chase it down by its title, authors, and ISBN number.

I've been interested in lighthouses since I was a lad. I started writing a book about New England lighthouses when I was 15, and in the mid-'40s I spent some serious getting-out-of-service money on a few rare lighthouse books, but my interests soon drifted to racing sports cars, wooing and wedding, raising three sons, and then tugboats. In

short, I still had an interest in lighthouses, only it was less exuberant. Now I'm delighted to add this superb book to the many already on the shelves of my library.

What is Trinity House? It is a venerable institution whose beginnings are obscure but definitely go back to King John or even earlier; it is the General Lighthouse Authority for England, Wales, the Channel Islands, and Gibraltar; it is a charitable organization dedicated to the safety, welfare, and training of mariners; and it is a Deep Sea Pilotage Authority providing expert navigators for ships trading in Northern European waters. This book, however, addresses only the English and Channel Islands lighthouses and light vessels now in service. Scotland and Ireland, by the way, have their own Lighthouse Boards.

Chapter One is a brief history of Trinity House. Then comes a chapter addressing lighthouse construction and equipment. Next is a long chapter dealing with the keepers; their training, daily routines, problems such

as loneliness and getting along with each other. Much of this section consists of quotes from keepers so the reader gets the inside word unwarped by a writer's pre-conceptions. The remaining 161 pages of the book describe the lights around England, starting up in the northeast at the Scottish border and going clockwise, hopping across the English Channel to the Channel Islands and back to Devon and Cornwall and through North Wales back to the other Scottish border.

Each regional section includes a map showing locations while many of the illustrations are of old plans, often carefully coloured. The text about each light or light vessel gives the reader enough history and other pertinencies but not too much. Did you know that most modern lighthouse lanterns look like automobile headlights?

To me, a book's value is rated by the combination of its dust jacket, text, illustrations, layout or design, and printing and binding. If all these components are well done and

meld happily, the book is a pleasure to hold and read. If the mix is even better, you have a great book, and the book being reviewed is indeed just such a joy. Competent writing, gorgeous paper (the sturdy dust jacket is generously gold-embossed), a pleasing layout with plenty of white space tastefully used, a wide variety of useful and often beautiful illustrations and first-class photos, and printing and binding done in China where so many artbooks are now being printed. This book gets very high ratings as a book, as a book about lighthouses, and as a book worthy of acquisition. But that is what I have come to expect from this publisher.

A final note: Trinity House offers a luxury sea voyage for up to 12 passengers on its flagship lighthouse tender *THV Patficia* while it does its daily work. The comfort level is extremely high since the passenger accommodations must satisfy the Trinity House Elder Brethren when they are aboard for inspection voyages!

Okoboji Crossing

By Wally Foster

(Reprinted courtesy of *Canoe Sailor*)

Having read that most interesting story by my canoe pal Dan Reiber in the last issue of the *Canoe Sailor* about trying to sail 25+ miles around Cedar Island off the coast of North Carolina and his disappointing failure, I thought to describe a miniature but analogous effort of my own on Lake Okoboji (Iowa) several years ago.

Not nearly as ambitious as Dan's plan, I merely wanted to sail solo across the south end of Okoboji and return, a mere three-mile round trip. The photo shows my favorite rig, 40sf main plus a 35sf jib, sloop rigged.

The 10am breeze had come up. I happily launched and thoroughly enjoyed the trip across on a beam reach with a 5-8kt wind. As I tacked to return I was suddenly confronted by a change in conditions. The well-behaved wind had not only increased to a white-capped speed of 11-18kts but had changed direction to an exact headwind.

Since I am a scaredy-cat sailor, I fearfully furled my jib, dropped the main, grabbed a paddle, and with two frantic strokes arrived at the rocky, steep-dropped shore and jumped overboard. No way was I going to tempt fate by even thinking of returning under sail.

But I had a secret weapon, a wee trolling motor already installed. But first I knew I needed not only to drop the sails but also to remove that tall, 15-1/2' mast. So, standing waist deep in the water and floundering around on that rocky, uneven bottom, I set about to remove the sails, unstep the mast, and lash all gear firmly to the canoe. I'm sure that without that maneuver I would never have made it safely back.

An hour later I was back aboard, running the trolling motor at only one-third speed to keep the waves from swamping me, and heading directly upwind toward home. At the age of 80 years, the same as my hero Bob Halsey at that time, I arrived home knowing and feeling that I had had a thoroughly good physical workout and a most exciting experience.



You write to us about...

Information of Interest...

Celebrating Ten Years at Philadelphia Wooden Boat Factory

Ten years of operations is most impressive as we look back through the number of individuals, organizations, foundations, and corporations that have supported the Philadelphia Wooden Boat Factory over that time. We invite you to consider strengthening our organization through support such as a direct donation, buying a t-shirt, using our United Way Donor Choice number, 8635, at work, taking a class, to name a few. Your involvement helps us to create positive situations such as the one, most recently, that Robert Serotkin helped make possible.

Robert Serotkin, who completed our Beginner Boatbuilding course in November 2005, established a partnership with the Factory and the Dorothy Day Center on the Campus of Saint Francis University in Loretto, Pennsylvania. This school year the work of the young men and women in our Marine Education Initiative will allow the Dorothy Day Center to once again launch a lapsed summer day camp for underprivileged youth by donating the canoes they build. Think about what you can give and receive from your involvement with Philadelphia Wooden Boat Factory.

January 1996: PWBF is founded as a Division of Resources for Human Development, Inc.

March 1996: PWBF launches a website.

March 1997: PWBF holds first meeting of the Board of Directors.

March 1997: PWBF receives first financial support from Crown, Cork and Seal Company.

June 1997: First class with two students from Mirmont Treatment Center (canoe hangs from shop ceiling today).

September 1997: First press article on PWBF.

April 1998: PWBF receives first foundation grant from the Samuel S. Fels Foundation for youth programs.

July 1998: First program with the School District of Philadelphia, PWBF Summer Camp.

September 1998: PWBF rents first shop at 2005 West Moyamensing Ave.

September 1998: PWBF Hosts Wooden Boat Challenge corporate boatbuilding event. Teams from Burlington County 4-H, Fox 29, PNC Bank, and Pulse Group compete. Event is listed on the PECO Building Lights.

March 1999: PWBF moves into a second larger shop at 2045 West Moyamensing Ave.

March 1999: PWBF is incorporated in the state of Pennsylvania.

September 1999: PWBF holds first Adult Class, Beginner Boatbuilding - 12 students.

October 1999: PWBF receives independent 501(c)(3) status from the IRS.

October 1999: PWBF begins Youth Marine Education Initiative Program with the Ahali Program at Harrity Elementary

November 1999: PWBF leaves the auspices of Division of Resources for Human Development.

June 2001: First PWBF display at the Wooden Boat Show - Beetle Cat and Youth Built Canoes.

June 2003: PWBF launches 150th canoe built by youth.

August 2004: PWBF moves into shop number three at 2126 West Moyamensing Ave.

Philadelphia Wooden Boat Factory, 2126 West Moyamensing Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19145, (215) 755-2400, www.woodenboatfactory.org <info@woodenboatfactory.org>

Boatbuilding Classes at North Carolina Maritime Museum

The Harvey W. Smith Watercraft Center at the North Carolina Maritime Museum in Beaufort, North Carolina, has scheduled a number of boatbuilding courses throughout this coming year. Interested persons should request a complete listing.

Harvey W. Smith Watercraft Center, North Carolina Maritime Museum, 315 Front St., Beaufort, NC 28516-2124, (252) 728-7317, <maritime@ncmail.net>

WCHA Northeast Chapter Meeting, Sunday, October 30, 2005

We had a great day at Bruce, Barbara, and Jeff Larson's home and shop. The weather was so beautiful we even opened up the big doors on the shop. We had 12 members and nine guests at the meeting. We talked about boats, old times, and new times to come.

Bruce had a family boat to be redone soon. Benson Gray went on his laptop computer (which he always has with him) and found the build sheet with Bruce's grandfather's name on it. That was great. Benson also brought a build sheet for me on an 18' square end, paddling model Old Town boat.

We bent some ribs on a 13' canoe form that Bruce had built. He also had a finished 13' canoe for us to look at, it was beautiful. The rib bending went great, none broke (that's real good). We also started planking on the ribs. Bruce reported later that the canoe we worked on is now ready for canvas and he is planning to sell this boat. So if anyone wants a nice 13' canoe, call Bruce for more information. If you call soon you could pick the color.

Sonny Hastings (an original member) has an 18' canoe he will donate to the Northeast Chapter for restoration. I will pick up this boat and bring it to my shop. The May meeting at my shop will be on May 20, 2006, at 9:30am. We can get a good look at the project canoe and make plans about a work schedule. I hope we will go paddling after lunch that day.

Bob Bassett, Kimball Pond Boat Barn, P.O. Box 111, Vienna, Maine 04360, (207) 249-2814, <kpboatbarn@yahoo.com>

How to Pick a Name and a Motor

This is in response to the gentleman who expressed curiosity as how people choose names for their boats. In my case, I've got three grandchildren. Ashley is the oldest, Ryan the next, and David last. Taking the first two letters from each name, I get ASRYDA, which is a nice word. Now, had

my three grandchildren been born in a different order, I'd have a problem.

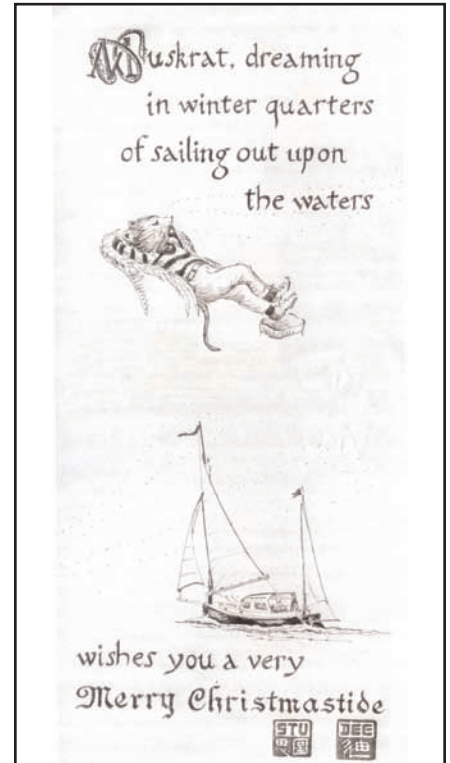
I've ordered a Swiftly 15 from Shell Boats and I'd like some help in selecting the proper motor. I've considered everything from Honda's 2hp air cooled 4-cycle to Mercury's 6hp 4-cycle. Anyone who would like to discuss/advise, please contact me.

John S. Smith, Hamilton, NJ, <jdanton-smith@verizon.net>

Unique Christmas Card

Herewith I share with all of you the unique Christmas card we received from Dee Carstarphen and Stu Hopkins of Dabbler sails.

The Editor



Information Wanted..

Using Plastic Electrician's Ties for Sail Ties?

I wonder if any readers have had experience with using the plastic self-clinging electrician's ties to bend sails to yards, gaffs, booms, etc? These are fast, inexpensive, and adjustable and should work well for small sails. Just how large a sail can be attached this way without unacceptable failure of the ties is an open question. The idea may not be salty enough for purists but could make the chore of bending on a sail a bit easier.

Neil Folsom, 16 Westside Sebago, Standish, ME 04084, (207) 787-3448

Looking for Information on This Boat

I have acquired an 18' sailing dory and found it was built by the Aeolus Boat Company of Davenport, California. I have included a picture of said vessel. This boat company is out of business and I would like to know if anyone has any further information about these boats.

It is of simple design, with steel center board and spruce spars. It has been in storage

for quite some time but is in very good condition. If anyone has any information regarding this boat I would appreciate their contacting me.

Jack K. Rentner, 2175 W 93rd Pl., Crown Point, IN 46307, (219) 662-0779.



Opinions..

Sharing the Pleasure

I have been meaning to write this letter to you for some time. Your editorial in Vol. 23 No. 16 tells me that now is the time. I have an opinion that the content in *MAIB* is growing greater in terms of literary value. I also feel that this growth is due to your "hands-off" policy in your presentation of material. That policy encourages writers to contribute without fear of rejection. There may be lengthy accounts of trips and cruises in small craft that some people consider boring, but any reasonable person will realize that these accounts are labors of love attempting to share the pleasure of the writers' experiences, and they should be honored as such.

I feel that most of your content is "well written" and that some is of outstanding quality, such as "Journals of the Constant Waterman" and "Window on the Water." The secretive and delightful Robb White rarely, if ever, makes grammatical errors in spite of the fact that he is hiding behind a "Good Old Boy" image. It would not surprise me to know that he had a private school education.

As a final comment; I encourage Prof. Fatuous Proximity to review his copy of *Strunk, The Elements of Style* in order to clarify his meaning.

Jack Chesley, Scituate, MA

Spice of Life

Hurrah for "fatuous prolixity," the spice of life!

Ted Bailey, Amesbury, MA

Robb Redeemed - 1

Dammit Robb, sometimes the stuff you write makes me so mad that I could come down there and kick you! However, in the November 15 issue you have redeemed yourself, you described how a tug with a pair of cat 99s could out-horsepower a boat with 12-71s, and that they were real engines! Oh God, do I agree! Up here in Michigan they are 2-stroke crazy, they use the damned things in anything that rolls, floats, or drives, and they drive me crazy!

One night last year my wife and I picked up a couple of gas station mocha coffees and, with our scanner, went to sit under the Blue Water Bridge. This bridge, (two of them) connects the U.S. with Canada at the point where Lake Huron ends and the St Clair River begins. Out of the night came a huge tug pulling a very big barge. They pull everything up here, they don't know how to push!

Anyway, this tug had the most beautiful exhaust sound you ever heard! I found out later that it had a pair of Alcos in it, serious 4-strokes! You could hear the "diddy-rump" from a mile off. It was just music to my ears, only one thing could have made it better. In back of us is a little spur track to service a local paper company. If another Alco came down that track to make a trio I would have died and gone to 4-stroke heaven! That would be like angels singing!

Matteo Augugliaro, Smiths Creek, MI

Robb Redeemed - 2

I enjoy the magazine immensely and now even more so since I've learned how to read Robb White's stories. When I first subscribed last year I couldn't get past the curmudgeonly intros of his crazed tales, intros which I now recognize as a signature style and character which do exactly what I've always wondered about, to wit, making his writing about daily comings and goings fun to read.

Spencer Day, Milton, MA



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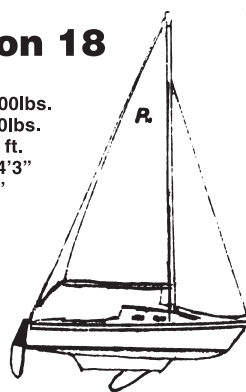
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People have always been fascinated by manatees. One tribe in Venezuela refers to the Milky Way Galaxy as "the road of the manatee." Columbus, on his voyages to the New World, saw many manatees around the Caribbean Islands. He reported that he had seen the mermaids that other sailors had talked about, although they were not as beautiful as they had been described. Those early sailors must have been at sea for a long, long time.

It is difficult not to become enamored with manatees. They are the most docile mammal I have ever been around. They won't bite you, bump you, or come up underneath you in the water. They will approach you, hold onto your leg, rest their heads on your shoulder, kiss you on the mask, and roll over to have their bellies rubbed!

Manatees are not small. They weigh 60lbs when they are born. Adults can weigh as much as 2,500lbs, although most weigh in at around 1,800lbs. Their closest relative is a terrestrial mammal, the elephant. It is easy to see the similarities between the two species. Manatees have the same thick gray skin, coarse hairs, tiny round eyes, a stunted trunk, rounded nails on their flippers, enormous size, and excellent memories.

The manatee is Florida's state marine mammal and is still considered an endangered species. There are just over 3,000 manatees left in the waters of the United States. In the summer they roam up into the northern Gulf as far as Louisiana and up the Atlantic coast into the Carolinas and Virginia. We often get reports in my area during the summer of manatee sightings in Perdido Bay, Weeks Bay, Mobile Bay, and the rivers that flow into them. These are usually single males. When the water temperatures begin to drop below 65 degrees, the manatees become uncomfortable. They are semi-tropical marine mammals with only a thin layer of body fat. When the water temperature drops below 60 degrees the manatees can become too cold to feed or they can catch pneumonia and die. The water temperature in the north Gulf in January is around 52 degrees so manatees would not be able to over-winter here.

I led 50 manatee dive trips to the Crystal River, Florida area between 1984 and 2005. I said that I would only do 50, so I am done. I can't get them out of my system entirely! Over the years the 50 groups that I led included marine biologists, marine educators, elementary teachers, nature center staff, youth-at-risk, deaf students, blind students, artists, and my extended family. Some were certified SCUBA divers. Some had never been snorkeling before our trip. Some could not even swim. All of them had this in common, the desire to learn about the manatee and experience its unique environment. All of them were good groups, so supportive of each other and caring about the manatees.

We explored five different rivers while we were in the area; Homosassa River (where we viewed the captive manatees), Crystal River (where we dove with the wild manatees), Withlacoochee River (where we went on a moonlight boat ride), Rainbow River (where we snorkeled on a two-mile drift dive), and Halls River (where we kayaked downstream and came full circle to join the Homosassa River again).

On this last trip, my 50th, the weather for our drift dive down Rainbow River was the best ever. That is saying a lot for someone who has been leading these manatee dive trips since 1984. It was 75 degrees, sunny,

The Joys of Nature



Teaching About Manatees...

A Chance to Learn Something About Ourselves

By Sonya Wood Mahler, Regional Extension Agent in Forestry, Wildlife, & Natural Resources, Alabama Cooperative Extension System



and no wind. In past years I have snorkeled down that river in the pouring rain, as the sun was setting fast, and as a harsh north wind stirred up a 1' chop on the surface.

The weather for the manatee dive was also perfect. For this dive we like to start out the morning at 40 degrees and end at around 60 degrees. This is cold enough to see lots of manatees and not so cold that participants get hypothermia. That is exactly what happened this year. We were the first boat on the water that morning. When we arrived at Three Sisters, our favorite spot, there were 40 manatees around us. The teachers had a great time watching and photographing them. The manatees, as always, were wonderful. When we anchored in Kings Bay, a young manatee hung next to our boat and flossed its teeth on our anchor line at the surface for half an hour. Anyone who wanted to could visit with him there. I finally had to pull the anchor line away from him back onto the boat so that we could leave.

Usually the Halls River is too shallow for manatees to come up into it, but a week of strong west winds had pushed more water into the rivers and there were quite a few manatees in Halls River and Homosassa River. When we were kayaking in Homosassa we had manatees and dolphins come very close to our boats and bald eagles swoop over our heads!

All of the spots where we dove with manatees were within the Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge is comprised of several islands totaling approximately 46 acres. They are surrounded by the spring-fed waters of Kings Bay, the headwaters for Crystal River. The Nature

Conservancy acquired the refuge islands with funds raised by the citizens of Citrus County in a year-long drive. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service subsequently bought these lands and created the Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge in 1983.

This refuge is unique in that it was established specifically for the protection of the manatee. From November to March certain areas in Kings Bay and Crystal River are designated as Manatee Sanctuary Areas where no boats or divers are allowed. This gives manatees a chance to rest and feed near the warm springs without being disturbed. They also no longer allow any boating or diving after dark, so the manatees are guaranteed 12 hours of peace each day. Idle speed and slow speed zones are in effect throughout the area in an effort to reduce the number of manatees killed or injured by boats.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service carefully monitors manatee populations in Crystal River, Salt River, Homosassa River, and Chassahowitzka River with once-a-month counts using planes in the summer and weekly aerial counts in the winter. In our visit with the staff at the Crystal River Wildlife Refuge we learned that they had just held their annual aerial count of manatees on both the Gulf side and Atlantic side of Florida on January 25th. A total of 220 manatees, including 12 calves, were counted on that day in Citrus County (Crystal River, Kings Bay, and the surrounding area). Last year, 340 total manatees were counted in Citrus County, and there have been as many as 500 there in past years.

When I asked about the low numbers, they cited several reasons. They said fewer calves were born last year. They said warmer weather the week of the count may have allowed some of the manatees to scatter and move out into the Gulf (more difficult to count). They also said that the count reflected more manatees along the Atlantic coast of Florida than along the Gulf coast this year. I had always been told that the Gulf population of manatees and the Atlantic population did not mix and were considered separate. In a gene pool that is already very shallow, it is good news if they now believe that some of the manatees are traveling through the Keys and moving from one side of Florida to the other.

Each year our participants had the opportunity to visit with Donna Corey, an elementary teacher in Crystal River who has developed an entire curriculum based on the manatee. Her curriculum includes lessons in science, social studies and current events, math, art, photography, and literature. She has designed lesson plans, teacher's guides, life-size cutouts of manatees, and coloring books. And, of course, she leads her students on field trips to dive with the manatees right in their backyard.

Students in other parts of the country may never see a real manatee in their lives. But these inspired educators can share their personal experiences with them. Through research and activities and discussion, they can bring the manatee to their classrooms. They can present opportunities for students to adopt a manatee or write their congressman or clean debris from a beach and know that they are helping to protect the manatee. That is why I kept doing this year after year!

If you would like to share your own manatee experiences with Sonya or have questions for her, e-mail her at mahlesw@auburn.edu.

The Connecticut River Oar and Paddle Club was established in 1983 to encourage explorations of the Connecticut River and to learn and teach more about the utility and seaworthiness of a variety of small craft. The club owns or has access to a number of interesting rowing and paddling boats and is a resource for practical information on traditional and modern small boats of many types. Our club boats and equipment are readily available at no charge for use by individual members and their guests.

In our role as the Connecticut River Chapter of the Traditional Small Craft Association (TSCA) we maintain a schedule of lectures and demonstrations by innovative boatbuilders and small boat expedition skippers, educational construction projects, races on the river and sound, island campouts, and river excursions and picnics on weekday afternoons and weekends. Members and friends also participate in the John Gardner Small Craft Workshop at Mystic Seaport, Sail New London events, and the Middle Atlantic Small Craft Festival. We also are happy to organize local cruises and on-water events in support of youth and adult education in the region.

In recent years we have designed or built several rowing or paddling craft: *Current*, a 22' 4-oared gig; *Aurelia*, a 15' decked canoe/kayak; and *Freshet*, *Apogee*, and *Perigee*, 21' single, double, or triple-station rowing boats; and two Atlantic 17 two-station dories, *Solstice* and *Equinox*. The *Freshet* class has been raced and cruised in rough waters and has competed successfully in the Blackburn Challenge as well as in local races and cross-sound outings.

Members' boats are varied and are not limited to a particular boating interest or construction type. From amongst us we frequently can provide a boat, or a seat aboard one, for guests at on-water events.

The club also welcomes tax-deductible donations of small rowing, paddling, or sail-

All About CROPC



ing craft in recognition of its longstanding educational role as a TSCA Chapter working with youth groups.

Recent News and Notes: Combinations of winds, storms (threatened and real), and rain diminished turnouts at our events this summer, particularly in the late summer. Nonetheless we pressed on, we attended the John Gardner Small Craft Workshop at Mystic Seaport, supported a number of youth events with boats and teaching this summer (notably Groton Maritime Academy and Morgan High School), had some fine informal outings on the river and its byways (always pleasant idylls), and provided on-the-spot volunteer help to Maritime Education Network.

Our vessels are safe and sound (although a couple need repairs) for the winter and we have a new easy-to-use dolly for the Atlantic 17s which makes rolling to the river a smooth process (thanks, Jon).

Over the winter the venerable (15 years old!) *Current* will have its spine strengthened, a bit of new gunwale cut in, and have revisions to the oarlocks incorporated to allow use as a sculling quad in addition to a

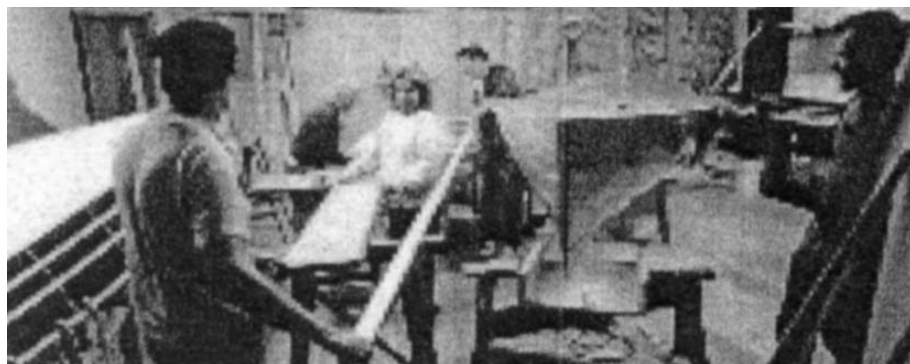
sweep-oared four. *Perigee* will get oarlock socket repair and deck stiffening.

On headier notes: We've been asked to participate in a small committee that will help define and improve the annual Small Craft Workshop at Mystic in early June. This key small-craft event has had adequate attendance, but as it cruises through its third decade it may need some tweaks to make it easier (and less expensive) to attend. Your ideas are welcome.

Contact us, make use of our resources, and enjoy your small craft to the fullest!

Connecticut River Oar and Paddle Club, CROPC, 17 Industrial Park Rd. #5, Centerbrook, CT 06409, (860) 388-2343 or (860) 767-3303, jon.persson@snet.net or (860) 434-2534, jpsratton@snet.net

Club and member small craft encompass a variety of types and many uses over the four seasons.



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Poor Richard launch hauling Culler fleet from bay to lake wind for a run toward home.



Brusstar boats guard the busy ramp.

Axon looking for wind in Gleason peapod.



Ninth Pend Oreille Rendezvous

By Bob Simmons

Photos by Sandy Gleason and Bob Simmons

Check the atlas, we're still in northern Idaho. Eight years graciously hosted at Glengary Marina where we are allowed to run amok in their low key, un-commercial setting.

Thirteen boats, 23 persons plus some walk past. Zero kids (what's with that?) and one dog too many.

Peripatetic road warrior and father of all messabouts, Jim Thayer, again hauled 900 plus miles from Colorado bringing Nina on the same trailer (I believe) which died on the ramp here several years ago. One tire could have won a bald contest at the senior center.

We caught a notch in the calendar of the Axon family summer tour, they brightened the weekend for all with enthusiasm and boating tales from far and wide.

Mainstay Bill Brusstar brought two of his built-by-eye double ended pulling boats.

Culler catboat, junk rig, moveable mast step, and centerboard pin allow balancing different rigs.



The latest, built finally using a planer, red cedar, and Sitka spruce planking with canoe type framing in lower mid-body, came in at under 100lbs. She is 17'9"x42" and non-epoxy, non-plywood.

Bill Sinclair had his Mac McCarthy Wee Lassie II and camped over. Many of us were new to this design and she was much admired in build and performance. Bill added lots to the camp circle.

Bud Smith came by with a new stripper Atkinson traveler sticking quite a way out of a VW van, and David Hutchens showed off an artful Laughing Loon stripper kayak.

Bob Betts had his Luger 16 kit sloop and tales of recent Alaska work experiences. Kay Hughes and David Walker returned with *Arrow*, their restored 21' gaff sloop, sailing from the other side of the lake in fussy light winds.

Pleased to have Charles Stout come from Montana and stay over. His Long Micro needs to see water and Charles says there is a new Dobler boat in the shed, too.

Herb Barbarie's *Ms Elsie*, a 15' Culler catboat, is a favorite with us lake sailors liking lots of sail area. Gaff cat and full gaff cutter were great, this year she was junk rigged, sail fabric of greenhouse shade cloth. Still fast and lots of strings, what with sheets port and starboard. Note in pic she self steers as Herb talks and we sneak past in Nina. Also see an historic Concordia sloop boat just added to Herb's fleet.

Gordon and Sandy Gleason topped the gang with three boats. Their Poor Richard takeoff did yeoman duty in the powerboat department. The Hylan/WB sailing peapod was popular and the Brussar-built pulling boat saw lots of use, too.

Hot, bright days, cool nights, wind light to nada, swimming fine. The day after it drizzled lots and the following day blew the lake clear of boats, so we did okay.

Thanks especially to the Trulocks who tolerate our irregular ways so calmly and to all who shared time, effort and little boats. The opportunity to make new friends and visit old in this way is a special treat. Looking back over nine events in ten years we know we cherish those Rendys who moved on or got time conflicted, or even are now sailing in Valhalla.

Northwest Messer's Rig As Seen at Pend Oreille Rendezvous

By Bob Simmons
Photo by Sandy Gleason



This may confirm the universal aspect of Robb White's observations on hauling rigs. Note here the 2"x4" rack works better on building materials or canoes. This shapely sheer gets real friendly with the roof paint.

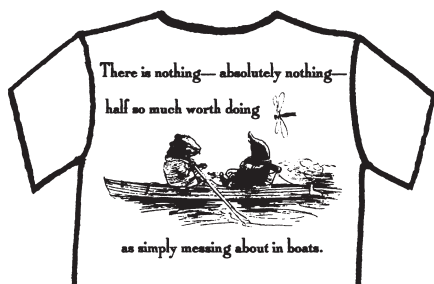
The trailer? It has bitty wheels, no lights, and plates several years out of date from another state, plus it is not fitted to this or any other boat.

Tie straps deserve attention, strips cut from stout inner tube, loops knotted on both ends. First end can either hook on or feed around something and back through itself. Second end hooks on or wraps around until a

stick can be woven through the loop and the incoming main stem. Nothing store bought.

One way to cut the strips is with a very sharp utility knife and straight edge against a wooden base. A helper with a dribble or spray of water at the knife is good. Try about 1"-1-1/4" width for light boats until the needs are achieved.

Another of our messers enjoys designing and building trailers which cradle their boats sweet as you please. With a shoal draft boat they'll launch without wetting bearings, lights or feet, plus they go down the road straight and don't bang on chuckholes. The endless variety is part of the fun, isn't it?



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I had been hired to deliver the 38' sailing catamaran, *Annie's Toy*, from Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, to Tortola, British Virgin Islands. The owners, husband, wife, and husband's brother, planned to be aboard and wished to learn sailing and a little navigation along the way. They also intended to stand wheel watches as crew and the brother was to cook. Some delivery skippers don't want the owners aboard for a variety of reasons. I have no problem with this if they are reasonable and sincere. On a passage like this one, over 1000 nautical miles to windward, it can be a great relief to have extra crew for round-the-clock watches. We planned seven to nine days.

My wife, Carla, my first mate of almost 40 years and also a licensed captain, and I arrived at the boat in Ft. Lauderdale early Saturday, October 29, from the Daytona Beach area 240 miles north. We were aware that Hurricane Wilma had passed through Dade County the previous Monday but we were quite surprised to see the extent of the damage. Either I wasn't paying attention or the media was burning out on hurricane coverage, but I just didn't expect what I was seeing.

The Florida Turnpike was not collecting tolls all the way down and there were long gas lines at every service plaza. The lines were backed up all the way into the left lane of the turnpike itself, requiring the police to route traffic to the right. From Ft. Pierce south to Ft. Lauderdale, a distance of about 100 miles, there was no electric power at most of the interchanges. Once we exited at Ft. Lauderdale there were no traffic signals working at any of the intersections we encountered. There was electric power for a few blocks here and there throughout the city but the traffic light fixtures had been blown off their hangers and were lying next to the roadway smashed to bits.

The few gas stations that had power also had lines of cars that stretched for blocks. Remember, this was five days after the storm had passed. It was interesting to note again that with no power and four way stop signs at the intersections requiring drivers to stop and proceed on a courtesy rotation format, traffic seemed to flow more smoothly than when the lights are working. I had noticed this last year when the Daytona area was hit three times in a row and my specific area was without power seven days, then six days, then two days. Even toward the end of the outage when traffic was up to full flow the wait wasn't as long at the busier intersections without power as it normally is with a red light. Maybe there is a message here.

When we got to *Annie's Toy*, she lay peacefully along a seawall on the New River with nary a scratch. A few boats in the immediate area had some cosmetic ouchies but there was a constant parade of boats with serious structural damage being towed downriver. Some had their topsides wiped clean off from being forced under low structures at high water while others looked to have been re-floated after being sunk. What a mess!

The first order of business with a vessel before departing is a complete inspection and familiarization with the boat's systems. As usual, there are a few small items that need to be gathered up along with topping up oil, water, and fuel levels. The procedure usually takes up a good part of the day. I like to arrive a day early and plan to get underway the next morning at daylight.

In this case we needed to have a propane tank filled and also to purchase fire

Delivery Trip for *Annie's Toy*

By Jim Sauers



extinguishers, fuel filters, a life jacket, and propane lighter for the stove. With all the devastation and power outages, the West Marine store happened to be located in one of the few city blocks with power for a mile around and was open for business. On a tip, we also located a propane distributor who was using one of his trucks to power the fueling depot. The man said he was closed for the day and tired as he had been going non-stop since the first of the week due to the storm. I explained that we hoped to leave at first light and the nice guy said, "Okay," he'd fill our tank. Before he could finish with us, another fellow pulled up with a small tank to be filled and then a pick-up with two 100lb cylinders. I apologized to the man for getting him stuck but he just shrugged it off. The owner of the boat had been aware of the fueling problems in the area and had brought six jerry cans of diesel to top off the boat tanks.

The weather forecast had been good up through Friday, but as Saturday wore on and we got back to the boat the wind had picked up to about 20kts. Sure enough, another tropical depression had changed direction and was now influencing south Florida. The NOAA weather report called for 9' to 11' seas in the Gulf Stream through Monday. The wind was going to be out of the north at 30kts to 35kts. With a north wind of 30kts against a northerly flow of 4.5kts in the Stream, I would have been very surprised to see only 9' to 11'. Maybe 9' to 11' feet over our heads at ten second intervals would have been more like it. After the last minute rush to get things together, daylight departure for Sunday was out of the question. Tuesday was to bring 3' to 5' seas and moderate winds. Tuesday was the new plan.

With a 48-hour delay we decided to return home but it was late and it had been a long day. All things considered, the evening was pleasant and the boat owner and his wife asked us out to dinner if there was a place open. A local chicken restaurant on US #1 close to the West Marine store had a generator and was open. I'm not sure exactly what ethnic cuisine they were serving but I think it was Cuban. Whatever, it was grilled chicken with beans and rice and salad with a selection of excellent sauces and it was good. It wasn't expensive either, about \$6.50 including a soft drink.

We slept aboard *Annie's Toy* but left for home early Sunday morning. The drive is three and a half hours each way but one more night in our own bed and the comforts of home for another day seemed worth it. On the way north we went off I95 at several

interchanges looking for breakfast. There were major chain restaurants galore but no power. We didn't see any lines at gas stations for the same reason, no power. It was Ft. Pierce again before we found an open restaurant. Along the way we saw convoy after convoy of out-of-state power company and large dump style trucks headed south to help. This was now six days after the storm.

We returned to *Annie's Toy* in time for a late dinner Monday evening, October 31. The boat was now completely equipped and checked out. In our absence the owner had found a station open and filled the empty jerry cans with diesel fuel for a reserve. With 52gal in the tanks and another 30gal in reserve I changed my course plot to eliminate a fuel stop in the Turks. The plan was to motor across the Gulf Stream and into Providence Channel.

We were going to set sail as soon as conditions warranted and try to avoid a fuel stop altogether. In November, the usual trade winds out of the SE can turn more northerly. If we sailed east as far as possible there was a good chance of sailing on a port tack to San Juan or beyond. We are talking about weather here so nothing is set in stone except the Bahamian's flat fee of \$300 to enter customs. This includes four fishing licenses and a pass to roam all over their territory for, I believe, six months. They levy this fee even if you are just stopping for fuel (and get caught). Instead of facing this hassle I was going to pass them by and planned to stop at Turks or Caicos if we needed fuel.

This is a good time to explain that this was not a pleasure cruise where we would be stopping here and there at the islands along the way to stretch our legs. The owner had an agenda and a schedule that wasn't especially tight but had to be met. We therefore motored from Florida across the Gulf Stream and into the Providence Channel. From there we continued east past Eluthera Island to the open Atlantic. That put us about 200 nautical miles east of Ft. Lauderdale where we finally headed 115 degrees SE for 700 miles. Conditions would then be assessed and one of several possible plans would be executed for continuing on to the Virgin Islands.

Due to circumstance, *Annie's Toy* was not equipped with a GPS chartplotter, radar, or a weather fax. All navigation was first done on paper charts and waypoints transferred to a very good handheld GPS I keep in my kit. I also carry an older handheld GPS unit for backup. These GPS units made set and drift calculations unnecessary as they project a plot line and calculate a course to steer. I did note drift angles on the charts for reference in the event both GPS units failed. Weather forecasts were received via VHF and XM radio or by contacting passing ships on VHF radio. The officers aboard these vessels are usually glad to speak with another boat, especially if you are proper and polite and are only asking for the weather. Our eyes were our radar and we kept a constant lookout and knew what was around us at all times. There were times when we didn't see another vessel for two days.

During dinner on the eve of our departure I was told by the owner that we were not cleared to leave at first light. *Annie's Toy* was a new boat and the broker suddenly remembered that she was not of American registry and would need to clear out of U.S. Customs in the morning. This delay was partly my fault for not specifically checking on the doc-

umentation of this vessel. On the transom is clearly displayed Edgewater, Florida, as the hailing port. It was curious to me that this was not mentioned when we planned to leave Sunday and then with the weather delay, three people sat all day Monday and could have easily attended to this detail had they known. Technically the captain is supposed to sign out but, in reality, anyone with the paperwork in hand can do it.

The whole crew was up at daylight Tuesday, November 1. Well rested and ready to go, we had to cool our heels waiting for the broker to show up with the arrival document. We couldn't clear for departure if we couldn't show when the boat had arrived. Finally, at 0935 he came with the paperwork. I had hoped we could stop at the Port Authority complex by boat on the way out but the broker thought it best to drive over by car. That's what we did but the U.S. Customs Office at the port had been damaged by the hurricane and the Marine Division was still operating out of temporary quarters at the airport. We would have had a hard time getting there by boat! We found the office, filled out the identical form that was filed for entry, paid the \$19 fee, and headed back to *Annie's Toy*.

As soon as we stepped onto the boat I started engines and called for all lines to be brought aboard. We were finally underway at 1115. There were five drawbridges to be negotiated between us and the Atlantic Ocean. Traffic was light and we only had to wait for the last one. The 17th Avenue Causeway Bridge operates on a 30-minute schedule. We had reached it at 1210 and had 20 minutes to kill. This would have been a good time for lunch but now many vessels were congregating waiting for the bridge to open and others that cleared under the closed span were passing through the circling, waiting boats. Not a good time to be distracted by anything. The bridge tender was sharp and called for *Annie's Toy* to pass through first when the draw span opened. We were now truly headed out and cleared the sea buoy at Ft. Lauderdale inlet at 1300 hours. Better late than never.

All looked good for the crossing. The skies were clear. The wind was ENE at 12kts and the seas were 3' to 5' as promised. As we motored along at 7.5kts Carla took the wheel watch, I moved to the chart table and the owner and his brother put out two lures on trolling rods. About halfway across the Gulf Stream the rod on the port side began to sing. The reel was a fairly light duty 4.0 and the engines had to be backed down to avoid emptying all of the line from the spool (spooling it). Eventually we boated a 20lb plus tuna. I don't know tuna very well but I was told that it was an albacore or big eye. It was very good eating for several meals to be sure.

At 2030 we cleared the Gulf Stream and entered Northwest Providence Channel. Barometric pressure had been steady all day at 29.92 but the weather was deteriorating. There was no moon and wouldn't be for the first half of the trip. By midnight we were experiencing 30kt squalls and 5' to 8' seas. It was difficult to keep the boat on a heading as the wind was varying from all points east. I relieved the owner after a sudden, vicious squall took the boat away from his control and at the same time blinded him and drenched him to the skin. The air was very cold and he was chilled. The channel here is heavily traveled by freighter and cruise ship traffic and we had to maintain a sharp look-

out. By 0430 Wednesday, November 2, the seas were running over 10' and squalls were still raging. About this time another sailboat within sight hailed us on the radio asking for a position. We weren't exactly having a good time of it but the other poor skipper didn't even know for sure where he was. These are conditions known as "slop." The only thing one can do is maintain a heading and hang on.

By 0600, as the day began to break, the sky was overcast with a few squalls still around but conditions were generally improving. Barometric pressure was on the rise at 29.94. We were now about halfway through the Providence Channel and with daylight some things needed to be tended to. The crew looked a little worse for wear. No one is quite prepared, by their first night at sea, for an ordeal like we had just gone through. I had stood the wheel watch all through the night and was now relieved by the owner who had finally warmed up. The auto helm had been useless so far because its compass was over 60 degrees off from the ship's magnetic compass.

The unit could be set on a course and hold for a short while, but if a correction of more than a few degrees was called for it would veer off wildly and turn toward a heading 60 degrees to starboard. Being new, I suspected that the unit had never been properly calibrated. The instructions for "turning the compass" indicated the vessel should be turned through 360 degrees two or more times in calm conditions until a certain indicator flashed on the screen. Conditions were certainly not calm but we turned the 360 five times. No indicator appeared.

At 0700 the wind was predominately east at 20kts and I called for limited sail to be set. The main was set at the second reef point with no problem. As the roller furling jib was wound out, the port sheet let go from the clew. The bowline knot had simply shaken loose with the furious wind through the night. There was nothing to do but go forward and retie it. Not as easy as it sounds with the wind at 20kts and the seas still at 8'. The third attempt was the charm and I went below for some needed rest. I don't remember if we even ate breakfast that morning. It had been a hard night for all.

By 1300 Wednesday afternoon we had made good 140 miles in spite of conditions and continued to sail on port tack with reduced sail for the rest of the day and into the night. Carla contacted the cruise ship *Fantasy* for an update on weather conditions. "No tropical systems developing," she was told. At 2000 we passed Sand Point Light at the south end of Great Abaco Island on a close reach with seas building. The winds were northeast at 22kts with seas running 8' to 9'.

These were good conditions for our plot and *Annie's Toy* responded with 7kts to 8.5kts hull speed for most of the night. This was the second of eight nights where the wind would pick up substantially from daytime velocities. I usually took the midnight watch and would trim sail and really get her "hooked up." We made our best speed after dark but it wasn't conducive to a good night's sleep for those not on watch. Especially the cook, he had a forward berth and was sometimes left in midair as the boat crested waves at speed.

For the 18 hours that we had motored on the first day the engines consumed 26gal of diesel fuel for a figure of only 1.45gal per

hour. I was now more than confident that we would not need to stop until San Juan, Puerto Rico, at the earliest. For the next five days I hoped to run engines only to charge batteries.

By Thursday November 3, at 0700 we had been sailing close hauled for 24 hours. The wind was up to 25kts through the night with seas running 7' to 10'. Carla spotted another cruise ship on the horizon. This ship was the *Celebrity* and advised, "No tropical systems developing, just high winds and heavy seas." We hoped it wasn't an omen but when Carla and the officer on the *Celebrity* exchanged pleasantries and she told him we were headed for Tortola, he signed off the radio with the words "good-bye." This was a very unusual way to end a radio conversation.

At 1300 we had been underway for 48 hours and had put 300 miles behind us for an average of 6.25kts. The auto helm seemed to be fixing itself. It was working for much longer periods of time and the compass was within 30 degrees of the ship's compass. The crew was in good spirits and settling down to the at-sea routine.

I am not one to dwell on dining details but I do want to note that the owner's brother was a great cook. He embraced his job and made certain that the entire crew was well fed. If a crewman would sleep through a meal, the cook would put a portion aside and warm it up when the person was ready to eat. We had a menu that included oatmeal and other cereal varieties, milk, orange juice, eggs, toast, ham, beef steak, pork tenderloin, pasta, fresh tuna, chicken salad, hamburgers, hot dogs, fresh garden salad, a variety of fresh vegetables, rice, snacks of Italian specialty sausages, sardines, fruit cups, cheeses, pretzels, crackers. We ate well.

On Friday November 4, at 1300 hours we had been underway for three days and had logged 405 miles for an average speed of 5.6kts. We were under full sail now in light air and passed well clear of San Salvador to the west. We had been on a port tack (wind over the port side) for 56 hours.

By Saturday November 5 the winds were almost calm and shifting to SE. Conditions seemed favorable for a starboard tack but it only partially worked. The heading we needed was ESE. The Antilles current flows NW at about 1.5kts. The wind was out of the ESE. These two factors added up to excessive drift to the north. We were tacking across our plot line but losing ground on the heading. We were "making no money." Back on port tack we couldn't hold 115 degrees but beat to windward at a true heading of 140 degrees. This course was taking us southward toward Puerto Rico but well within the route plan variables. The boys were fishing again and brought a small marlin, about 5', alongside. We intended to take a picture but the fish decided he had enough and spit the hook when the leader was touched.

Annie's Toy has no deep keels, skegs, or extendable center boards to help her track. She draws slightly less than 4' of water but carries 900sf of sail. This is possibly why we could get her to point as close as 35 degrees into the wind but she would tend to be blown off course sideways. In other words, we were pointed in the right direction but were sliding to the south. This is called set and drift. At times we were drifting off course as much as three miles in ten miles of forward travel.

In a motor vessel one would simply angle the boat into the set conditions and proceed crabbing along to make good a true

course. Sailboats can do this too as long as the course required is off the wind enough to allow it. Our required course was almost directly into the wind. Eventually conditions would force us to run the engines or tack hundreds of miles to the north to gain the required sailing angles. I tried trimming sail from loose to tight, flat to full, and more to less area but could not gain much on the slip angle. When running the port engine to charge batteries we would engage forward gear and douse the jib and could tighten our line for an hour or so.

Sunday brought slightly more favorable wind conditions. This was good as we had only made 90 miles the previous day even with a few strong squalls through the night where we saw an indicated 9.5kts. Early in the day the wind was still in our face but by 1600 it had shifted to SSE and finally allowed a good starboard tack to the east. We crossed our plot line at 7.5kts and were able to hold that course long enough to gain some advantage on sail angle. As we changed tack, the starboard jib sheet fouled and we did about a 300 degree turn. A passing freighter noticed and hailed us on the radio. Our change of course must have looked strange on his radar and he inquired if everything was all right. The auto helm was now working perfectly and could be trusted.

Monday, November 7, Day 6. The wind had slowed to below 10kts and it was very difficult to make any speed. Set and drift was again putting us off course three miles in ten. The refrigerator quit on this day and by the time it was discovered all the perishables had perished. We checked all systems and determined that it must have been compressor failure as the raw water cooling pump was working and there was voltage all the way to the compressor which was very hot. The cook saved what he could and boiled up a dozen or so eggs for consumption by the next day.

The crew was in remarkably good spirits. There hadn't been a harsh word spoken and the only complaint had been about the rough ride at night when the wind picked up. Even then it was more in jest than serious. This is another peculiar trait with large catamarans. When bounding along in moderate to heavy seas and the hulls slice through a wave there is a heavy spray of sea water forced off both sides of each hull. On a mono hull boat this spray is pushed out to the open sea on either side. We have all seen some spectacular photos or films of this with ships in rough conditions. On a catamaran the water forced from the inside of each hull is trapped under the boat and can hit the underside of the salon and the inside of the opposite hull with such force as to sound like artillery fire, especially while lying in a bunk (actually larger than a queen size bed) right next to the inside of a hull. This phenomenon was responsible for some of the crew spending a few nights sleeping in the salon.

With no moon and mostly clear skies, the stars were more vivid than I had seen for years. One could almost see the spiral shapes of some of the distant galaxies. Our own galaxy, the Milky Way, appeared brilliant yet cloudy as the name suggests. Shooting stars seemed to be wherever you looked and Mars was so red and brilliant it could have been mistaken for the port light of a ship. Those who came out to a weather deck were captivated by the sight. The owner's wife especially seemed to enjoy the view.

Monday night the batteries were not charging as they should and the tachometer on the port engine had been acting up more than usual. An inspection revealed a broken bolt on the alternator bracket, one missing bolt (later found in the bilge), and a broken adjustment arm on the bracket. The alternator and bracket were about to fall off completely. This was the large alternator that works as a generator for the house electrical system. The one bolt had broken off flush with the engine block and would have to be removed to have any chance of getting this system repaired. As it were, the owner was able to tap the broken piece out with a hammer and punch. Luckily this broken bolt had also worked its way almost out before it sheared off. This left it just long enough to be reused. The other bolt was found and by forcing what was left of the adjuster against the broken piece he was able to get enough tension on the belt to drive the alternator.

We actually had very few problems or failures so far on the trip. The tachometer on the port engine had been working intermittently from the start as had the bow light. The bow light was a real nuisance as it required someone, usually me, to go all the way forward and release the bottom cover plate and just touch the bulb to get it working. This assembly was protected by an aluminum cage which would have had to be removed to affect a more permanent fix. With the general sea conditions combined with the exposed position it was not worth the risk of losing parts or tools not to mention crew. Of course, the bow light worked perfectly as we sailed for days out of sight of another vessel. Let other boat traffic appear, especially if there was a rain squall blowing and visibility was poor, and Murphy would be right there to douse that light.

Tuesday, November 8. This was Day 7 and we were a little behind schedule as we had drifted and tacked an extra 100 miles. We continued to beat to windward with severe slip angles for the next 24 hours and by 1000 Wednesday we were just 67 miles from San Juan and had more than enough fuel to run in under power. If we fueled up at San Juan, we would also be able to make the last 100 or so miles to Tortola under power with plenty of fuel in reserve. We were still experiencing heavy ocean swells and could not exceed 7kts under power. For the rest of the day we ran the engines and the main sail. At dark the mainsail was brought down.

There was a lot of ship traffic as we approached San Juan Harbor. The seas were very heavy and there were squalls in the area. One ship crossed our path and was barely visible. It could have been a military vessel as the most noticeable thing about its presence was the large area of the lighted coast that it blocked from view. It was kind of like one would imagine a black hole to be. Nothing there, it just blocks out everything else.

Just after the "Black Hole" passed we were hit by possibly the worst squall of the trip. In seconds the rain came down in torrents and the wind gusted to 48kts for minutes on end. The hatches were secured and even the protected salon doors had to be closed and locked.

Of course, the bow light quit. Now *Annie's Toy* was displaying only a forward steaming light on the mast and a lower stern light. This must have given the appearance of range lights of a ship farther out to sea and going backwards. There was nothing I could

do about it in those conditions. Visibility was zero for me at the helm and all I could do was to head back out to sea and wait for conditions to improve.

The weather cleared and I went below to verify our final approach to the harbor channel. Back on deck again with the owner at the helm and he thought he was seeing the channel markers. I didn't see marker lights but just a continuous red and green glow. Channel markers flash at specific intervals and these lights were constant. Carla was also on deck and had calculated that the "Black Hole" came out from a position several hundred yards to the west. We were moving at dead slow speed. I advised the owner to turn hard right and sure enough, in a very short while the correct markers came into view. This was interesting as the Lat. Lon. coordinates I had entered in the GPS had shown us to be on course.

Once inside the harbor I checked again and from mid channel the coordinates on both GPS units showed us to be about in the middle of the fort to the east. For whatever reason, on the harbor chart we were using the Lat. Lon. overlay was off by a considerable distance. The mapping GPS also showed that we had crossed over a spit of dry land which, of course, we had not. The information in the unit was probably taken from the same chart. This was a real life lesson why one should never blindly trust electronic instruments for navigation. The visual picture must match the chart picture. If the pictures don't match, don't proceed until you figure out what is wrong. This was the only time that I had seen the coordinates on a chart far off but it would have been enough to put us hard aground. With the heavy swells that night the boat would have surely been wrecked. There is also another word to the wise that says, "Never enter a strange port at night." Good words but not always practical on a commercial level.

We were safely inside the port and the drama was over. An attempt was made to contact Puerto Rico Customs. By now it was well past 2100. The cell phone indicated a strong signal and would ring all three numbers listed for customs but there was no answer. The U. S. Coast Guard has a station just inside the harbor so we made contact by VHF radio and asked for advice on how to proceed. They were very helpful and offered the same phone numbers we were using but getting no answer. One number in particular was supposed to be manned 24/7. The Coast Guard even tried the number for us but was unable to get an answer. We also tried to radio Harbor Control for instructions but couldn't raise anyone.

Finally the Coast Guard asked if we were all American citizens and, on that condition, advised that we proceed to a specific anchorage and wait for the marina to open in the morning. We thanked them and began heading toward the anchorage when suddenly the radio came to life. It was Harbor Control wanting to know where we were going. They had been listening to our conversation all along but wouldn't answer. Now they challenged. I advised that we were proceeding under instructions from the United States Coast Guard. The voice on the radio responded, "Thank you Cap-i-tan."

We slept on calm water for the first time in over a week. Just before 0800 we left the anchorage and headed over to the fuel dock at the marina. There was some activity along

the docks but no one seemed to notice *Annie's Toy*. Posted hours of operation were 8am to 5pm so the owner took a walk in the direction of the main store and office. After about 20 minutes he came walking back with a few bags of ice and shaking his head. It seemed that while eight o'clock was opening time, the staff had just arrived and hadn't had coffee yet and they just weren't ready to move. Some folks call this "the Island way" but I think "the Islanders" are just plain lazy and don't think very highly of us for invading their territory.

About 15 minutes later, down the dock came a golf cart toward the fueling area. It came to a stop next to us and the operator looked behind and it was obvious that something wasn't right. The cart made a "U" turn and drove back toward the store. This is a very large place and the dock must be a quarter of a mile long. Another ten minutes passed and here came the golf cart again. This time it had a trailer in tow with a huge spool of fuel line mounted on it. Imagine forgetting a thing like that! It took only 36 gallons of fuel to top off our tanks. To this point the boat had consumed only 66 gallons of diesel after 39 hours of powering the boat and several hours of battery charging every day for five days. We needed only 30 gallons for the trip to Tortola. By the way, diesel fuel at a marina in San Juan was \$3.00 a gallon. Diesel in the Daytona Beach area at a regular gas station is \$3.15 if you pump it yourself.

We cleared the harbor entrance by 1000 Thursday morning, November 10, and set a course for the final leg of our journey. We were headed due east now and directly into the wind. We had planned to motor this last 100 miles or so but really didn't have a choice. Sailing was out of the question. We motored along happily for the rest of the day and as night fell we passed the Island of St. Thomas. The island is so populated that with its mountainous shape and all the lights it looked like the top of a huge Christmas tree all lit up with no room for another light or ornament. We followed our plot line between and around the islands. The sight was breathtaking, even at night. At the stroke of midnight we hooked a mooring float in the harbor at Road Town, Tortola, British Virgin Islands. Our journey was all but over.

We all got another good night's rest and it was after 0700 when the crew began to stir. We needed to check in with Tortola Customs and they were to open at 0800. Another boat tied off to a float and launched a dinghy as we were having coffee. The dinghy headed to the customs building and dropped off a representative. As we were launching our dinghy, yet another boat tied up to the ferry dock and deposited their representative. The outboard motor on our dinghy refused to start so the owner went to work on the fuel system. By then it was well past 8am and the two men who had been dropped off at the customs office were still standing outside of the building. Does the marina at San Juan come to mind?

The morning was stifling hot. Eventually it was decided that our dinghy's engine was not going to run. We cast off from the mooring float and towed the dinghy to within a few hundred feet of the landing where I boarded it and rowed the short distance to shore. As I was rowing in, the two men who had been waiting outside now for almost an hour were finally admitted inside the building.

I won't go on too long about my feelings for these official butt heads but I will say that the entire process is a bad joke. When a person enters a Port Authority building looking for the Customs Office, in many cases it would be that person's first time entering that country. Yet, there was not a directory at the main entrance. There were small unmarked offices stuck in cubby holes and when one asked a local for directions they responded with a wave of a hand in a general direction. Almost a "move along, you bother me" gesture.

After finding the office around several corners and at the top of the stairs, I found the door had a paper sign identifying it as customs but the door was open so the sign could not be seen until one was in inside. I stood there in 90 degree heat filling out forms that nobody ever looked at. I was responsible for five passports and no one ever checked my license or I.D. or checked to see if the names on the form matched the names on the passports. I could have claimed that Mickey Mouse, Minnie, Pluto, Donald Duck, and Goofy had just entered the country.

I had an invoice declaring value of items being brought into the country and was prepared to pay out over \$600 in duty fees. The agent mumbled something about having to fill out form #A&*A, but it seemed like too much trouble so he wrote his name on the back of it and told me to have the marina named on the invoice call him. He may have done us a great favor but it sure didn't seem right. In the end I was charged \$14.96 which took the clerk ten minutes to process and was referred to Immigration downstairs. I swear these people deliberately screw around trying to provoke an outburst so they have reason to give us an even harder time.

The Immigration officer had me redo the same form that I had filled out upstairs at customs because he claimed he couldn't read his copy. I could damn sure read it and copied over the same crap again. The agent still didn't look at the form but gave me five smaller forms to fill out, one for each passport. The stubs of these were to be used at the airport when leaving the country. It turns out they were the receipts given back to us for the \$20 per head departure fee, but still no one looked at them. The fee here was 50 cents total.

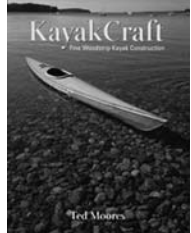
I had to wait until this guy stamped the passports of about 150 people arriving on the ferry before he would stamp our passports. While stamping all of these ferry passengers, never once did he open a passport to the photo page and insure that the document belonged to the bearer. Of the two men who had waited for an hour to get into the building; the second man was able to get through just before the ferry arrived but the first guy got some kind of a runaround and ended up behind me. It was after 1000 when I got back to the boat. We then motored for just a few more minutes and docked at *Annie's Toy's* new home.

The boat owners were great people and showed us around Tortola on Friday afternoon by rental car. We enjoyed the tour and dinner with them at the yacht club that evening, but it had been a long trip and we were ready to head for home.

The trip back to Ft. Lauderdale was uneventful but I must mention airline security. I don't mind extra scrutiny for the sake of security but if they delay me to check a bag, the least they could do is check the damned thing. I carry a kit that contains several elec-

tronic devices which could look like bombs or detonators along with enough spare AA batteries to light a small house. At Tortola, the security woman selected the old GPS II and had me turn it on. I almost told her that it would blow up if I were to turn it on but these people have no sense of humor. She also asked me what the pocket calculator was. There were three more items in the carry on bag which were completely overlooked.

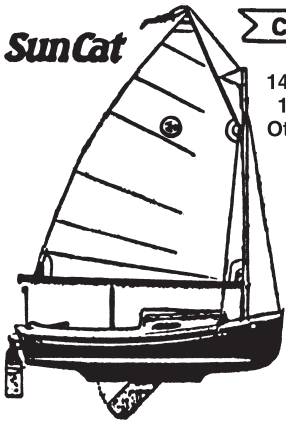
When we entered San Juan Airport we had to go through the same drill again, although the bags had just come off the commuter plane from Tortola. This time they checked three of the five items in my bag with some kind of explosive sensor that sniffed a cloth that had been wiped over the surface of the items. We all had to remove our shoes, belt buckles, and any type of over garment. Has it occurred to anyone but me that the guy who had the explosive shoes and was trying to light them wanted to be caught? If he had wanted to blow up the airplane he could have gone to the restroom and done it. I think he wanted to happen exactly what has happened. He probably laughs his head off every time he sees film footage of air travelers walking barefoot through a checkpoint. Carla carried in her purse, without knowing it, an 8" long very sharp pointed nail file. Security never caught it. She had been looking for it and discovered it on the way home.



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Sunday, February seventh, last night we slept by the fire, sun rose clear this morning, in the afternoon a New York gentleman and his wife came down to see us, and we had a pleasant chat. People down here get acquainted very easily and talk familiarly. There is a meeting at the school house this afternoon. The boys returned late from their deer hunt, their guide had wounded one and they had shot a fox squirrel.

Monday we slept out by the fire last night, we have made up our minds to get ready and start tomorrow afternoon in the city point for Charleston. In the afternoon I shot a turkey buzzard on the fly and Ben emptied his last barrel into it as it was falling which made it turn a complete sommersault. It was more than five feet across the wings, I took some of the wing feathers and the head.

In the evening a Negro ran ashore at our camp with a sailboat to warm his feet and bake some potatoes, he had mistaken our fire for that of a friend of his having a house a short distance to the southwest of us. He stayed with us more than an hour, chatting all the time. He was going moss gathering, he used to be a slave and told some stories of his younger days.

About this time there arose quite a noise at his friend's house and pretty soon they commenced to dance. It sounded as if there were about twenty couples at work upon the floor, this was tempting to our friend and he left. The dancing was kept up until twelve o'clock, at which time it ceased and they started a roaring fire out of doors to light up the heavens as it had got cloudy.

In the morning the little boy came over to see us as he generally did and we asked him how many were over at the dance. He said there was his father, mother, and three fellows, one of which fiddled and called off. Sometimes the little coon would warm buckwheat griddle cakes by our fire which his mother had given him who worked over to Web's. He always threw them onto the ashes and when warmed, he would draw them off and wipe his hand across them filling the pores nicely with the ashes.

We carried the trunks on shore and, packed them, it was quite a job. I filled all the spare room with moss. We finished about noon and had dinner.

I now give you an idea of the different dishes we had during the trip. Stews of squirrel, duck, fish, doves, quail, possum and pork. Fries of the same kinds of meats, with the addition of coots, codfish and bacon. The stews were supplied with onions, Irish potatoes, crackers or meal, and sometimes turnips. The fries with Johnny cake and boiled or baked sweet potatoes; we also had crackers and cheese, bread, hasty pudding, hominy and syrup, baked beans and pork with vinegar. I think I have given the whole list.

We hung the old trumpery on the trees, and I picked a handsome swamp lily blossom before we left. At a little after one we pushed off, and along past the houses to the wharf. It was calm and pleasant, as we passed Web's wharf he and some of the boarders came down to see us pass. I asked them if they would buy the boat, Web offered fifty cents. Upon the steam boat wharf were two men, whom I asked if they would buy, they asked the price, we told them two dollars, and they bought it. They were Charles M. Cutler, Mandarin, Edward M. Dunn, Newark, New Jersey. Cutler had come down in December, barely able to walk from consumption, and

Trip to Florida And Back

From Providence, Rhode Island Part 6 Conclusion

now got into the boat and rowed it round to a private wharf.

We then went ashore to spend the rest of the time, I picked a wild rose alongside of the walk. We left in the steamer at quarter to five and in an hour landed at Jacksonville where we got deck passage. So went ashore to get lodgings for the night, one place we went to was kept by a woman, small and dried up, she looked at us and seemed to be a little confused, at last she stammered out that there was a bed in the basement. We told her that would do, as we were not particular. This did not seem to suit her, she put her finger up to her mouth and seemed to be thinking. At last she would see about it and left us. On her return she said they were full. I guess she thought we were highwaymen, we went off laughing. We found lodging at Kemps' house, by paying fifty cents each.

Wednesday morning up before the sun, the thermometer stood at seventy on the side of the house. There was a fire this morning, and the firemen pitched a heavy cook stove from a third story window to save it as they said. The steamers here are drawn by hand. The boat left at seven and we glided smoothly down the river, we passed four saw and planing mills, being Jacksonville. We passed a great many fishermen, who are setting their nets or pulling them in. The shore is from two to twenty feet high. We passed some respectable looking places situated on the highland.

We touched at Yellow Bluff about twelve miles from Jacksonville, it is a village of fishermen, three hitched their sailboats on behind the steamer to go down to fish. Now the banks are low and interlaced with creeks in some directions as far as the eye can reach, covered with tall grass.

Touched at Mayport at ten and at Pilot Town fifteen minutes later. The first place is of about twelve or fifteen houses set in white sand, the second place of about four houses and a little grass.

We are now nearing the bar which is twenty-five miles from Jacksonville. The waves break as they come onto the bar, and form a white streak on the black water for ten or fifteen miles. There are two very tall light-houses to right; now we are outside of the bar, the heaves and rolls, I get dizzy and heave up and feel quite comfortable. At noon there were few of the passengers that came down to dinner, most of them being sick. The shore we had left looked cold and bleak, which appearance was given by the white sand which looked like snow, a few Palmetto trees were to be seen, but these had a quantity of sand upon them and did not appear green.

I must go back a little now. About halfway between Yellow Bluff and May Port, we passed St. John's Bluff which was sixty or seventy feet high at the highest part and sloped gradually downward toward the south, it was covered with trees. The river is gradually wearing it away, one man told us that it had lost a hundred feet in his time. A few miles below Pilot Town, on the same shore the sand lays in small round mounds, some were full twelve feet high and thirty

feet in diameter, and seem to be as close as they could easily be set, and covered eight or ten acres.

I now return to the boat. It is cloudy most of the time, and now we see a floating buoy and there is no sign of land. In an hour we see a light house, the boat putting into Fernandenia, the same style of shore greets us here as that we left. We passed Fort Clint on the left, built of brick and is not garrisoned. At three, we are at port, they are to stop twenty minutes and I went ashore and bought something to eat, It has an ancient look and contains about three thousand inhabitants. Apothecary shops seem to thrive in all the southern cities and are first class.

We were soon on the waves, had another heave. When it came night we had a state-room by paying fifty cents each and had a good sleep. When we waked in the morning it was raining and we were going up the river to Savannah, we touched at six. She was to leave at eight so we soon got up and went ashore, we visited the market. It was in full trim, we got something to eat and at a store at high prices, I would like to have had the chap down at the river. We saw some very fat poultry but it was dressed and I could not say where it was raised. There were green vegetables of all kinds.

We then went back to the boat which left at her appointed time. There is bass fishing here though not to the extent that it is in the St. John's. At one place on the river they are raising what seems to be an obstruction placed there in time of the war to keep the Yankees out. All the shore we see after we are outside of the bar is of white sand. We passed the revenue cutter *Moccason*, which used to be stationed at Newport.

At last we came in sight of the bar at Charleston, and in a short time were crossing it, the waves were coming in heavily, and the wind was blowing from the land and as each ascended the bar, it kept breaking for a quarter of a mile, the spray of which was blown in the opposite direction, and reminded me of hundreds of locomotives going at a good speed, with steam issuing from their smokestacks. The channel is very crooked across the bar, of which none was bare at that time,

We passed Fort Sumpter on the left, surrounded by water, and Fort Moultry on the right opposite Fort Sumpter. Fort Moultry is made of brick and I think Sumpter is. We arrived at Charleston at half past six, It was dark and the tide was out and we had to work through the mud to get to the wharf. Charleston is twelve miles from the bar. The river is yellow though not so bright as the Savannah. They use a great deal of Palmetto for spiles as its fibrous nature resists to some extent the action of the worms. The city is on the left hand side going up and is of about fifty thousand inhabitants. None of the land I should judge being more than twenty-five feet above the water.

After landing our first object was to find a boarding house, which we did after a while, situated ninety three Church Street, kept by Mrs. Conly. We paid two dollars for two day's board and lodging, the bed was clean but there were three in the room, but down in the dining room it was the boss, such a lot of German, Americans with only one Englishman, and it was a house of many tongues. Our feed was rough, though there was plenty of it, fried fish came onto the table with their heads on, a great deal of

bread and syrup were used. I never saw such a jolly lot over so poor a table.

We took a walk after supper, St. Michael Church is a short distance off, it is made of brick and plastered over, it has a chime of bells, and a clock which strikes three times at quarter past the hour, six times at half past, nine times at quarter to, twelve times at the full hour, and then the hour is struck on a larger bell. Every time the bell strikes the policemen sing out the time, here they are dressed in blue, in Savannah they dressed in grey.

Friday morning, I lay awake for three hours, from the continual striking of the bell. After breakfast we took a walk, there are great many lots upon which are the ruins of brick buildings, and the city generally does not look thriving, there is not such fine shipping here as in Savannah. We went round to the custom house now in the course of construction, the first story is granite, the rest of marble, It will be a fine building when finished. We then went to the market. It is built of brick, plastered over and more than a thousand feet long with one row of stalls on each side, most of which were kept by Negroes, women as well as men

After dinner we went for a stroll down to what is called the battery, it is a narrow strip of land forming a right angle facing the water. The side of the angle fronting Fort Sumpter is between two and three hundred yards long and about a rod wide, four feet high from the street, and about ten on the water side. It is faced with stone and covered with flagging, along the water side is an iron railing. The other side of the angle covers about three acres of land and about the same length as the other side, upon this ground are trees, a few flowers, fountains, settees and a band stand. There are boats also to let. Before the war Negroes were not allowed up on the battery, but when it was over they flocked there in great numbers.

After leaving it we saw a funeral procession, the corpse followed by a company of soldiers and company of firemen, the drums were muffled and they were marching slowly, the soldiers in all the colors, and had the appearance of a lot of Turks, the colors black, white, yellow, red, blue, and scarlet

A boil is coming on Ben's neck and he is tired and we go to the house. Taxes here are about five dollars on the hundred. We saw some fellows peddling short wood, carrying it on their heads. One man I saw had a bushel of sweet potatoes in a clothesbasket with a measure on his head, and a peck of eggs on his arm, behind was his boy with half a bushel on his head.

Saturday morning after breakfast we went down to move Ben's trunk to the steamer we were going on, she leaves at eleven today, my box I had carried over. We then took a walk around by St. Michael Church, and was looking through the iron gate, and reading some inscriptions upon the flagging walk and grave stones. I noticed that the lock merely hung on the staple, so we opened the gate and went in. In a few minutes the sexton came over to see who we were. After spending some fifteen minutes round the yard we went inside and had a talk with the sexton.

The sexton had been at his job for many years and is now a dried up nervous little old man, but time was flying and we had to go, we took a walk through the market and then down to the ship.

Her name is *Champion*, her hull is iron, the upper part wood, she is of fourteen hundred and ten tons burden. Iron side wheels, with two beam engines. We are going second class passage. She starts at her appointed time and we go smoothly out of the harbor. The day is free from clouds, and warm. We are now outside of the bar and there's hardly any swell, the afternoon was lovely. There is not a lady passenger on board, we met two steamers going to Charleston and saluted them.

Sunday the fourteenth it is rainy and disagreeable outside and the vessel kept up a continual pitching which set me to heaving as soon as I got up., but at breakfast I did well. At three we passed Cape Hatteras, the day wore slow away and we were glad when it was night.

Monday, it is cold and cloudy and we kept mostly indoors, the boat does not pitch quite so badly as it did yesterday but it is colder and still increasing. They hoist a couple of sails to help us along, at night the deck forward of the wheel is covered with a thin coat of ice which is rather uncomfortable to walk upon.

Next morning I was up before light and took a look out of doors. It was very cold, the deck and all around the wheelhouse was covered with ice, they had let steam into the wheels the night before to prevent ice from forming on them. There were quite a number of lights of different colors ahead and to the side of us. We were close to Sandy Hook. Not liking the weather outside I went into the engine room and then down into the boiler room, this place was liken unto hell, if the descriptions give by some preachers of that place is correct. Only that the hell they speak of is very easy to get at, where this place is hard to get at, not being accessible to a very large man, except by the ash spout. It was close work for me with my overcoat.

While I was there they drew one fire, pouring on water from a hose, and the men looked like demons at work, at the scraper holes of which there were eight or ten. On the side of the boilers I was, there was salt which had been left there by steam that had leaked out some of it was in the shape of a long icicle. We were now among the ice which I could hear rattling against the iron sheets. It looked to me as if with a few good licks with a sharp pick axe the vessel could be sunk.

The harbor was full of ice though not all solid. We landed at eight and were not sorry. We got a hot breakfast and then went into the market, we then went to the Neptune office to get tickets but the boat had not got in. We waited until two before we got tickets and as the piers are a short distance apart we carried Ben's trunk and drew my box to the Stonington Line. We left at four on the *Narragansett*, she will go outside of the Long Island as the Sound is frozen up. We had good berths in the cabin.

We arrived at Stonington at four but preferred to wait till the seven o'clock train. At about six we dressed and went up into Stonington and got something to eat. At seven we left and were soon whirling homeward, and at Providence at quarter past nine, just nine weeks after our departure. I had let my beard grow while gone and was not known at first by the boys.

So endeth the lesson. Charles H. Brown, April 6, 1875.

An Accounting

December 15, 1874 cash on hand	\$79.66	Lumber to build boat	1.20	Lodging at Jacksonville	.50
Of John A. Brown	1.00	Board at hotel	3.00	Nitre	.10
A. V. Fornum	4.12	Lumber, grub, express 26	1.50	Snaps at Fernandena	.10
Fare to Boston	1.35	Grub January 5	1.11	Grub at Savannah February 11	.30
Express to wharf	.25	Postage stamp	.06	Berth on board	.50
To Savannah	22.00	Postage cards	.20	Board at Charleston	2.00
Apples	.02	Potatoes and meal	.17	Charleston to New York	12.00
Dinner in Boston	.15	Stamp	.07	Express	.25
In Savannah 22	.15	Potatoes	.20	Cards	.02
Dinner 22 Tuesday	.50	Oranges	.08	Blanket	1.25
Express	.17	For grub at Palatka Saturday 16	1.56	Breakfast in New York	.20
Apples	.05	Buscuit Saturday 16	.05	Apples	.05
Room	.50	Stamp and card	.04	Dinner	.35
Breakfast 23	.35	Mollasses	.10	Pie	.05
Apples	.08	Grub 25 at Ticoi	.48	New York, Providence, Stonington	3.50
Cookies	.05	Provisions	1.17	Cookies	.10
Bread, cookies, apples	.23	Stamp and cards at Green Cove	.05	Cost of Trip	\$72.54
Express to Gulf Depot	.25	Stamp at Mandarin February 1	.03		
In train to Jacksonville	2.50	Provisions February 6	.60	February 22	
Postal card 24	.01	Stamps and sundries at Ma.	.05	Board	.25
		Crackers February Saturday 6	.07	Pants at Barnaby	6.50
December 24, 1874 Jacksonville		For boat February 9	1.00	Dinner at church	.50
Express to St. John's hotel	.15	Passage to Charleston from Mandarin	6.00	Entrance at door	.15

A good friend of mine (designer of my website, www.robwhite.com) lives over on the Mississippi coast which Katrina and those floating casinos scraped down to bare dirt. He has sort of been wandering around to escape having to look at all that destruction full time and he wandered our way. I felt so sorry for him that I offered to take him to the little river I called "Pleistocene Creek" in my wretched book, hoping that it would make him feel better to see something that has survived untouched since the last Ice Age, and I hoped like anything that it was still untouched but it has been 25 years since my last trip back in there. I had been trying to avoid the place so I wouldn't have to find that it has a damned flakeboard and vinyl siding style condominium looming over the habitat of the mastodon and the naked savage. I have to tell you I was scared to death when we rolled the Rescue Minor off the trailer at the nearest boat ramp.

One reason I was scared was we found that the boat ramp had been significantly improved by the government. Back in the old days it was just a little cut in the bank where somebody could back a trailer down to launch a little boat. It had to be a little boat because about 5' out from the edge was a gigantic submerged (at high tide) rock that the boat had to clear or be dragged over. Not only was the rock gone but the ramp was concrete and two trailers wide, which is a useless thing since a rapidly expanding population of yahoos down here can't back a trailer well enough to occupy only one side while they fiddlefart around with all the stuff they should have done before they backed down so cattywhompus as to block all further launchings on both sides of the ramp until they finally get ready to launch and leave.

I am trying to avoid becoming an old, dried-up malcontent so I won't have to live the rest of my life in an impotent rage but it is kind of hard to do when you have to launch a boat. Degeneration of boat ramp etiquette is just one branch off the basic stem of all my pet peeves... the incompetence, stupidity, and thoughtlessness that runs rampant in American society today... brought on, I believe, by an excess of the easy life.

Fortunately, we didn't have a bit of trouble. Launching only took us 15 seconds on only one side of the boat ramp. The boat was already untied from the trailer, our junk was all arranged, the engine had been tried to see if it had what it needed to percolate, and the trailer roller axles were greased so the boat rolled immediately off and my buddy led it with the painter around the end of the dock the government had built so that other people could tie their boat up and unconsciously continue to block the ramp even after the boat was off the trailer.

Phooey on a dock. I like to pull up on the bank to get in. The trouble is most boaters don't want to get their Sperry Topsiders wet. Me, I leave my Sperry Topsiders in the car and go barefooted in the boat unless it is January, then I wear my white rubber boots like all working boat style people do. You know, it takes a particular talent to ride a bicycle with white rubber boots.

So I was scared to death as we idled out the river, dodging the rocks that the government had not removed quite yet. Now I ain't about to tell you exactly where that was but I will set the scene. It is somewhere between Dickerson Bay (Panacea) and Crystal River. That's a long stretch of coast and most all of

Pleistocene Creek Revisited...

In Which the Role of Riverkeepers is Examined

By Robb White

it is rocky and shallow. Before the invention of the cell phone it was a regular yahoo trap. Many of them got themselves into a fix of extremis after they knocked the foot clean off the engine on a rock. There is a significant amount of aluminum on the bottom of that coast. I wasn't scared of the rocks. The water is clear enough so I could see anything that was within 6" of the surface far enough away to dodge it.

I stood up on the seat and eased down the coast in the bright sun and sparkling water of a perfect fall day to the secret go-in place that I hoped I had remembered right all these years. This is all classic salt marsh down here, and that's an ephemeral situation at best, and we have had about ten hurricanes whip through that exact place since I was last there. I have to tell you that we wandered around in the marsh for most of the morning trying to figure out where the hell we were. I shut down and stood on top of the engine box a bunch of times trying to get my bearings. Fortunately it was only two days past the full moon and we had a two tide day (one high and one low in 24 hours) and the tide was rising and apt to do that all day long. It doesn't pay to get up in a marsh on a falling spring tide around here no matter what kind of shallow draft boat you have. You are liable to get yourself in a fix that you can't talk yourself out of on a cell phone unless you know somebody with a helicopter.

Finally things started looking familiar to me and I noticed where the current of the rising tide seemed to have found itself a channel and I eased on further into the marsh toward the distant trees. My buddy broke out his camera and took some pictures as the landscape changed. I got more and more worried as I realized that we would soon be in that wonderful little place.

What I was worried about wasn't hitting a rock but that we would find trash and vandalism and evidence of fartfaces and yahoos defacing a place that ought to be looked at and left absolutely alone. I was even worried that the government might have decided that they needed to do a little improvement project in there like they had done with the boat ramp.

Let me cover those topics briefly before I get to the real Pleistocene Creek part. Trash is one of my favorite gripes. I mean, all this trash along the road and washed up on the beach is a good an indicator of how sorry and thoughtless the average American has become. I bet you don't see that in Iceland or Monaco or Switzerland.

It is easy to see how the trash throwing tradition starts around here. The city our shop is near does not run school buses. The children have to walk to school or get their parents to take them (not a bicycle amongst them). Before they come home, a lot of them stop off at the vending machine emporium maintained in the schools and buy themselves a little snack or two. You can see some of them walking home along the sidewalks in one of the prettiest little towns in Georgia

gnawing open plastic wrappers, eating the contents, and throwing the trash on the ground without any more thought than a baby uses when he wipes his nose on his sleeve. There are Snicker Bar wrappers blowing down every street and sidewalk in town.

I know some of the kids don't do that but I am afraid they are a dwindling minority and there is no hope that the thoughtless majority will ever grow up to be anything but shittokes. It is possible that they will attain the American dream and drive the SUV but you know damn well they'll throw trash out of the electric window (if the fuse isn't blown) and you know damn well they'll never park between the lines or notice what they are backing into. Whew... that takes care of what'll happen if you eat a Snicker Bar. Now on to government "improvements."

The same week as our Pleistocene Creek trip I was invited to speak at the semi-annual meeting of the Apalachicola Bay and Riverkeepers, but they didn't want me there as a dignitary to add a little gravity to the serious work of the organization. One or two of them had read my wretched book and thought what I remembered from 60 years ago about the river and the bay they are trying to protect might be entertaining.

I don't know if I told them anything they didn't already know but I learned a lot from the Riverkeepers. One thing I learned was that they are, finally, after many years of fighting, hopeful that they can make a little headway in the struggle to stop the Army Corps of Engineers from dredging the Apalachicola River. Let me give you a little background here. The Apalachicola River is the second biggest river draining into the Gulf of Mexico. It is a sight to see and may very well be the most unspoiled river in the northern hemisphere south of the Arctic Circle. It is the result of the confluence of its two main tributaries, the Chattahoochee and the Flint, which used to come together right at the corner where the Florida/Georgia line takes a jog to the north.

In 1957 the Army Corps of Engineers closed the gates on a dam they had built on the state line and flooded 37,500 acres of woods to create Lake Seminole (that's 376 miles of shoreline... 30 miles up the Chattahoochee and 35 up the Flint). The little Thomasville Boat Club (among others... I rode with Chester Bellamy) made the last trip down the Flint River from Bainbridge before the gates were closed. That was a beautiful place and it still is. The Apalachicola below the dam is fortunate not to have any big towns or industrial complexes to pollute it. It is supposed to be navigable (it is wide, swift, and used to be deep... (most places) and was maintained in that condition by the Corps for a long time.

Bainbridge and Columbus up in Georgia are inland ports. You can lock through the Jim Woodruff Dam at Lake Seminole and a lot of barges of fertilizer and petroleum used to do that. But Atlanta has grown into a regular megalopolis since 1957 and all those urbanites have to wash all those SUVs and water all that yard and golf course grass so there isn't much water coming down the Chattahoochee anymore... lot of sewage and trash, though. Somehow the city of Atlanta and surrounds has managed to litigate and procrastinate themselves through and around many of the government environmental protections. There are so many introduced noxious weeds in Seminole (the weediest lake I ever saw) that I hope most of that

north Georgia runoff is "biodegraded" before it trickles through the dam to feed the dwindling Apalachicola.

The ridiculous part is that the Corps of Engineers has continued to dredge that river even though the little bit of water that escapes from Atlanta isn't enough to float a barge but just a few days out of the year, and people long ago decided that if they needed reliable transportation of commodities they better work it through trucks, trains, and pipelines.

Not only that, but even with good water, the Apalachicola and Chattahoochee are some of the hardest rivers I ever saw to negotiate with a tug even with only one barge and the Flint... whoooo... you know flint rock is hard on a barge bottom or a towboat wheel. There aren't very many wheelmen left who can push up to Bainbridge or Columbus even in the rare times when there is a little water. What I am saying is that there has only been just an intermittent trickle of commercial traffic on that system for years... no need to do all that dredging and fooling around.

I hate to keep harping on government incompetence all the time but it is just inescapable if you get anywhere around the water and have an environmental bone in your body. I ain't about to torch a condo or bomb a jet ski factory, but I will speak plainly about travesties inflicted on us all by the kinds of people who throw trash out of the car and the incompetence of the people we pay to protect us from mindless environmental destruction.

The Corps of Engineers has fought the Riverkeepers successfully because the Florida Department of Environmental Protection keeps on issuing permits to dredge the Apalachicola and, if you permit it, they'll damn sure do it. It is the stupidest thing I ever heard of. Back in the old days the dredging wasn't quite so bad because there was a lot of water to dilute the silt from the dredge, but since Atlanta stole all the water dredging is catastrophic not only for the environment of the river but for Apalachicola Bay... the most productive oystering bay in America after the Chesapeake.

Eighty percent of the oysters harvested in Florida come from water that is fed by the Apalachicola River. Most of the citizens in Franklin County live by oysters. The men rake and the women shuck and all of them work hard for their money and are proud and independent people and their children want to grow up to be just like them. There is no mechanical harvesting in Florida. They do it by hand and have somehow managed to scratch a living out of the bottom of the bay for a mighty long time. The only machinery involved is an outboard motor and you can buy a beat-up outboard motor mighty cheap down there these days because all those people are literally starving because the bay has been closed to oystering for most of the summer and fall. It is a minor disaster compared to the tsunami, Katrina, and the Pakistan earthquake, but it probably feels about the same to the people it happened to.

You know if you are on public assistance the check comes on the first of the month no matter what, but if you are raking around on the bottom of the bay and making a get by on your own and they close the bay for one reason or another, you are stuck. Those people are not irresponsible. They know oystering is seasonal so they save up for the hard times, but Apalachicola Bay has

been closed for 12 weeks of the most productive part of the season by a red tide.

No, I'll amend that statement. The bay has been closed to oystering for 12 weeks by the government. Let me explain. As I said in the November 15 issue, red tide is caused by excesses of some kind. This one was triggered by Hurricane Dennis. Somehow too much fertilizer or something (nobody actually knows for sure) got into the water and triggered a persistent red tide like nobody has ever seen around here. It is kind of scattered and appears to be mostly offshore but the bay was closed to oystering just like it is when torrential rains come and flush Atlanta's toilet.

The way the government determines if the bay needs to be closed due to the fecal bacteria content of the bay being too high is to look at some water under a graduated microscope cover slip and count the bacteria in one square jillimeter or something. I guess that's a pretty good test. They can sample the water at various places all over the bay and quickly get a count and make a decision but the red tide test is just plain hokus-pokus. I don't know who invented it but they have been doing it the same way since the '30s and the government steadfastly refuses to implement a more modern test for dinoflagellate toxicity in oysters.

What they do is get some oysters, blend them up, and inject the oyster soup into some mice and count how many of them die. Some of them always die and sometimes they all die. If enough of the mice die the bay is closed. I guess it is a valid test but the trouble is that there are only two laboratories on the Gulf Coast who do this test and it takes a long time. Unlike the fecal bacteria test, they don't test a bunch of places and close the bad ones, they just test a few and close the whole bay. One of the testing labs is down on the peninsula of Florida and the other is in Texas, and the one in Texas refused to test this red tide outbreak. Rumor has it that they just didn't want to get tangled up between those starving oystermen and the government. Nobody knows if the oysters are toxic or not but nobody is able to work and there is no government relief even if the people would accept it.

One private organization tried to take on a particularly hard hit family. The man was a tonger and the wife was a shucker and not only did they have three children of their own, they had had to take in four relative children because of some abusive behavior in the other household. Because of the family connection of that situation there was no foster child money. The savings were used up, the outboard was sold (couldn't sell the skiff... who wants an oyster skiff down here now?) the car was repossessed and these people were in a real fix. "I thank you," said the man, "but I ain't never took nothing from nobody. I work for what I get." There are plenty of quick and efficient ways to accurately test for stuff in the water and in organisms. I mean you can pee on a little strip of paper and instantly find out if you are pregnant or not.

So, is the situation so hopeless that I am in complete despair? Nope. When my buddy and I idled into the shade of the ancient trees of Pleistocene Creek, it was exactly like I remembered it from 25 years ago. There was no trash... no chainsaw work, no archaeological digs, no government improvements, and nobody at all. The tears came in my eyes. I shut off the engine and we sat in the boat and

looked around for a long time and left it just like we found it.

When we got out in the bay we saw a man and his wife working crab traps in their white rubber boots. I asked them how it was going. "Pretty good," said the woman, "these crabs have fattened up all summer from eating all these dead fish. You know that red tide ain't hurt them a'tall." So there is hope. Apalachee Bay is not irreversibly damaged like they say the Chesapeake is, and below Lake Seminole the river will be much better if they can get the fool dredging stopped. I think there are enough people who have the sense to become aware that maybe some of this pollution can be stopped in time. There is a rumor that the FDEP has realized that they are permitting a useless and destructive project and that there are more and more people who are aware of that. If that is true, all these Riverkeepers have to do is curtail some of this agricultural and golf course runoff and get the U.S. Supreme Court to stop Atlanta from squandering and crapping up everybody's water.

They might be able to do it, too. There were 200 people at that meeting and that was in Eastpoint, which is a tiny little oystering community on the point east of the river. They were meeting in the Eastpoint volunteer fire department building... a mighty fine place built all by volunteers. I didn't see any fire truck but I bet those volunteers are building that somewhere, too. Some of those Riverkeepers had on their white rubber boots and I think there were one or two politicians there (not in white rubber boots). I don't know for sure but I bet somebody up there in Tallahassee is going to have to shake a leg pretty quick.

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International Scene

World market indicators pointed both ways. Demand for both new and used containers dropped sharply, reports from China said new containers ordered by leasing companies were piling up undelivered, and shipping rates between Asia and South America dropped by more than one-third due to massive capacity increases and fierce competition. But demand for copper is keeping Chilean mines hyper-busy while the cost of shipping West Africa oil to the U.S. in two-million-barrel tankers reached a seven-month high, up 93% in just one month. And Morgan Stanley warned that the world shipbuilding industry could suffer from 30% overcapacity in 2008. (Those with long memories remember the late '70s when hundreds of tankers and bulk carriers, many of them new builds, were stored in Norwegian fjords and elsewhere as the results of a ship-building boom that went bust).

In France, a public prosecutor recommended abandonment of a charge of complicity in endangering human life against the Total Oil Group but will press on with numerous charges against several parties relating to pollution resulting from the 1999 sinking of the tanker *Erika* off Brittany. But the world still awaits court decisions about the equally impactful *Prestige* sinking and subsequent oil spill onto French and Spanish shores.

Although Panamanians may vote next year to enlarge the Panama Canal to handle ships up to 10,000 TEU, Panama has asked for expressions of interest about a \$600 million megaport that could handle post-Panamax ships. Four firms have expressed interest in building and operating the port for 50 years, which would be located on an artificial island at the Pacific end of the Canal. Canal authorities denied statements that it had awarded a contract for Canal expansion to a Spanish construction firm.

Total losses at sea of ships over 100gt declined last year (101 vs. 144 in 2003) for the eleventh year in succession, but loss of life (589) increased over 2003 (197). The last category fluctuates widely (from 246 to 1,552 in the '90s) with no perceptible trend.

Four North Korean ships arrived in South Korean ports to load rice for the starving communist country.

Hard Knocks and Thin Places

The 3,000-ton tanker *Chapyangping No. 8* collided with the similar-sized *Wu Shan* on the Huangpu River in Shanghai and 50 tonnes of gasoline leaked out.

A Russian steamer capsized near the port of Dudinka and seven were saved while eight went missing. The vessel, carrying fruits and vegetables, was not licensed to carry passengers.

In London, the small cargo vessel *James Prior* became jammed under the Battersea Road Bridge during the evening rush hour and commuters swore for the next month or so as repairs were made to the bridge.

The South Korean tanker *Samho Brother* capsized after being struck by the container ship *TS Hongkong* off Taiwan.

Near Antwerp, the sizable Qatar-flagged container ship *Fowaire* grounded in the River Scheldt and broke its back before it was refloated.

The Chinese cargo ship *Chien-hsing* ran ashore on Kinmen (better known to Americans as Quemoy) Island off Taiwan's coast and all were rescued.

The coastal container ship *Umfolozoi* sank at its berth in Walvis Bay, Namibia, after

Beyond The Horizon

By Hugh Ware

colliding with the dredger *Ingwenya* outside the port.

At Alborg, Denmark, the Russian cargo ship *Solkka 2* drifted into the Oddeund Bridge.

Off St. Kitts and Nevis, the iron ore-carrying bulker *Chang An* had an engine room fire but extinguished it after the tanker *British Vine*, the patrol boat *Stalwart*, and two tugs showed up to help.

The Hong Kong-registered bulker *Belo Horizonte* had a fire deep in the coal in one hold at Hunterston, North Ayrshire.

The Bangladesh inland cargo boat *Manirul Islam*, loaded with 1,000 tons of clinker ash, capsized due to currents and stormy weather and sank. The 13 on board were saved by passing trawlers.

The LPG tanker *Hera* broke down off Iran and was towed.

The bulker *Ocean Park* broke down off Japan and was towed.

A crane operator on the bulker *Shan Hai* at Durban was killed when the crane collapsed.

The master of the cargo ship *NT Express* was charged after his ship backed into a fishing boat in Darwin harbour. He faced two years in gaol or a \$10,000 fine.

More serious was the collision of the container ship *Zim Asia*, which hit and capsized the Japanese fishing boat *No. 3 Shinsei Maru* and kept on going. Only one fisherman survived. The culprit was identified from paint markings on its bow and the Israeli company president flew to Japan to offer apologies and financial compensation to the families of those lost.

Off the Western Isles of Scotland, a doctor and a nurse were heli-winched down to the anchored 50,000tonne *Yeoman Bridge* to treat 24 crewmen for suspected food poisoning. Six others were evacuated by lifeboat to a hospital.

It was just an old Indian-owned tug towing an older bulker from Cuba towards the scrapping beaches of India. A bit of trouble required repairs at Walvis Bay in Namibia in August and then nothing was heard for a month until the *Jupiter 6*, towing the *Pointing* (ex-*Ithomi*), made a routine position report in early September. Then, in early October another ship came across the drifting bulker with a towline hanging down but no tug. It took several days for a salvage tug to get men aboard but they found the towing wire snapped and signs of at least two attempts to rig emergency towing lines. A search was being made for the tug when, several days later, its EPIRB suddenly started transmitting. Nothing was found at the EPIRB position except some oil and debris, possibly from the tug, possibly not. One can but imagine what the tug's crew of 12 went through.

The Grey Fleets

The new U.S. Navy Chief of Naval Operations wants to restructure how the Navy's warships are planned and purchased. Unlike the previous CNO, he wants to provide Congress with a number for ships in the fleet rather than ranges of numbers. He is willing to operate with 11 carriers instead of 12 and believes in the Littoral Combat Ship, saying, "You can't get the LCS into the water fast enough." Two versions of the LCS, one based on an Australian multi-hull and the other on a

traditional monohull, are being built with two more of each type on order.

The U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander said his highest priority is antisubmarine warfare to keep an eye on some 250 non-U.S. subs in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Namibian Navy celebrated its first anniversary, apparently somewhat surprised that its major warship, the "frigate" *Lt. General Jerombian Dino Harnaambo*, was in good shape. The vessel was the ex-Brazilian Navy tug *Pursus*, donated in 2004 because Brazil is helping Namibia establish a navy. Brazil will supply another navy ship and four patrol boats in a commercial contract worth \$35 million.

South African navy officers are being trained in India in the details of the Type 209 diesel-electric submarines both countries own, thus joining personnel from 25 friendly countries who get training in India. India decided to add six French Skorpene cruise-missile submarines to its fleet and they will be built in the Navy's Mumbai shipyard.

Pleasure Cruisers

On the Danube near the border between Slovakia and Hungary, fire broke out on the four-decked river cruise boat *Olténita* and 77 passengers hurriedly scrambled ashore on the nearby riverbank. The body of a female professional entertainer was found in the ship's galley area. The vessel was once the favorite riverboat of former Rumanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

In upstate New York, on a placid Lake George, the 40' glass-enclosed tour boat *Ethan Allen*, carrying a party of 48 or 49 senior citizens, rolled over and sank, possibly because of the wake from its larger fleetmate, the *Mohican*, some distance away and 20 passengers drowned.

A hotly contested contract for performing the first maintenance and repair work on the giant *Queen Mary 2* was won by Blohm & Voss Repair. The ship will be drydocked for 11 days at Hamburg.

Hundred of miles up the Amazon a wooden passenger boat tried to cross in front of two barges carrying trucks but lost. Forty of 60 on board were rescued by the tug pushing the barges and other small craft.

Ferries

The Manly ferry *Collaroy* struck the Circular Quay Wharf in Sydney and two people were injured.

The Philippine ro/ro ferry *Our Lady of Fatima* had an engine room fire that was extinguished five hours later and none of the 620 passengers were harmed.

Off Rhodes, the Greek ro/ro ferry *Leapetra* ran aground and the *Tinian Express* dittoed at Tinian, injuring all 12 passengers and the co-captain. And ditto for the *Regina Baltica* off Sweden.

In the south of France, the government attempted to privatize its money-losing SNCM ferry line but ran into resistance from workers who went on strike. Several strikers hijacked the ro-pax ferry *Pascal Paoli* and it was recaptured by 40 French commandos who rappelled down from helicopters. Sympathetic port authority personnel at Marseilles staged a series of 24-hour strikes, blocking dozens of ships from moving. The Corsican National Liberation Front warned against privatization and threatened anyone who participated. The government threatened to liquidate the ferry company. In the end, 88% of the strikers voted

to return to work after 23 days out and the French government decided it would retain a quarter interest in the company, now owned by Butler Capital Partners and Connex-Veolia. Marseilles authorities figured the strikes' effects will last a decade.

Crime and Punishments

The U.S. Coast Guard said it had no interest in criminalizing seafarer actions resulting from accidents but will prosecute those who intentionally break laws (but isn't there usually a law somewhere against 'most anything')?

The chief engineer of the container ship *MSC Elena* was arrested at Boston and charged with five counts involving a so-called "magic pipe" that bypassed the ship's oil/water separator. He could spend 40 years in jail.

Danish shipping giant Moller-Maersk was fined \$500,000 by a U.S. court after being found guilty of condoning and encouraging violation of an international treaty limiting the discharge of oil from its ships, particularly the *Jane Maersk*.

Coastal Transportation, operator of small cargo ships between the lower forty-eight and Alaska, paid \$412,101 in fines because it hadn't filed oil spill contingency plans with the state of Alaska. The fines were designed to nullify any savings Coastal might have realized by not filing.

The U.K. fined UECC, one of Europe's leading car carriers, more than \$41,000 because its *Autofreighter* spilled 100 litres of oil at Southampton and failed to report the spill.

In Australia, the owners and master of the Panamanian-flagged *Magic Wave* were fined only \$24,000 for illegally dumping garbage off New South Wales in 2003. The fines could have totaled \$134,000.

Mother Nature and Her Tantrums

The bulker *Golden Dragon* was driven ashore by Typhoon Longwang ("dragon king") near the Taiwanese port of Hualein and broke in two. All 15 crew escaped harm.

Plans to replenish the beach at Waikiki were put on hold because the pumps were being built on New Orleans when Hurricane Katrina arrived there.

Hurricane Katrina impacted four portions of the oil/gas industry in the Gulf of Mexico region: wells, pipelines, on-land bases, and refineries. There are roughly 4,000 platforms in the Gulf and Katrina passed near or over about 2,800 of them, demolishing 46 and extensively damaging another 20. Four drilling rigs were destroyed, nine extensively damaged, and several broke free of their moorings. Pipeline damage seems to have been slight, unlike when Hurricane Ivan moved pipelines up to two miles. Offices were quickly reopened in other cities and many refineries soon resumed operations.

Then came Hurricane Rita... reports are still vague but eight of 38 mobile drilling rigs went adrift. Losses from both hurricanes were about 6% (oil) and 4% (gas) of the Gulf's annual production.

Katrina and Rita may delay urgently needed U.S. dredging projects. Every bit of dredging is controlled by and must be processed through the Corps, and U.S. laws prevent states and smaller entities from starting to dredge (although even cities elsewhere in the world can do so). And the Jones Act protects U.S. dredging firms from foreign competition but it also leaves them with little incentive to invest in really efficient equipment such

as trailer suction dredges. Interesting aside, under the Jones Act dredged spoil is considered to be "merchandise."

Dredged sediments from Illinois could be used to renew depleted marshes and wetlands in Louisiana and five barge loads may be sent south as a demonstration.

Greenpeace's *Arctic Sunrise* tried to show support for a wind farm project in Massachusetts' Nantucket Sound but found that others can adopt Greenpeace tactics. About 20 fishing vessels and others circled the ship, waving flags, blowing horns, and shouting while an airplane flew overhead with a banner saying, "Greenpeace, go home!"

People

A brave Brit, operating as "Expedition 360," is pedaling his way around the world in the pedal boat *Moksha* assisted by one or more friends at most times. He started in 1994 when he and a friend made it from the U.K. to Portugal on bicycles, then pedaled a boat across the Atlantic. One then biked across America (and was hit by a car, breaking both legs) and the other inline roller-skated across. From San Francisco they biked to Peru but El Nino had reversed the Pacific's winds and currents and... hey, go google "Expedition 360" and read about this fascinating journey. He and friends have made it across Australia.

In the middle of the night a woman fell off a sailboat into British Columbia's coolish Strait of Georgia without lifejacket or survival suit and was picked up about nine hours later somewhat hypothermized. Her two male companions did not miss her until the boat ran aground. All three had been drinking. She said a seal stayed with her throughout her ordeal.

Quadriplegic but married Hilary Lister sat rigidly strapped into a special chair as she sailed across the English Channel. She controlled her 26' Malin by puffing and sucking on two tubes connected to motors that operated the sails and tiller. On her agenda is a sail around Britain next year.

Nasty People and Territorial Imperatives

The Royal Australian Air Force offered to provide aircraft for joint patrols with Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand of piracy hot spots along the 960km Malacca Strait and New Zealand made a similar offer. The Australians also expressed fears that al Qaeda-sponsored regional terror groups have infiltrated local piracy gangs.

In a shift from usual pirate practices, the hijacked Indonesian cargo ship *Prima Indah* was found sunk off Banka Island with its cargo of tin (worth about U.S. \$30 million) probably still on board. The crew had been released by the pirates and was rescued.

Taiwan's Navy may lend the Coast Guard six warships to stop bullying of Taiwanese fishermen by the Japanese.

China announced it had established a squadron of warships "to eliminate obstacles at sea" in the East China Sea before starting talks with Japan over competing claims there. Japan said China had already started production at a potentially productive gas field on its side of a dividing line in the sea and noted that drill holes could be steered over to the Japanese side.

Metal Bashing

Spain was accepting bids for three former government-owned Izar yards and engine manufacturer Manises while other yards will be incorporated into the new state shipbuilder Navantia.

In Scotland, two BAE System yards and Babcock at Rosyth will build three of the five sections for each of Britain's new aircraft carriers with BAE's submarine works at Barrow-in-Furness and VT Group at Southampton getting the other sections. This allocation of carrier work cleared the way for creation of "shipco," a grouping that will consolidate all four companies' naval ship construction into one company. Still to be defined is whether the American company Kellogg Brown & Root, a subsidiary of Halliburton, will manage the carrier project as "physical integrator."

Odd Bits

The contents of a typical 8,000-plus TEU container ship would fill a one million square foot warehouse or five WalMart Supercenters five feet deep with toys and such. And bigger box boats are coming.

South African specialists are puzzling over its great white sharks. During last year's peak December holiday period, hundreds of potential "Jaws" gathered in two bays used by thousands of vacationing swimmers. The sharks swam in the shallow portions but paid no attention to the splashing natators. The observers are hoping the sharks will behave as well this year.

In hopes of paying off a \$120,000 gambling debt, a gambling mad tar stole three Royal Navy laptops whose hard drives contained top secret cruise missile information. Officials retrieved the hard drives before they had been sold.

An experienced New Zealand couple got caught by bad weather north of the Chatham Islands (almost 500 miles east of New Zealand) and the mast of their sailboat *Janette Gray* went by the board so they yelled for help. Three ships diverted and the 5,000 ton *Maunakea* tried to take them off but no go and severe injuries to both sailors. Later, the 45,000-ton container ship *P&O Nedlloyd Encounter* plucked them to safety and then it backtracked towards the Chatham Islands to meet a civil helicopter, flown from the mainland, that took the sailors to the Islands and a waiting air ambulance aircraft. New Zealand Air Force Orions spent some 30 hours monitoring everything from overhead and dropped two rescue packs, each worth NZ\$250,000. Cost of the rescue? Well over a million dollars, not counting the value of the yacht or the cost of the *Encounter's* diversion.

The Dutch trawler *Onderneming* brought up an American 250lb bomb off Norfolk, Virginia. The bomb was in good condition and sitting on the deck so the Dutch fishermen were delighted to let a team from the British fisheries patrol vessel *HMS Hurworth* lower the bomb to the seabed and detonate it.

Head-Shakers

In the U.K. a man hooked a large fish and enthusiastically jumped off a Swansea West pier so as to not lose it. He broke an ankle and the Coast Guard had to rescue him.

Myanmar national An Ne was naked and clutching a log in the Malacca Strait when he was rescued by a passing tugboat. No one is sure how long he had been floating there. In Singapore he was not allowed to step on land and so ended up living on another vessel. Thirty-four days after his rescue, his body was found hanging, an apparent suicide. The only clue was a note in Mon (a language spoken in Myanmar) that said he didn't want to go back to Myanmar.

Iowa was slathered in snow this early week in December. While I should be grateful that we were blessed with an unusually warm autumn, allowing only sweatshirts at football games and a light windbreaker at the lake, any time the snow comes at this time of year it will remain until April and my water experience is over for the season. It also signals the onset of my chronic depression, acute anxiety, and general irascibility. My shrink, a salubrious and arrogant snob complete with disgustingly handsome looks, thick blonde hair, brilliant mind, and a smell of money says, "Get a job, swallow some pills, avoid wintry days, and take an expensive vacation." This takes three minutes. He charges me \$80 so he can take long weekends in the Bahamas. I should find a job?! What the hell would he know about work?

My doctorate in psychology proffers a different perspective than my shrink, go south, take the boat, take the dog, leave the wife at home. I have an intuitive belief that my depression, seasonal attitude disorder (which no doubt commenced when they started blaring Christmas music at the mall three days before Halloween), and general malaise will disappear immediately upon the sight of salt water, beat-up old boatyards, or even a rippling lake sparkling in the sunshine.

Messing About in Boats takes on a more medicinal interest for me during the winter. During the rest of the year it offers many interesting articles, some of Robb White's quiet and soothing discourses, enviable photos of boats built by significantly more talented people than me, and a plethora of ads with internet addresses which I can view at my leisure when I can't sleep at night. During winter *MAIB* becomes my only connection with sanity. I also absorb Ken Murphy's *Shallow Water Sailor* which is way too short, comes way too infrequently, and is way too good to not sit down and devour immediately at the closet chair next to the mail slot. Eight pages aren't enough to cut my boat withdrawal symptoms, but neither is *MAIB*, *Sail*, *L&A*, *Good Old Boat*, *Small Boat Advisor*, *WoodenBoat*, and a smattering of others that come too seldom to meet my privation. Catalogs are OK since I can, and do, review them daily and too often buy unimportant stuff just to await nautical materials coming in the mail. Waiting for the mail is about the only fun thing in an Iowa winter.

Everyone around here knows that I possess a doctorate and thus assumes I am a total idiot and eccentric. Plumbers love my do-it-yourself projects around the house almost as much as car mechanics. Carver Ace

Seasonal Attitude Disorder During an Iowa Winter

By Stephen D. (Doc) Regan



Hardware gives me all sorts of little gifts like key chains and coffee mugs since I am their ace customer. Each clerk recognizes me immediately during the winter since my withdrawal symptoms are somewhat mitigated by sauntering around in naval attire from my sea bag.

I have acquired a wool Greek fisherman's hat to keep my balding pate warm, a plethora of U.S. Navy caps from various ships I have visited or been given by veteran crews whom I have addressed (sometimes I actually get money for my blathering and blarney), and an old pea coat. I have a silly yachtsman's cap for wearing around the house as I pretend that I actually command this home and my dog and cat are loyal seamen. I am convinced that wearing some sort of water clothing is a necessity when reading my magazines during the winter. Hey, I consider my malady serious in nature and it requires significant psychological adjustment.

The Christmas season struck with a mighty blow complete with the usual smatterings of trappings at WalMart, a couple of Salvation Army Santas making off with the pots, a multitude of ho-ho-hos from ordinarily decent businessmen who imbibed too many Tom and Jerrys. Son Timothy knows what dad needs and deserves for presents, gift cards to Barnes & Noble. Barnes & Noble, usually reliable for offering decent books for a plethora of divergent folks, have stripped the aisles and shelves of anything resembling sailing, water, boats, knots, and such and these have been replaced by a pile of expensive "gift" books for silly people to spend large sums of money on to give to equally silly people who shall never read the leatherbound version of *War and Peace*. I did find a paperback version of *Maiden Voyage*. I bought it before they shunted it away to the netherworld of the back room.

As aforementioned, I vehemently disagree with the psychiatrist. I think I should continue the pills, skip the job part, and avoid winter entirely by saving my shrink money and sailing in the Caribbean from December to April of each and every year. While I have no empirical data to support my contention, I do believe that sailing is pretty much a cure-all for most maladies including those with aquaphobia (a little salt water and facing the fear directly is a wonderful idea).

In fact, on additional contemplation, I believe there is a professional research article

being born here. I should take my current psychological depression that arrives promptly on November 1st and fails to leave until the boat is launched in early April and use the number of times my "Miss I Love Frozen Finland 1953" threatens me with murder if I don't lighten up as the base line. The experiment would be to take my seasonally attitude depressed body and place it for the winter months in some warmer climate where I can scuba dive and sail to my heart's content. Cozumel would be appropriate, Hawaii is beyond my financial reach, and Bali or Pago Pago are more of a dream.

My research article would be "The Impact of Winter Sailing in the Tropics on Seasonal Attitude Disorder" and it would be complete with graphs and lots of statistical stuff subscribing to a notion that is as obvious as the nose on your face, but that is what social research is all about. Toss a t-test or an Analysis of Variance in somewhere. Whether the data supports the hypothesis is irrelevant just as long as it is "almost" significant, which to a statistician is like being almost pregnant, either you are or you ain't. But most people don't know statistics worth a damn so lots of graphs and numbers impresses the hell out of them.

I have served on the editorial boards of several professional psychology journals so I know that writing in the passive voice, using lots of big words, showing tons of graphs and statistics will make the article reviewable. If it is so damn complicated that no one could possibly understand it I guarantee it will be published because no editor would admit he or she didn't have a clue about what the article was saying. Being very long and boring is also a positive trait for articles intended for publication in professional journals.

Currently the topic of spirituality in psychology is hot. If I play my cards right I can also toss in a variable about finding God on a sailboat during winter while I sailing with a bikini clad buxom stewardess named Bambi. That will get the article published for sure, AND I might even have to present the findings at some American Psychological Association or American Counseling Association conference, preferably in a nice warm climate during the following winter. I actually did slap together some stuff on suicides in schools for the ACA conference in San Diego a few years back. The conference was in early March. Iowa had a snow storm. I got sunburn on the beach... whoops, I just gave away the secret that I didn't attend a whole lot of other sessions at the conference.

The more that I contemplate this research the more I am convinced that it is worthy of a substantial grant from some obscure entity that funds ludicrous research like the profound study that showed that left-handed teachers use more prepositions than right-handed teachers, information that certainly changed my life drastically, especially since I don't know a preposition from a gerund. There just must be some organization that will finance my endeavors from early November until late spring.

Until Bill Gates forks over the moola or I win the Powerball Lottery, I will just play with the contemptible snowblower, take long naps with the pug, and generally hibernate. Benjamin Franklin said, "Beer is proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy." Doc Regan says, "Tom and Jerrys are proof that God loves us and wants us to become oblivious to winter."

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A stroll down the marina dock in November brings to mind how easy it is to neglect the trusty and dependable, the always faithful dinghy. Waterlogged small boats lie down by their bows, straining at thin and abraded mooring lines. Others, vaguely tethered, dive under docks and nuzzle pilings. One, heaved up on the slip and left bottoms up on Labor Day, is home to generations of barnacles.

Some dinghies fare better. A 27' sailboat carries her boat inverted on the foredeck as she does when cruising, but with a neatly fitted tarp as protection from winter rains. Others are tucked in under the bows of the big boat, well-moored and bailed as necessary, ready to be rowed about the marina and out over the shallows on any sunny winter's day.

Sometimes it's hard to recall how important small boats are to the kids, how much more easily little people relate to an 8' dink than to the adult world of dos and don'ts on a cruising auxiliary. Last summer my eight-year-old granddaughter, Piper, reluctantly joined her mother and me on a short weekend cruise. She seemed to divide her time between reading her latest Geronimo Stilton and wishing she were somewhere else. That first afternoon she caught me bailing the pram, we'd taken in a pint or two during the day's long reach to our first anchorage. Surprisingly her mood picked up as she slid in beside me and began to sponge down fore and aft, finding nooks and crannies that reminded me of the winter I spent building her.

Later, on their first row together, daughter overpowered mother and took her first strokes. By evening, bucket in hand, she started in on bird leavings and muddy dog prints on the decks of the big boat. I suspect that before too long she'll be tending jib sheets and going to weather like a witch. Thoughts of that day when Piper messed about with the dinghy will extend the summer well into the New Year.

When I look at the dinghy in winter I recall the night we awoke to the sound of gravel moving under the keel, the skivvied dash topside and rowing to windward with the Danforth. In the best and worst of times, the little servant has been there waiting, ready for anything and full of surprises, the most under-appreciated of shipmates.

The luckiest of dinghies in winter is snug in the garage or carport. Others wait for summer in the garden shed. They find shelter with stacks of firewood under corrugated

The Dinghy in Winter

By Richard Alan Smith



Piper sponging out dinghy.

metal sheets or hang with spiders from basement joists and attic rafters. Our old Yugoslavian inflatable leans against a column under the house out of the sun and rain, surrounded by cobwebs and plenty of fresh air. It rests, outrageously powdered with scented talcum, snug in its own suitcase, waiting for summer.

I like to wake up on a winter morning and pull the dinghy out of the garage and into the sun. To my eyes there's no better sight than to see her up there on sawhorses, glowing in the low winter light beneath several coats of varnish, begging for just one more.

This winter I'm messing about with a new thwart and changing the oarlock sockets a bit, trying to get it just right for man, man and woman, man and dog, man, woman and dog, woman and dog, buckets of clams, anchor, and so forth. I'm going to attach a nice piece of indoor-outdoor carpeting to old Scout's perch up in the bows. Good trim is an illusive ideal in an 8' pram, best dealt with in the garden.

Then there's the in-skeg wheel I've been thinking about for years, the thing that promises to get it on and off the pickup without any assistance from anyone other than

the master. Some of these projects become good excuses to get me down to the water when least expected. Might as well take some kindling down to the marina and fire up the Dickinson in the big boat while I'm at it, maybe hang a small tent awning over the companionway slide, too.

My friend Gary has finally got his nesting dinghy up in the shop. Last summer we sailed our big boats alongside each other spending hours admiring the merits of our tenders, how they towed, rowed, and looked. We thought a lot about what we'd do next winter when we got through all this cruising business. Gary talked about replacing his delaminating plywood cleats with some left-over teak and maybe work out a better way to secure his forward removable thwart which had a tendency to remove itself in a seaway. His gunwale fender lines are sagging a little, too, he'd have to think about that.

Come winter, I thought I'd raise the towing ring again or maybe lower it, lose some drag, maybe get a spring scale somewhere and see if we can see much difference. Now with our dinghies about 40 miles apart we get together from time to time and attach digital photos of skegs and new oarlock locations to our emails. We're on the phone a lot about cheap water-based paint versus pricey two-part linear polyurethane finishes. We find ourselves in violent agreement about most things but there is the odd and stubborn, immediately irreconcilable difference of opinion to keep us on our toes.

We go on about the best way to snug up 3/4" fender line to the gunwale. "Atkin liked it lying on a ledge against the gunwale."

Or, "how about we route out a nice channel for it to lie in?"

"Tried that, kept rolling out."

"Well, don't nail it in, tie it through with small stuff, up and over, down and under."

"How about black nylon?"

"Are you kidding, nobody uses black nylon on their rub rails."

"Well, what about that 1" white cotton stuff they've got on sale at Centex?"

"Give me a break."

"Okay then, how about the expensive stuff from West's?"

"You want a boat or a piano?"

"What about coiling the ends at the transom? Looks great."

"Kind of like putting perfume on a pig, though, isn't it?"

We go on and on like that, like spiders, waiting for summer.

Tender under dinghy shed with Port Madison Pram



Dinghies under house



On Saturday, December 17th, at 12:00pm, students launched a 15' Great South Bay Scooter and a 17' Rangeley Lake Boat at the Atlantic Challenge shop in Rockland, Maine.

Apprentices Lisa Zygowksi of Caledonia, Ontario, Canada, and Bella Pierson of Woodstock, Vermont, began construction of the Scooter in September of this year. Designed for sailing not only on ice, but also over short expanses of water, this scooter is a very unique craft. She was originally intended for use on Long Island, New York, where the salt bays remained partially frozen for most of the winter, making travel to fishing grounds, lighthouses, and rescue stations all but impossible for boats that were restricted to either ice or water alone. The scooter is gaff-rigged and will be sailed over the ice of midcoast lakes and bays. The sails were made by Nat Wilson Sails of East Boothbay, Maine. This ice boat was commissioned by two local friends of Atlantic Challenge, Dale Young of Hope and Ken Rich of Rockland.

Builder Lisa Zygowksi with the ice boat in early stages of construction.



Apprenticeshop Launches Two

The 17' Rangeley Lake Boat was constructed by second-year apprentice Phineas Ramsey of Sacramento, California, and first-year apprentice Shaun McFee of Massillon, Ohio. Throughout the Apprenticeshop's history students have enjoyed projects that include taking the lines off an original boat. This project, commissioned for Bob Robinson of Galesburg, Illinois, began with the original 16' double-enders and included modification of the lines to create a 17' design.

Also on the 'Shop floor are an 18' Joseph Liener catboat scheduled for a June 2006 launch and the restoration of a Dark Harbor 17. When apprentices return from winter break in early January, new construction will begin on a 16' John Gardner sailing Whitehall.

The Apprenticeshop, a traditional wooden boatbuilding school located in Rockland,

The ice boat partially decked over.



Maine, has been teaching traditional boat-building techniques to students from around the world since 1972. The program's philosophy is based on the teachings of renowned educator Kurt Hahn, who believed that experiential education promotes self-discovery through challenge, that education should encourage both thought and action, not one or the other, but both at once.

Atlantic Challenge is a nonprofit 501c3 educational organization dedicated to inspiring personal growth through craftsmanship, community, and traditions of the sea. For further information about Apprenticeshop and other AC programs, call (207) 594-1800 or visit our website at atlanticchallenge.com.

Shaun McFee of Ohio working on the Rangeley Lake Boat.



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Boatbuilding Classes with CLC

Chesapeake Light Craft (CLC) will be offering nearly a dozen week-long boatbuilding courses throughout 2006. For those who would like dedicated, one-on-one guidance with their boatbuilding project, CLC is presenting a collection of comprehensive boatbuilding courses. Students will spend five-and-a-half days in the company of a professional boatbuilder and take home a finished boat.

These courses are built around a wide range of CLC designs. For kayakers, there is the Chesapeake LT sea kayak, the elegant and speedy Shearwater sea kayak, and the more stable Mill Creek, a 1930's style recreational kayak. The ultralight Sassafras is offered for canoe enthusiasts. For rowers, there is the Annapolis Wherry, a 17'6" pulling boat designed for a sliding seat, and sailors can build the Skerry, a double-enders inspired by traditional Scandinavian sailing craft.

At the end of the week, students will have learned about wood/epoxy construction, stitch-and-glue boatbuilding techniques, fiberglassing, laminating, and the basics of finish work. Because students are building their very own boats, the week will be busy and some evening work will be required. Students will leave not only with a boat they built themselves, but the confidence to build larger and more complex boats.

CLC has been hosting and teaching boatbuilding classes since 1994. Through CLC boatbuilding classes, over 700 boats have been launched and more than a thousand students have been introduced to the joys of boatbuilding. CLC holds boatbuilding classes in their fully equipped classroom in Annapolis, at the WoodenBoat School in Brooklin, Maine, and at the Norwalk Wooden Boat Workshop in Norwalk, Connecticut.

A list of Chesapeake Light Craft's 2006 Boatbuilding courses follows:

2/6-11: Build your own Shearwater Kayak with Eric Schade at the WoodenBoat Workshop, Norwalk, CT, (203) 831-0426.

2/20-25: Build your own Annapolis Wherry with John Harris at the CLC Shop, Annapolis, MD, (410) 267-0137.

4/24-29: Build your own Skerry Daysailer with John Harris at the CLC Shop, Annapolis, MD, (207) 359-4651.

5/15-20: Build your own Mill Creek Kayak with Geoff McKonly at WoodenBoat School, Brooklin, ME, (207) 359-4651.

7/2-8: Build your own Skerry Daysailer with John Harris at WoodenBoat School, Brooklin, ME, (207) 359-4651.

7/9-15: Build your own Chesapeake 17LT Kayak with Geoff Kerr at WoodenBoat School, Brooklin, ME, (207) 359-4651.

7/16-22: Build your own Sassafras Canoe with Bill Thomas at WoodenBoat School, Brooklin, ME, (207) 359-4651.

7/23-29: Lofting on your Laptop with John Harris at WoodenBoat School, Brooklin, ME, (207) 359-4651.

10/16-21: Build your own Chesapeake 17LT Kayak with Geoff Kerr at CLC Shop, Annapolis, MD, (207) 359-4651.

10/23-28: Build your own Shearwater Kayak with David Fawley at CLC Shop, Annapolis, MD, (207) 359-4651.

For more information contact: Chesapeake Light Craft, 1805 George Ave., Annapolis, MD 21401, (410) 267-0137, www.clcboats.com, john@clcboats.com





Crabs love the chicken necks we use as bait. This one has been raised out of the water and is continuing to eat in mid-air. I suspended the line over my basket and shook it until he finally let go. They are not very smart animals.



Due care must be taken when measuring crabs. They move very fast and a pincher can draw blood.



I am washing off the anchor. Only a light anchor is needed because our area has mild tidal flow. Trot lining would not work well in an area with strong current.

Crabs often get loose in the boat, they crawl over our shoes and retreat into dark corners. We must use metal tongs to dislodge them and return them to the basket.



Crabbing With a Trot Line

By Robert A. Musch

One of my favorite ways of messing about in boats is crabbing with a trot line. The technique has been around for many generations and can be practiced with any kind of small boat. A trot line is a long, thin rope with baits attached at regular intervals spread along the bottom of a river. It always surprises me how few native Marylanders have actually crabbed this way even once in their life. When I take someone crabbing for the first time they are amazed at how much fun they have. Prices for crabs run \$50-\$100 per bushel in the summer, so it is well worth the effort to catch them myself.

I think many people do not exactly understand the process of using a trot line. My boat is a 16' flat bottomed open skiff with a 15hp outboard motor. Low speed of 1-3mph at idle is essential for success. I can crab by myself, but steering with one hand and dipping with the other gets tricky, especially if it gets windy. It is a lot more fun to have two people in the boat so I can concentrate completely on driving while the other person dips crabs. Dipping with a net is much more efficient while standing on both feet on a flat surface. That way one is better balanced and can coordinate the muscles of the legs, back, shoulders, and arms in a smooth operation. Crab dipping from a sitting position is difficult because one is limited to the use of arms and wrists.

I like to trot line on the Tred Avon, Miles, or Choptank Rivers on the Chesapeake. I look for 8'-15' of water about 100 yards from shore. A light anchor is dropped overboard followed by 50' of 1/4" nylon line. This is tied to a float, one gallon plastic milk bottles work fine. Then another 50' of line attaches that milk bottle to 3' of chain. Steel chain weight holds the line securely to the bottom of the river but still passes over a roller easily. The trot line is snapped onto this chain.

The trot line itself is 600' of 1/4" nylon with a chicken neck looped every 4'-5'. There are about 120 baits on my line. I buy 40lbs of chicken necks for \$19 which provide about 500 baits. The line is kept loose in a 5gal plastic bucket. As I drive downwind in a straight line the baits pop out of my bucket over the transom and hopefully do not become entangled. At the far end of the trot line I snap on 3' of chain to another 50' length of nylon and another float. It is the law and common courtesy to have both floats similar in size and color to give other crabbers a hint of where the line lies. If the line is placed over another crabber's trot line it is always awkward and sometimes leads to hostile confrontations.

Finally I attach an anchor line to the second float and pull all lines taut with the engine. Line tension is a critical factor. If the line is too tight it rises to the surface in front of the boat and crabs drop off before the net can reach them. If the line is too loose, it comes straight up from the bottom and there is not enough time to see the crab. If there is slack in the line, it gets hung up in the roller and one must start all over again. The only thing worse than slack in the line is to get it tangled in the outboard propeller.

When trot lining for crabs the boat does all the work. A roller is attached to the starboard side of the boat just behind the mid point to guide the line up out of the water and then in again. I have seen trot line rollers made of expensive stainless steel, plastic, wood, and most often the rollers off old fashioned wringer washers. All rollers that actually turn make a high pitched squealing noise that I hate. I use a piece of PVC tubing 1-1/2" diameter in the shape of an "F". The trot line just slips over the plastic silently. Plastic is cheap, floats, and easily replaced as it is just lashed to the cleat on the boat. Too much trouble is attached to crab rollers by making them complicated and expensive. Actually a board with two vertical nails would suffice.

Crabs crawling along the bottom of the river find those gourmet chicken necks and begin feeding. I line up the two floats and approach the first one just to the left of the line. With a boat hook, I catch the line under a float and place it over my roller. I then drive toward the second float. As the boat moves forward the line, chain, and then trot line is gently forced upward and over the roller. Crabs come to the surface with the line where they can be dipped. Yes, they are stupid animals but they are very quick. The technique is to maneuver the net under the crab so that when he senses danger he will dive down into the net. Children and beginners tend to lunge directly at the crab and knock the larger ones off the bait to freedom. They catch the little ones which will be released anyway, but miss the large crabs we are after.

In our murky tidal water there is only about a second from the time the crab is seen until it is dipped. That is enough time to do the job but it looks easier than it is. Even religious crabbers will occasionally swear when they miss because it looks so easy. As they catch each crab it is dumped into a waiting basket forward. Crabs clamp down on the wire in the net with their claws so we often pound the net on the basket to get them out. Sometimes there are two crabs on a bait or on consecutive baits so there is not enough time to dislodge captured crabs. Soon three, four, five, or even six crabs are in the net at the same time trying to crawl out.

When the dipper lunges at a basket he misses, so crabs tumble out all over the floor. The claw on a large Jimmy crab is powerful enough to penetrate a leather shoe so it can be disconcerting to try to drive a straight course while dancing around in the boat in flip flops with crabs crawling over one's feet.

Trot lining can get exciting with lots of shouting, dancing, and yells of "there's another one." Sometimes the children start to cry when Dad misses a big one. This does not improve his vocabulary. It is comforting to tell them that crabs are dumb and they will go back to the line so we can catch the missed crab on the next run.

At the end of the line it is removed from the roller and the boat moved away from the line in order to cull crabs. Try not to sit on a crab. Catch those loose ones crawling around the bottom and measure them point to point with a gauge. Crabs over 5-1/4" can be kept but smaller ones are returned to the water. I usually expect to catch a bushel of crabs (about 60) in two to three hours for my limit. If catching slows down we go ashore to a beach to eat lunch or take a swim. This is a casual activity to have fun on the water. For the last run of the day I pull the anchor and

float and drift down the line putting it back in the 5gal bucket. We always dip a few crabs while retrieving the line.

Back home I place the entire covered bucket with line in a freezer. This preserves the bait till the next week when I only have to thaw it out overnight and repeat the process. Chicken necks will stand about eight hours immersion in water before they are either consumed or smell so bad it is obvious they must be rebaited. Crabs prefer fresh meat, they like the fresh chicken even better than the salted eels we used for bait when I was a boy.

In Maryland we steam crabs, we don't boil them. The secret to all seafood is get it fresh and do not overcook. About 1" of salt water and vinegar is brought to a boil in a stainless steel pot large enough to hold a bushel of crabs. The crabs are added with lots of Old Bay seasoning and the top weighted down. If the top is not secure, crabs will push it off and start crawling in every direction. It's the steam that gently cooks the crabs in about a half hour. They go in green and come out red in color. I use an old converted propane hot water heater to cook crabs out of doors to keep the heat and moisture out of the house. The pleasant aroma of steamed crabs wafts throughout the neighborhood.

Some people add beer to the pot when cooking crabs, but I think that is a waste. Beer is for drinking cold when picking the crab meat for dinner. We prefer to eat crabs out of doors if it is not too hot. A bushel is a lot of meat, enough for a couple of families. It is certainly nice to get that telephone call, "Come on over to dinner, we have crabs!"

This is our evening meal. Seasoned and steamed, they taste good with beer or iced tea.



This is an outdoor crab steamer heated with propane. It keeps moisture, heat, and odors out of an air conditioned house in summer. It can cook two bushels of crabs at a time.



Gita Gresh relaxes between runs on a trot line. Note the long, wide net with a mesh of wire. Sometimes it becomes necessary to pound the net against the basket to dislodge crabs. A soft string mesh would become too entangled.



Giet holds up a large crab just caught. The 2005 season was very good in the Chesapeake mid-shore region. We could usually catch one bushel limit in a couple of hours.



Roy places a crab into the culling basket and gets ready for another. Sometimes it becomes necessary to dip two, three, four, or more crabs at once and the action becomes exciting.



Each crab is measured between runs to make sure it is more than 5-1/4" point to point. Smaller ones are released a good distance from the line.



Roy Judy dips crabs from a trot line while Jim Lohr steers the boat. Note the plastic "roller" that brings the line to the surface and then allows it to return. Jim is using a tiller extension which lets him stand to see down into the water. This is convenient with two in a boat and necessary when crabbing alone.



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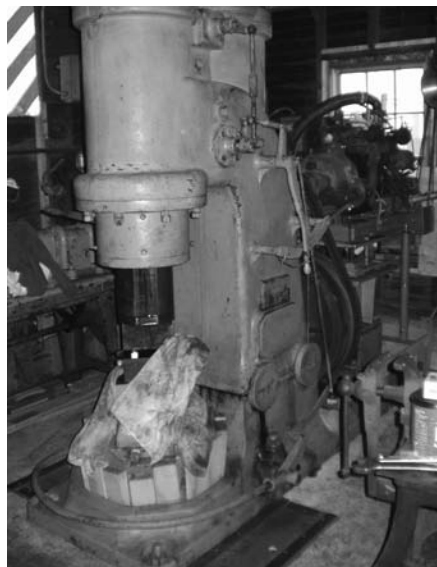
"Life's Too Short To Own An Ugly Boat"
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When I learned the name of Ray Larsen's forge on the Massachusetts south shore at which Ray would be conducting a demonstration of hand forging boatbuilding tools as part of the Mass Bay Maritime Artisans winter series of lectures and demonstrations, I wondered about it. It sounded a bit boutiquey to me, perhaps aimed at upscale folks wishing to get custom made ironwork for their trophy homes. The term that came to mind was "cute." So when I met Ray at the demonstration I asked him about his choice of that oxymoron for a name and he replied that he had thought it was "cute." The choice had been made 30 years ago when Ray first set himself up in the blacksmith trade prior to the trophy home era.

Well, Ray's forge is anything but cute. Entering through a barn door latched by a handmade two-man deck seam caulking iron, we came first into a sort of ante-chamber filled with stored looming, massive forging hammers, through which a narrow path led to an inner door, from beyond which we could hear the roar of a fire. When that door was opened so our small group could enter into the dark grotto beyond, we peered into a darkness lit only by the bright orange flame within the open door of a waist high firebox and one or two remote windows, rendered nearly opaque by the accumulation of dust from 30 years of forging. The darkness is intentional so Ray can properly see the color of the heated steel so as to know when it is right for whatever work he is about to perform upon it.

All around us loomed more iron monsters, the forging hammers Ray uses in his work. Everything was uniformly blackened by the same dust that covered the windows and underfoot the floor was crunchy with drifts of slag fallen from the forging hammers. This was some place indeed, a one-man "factory" set up to apply the fierce heat

One of Ray's mighty hammers, this one air operated, powered by a 60hp, 6-cylinder industrial gasoline engine from a junked wood chipper. Ray spent three months installing it on the elderly hammer as 60hp from the local electrical service was not an option. The air operation provides a much longer stroke than a mechanical crankshaft operated ram as well as infinitely adjustable impact pressure by adjusting the ram air pressure.



A Visit to the Genuine Forgery

By Bob Hicks



The latch on the doors to Ray's shop is one of his creations, a two man caulking iron for use on deck seams.

of a forced draft gas fired forge to bring a chosen chunk of high carbon steel stock nearly to incandescence, at which moment it was then grasped by tongs and beaten into the shape desired by one or more of the variety of forging hammers. These machines stood 6'-8' tall, massive cast iron bases supporting huge electric motors powering overhead giant rotating cast iron flywheels, whose inertia when the foot pedal was pressed down was transferred by means of a short coupled crankshaft to a vertical ram driving a hammer which then pounded on the glowing workpiece, shaping it to the smithy's desire as he twisted and turned it under the repeating blows.

Ray's product of choice is traditional boatbuilding tools. Handiest for the demonstration were caulking irons, small and handy enough to take shape quickly so we could all follow the process. Before he began to introduce us to his work, Ray turned up the draft in the forge and the roar became overwhelming. He barely noticed, he's been working there alone in the semi-darkness and noise for 30 years. He allowed that now he's backing off, several times mentioning how he was 66 now and didn't have the necessary stamina to keep on a full production schedule any longer.

The chosen caulking iron began as a chunk of carbon steel perhaps 8" long by maybe 1" diameter. While it heated up in the forge Ray talked a bit about what was going to happen. Then he went to work, he grabbed the workpiece in tongs with a gloved hand, moved it over to the chosen hammer and it became, after several returns to the forge for re-heating, a flattened wedged shaped blade with a still untouched cylindrical portion which would become the handle. Reversing ends, Ray now grabbed the workpiece by the blade end, set it up vertically in a small fixture which grabbed it on the cylindrical shank. He then reverted to a hand hammer and beat the glowing end into a shape similar to a hammer head, which would indeed be hammered upon when it was put to work caulking.

The forging was now complete and the still glowing caulking iron was put into a bin of sand to cool. It would later be ground to the desired surface finish and edge and then annealed to the desired combination of hardness and toughness. When I asked him about his annealing process Ray was bit cagey. I happened to be familiar with hardening and

annealing steel from my machine shop days as a youth and was curious. The exact process Ray follows appears to be a "trade secret," it is a most important part of metal working to achieve the desired hardness for holding an edge that will also have the necessary toughness to not simply shatter on impact. Knowledge of the characteristics of metals is an innate part of this blacksmithing.

Ray's shop backs up to a local river where a few hundred yards upstream is a broken down dam that once held back water to power a long gone Colonial era forge. Further downstream at the seashore had been the shipyards that once used the products of that forge. The historical connection is embedded in Ray's vision of his trade, he is one of a shrinking number of working blacksmiths still extant today. His products go to those who choose to pursue the old ways, a shrinking market. Even caulking irons, certainly not in widespread demand, are still produced today by drop forges for \$18 or so as compared to Ray's \$40 price for one of his.

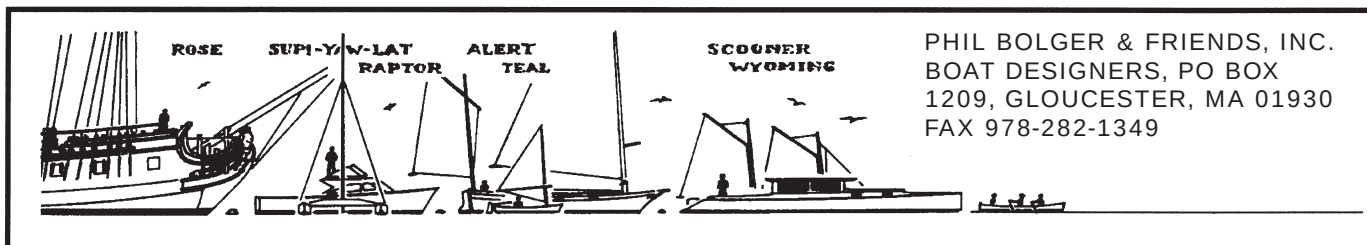
With his remarks about backing off now and being 66 in mind, I asked Ray about the future of his shop. He figures that when he no longer feels he can carry on, the contents will be auctioned off. The machines he has collected over 30 years have no value to anyone except another blacksmith, and some of them have very high value indeed to that slim group of potential buyers.

There appears to be no prospect for the shop going on without Ray. He dismisses the idea of bringing in someone interested in learning his trade as an apprentice, with an idea of subsequently buying his business, as being too burdensome overseeing and instructing a wannabee blacksmith instead of just getting on with his work.

I left that afternoon after three hours exposure to this man and his work very much liking him and his chosen trade. No nonsense, no pretense, just a guy who really knows what he is doing, doing it his own way in a place that would give an OSHA inspector a heart attack. Ray Larsen is a man rightly confident in his skills, able to market his work well enough to sustain a 30-year career. The world is leaving him behind as it has most of the craftsmen of bygone times, men who could tell by sight, sound, and feel how their work was progressing without resort to the dehumanizing impact of "modern technology." It does appear that Ray Larsen will have succeeded in lasting the course as one of the last of his kind.

A flowing workpiece starting to take shape as a caulking iron in one of Ray's power hammers.





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Back in August 2004, *MAIB* Vol. 22, No. 7, we wrote about this small sternwheeler which was then nearing completion by Paul Everett of Endicott, New York. She was commissioned to celebrate his 50th birthday by pedaling the length of the Erie Canal. He had intended to sleep ashore during the cruise, but we suggested that designing the boat as a cruiser with sleeping, toilet, and (minimal) cooking facilities would open up many options for scheduling and all-around convenience.

He built her in Charlie and Sue Carpenter's workshop in Vestal, New York, doing a very clean job. The first trial was on Forest Lake, New York. She was officially christened *Walkabout* to bagpipe music and without prejudice to our "drawing board" name. Everything worked quite well. The speed with two pedalers was 2.5kts by GPS. We had aimed for three knots but this was judged workable for the cruise, with some modifications to improve efficiency put off until afterward. It had always been understood that the design of the sternwheel was experimental, more on this later.

We next heard, by way of a series of faxes relayed by Adele Everett, of progress on the canal by Paul and his sister Mary (Adele Everett was tied down by professional priorities) with various vicissitudes of weather and circumstances through the canal and its connecting lakes and rivers. They launched at Pittsford, just south of Rochester, and made 6.7 miles to Fairport that day with mildly sore knees. They were probably pushing too hard as they claimed it didn't happen again. Paul was emphatic that keeping the boat moving was easy and didn't wear them out. He said that as long as they were close to shore so that the progress was visible and the object was to admire the scenery rather than to make time, the pace was perfectly acceptable.

Towards the end of this trial cruise they set out to cross Seneca Lake. When they got clear of the shore and the breeze looked like picking up with a little chop on the water and the far shore did not seem to get any closer, the tranquility went away and they turned back. When you have at most half a horsepower, probably much less, it's not smart to get out of narrow waters. Given a quickly rising breeze, which happens on lakes, the likelihood of being blown somewhere you don't want to be is too likely.

They pedaled from one diner to another, taking a good midday break and not hesitating to take a day off and relax in some nice spot. Their best day was 15 miles with a small lift from a fair wind. The total distance was 85 miles. They'd meant to go farther but a day of rain and a forecast of three more days of rain decided them to round off the adventure while they had only good memories to put away (the shutters on the windows leaked intolerably as they were hasty makeshifts from running out of detail finishing time). They also did not have the plastic

Bolger on Design

Becky Thatcher

Pedal-Powered
Sternwheel Cruiser

Design #669

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windshield and side curtains for the forward cockpit.

With better protection as intended, rain, even in October in northern New York State, might not have been prohibitive for a day or two or more, although the peak of fall scenery would have been more or less watered down. The tiny cabin is quite nice, body heat and shelter from wind can make such a cabin pleasant in surprisingly low temperatures. The full-size berths are canted to bring them level when the boat is down by the stem with the weight of two sleepers, heads aft.

As a young teenager I used to dream about cabins like this. In particular, Weston Farmer published a design called *Katusha* that had a cabin much like this one with engaging perspective drawings that I could imagine myself into. I still have it and still enjoy looking at it, though I'm more critical of the design than I was 60-odd years ago.

Paul says that he has been finding many places on maps that look appropriate for Becky/*Walkabout* and he adds that there have been a lot of applications to go along, including from his sister who knew best whether it was a pleasure or not! The reception from spectators has been pleasant. The first time they used a canal lock they followed lock protocol, pulling in to the side of the canal as the giant doors opened. Then they pedaled forward. After a while the lockmaster emerged and called out in an annoyed voice, "We're waiting for you!"

They called back, "We're coming as fast as we can." Then he took a good look and realized there was no motor. Paul reports that suddenly everyone became much friendlier. Their passage was noted in one local newspaper after another.

We drove over later to try out the boat and get some video on Lake Cayuga. We happened to fall in behind the *Walkabout* convoy on the highway as we approached the lake and noticed how easily she ran on the trailer. Later the launching and hauling went smoothly with no special effort. We designed the mount of the experimental stern wheel slightly too low, as it proved that she went better trimmed down by the bow. The problem was exacerbated when we were there by an access plate having gone missing from the buoyant drum of the wheel, letting in enough water to lower the stern still more.

The action of the raked blades is odd. We had hoped that the water emerging from under the hull would encounter the blades edge on, but the flow is not that fast, the blades slap down on the surface as they come down with a chuffing sound reminiscent of steam engines. They emerge without carrying much water up and the race behind the wheel is very low, with little apparent slip. The effort saved by not lifting the departing water is emphasized when you go into reverse. Backing up is hard work and impractically inefficient. A couple of paddles come in handy when authoritative backing is in order.

We have a simple solution for this after considerable sporadic thought, which we'll show and describe in the next issue.

Steering is good. The side-mounted dual levers are light and positive and the twin end-plate rudders produce such a short turning circle that we toyed with the idea that one of them would be adequate with some resulting drag reduction. Watching the action of these rudders suggests that putting them abaft the paddlewheel, to be "blown" by the wheel, is an improvement on the usual placement ahead of the wheel. The forward centerboard is definitely worthwhile, with it fully raised there's an appreciable skid and more vulnerability to wind.

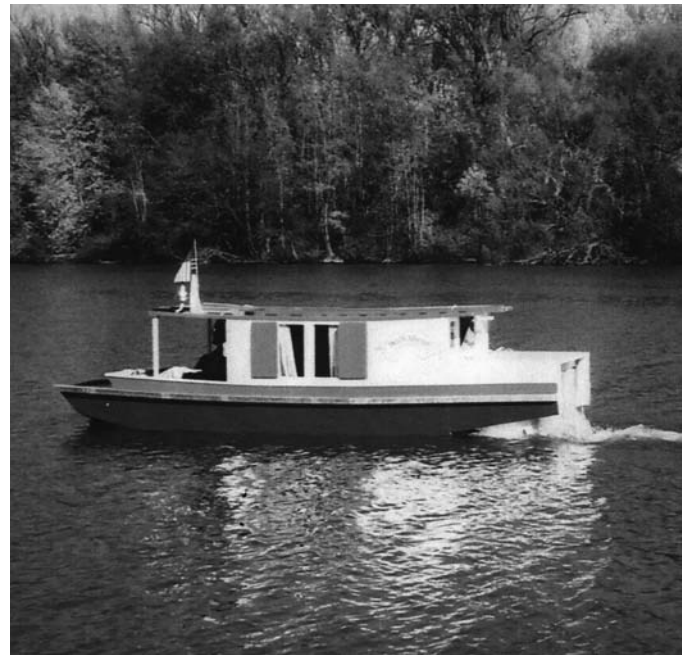
Inevitably we start thinking about a bigger sternwheel cruiser along Becky's lines. There's a sketch of one in our book, *Boats With An Open Mind*, but that concept depends on a much more drastically experimental wheel than Becky's, an experiment, as noted in the book, that might not work at all. But a 1.5:1 or 2:1 scale-up of Becky, with the improved sternwheel and very modest diesel or gasoline power, would have considerable advantages as a river cruiser. Enough (not very much) engine power would allow it to cope with ordinary rough water on lake crossings, while the 1' more or less draft with none of the possibility of fouling that both propellers and waterjets are liable to, would open up places otherwise open only to airscrew boats (which we hope never to have to listen to again!)

Apart from the possibilities of enlargement, by Paul's account and our own brief experience, this is more than a conversation piece. We undertook it lightly as a recreational break from something "more serious," but as usually happens, it turned into an exercise in hard thinking to make it work as well as it does. Working out that drive train from 98% off-the-shelf components was more like work than we planned on. It did leave us pleased with ourselves, (to say nothing of being pleased with Paul Everett), so the effort must have been justified...

Plans of Becky Thatcher, our Design #669, are available for \$150 to build one boat, sent priority mail, rolled in a tube, from Phil Bolger & Friends, P.O. Box 1209, Gloucester, MA 01930.



Launched on Cayuga, already with quite a few miles behind her on water as well as highway.



Not much fuss from the wheel and none elsewhere at cruising speed.



Note the angle of the wake in a sharp turn, a good way to stop suddenly if necessary.

Closing in for a rainy day. Still a nice view.



Bolger examines Paul's rendering of the experimental wheel and endplate rudders.

Paul and Phil enjoy the cabin comforts.





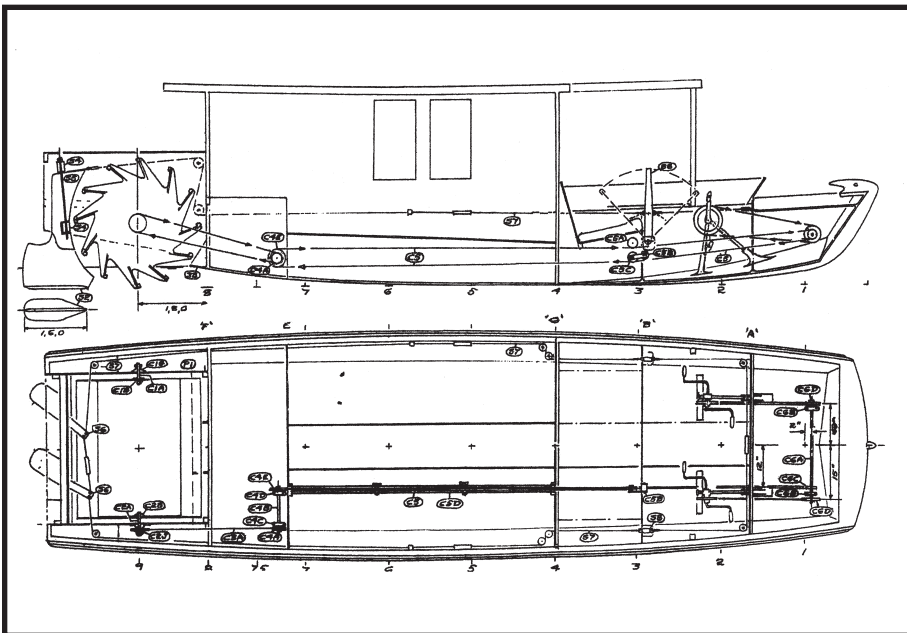
Broad smiles by Adele and Paul in dual control cruising position. Nice view.



To speed up getting afloat, the seat, pedals, and some other components from a recumbent bike were used. Somewhat different from the design, but effective enough.



Trailer view shows the rocker of the bottom profile and the raked blades of the sternwheel.



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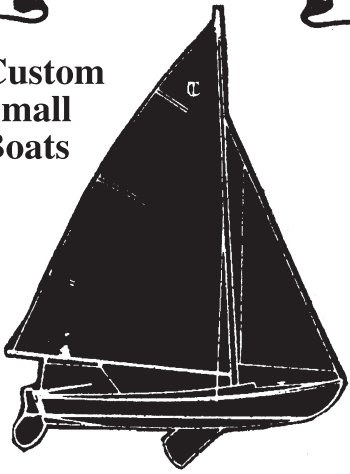
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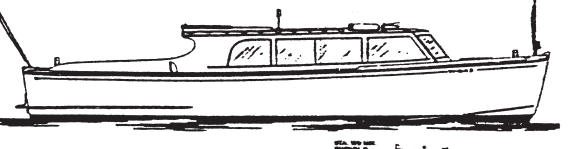


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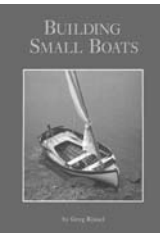
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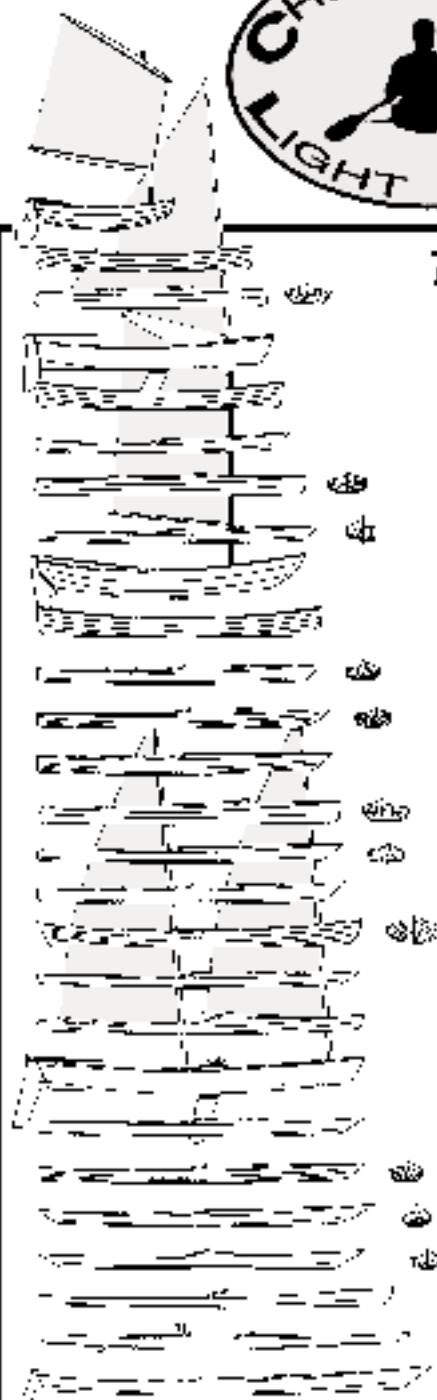
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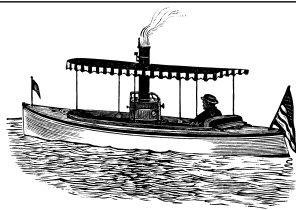
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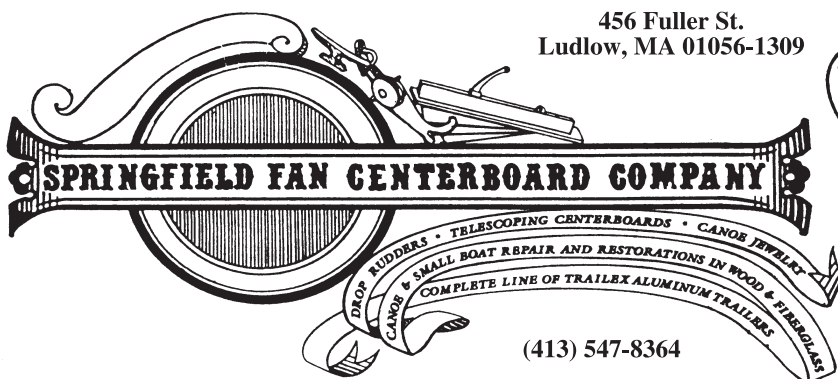
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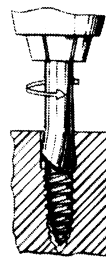


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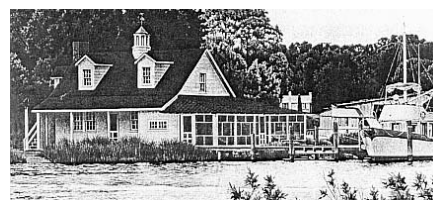
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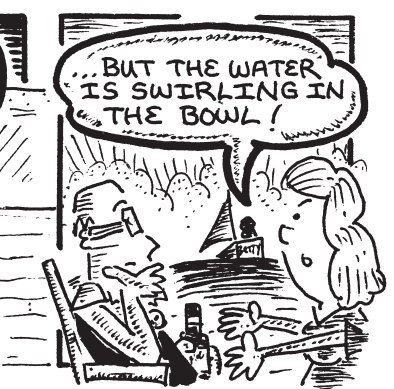
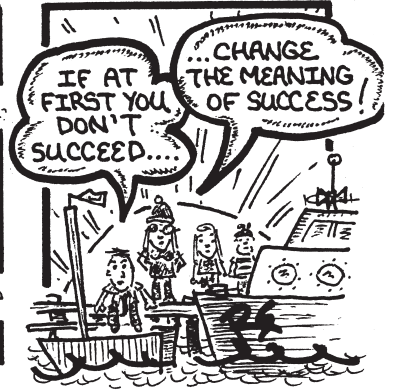
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