

GOOD OLD BOAT

Still sailing after all these years!

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1998

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RENAISSANCE



This Issue



GOOD OLD BOAT

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Creating a community

Good Old Boat magazine is bringing members of our community of sailors together: we'll be pooling resources to compile lists of suppliers who offer parts for our boats, sharing solutions to specific and general problems we face in keeping our good old boats afloat, compiling contact information for sailboat owners' groups and associations, and profiling good old folks with good old boats. We enthusiastically welcome your input!

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Come aboard!

About the cover...

Writer and photographer Mary Jane Hayes has been a godsend for *Good Old Boat* magazine. She contacted us early in the development of this magazine when we were still wondering where we were going to find good quality photos of sailboats and the people who sail them. If you've ever tried to shoot white sails against a bright sky with the reflective sea all around, you know the challenges. Mary Jane is up to the challenge. The photo of *Renaissance* was shot on land, of course, at James Landing Marina in Scituate, Mass.



the view from here

Good seamanship

*Years of salty experience alone don't make the sailor;
it takes competence and safe practices*

The term seamanship conjures up mental images of a professional sea captain rounding one of the great capes in a mighty storm, barking orders through his speaking trumpet at fearless sailors in the rigging of a tall ship. There may be the impression that only vast years of experience will allow for good seamanship.

In his *Illustrated Dictionary of Boating Terms*, John Rousmaniere defines seamanship as: *The art and science of handling a boat competently and safely in all conditions.*

There is no mention of years of salty experience here, just competence and safety. Working from this definition, could a newcomer to sailing practice good seamanship? Let's consider a new boatowner, perhaps with only a few hours of real experience. Can this person practice good seamanship? I think so.

After you've been around the water a while, you will have met both types: the ones who are or will be good seamen and the ones who won't. Everybody has trouble once in a while, but some sailors seem to go from one crisis to the next without a rest.

To me, good seamanship means sailing within the limitations of the characteristics of the boat, the skill of the skipper, and the capabilities of the crew. This definition allows the novice to choose appropriate conditions for sailing and, in so doing, to practice good seamanship in the choice and the activity. So yes, a novice can be a good seaman or seawoman. Using good judgment and matching skills and capabilities against the expected demands of the water are what is required.


As for experience, the water has a way of surprising us no matter how much experience we have. Perhaps sailors with more experience are surprised less often, but the richness of our sea stories tells us we can all be taken aback from time to time. The ones who will be the better sailors are preparing themselves and their vessels to be safe and competent in an ever-wider range of conditions. They have trouble now and then, but they handle it. Most days they

come and go without notice. Their guests wish to sail with them again, and they seem to have "regular" crew. They are gaining experience. Their boats are becoming more reliable and better suited to their use.

These sailors, who are navigating the journey between novice and old salt, are in the vast majority. This must be so, since sailing has an excellent safety record. The minority who do not understand good seamanship give little thought to preparing themselves or their vessels, and it shows. When you have their attention, gently, ever so gently (because they are good people, too, and everyone is important in the grand scheme of things) try to convince them to respect the water.

You asked for it, you got it!

We have received a lot of feedback from our readers about whether we should carry advertising or not. To our surprise, the overwhelming consensus is that we should, but that it should in no way compromise the editorial content. We have thought long and hard about how to do that. We started this magazine with the focus on our readers, and that is where the focus will continue to be. We are in the process of developing an advertising policy that will allow our readers to be informed without being overwhelmed or manipulated. Our first display ad is in this issue (from Sailrite on Page 55). We invite your comments.

We appreciate the support we've received from Sailrite for this new magazine. Over the years Matt, Jim, and Connie Grant have become respected friends of ours as vendors. They've sold us kits for making our own jib bags and mainsail cover and also built a new main, jib, and storm trysail for us. They've always added thoughtful suggestions and given us exactly what we were looking for. It was for this reason that we featured them as our first good old boat vendor in the last issue of *Good Old Boat*. Their purchase of a full-page ad to help us get started in the advertising side of publishing is further evidence of their support. 

by Jerry Powlas



Contributors

Roland Barth, Page 36, shown reefing the sail, owns a 26-foot Contessa in Maine, a 25-foot Cape Dory in Florida, and a 20-foot gaffed-rig sharpie in the Florida Everglades. In addition, he's a devoted Laser sailor. His recently published book, *Cruising Rules*, depicts the laughter and insight collected over 20 years of sailing his Friendship sloop, *Sazerac*.

Scott Perkins, Page 49, unfurling the headsail, is owner and head technician at Perkins Electronics, an electronic sales and service business in Houghton, Mich. He and his wife, Cyndi, cruise Lake Superior waters while they wait until both kids have flown the nest — in the year 2001. By then, Scott and Cyndi will be ready for adventures in saltier seas.

Bill Sandifer, Page 38, on the bow with the hammer, is a marine surveyor and small boat builder who has been living, eating, and sleeping boats since the early '50s when he assisted at Pete Layton's Boat Shop, building a variety of small wooden boats. Since then Bill has worked for Charlie Morgan (Heritage), Don Arnow (Cigarette), and owned a commercial fiberglass boat building company (Tugboats). Bill and his wife, Genie, currently sail a Pearson Ariel which he restored from a total wreck.

Stan Terryll, Page 23, on the bow with the ink pen, has a passion for art, boats, airplanes, and the blues. An art teacher from White Bear Lake, Minn., he designs, builds, and sells small boats as a hobby. Stan also markets limited-edition art prints, primarily with nautical themes.

Jerry Powlas, Pages 17, 34, and 42, hauling in the anchor, is technical editor of *Good Old Boat* magazine. In an earlier life he was director of engineering for a refrigeration manufacturing firm until sailing's siren song lured him into something less stable but more fun. He and his wife, Karen Larson, sail *Mystic*, their C&C 30, on Lake Superior.

Karen Larson, Pages 30 and 56, at the helm, is editor of *Good Old Boat* magazine. She has written about sailing for *Sail*, *Cruising World*, *Sailing*, *Northern Breezes*, *Lake Sailor*, and *Lifeline*. Her publishing career began as a newspaper feature writer and page editor and later grew into a thriving newsletter production business.

Art Saluk, Page 11, in the cockpit, built his first boat at age 13, although he points out that it later sank. He presently owns a 20-year-old Cheoy Lee 32, *Flying Dragon*. After spending too long as an executive in the electronics industry, he pursued his lifelong interest in boats as a yacht broker, eventually opening his own brokerage (SGA Yachts) in Fort Lauderdale.

Jim Plummer, Page 13, on the ladder with the dollar sign, started out in a family boat business in 1952. His first job after college was in the finance field. Later he discovered sailboats. These days Jim and his wife, Bonnie, sail *Plumair*, a Tayana 37.

Sven Donaldson, Page 24, inspecting the stern, has a background in marine biology, 35 years of sometimes serious sailing, and four years as a sailmaker. He currently works as

a marine technical writer and editor and spends, he says, a disproportionate amount of time on junior sailing activities.

Dave Chase, Pages 2 and 36, with the paint brush, is a maker of drawings and paintings and foolishness like this caricature of the contributors. With his wife, Susan, he spends summers sailing the Great Lakes in good old *Old Sam Peabody*, a Cabot 36. Some folks say he looks a lot like his caricature; others say he flatters himself.

John Vigor, Page 6, bringing the beer, is a freelance journalist based in Oak Harbor, Wash. He has raced, cruised, and written about boats for more than 30 years. He is a regular contributor to yachting magazines in the U.S., Europe, and South Africa. He's the author of *Danger, Dolphins and Ginger Beer* (Simon and Schuster), a sailing adventure novel for 8- to 12-year-olds; *The Practical Mariner's Book of Knowledge* (International Marine); *The Sailors' Assistant* (International Marine); and *The 1998 International Marine Daybook and Nautical Desk Reference*.

Ken Textor, Page 23, bringing the new head, has lived and worked aboard boats for the past 17 years. In addition to work he did for the former *Small Boat Journal*, he regularly contributes to *Sail*, *Cruising World*, *Yachting*, *DownEast*, *Maine Boats and Harbors*, and *Boating World*. He runs a sail excursion business on Arrowsic Island, Maine.

Geoff Parkins, Page 15, inspecting the crack in the hull, lives aboard his good old boat, a 46-foot Ted Brewer-designed cutter called *Ocean Tiger* with his girlfriend, Lori, Jake the black lab, Buster the parrot, and Dirty Kitty. He is restoring a 1965 Pearson Vanguard which can be seen at <<http://members.aol.com/gparkins/index.htm>>.

Mary Jane Hayes, Page 28, taking photos, and her husband, Warren, have been boating for more than 25 years. They sailed *Serena*, a Sabre 28 for seven years and now cruise the East Coast in a Grand Banks 36, *Sea Story II*. A freelance writer/photographer, Mary Jane has been widely published in boating magazines and has a book coming out soon, *Eye on the Sea: Reflection on the Boating Life*.

Matt Grant, Page 47, with the sailbag, first soloed at age 5 in an 8-foot Sabot when his father pushed him away from the dock. Fearful of sharks, Matt promptly tipped the boat over so the mast rested on the dock and scrambled to safety over the sail. Over the years he overcame this first harrowing saltwater experience and now is a freshwater sailor who favors C-Scows and an S2 7.9 for racing and pleasure sailing. Together with his wife, Hallie, he manages the family's marine business, Sailrite Enterprises, Inc. Their two sons are being raised as sailors ... but not in shark-infested waters.

Bob Wood, Pages 20, 50, and 57, on the phone, learned to sail on small O'Days more than 30 years ago. He has owned an odd assortment of sailboats and sailed them in waters from the Florida Keys to British Columbia's Gulf Islands and from New York's Finger Lakes to Colorado's and Idaho's impoundments and reservoirs. He left a job as field engineer with Eastman Kodak to write a book — a sailing fiction — and never looked back.

Why, it's the Ericson Classic!

Looking at the cover of the September issue — Can it be? No, it's not. Or is it? It's close. It is! It's an original Ericson 35! Or, as we owners like to say, the Ericson 35 Classic. We avidly read every word comparing the Haupters' experiences with ours aboard *Natalie*, which we purchased new in 1965. We've never even considered another boat.

Our children were six and seven when we launched her, and she has borne up well through kid and teen stuff on our yearly summer cruises to California's Channel Islands. Now she just takes care of us old folks.

A testimonial to her stowage capacity (like Dan, we found several dead spaces that could be opened up) is the 16 days we spent once at the northern islands, where there is no resupplying, with four teenagers. You couldn't see the waterline when we left Newport Beach, since we had all the necessary food, water, and fuel, as well as scuba gear for all six of us.

We've cruised to San Francisco and explored the Sacramento Delta, and made two extended trips to Mexico, the last one as far south as

Zihuatenejo.

When we were first fitting her out, we spent a lot of time at the

Ericson factory in the nearby town of Orange. There we were told the following story about how an Alberg became an Ericson. It seems that Pearson had decided to discontinue the manufacture of Alberg 35s at its Sausalito plant, preferring to consolidate production at the East Coast

facility. They sent the molds to the San Francisco dump where they weren't broken up, supposedly because the crew stopped to eat lunch before doing so. Someone saw them, claimed them, and trucked them down to Orange where they set up a manufacturing facility. Bruce King redesigned the keel, taking out 500 pounds of ballast, which we replaced in *Natalie*, as she was pretty tender at first. He also redesigned the house, putting in the window that is so reminiscent of the better-known Columbias of that period.

Then the lawsuits started. Pearson sued Ericson over the hull. They lost. Columbia sued Ericson over the window shape. They won. As a result, later windows had the same general shape but were split in two. We still have people cruise by to ask if *Natalie's* a Columbia 36, but they always have a hesitancy in their voice that says she doesn't quite look like one.

We, too, have replaced the old Atomic 4 with the Universal Diesel, and we, too, have had to remodel the companionway steps. We installed the M30 model, wanting the extra power for the demands of the northern Channel Islands, as well as the grueling uphill slug off Baja California's Pacific Coast. Under normal conditions, she uses a tenth of a gallon of fuel per mile.

Beside electronics, we've added a power windlass (age has its rewards), coldplate refrigeration for longer trips, a furling jib, a holding tank, a propane stove, and a cockpit dodger. We carry 35 gallons each of fuel and water.

Dan is quoted as saying, "It's not good for punching into seas." We would add that, although she may not make way readily under those conditions, the sea kindness offered by her full keel and depth of underbody forward make her a comfortable ride relative to today's flat-bottomed pounders.

One advantage of the E35's sloop rig is that a dinghy can be shipped comfortably aft of the mast, be it our regular Sabot or the inflatable we use for longer cruises.

We enjoy the large, comfortable cockpit unobstructed by binnacle or wheel. Use of the tiller can also put the helmsman under the dodger, keeping

him dry — well, mostly — in heavy weather.

Finally, a feature that can't be overlooked is the deep bilge provided by the full keel. It's great for general stowage, but most importantly it's a marvelous wine cellar. Thanks again for giving the Ericson 35 Classic some well-deserved space.

Nancy Baker
Santa Ana, Calif.

Cape Dory 30, too

General comments from the proud owners of a CD 30 cutter: Sails like a dream; tracks very well. I have not added a self-furling system, maybe that will come in the future, but the sails are easy to handle, and I can think of other areas to spend my money. I have been in 35 mph winds with a staysail and one reef in the main and was able to let go of the wheel, and she would sail herself for at least 10 minutes at a time.

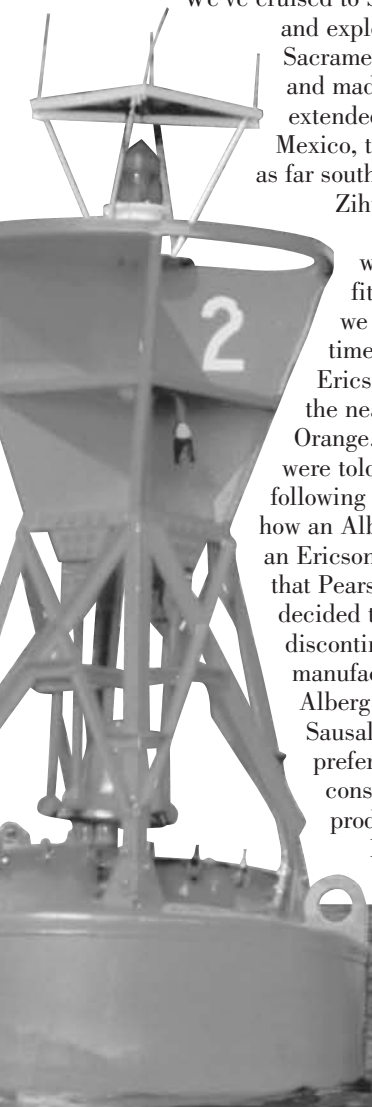
I may add a cruising spinnaker in the future for downwind work. The cutter rig means that either the staysail or the Yankee is left up. Both up leads to blanketing the Yankee.

My wife is not really pleased with the amount of working space in the galley area: not enough counter space, and everyone walks through her galley when she's preparing food. I will add fold-up countertop extensions to each side. The icebox drains into the bilge, and I will need to replumb this to prevent unwanted odors from wafting into the living quarters!

My engine (Volvo MD 7) works great although I would like a few more gauges instead of idiot lights. My boat has been wired for 110 AC throughout, which also has been helpful. I have added lazy-jacks to help with the single-handed furling of my sails.

As you can tell, I have no real complaints with our boat. She delivers on her promise of a safe, well-built boat that is aesthetically pleasing and a continual head turner. I always wanted a boat that would bring a smile to my face every time I saw her sitting in the water, and this is the one.

Erick Frack



Shorepower revisited

I enjoyed your piece about shorepower. As a former electrician/instrument mechanic, I learned a trick about extension cords and shorepower cords. Don't ever wrap a live cord around your arm and shoulder to roll it up. Make sure it is unplugged first. If the cord is nicked or chafed, and a bare conductor touches your bare skin, the resulting muscle contractions may prevent you from dropping the cord. This rule applies to any extension cord or wire.

Gary Scurlock
Hammond, La.

Indigo kit works for me

I just put an Indigo Electronic Ignition kit (full kit) in my boat. Because it was a freshwater-cooled engine and a freshwater boat, the engine, although 29 years old, runs OK and has no rust. However it did develop carbon if the ignition wasn't tended to regularly. I installed the Indigo kit in 50 minutes. The motor fired right up and seems to burn fuel better under load, i.e., it doesn't flood out or load up and seems to put out more power now! I tested this by putting the motor in gear and running under load (full throttle). After the CDI ignition, I got 300 more RPM from the motor, and the propwash extended another 30 percent behind the boat. This is the only crude dyno I have, but it works for me. I am impressed. I will have to road test it on the weekend, as we still have one short cruise and five more weekends before the mast comes down in November.

Douglas Axtell
Rochester, N.Y.

Lessons in the shipping lane

On a recent trip I had a close encounter with a 600-foot freighter and learned a few things about commercial traffic. First, when you see a freighter, use binoculars to make sure you know which way it's heading. Second, no matter how clear the weather, always keep a sharp lookout in all directions (even behind you). This ship quietly crept up on my port quarter. And lastly, never assume that pilots of these vessels see you. With clear weather in broad daylight, the ship we encountered saw us **only** after we hailed it on the radio. After we and the ship agreed to alter course, it passed one mile behind us. Being that close to a freighter running full speed is very humbling. To be unaware is life-threatening.

Tim Hanrahan
Minneapolis, Minn.

Thanks, Tim. Good Old Boat is interested in hearing other stories of encounters with commercial traffic — good, bad, and ugly — for a future article. Let us hear from you if you've got thoughts on dealing with the big guys out there.

Are gas engines better?

I've heard that the old gas engine is more tolerant than the diesel of the typical weekend sailor's "10 minutes to run in and out of the dock and then shut it down." People have told me diesels are workhorses thriving on 15-hour days, treatment they might not get on a sailboat daysailing and cruising casually. I don't know if it's true. I do know there is no comparison for work produced per gallon of diesel vs. gas just from driving farm tractors for a friend of mine — diesels are the way to go if it's power and pull you want.

Last spring we picked up a tip — might have been from Don Moyer — for repitching our prop. We switched from 9-inch to 6-inch pitch and believe the motor is happier operating at a higher RPM rather than constantly being on the verge of "lugging" (but we're not mechanics, so maybe it's a delusion). Did we waste \$200 or could this really extend our motor's service life?

Finally one last note on obsolete, but forgiving, engines. I once ran my two-cylinder Universal Blue Jacket Twin (dating from the 1930s) out of gas. I dumped my anchor light kerosene in and added a belt of stove alcohol to mix with the gas dregs. The Twin ran cheerfully on it for the hour it took us to get to Oswego's fuel dock!

Susan Peterson Gateley
Wolcott, N.Y.

Susan, while a horsepower is a horsepower no matter whether from steam, gasoline, or diesel, it's true that the diesels available for small boats are more efficient than the gasoline engines that are available for small boats. This derives in some measure from the fact that a small modern gasoline inboard is not offered for small boats.

The comparisons that are made are between a low compression flat head Atomic 4 and a diesel. We love the Atomic 4, but it is certainly not the most efficient gasoline engine. The modern technology in combustion chambers, high energy ignitions, and fuel injection found in automobiles would bring the gasoline engine much closer to the diesel in efficiency. These improvements

are not free, so such an engine would probably be much closer to a diesel in cost, too.

The diesel in our boat has been used for short intervals to motor in and out of marinas for about 19 years, and does not seem much the worse for it. We make no attempt to idle the engine for prolonged periods before or after using it. It is raw-water cooled and so never gets very hot. Theoretically none of this is good for it, but our little Bukh Pilot 20 doesn't seem to mind. It has the heart of a little tugboat engine and shakes the boat like a small earthquake to show enthusiasm and industry. I love it. Maybe it would last longer if it ran constantly, but only longer in terms of running hours, not years of service.

If Don Moyer said to change the pitch of your prop, I'd be inclined to believe him. I think the reasoning behind the way a lot of good old boats were designed was that the Atomic 4 was applied with direct drive in small boats and with a reduction gear in larger ones. Without a reduction gear, the engine could not develop full horsepower, but then on small boats, the hulls could not use full horsepower anyway. The 30-horsepower Atomic 4 has been installed in boats with a 20-foot water line. They might happily need all of 10 horsepower and will hit hull speed long before much more can be applied. With the direct drive, the Atomic 4 can develop the needed horsepower at very low RPM, which is not all bad. Pitching your prop from 9 to 6 inches will allow the engine to rev up more, and that might be an advantage. With the 9-inch pitch prop, the operator should know that it is pointless to operate the engine near the upper end of its speed and power range. Otherwise the engine will be lugging.

Your description of blending kerosene with a little alcohol and mixing it with a little gasoline makes me think of the way legislators blend motor fuels today. You had a better reason, however. It is worthwhile noting that while those old low-compression gasoline engines will run on (almost) any liquid that burns, at least for a while, modern diesels need really good, really clean diesel fuel. With these, we should be careful with additives, and never add alcohol.

There have been problems when legislators have messed around with the fuels. I wish they wouldn't do that, but I'm sure we have not seen the last of it. My old RX7 runs much better in

Mail continued on Page 54

Ted Brewer

creator of Black Velvet and

by John Vigor

In his home office in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains, Edward (“Ted”) Brewer mops his brow and shoves back his stool. He is tall and solid. His hair is dark and his sense of humor keen. “It’s too hot to work today,” he says. “The ink’s running.”

Ted, one of the country’s best-known yacht designers, still draws the old-fashioned way with ink and splines. There are blueprints and papers scattered all over his wide desk, and at one edge there is a row of “ducks” — those traditional lead weights that hold the splines in place while you draw a fair curve.

The walls are knobby with half-models of some of his boats. Pictures of others are framed alongside copies of his impressive professional credentials. And everywhere there is the paraphernalia of the one-person business: the fax, the phone, the file boxes, the letters waiting to be answered. But all that is for another time.

“Let’s go into the house,” he suggests. “It’s cooler.” In the few short steps between the office and his house we run into a blast of dry August heat that feels like the Sahara at these high latitudes. It’s 85 degrees Fahrenheit and rising in the valley of the mighty Skagit River, 75 miles north of Seattle. The Skagit, the second biggest river after the Columbia on the west coast of the continental 48, is only 150 yards

away, but the cool water it draws from melting snows in the rugged Cascades looming high overhead is doing little today to temper the heat.

The office and the house are remote, situated on a dead-end road off rural State Route 20 in northern Washington, miles away from the nearest city and surrounded by farming land given over to fields of nose-high corn scorching at the edges for want of rain.

For a man so well known and respected in the yachting world, Ted

ocean races. He’s also the man who designed scores of the good old boats still cruising out there.

He likes the peace and quiet now. At age 65, with more than 260 yacht designs under his belt, he feels he’s earned a rest. He still keeps designing, though. He can’t get totally stopped. He has just finished the lines of a 35-foot keel/centerboard cutter in double-chine aluminum for a California owner, but he’s disinclined to take on any work involving a design of more than 50 feet.

He laughs wryly. “I designed a 100-foot yacht once. Never again. The amount of work is incredible. You have to hire experts to help you. It has all the components of a full-size ship.”

The magic of designing, he says, the magic that keeps drawing him back, lies in the lines and the accommodation. But there’s no magic in designing the shaft bearings, the ballast, and the chain plates. That’s just number-crunching and drudgery.

Now he’s working on the plans of a 29-foot powerboat for home builders to construct from plywood or aluminum. It will cruise at 15 to 18 knots with a single diesel or twin outboards. “That kind of plan is always in demand,” he notes.

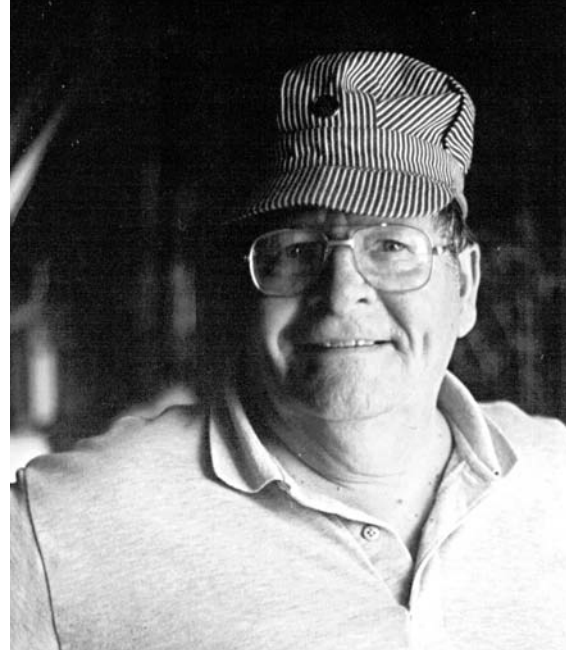
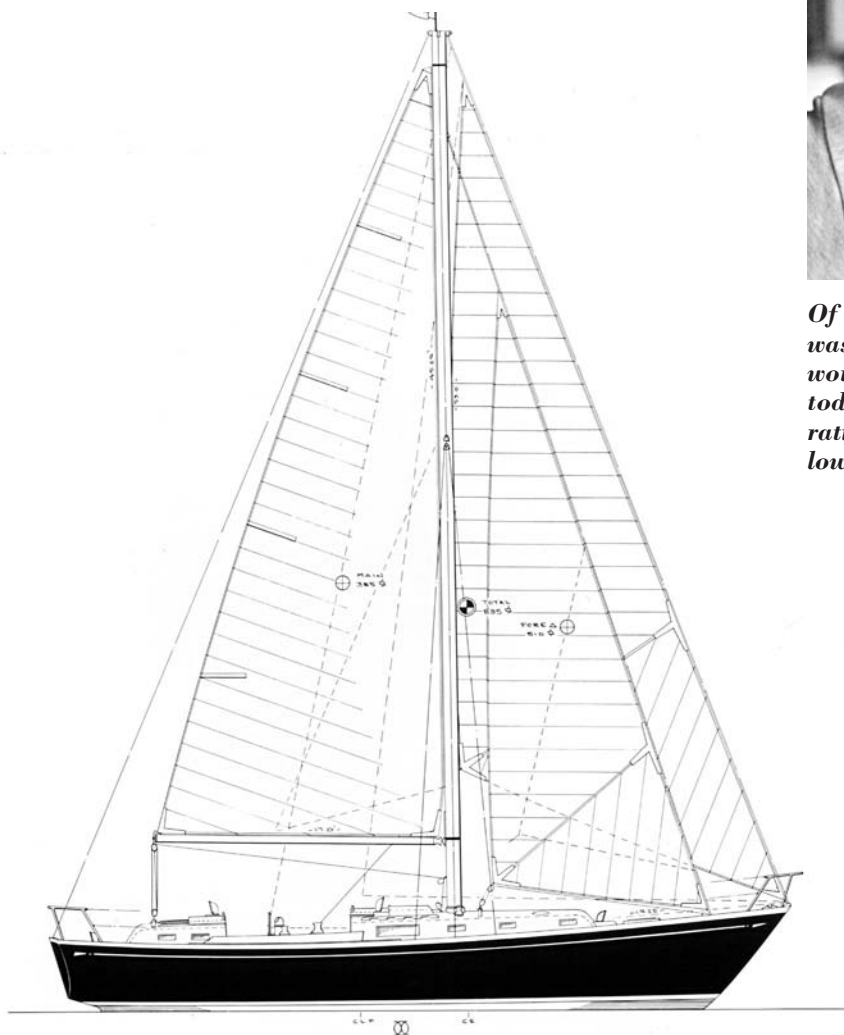
Ted started his working life in the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps, but was advised by a friend to get out as soon as he could because there was little chance of

If you have a really good old boat, Ted has a word of advice: “Hang on to it. Maintain it as best you can, and look at it as money in the bank — it’s an investment that will pay off in the end. Maintain it like new, and you’ll never be sorry.”

lives a quiet life. His home is comfortable but modest. The boat he keeps at La Conner, the nearest saltwater marina, is a 24-foot power cruiser.

This is the man who worked on the America’s Cup boats *American Eagle* and *Weatherly*, boats that won the Olympics, the Gold Cup, and dozens of celebrated

other miracles



Of Black Velvet, left, Ted says, "She was done 200 designs ago, but I would not change a great deal even today. The high boom was done for a rating advantage, so I'd probably lower it a foot or so. That's about it."

promotion in such a small army. He made it to lieutenant, however, before joining C&C Yachts (then the Canadian Northern Company) as a yacht broker.

While he was in the army, he had studied yacht design by correspondence from the Westlawn School. His big break came when he heard that Bill Luders Jr., a respected designer from Long Island Sound, needed an assistant designer.

His first job for Luders was to design the plumbing for a ferry. "I

hardly knew where to start," he confesses. "But I learned quickly. In fact, I worked for Luders for seven years and learned a lot. And he made me teach myself a lot. Bill Luders was a wonderful sailor, friend, and employer."

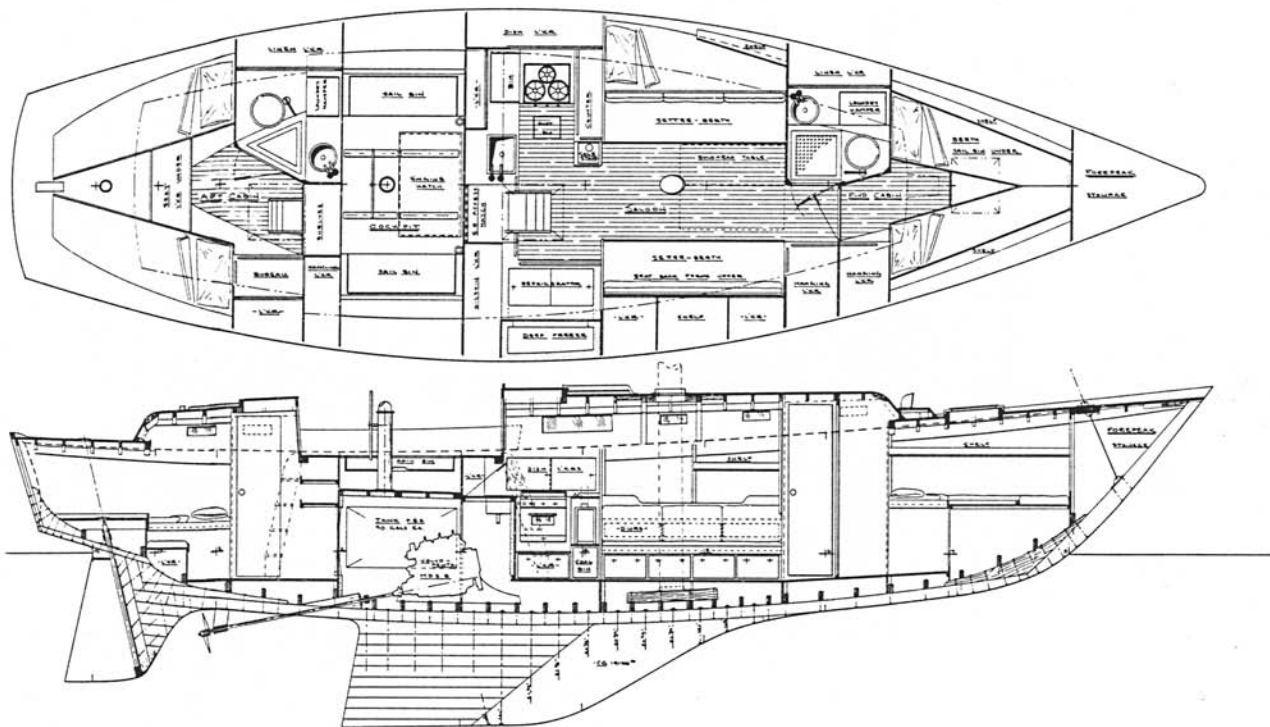
In the early 1970s, Ted originated the radius-bilge method of building metal yachts that made construction much easier for amateurs and professionals alike. He first applied it to the Goderich 35 design. And if you're wondering why that name rings bells, it's because it was a Goderich 35 that

later sailed all the way around the globe without navigational instruments of any kind, not even a compass.

In 1979 he moved to Washington state, designing all kinds of boats, ranging from small dinghies to the 68-foot schooner *Tree of Life*, which was nominated one of the "100 Greatest Yachts in America" by *Sail* magazine.

But his favorite design remains one of his early ones, *Black Velvet*, which was custom-built with a strip-planked wooden hull in about 1970. *Black Velvet* was a fast boat with a fin keel and a skeg-hung rudder. "She had to be fast to windward," Ted explains. "I designed her for Fred Chevrier to sail on Lake Champlain, and Fred said it was important that she beat well because 'No matter where we go, it's always to windward.'"

The design was such a success it was later produced in GRP and became the Cape North 43, which, among other achievements, won the closely contested Swiftsure Race. But the design didn't end there.



Black Velvet lives on in the highly regarded Whitby 42 cruiser, which is basically the same boat with a full-length keel instead of the fin-and-skeg underbody.

Ted has always known how to make boats sail fast and go to windward well, even cruising boats. From the beginning he favored the fin-keel design, and even when people asked him for cruising boats he'd do his best to persuade them to accept a fin-and-skeg underbody.

In the early days, most people ordering cruising-boat plans wanted full-length keels, and Ted would try to talk them out of it. He would negotiate until he got permission to take at least a little "bite" out of the after end of the keel where it would do most to help maneuverability and cut down on wetted surface drag.

How did he decide on the size of the bite? "I always took the biggest bite I could get away with," he admits. That trademark "Brewer bite" was a compromise that suited the coastal cruisers/club racers very well. It gave them improved windward ability

and much better maneuverability in the close quarters of the marinas that were starting to spring up everywhere.

The first of the fiberglass production boats produced in the 1960s and early 1970s were not influenced by the later International Offshore Rule for racers, which favored shallow, beamy boats. But in the late '70s and the '80s, the builders of production family cruisers also demanded more beam because it added greatly to the space down below.

"The French also carried the beam way aft so they could get double staterooms into 30-footers," Ted says.

Are the owners of older boats, those built before the influence of the IOR became so pervasive, at any kind of disadvantage?

"Not at all. They have less beam, and therefore less accommodation. That's all," he says. "Moderate beam, in fact, makes a boat more seaworthy because it is less likely to capsize; and if it is

hurled upside down by a large breaking wave, it is likely to recover more quickly than a boat with excessive beam."

If you have a really good old boat, Ted has a word of advice: "Hang on to it. Maintain it as best you can, and look at it as money in the bank — it's an investment that will pay off in the end. Maintain it like new, and you'll never be sorry."

"The Whitby 42 cost \$42,000 to

That trademark "Brewer bite" was a compromise that suited the coastal cruisers/club racers very well. It gave them improved windward ability and much better maneuverability in the close quarters of the marinas that were starting to spring up everywhere.



Edward ("Ted") Brewer poses in his office with a picture of one of his early designs, the 53-foot aluminum ketch, *Mystic*, on her way to taking second in Class B in the Trans-Pac. The lines for *Black Velvet*, one of his favorite designs, are at left.

\$45,000 in 1972. The last Brewer 42 (basically the same boat) built in Florida in 1990 cost \$260,000. You work it out. And here's another example: The Luders 33 was \$13,500 brand new. Now used ones sell for \$40,000."

He considers the price of new sailboats to be "outrageous." That's mainly because comparatively few new production boats are being built. And the reason is that the good old boats built in the early days of fiberglass seem to be lasting forever.

One of the few problems with older boats, according to Ted, lies with the extensive use of balsa-cored decks to minimize weight and lower the center of gravity. Unless you're very careful, water seeps into the balsa when the deck gets damaged or you drill holes for new fittings. Edge-grain balsa is good at containing the area of dampness, but after a while extensive delamination of the wood and fiberglass can begin from a small patch. (See *Bill Sandifer's* article on Page 38.) But if you take care of your balsa coring and maintain your old cruiser in first-class condition, you'll have a boat that's as good as new.

Ted's own boat, an unconventional 24-foot Nimble Nomad, is one of a series of power and sailing flat-bottomed centerboarders he designed for Nimble Boats in Florida. None of them has any balsa cores. The decks are solid, composed of skins of fiberglass separated by a core of resin mixed with filler. "It can't rot, and you don't need to worry about compressing it when you tighten up on a fastener for a through-deck fitting. It's there forever."

Circumstances dictated Ted's choice of boat. "In the best cruising season, the summer and fall, there's very little wind on Puget Sound. And when there is wind, it seems to curve around every island and come straight at you, so I prefer to sit in the comfort of a cabin and go to windward at 7 knots to get places," says the man who has competed under sail all over the world and taken part in three Trans-Pac races.

One year he and his wife, Betty, cruised north to Sucia Island in the San Juan group in a Nimble 30 yawl, which has become a cult boat. During their cruise they came across a very ugly houseboat. A woman aboard the houseboat took

one look at the Nimble and exclaimed: "What a pretty boat!"

Ted was skeptical. "I figured, heck don't get too excited. Anyone going around on a houseboat as ugly as that can't possibly be a judge of beauty."


But then the woman revealed that the houseboat was on charter. "We have a Concordia back East," she added. Ted was greatly mollified. "That suddenly made me very happy, because anyone who owns a Concordia surely knows a pretty boat when she sees one."

When Ted looks back over a lifetime of work and 260 designs, does he spot anything he wishes he'd changed? Would an inch here, an inch there, have made any difference?

"Not to the underwater hull, not to the performance. But to the stuff above the waterline, yes — to the looks of the boat. I think it happens to every designer. You see a boat or look at a design years later and you say: 'God! Why didn't I give her an inch more spring in the sheerline?' Or 'Why didn't I pull that counter out another couple of inches?' It can make a big difference to the looks of the boat."

When he's not at his drafting table, Ted is either writing books and articles or pursuing his hobbies. He has written three books — *Understanding Yacht Design*, now in its fourth edition; *Cruising Yacht Design*; and *Ted Brewer Explains Sailboat Design*. His passion for sharing the secrets of boat design also reveals itself in the many articles he writes for the yachting press here and abroad.

He is justifiably proud of his G-gauge radio-controlled model railroad setup, in which he has invested "thousands — far too much," and his collection of World War I books, which now numbers about 300 volumes.

But he doesn't get to indulge in his hobbies as much as he'd like because the lure of the drawing board is always there. And you just never know when another miracle like *Black Velvet* might happen. 

Buying an older boat: *The complete guide*



Gently used, previously owned ... call good old boats what you will. When we're in the market to buy one of these used gems, there are a couple of hurdles to jump simply because they are old boats. In this collection of articles on the financial side of old boat ownership, Art Saluk talks about the process of buying an older boat including survey, sea trial, and haulout; Jim Plummer reviews the realities of financing

an older vessel; Geoff Parkins discusses issues involved when insuring your good old boat; and Jerry Powlas reminds readers that upgrades should be tailored to the boat's use. On a high note, Bob Wood discusses tax deductions that apply equally to any boat whether a good old one or a new one at five times the price. All of the shortcomings are surmountable and the advantages worthwhile. Read on ...



Before you buy ...

You drive by her each morning and evening, and your heart starts to flutter.

Her graceful lines and the shimmering water make the world beautiful. As she bobs on her mooring, all seems perfect in the universe. One day you drive by and notice the FOR SALE sign hanging on the lifelines and you know you must own this boat.

Before you rush out with your checkbook in hand to buy your dreamboat, there are several things you must know: how to assess the condition of the boat, how to value the boat, how to prepare an offer, and how to enact the transaction. Each of these steps contains potential pitfalls that can be quite costly if not properly addressed. Obvious as it may seem, it's easy to forget that time invested properly in your purchase can save you thousands of dollars down the road. A boatless sailor with a pocketful of cash, and a graceful yacht in need of a new owner, are the ingredients for a poor decision.

There have been many articles written on how to assess the condition of an older boat. (See Bill Sandifer's article on Page 38 in the September issue of *Good Old Boat*.) These articles focus on how to look inside lockers, under cushions, behind the stove, behind drawers, and in every nook and cranny where you can fit a flashlight for



signs that the boat has been well maintained all along and not just cleaned up for sale. Determining for yourself that the boat appears to be in good condition prior to making any offers, hiring a surveyor, and paying for a haulout can save you hundreds of dollars.

Several sources can help you determine a fair price for your future boat. The primary sources

by Art Saluk

of data used by many lending institutions and brokers are the *BUC Used Boat Price Guide* and NADA's *Used Boat Prices*. These books offer a good guideline as to the value of a particular model of boat. The Internet, classified sections in sailing magazines, and brokers' ads will also give you an indication of the range in asking prices. Combining data from these sources will give you a sense of the market value.

Most likely you will notice a difference between the published values and the advertised asking prices. Many factors contribute to this difference. An owner's overestimation of his boat's value and a built-in "negotiation factor"

are the two largest factors. A high asking price may be justified due to recent upgrades such as new sails, a new paint job, a new engine, or an exceptionally well-maintained boat. Once you have determined a fair and realistic value of your prospective purchase, the time has arrived to make an offer and arrange for a survey and sea trial.

All offers should be made subject to a survey and a sea trial. This is the time for your surveyor to determine the condition of all aspects of the boat and associated equipment. The sea trial not only gives the surveyor an opportunity to inspect the boat while under way, it gives you the opportunity to find out whether you feel comfortable with the way the boat performs and to decide if it meets your expectations.

The sea trial will also give you an opportunity to see how the owner handles the boat while under way and at the docks. This will give you a little insight into how the owner has treated your prospective new purchase. Before the survey and sea trial take place, however, the seller will want a deposit.

At this point you should put all of the details of your offer in writing.

Your offer should include the following:

- Amount of the offer.
- Amount of the deposit.
- Terms of the offer (how long is the offer good for, list of equipment that is included, etc.).
- Conditions of offer (survey, sea trial).
- Dates for each event to take place (acceptance of offer, sea trial, closing, etc.).
- Responsibilities (who is responsible for costs of survey, sea trial, etc.).

While this may seem to be a lot of trouble, it will make clear all of the implied conditions of your contract and prevent difficulties and misunderstandings if there are unexpected problems on the sea trial or afterward. Remember that you are involved in a transaction that involves thousands of dollars.

Typically a 10 percent deposit will be required to accompany the offer. Be certain that the seller has agreed to let an escrow agent hold the deposit for you. If you give it directly to the seller, and the boat

with the boat and her new owners. There are unfortunate sailors out there who have bought their boats twice. If the boat is documented, write the U.S. Coast Guard Documentation Center and ask for a title abstract. It will cost you \$25, and they will fax you the abstract within a couple of days. You only need to provide them with the official number and name of the boat. Many smaller older boats have not been documented but instead are state registered. If this is the case, you should have a copy of the title with no liens recorded.

Now you are ready to hire a surveyor. Make certain that you hire a reputable surveyor who is a member of a recognized association such as NAMS or SAMS. The survey should include going up the mast to inspect the rig and going out on the sea trial. Be certain to ask the surveyor for several references of boats that he has recently surveyed. His report is the last thing standing between you and ownership of your new boat.

The surveyor's report will certainly contain dozens of recommendations. Be certain to review them carefully so you understand the magnitude of each and how they may affect the seaworthiness of the vessel. You should view most of them as a project list for the boat. If there is a major problem, however, now is the time to review it with the seller.

Make a fair estimate of the costs to make the proper repairs, and ask the seller to reduce the agreed-upon price by that amount. You are better off taking a monetary settlement and then making the repairs yourself than having the seller do the repairs for you. The older boat will have many small things that need tending to, and it is my belief that the survey should not be used as a document to “nickel

and dime” the seller into a lower price.

Now you are ready to buy your dream. Have the seller prepare two original bills of sale for you. You will need them later if you decide to document your boat. Have both bills of sale signed and notarized by the seller. If the boat is documented, be certain to get a copy of the original document. You will need this if you are going to re-document the vessel. If the boat is state registered, then have the original title signed over to you. I always recommend that you have

SAMS

Society of Accredited Marine Surveyors
4162 Oxford Avenue
Jacksonville, FL 32210-4425
800-344-9077
<<http://www.marinesurvey.org>>

NAMS

National Association of Marine Surveyors
P.O. Box 9306
Chesapeake, VA 23321-9306
800-822-6267
<<http://www.namsurveyors.org>>


USCG Documentation Center

National Vessel Documentation Office
2039 Stonewall Jackson Drive
Falling Waters, WV 25419-9502
304-271-2415 fax
800-799-8362 office

is subsequently not purchased (say the sea trial performance was disappointing), there is always the possibility of the seller's not being as cooperative as he was when accepting the deposit.

There is only one remaining thing to do prior to laying out hundreds of dollars for the survey, sea trial, and haulout: find out if there are any liens on the boat. The responsibility for the lien will go

proper insurance coverage take effect the day you take possession of the boat.

Be absolutely certain the beautiful boat that has caused your heart to flutter will not later cause it to ache. Take the time to have a proper survey and establish ownership with clear title. The devil always seems to lie in the details. Working with a yacht broker will free you from tending to these details. The broker will be able to establish market values, obtain a title abstract, coordinate the survey, and prepare the paperwork. The critical issue is not whether or not you work directly with the seller or with a broker, but that you ensure you have performed all the tasks to protect your new purchase. 

When you need financing ...

Any discussion of marine financing can be as nebulous as a discussion of which is the best boat. We all know no one boat can be best for all sailors or in all situations. Similarly, no one loan or marine finance specialist can be best for all our financial needs. Marine financing is a large, diverse industry with many specialized lenders. Local banks, although they may make loans to purchase boats, generally are not specialists. While doing research on this subject, I found that one of the best sources for names of marine lenders is the ads in *Soundings*.

Because of the diversity of lenders, you must first determine what you need and then start looking for the lender who comes closest to fulfilling that need. You might even think before looking very deeply into this specialized field that you surely will need squeaky clean credit, but that's not always true. Some lenders can even customize loans to fit the needs of the "marginal borrower."

Of course we all think about financing when we are looking for a new boat, but do we start looking soon enough? The acceptance criteria for the marine specialty finance companies vary enough that you should start to arrange for financing even before you start wandering through boatyards or

contacting brokers. My own research could not turn up any difference in the credit-granting guidelines of marine finance companies, but their loan criteria showed vast differences. Some of the companies had no minimum loan amount, while others had a minimum amount, usually in the \$15,000 to \$20,000 range.

Some of the firms also had a maximum age of boats they would finance, although they suggested that each loan is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. A surprising number of the finance companies queried do not make a survey of the boat to be financed a prerequisite for granting the loan. However it should be noted that the loan will require the boat to be covered by insurance with the finance company shown as a loss-payee. The insurance company will require a survey in order to issue coverage.

Wisdom dictates getting a survey if for no other reason than having a disassociated professional check out your decision and point out any problems you may have overlooked or been unable to determine.



The rates and terms of the companies — the items most advertised — are not going to vary much. Banks and finance companies get their money from the same sources and will have to pay about the same amount, so they will charge similar rates. It is wise, therefore, to shop for other criteria, because that is where the differences show up. A boat can meet the IRS criteria for a second home and therefore the interest on a loan secured by the boat may be tax deductible. For this reason, it might be wise to finance your next boat even if you have the funds to pay for it outright. But check with your accountant and refer to Bob Wood's article on the subject on Page 20.

If you're selling a boat, rather than buying one, you would be just as wise to look into financing. When you find a person who wants to buy

your boat, you want the sale to go as smoothly as possible. Can you think of anything more discouraging than having a potential buyer go to a marine finance company and learn from them that your boat doesn't fit the loan criteria for that bank? A big red flag was just hung on your boat. Or worse yet, your buyer goes to his local bank, and they quote terms and rates that are overly stringent and, in doing so, crush the deal.

If you are prepared ahead of time to guide your prospect to the financing firms that can supply funds to buy your boat, you will make it easy to buy from you. It would also be wise, if you are selling your boat, to get a survey done by a certified surveyor. This will prepare you for any shortcomings your boat might have so you can correct them or be prepared to deal with them before they become a negative in the eyes of the potential buyer. It's better to know the faults and be prepared to deal with them than to conceal them and risk losing the sale.


Not buying or selling? There's one more reason you might want to look into marine financing. You may want to upgrade the boat you have. Depending upon the project and the amount of money involved, you might be a candidate for marine financing. Not all marine lenders do refit or boat improvement loans, but some have

programs set up specifically for such activities. In most cases, the lenders who have rehab programs require that the work financed be done by an outside contractor. But if you're a do-it-yourselfer, this shouldn't discourage you completely.

Maybe you can separate your refit into a number of specific projects and hire professionals to do

the more complex of these. You could do the tasks you feel the most comfortable with and finance the work done by the professionals.

Or perhaps if the project cannot be separated into smaller chunks, you could convince the contractor to allow you to do the parts you are qualified to complete as a subcontractor and give you credit against the down payment. Since rehab loans are not that common, you'll need to do your homework before you get too far down the line with project planning or commitments on a job of this nature.

In the end, your work will be rewarded with financing for your specific needs. 

Editor's note: If you've had a good experience getting a loan for an older boat, please send us names and contact information to share.

If you're buying a boat:

- Start looking for financing sources as soon as you begin looking for a boat.
- Learn what amount the financial sources will let you borrow, based on a down-payment and terms which you can be comfortable with.
- Start looking for a certified surveyor.

If you're selling your boat:

- Start looking for financing sources for boats like yours.
- Get rates, terms, down-payment requirements, and even loan application forms from these sources so you can help your prospect become a buyer.
- Get a certified surveyor to do a full survey of your boat.

If you just want to upgrade your boat:

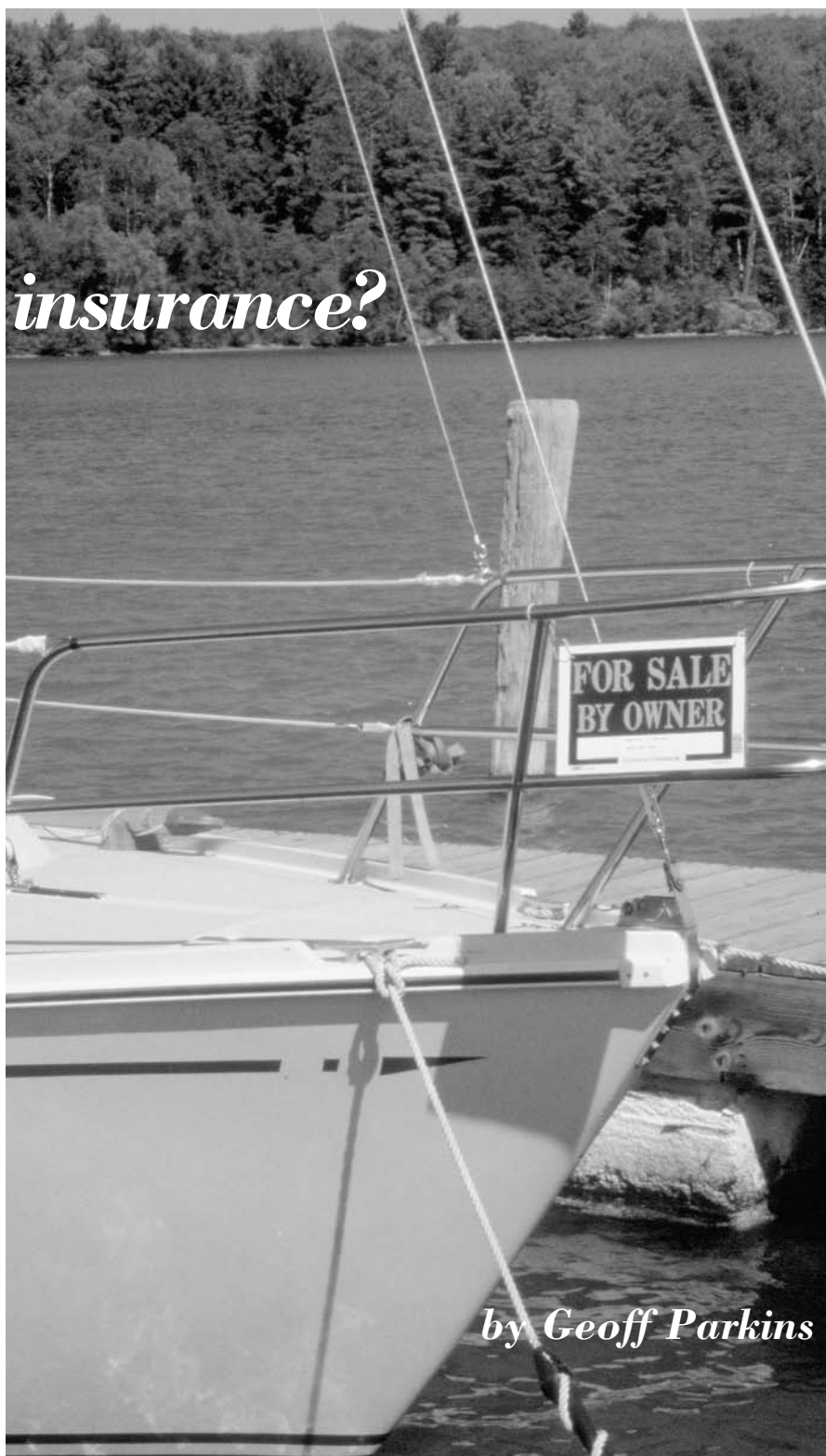
- Find out which finance companies offer refit loans.
- Get estimates from reliable contractors for the work you want to do.
- Find out if you can serve as a subcontractor to hold down the cost or to get credit for partial payment.

Editor's note: Jim told us that one constant in his research on financing older boats was the refrain, "No wooden boats." We asked Carl Cramer, editor and publisher of *WoodenBoat* to tell us about this situation. His response was that most of the national marine financial companies do finance wooden boats, although they may not admit it immediately. He added, "If one buys a used boat through a broker, typically that broker has local recommendations" and noted that the two primary items necessary to secure financing in his opinion are a successful survey and good credit. After that, he says, "All else becomes secondary, including the hull material."

What about insurance?

Picture a scene from a really bad nightmare. You're on the maiden voyage of the newly restored nautical fantasy you've just spent three years sweating, spending, and bleeding into. It's a perfect day for sailing, with your destination 15 miles north of you and the wind out of the west at 10-15 knots. The skies are clear, and beers are chilling in the icebox. Myron, your old high school buddy, is feeding the fish over the leeward rail, giving you a nice chuckle at someone else's expense. Here's where it turns bad: instead of keeping an eagle eye forward as assigned, Myron is paying for his double chili omelet breakfast croissant. Instead of keeping your own fool eyes open, you're watching Myron. Pity you don't see the 120-foot gin palace you're about to T-bone.

The screeching, rending, tearing crash you hear is nothing compared to what's about to happen. It seems you've hit Johnny Cochran's new flagship, *Litigious*, in the one spot that would sink her on the spot. Meanwhile, Myron flew forward and knocked himself silly (thin skulls run in his family). Unbeknownst to you, the force of the impact tore your engine loose from its bed, and the fall split the oil pan open, dumping five quarts of black oil into your bilge. The good news is that your automatic bilge pump switch performs flawlessly. Too bad there's more bad news: you just pumped all of that



nasty oil straight into Lake Pristine (home of the EPA, Sierra Club, Greenpeace, and The Fund for Animals). Bummer.

Coolly, almost casually, you reach into the sodden folder containing all of your ship's documents and extract ... a yellow sticky note reminding yourself to:

"Look into insurance of some kind." Gasp. Choke. Sport, your nightmare is just beginning. You've just lost the boat, your house, your business, the '78 Monza you traded down to in order to buy the boat, and great Aunt Fannie's old brooch. On top of that, your picture will be on every environmental activist's bumper sticker from Prince William Sound to the Love Canal.

You wake up sweating and with an irresistible urge to run down to the marina and pet your boat. First thing in the morning, you resolve to get boat insurance. Where do you begin? What do you need to know?

Owners of good old boats should know that insurance companies are going to focus on the second, rather than the first, word that describes your diamond in the rough. Get rid of the fantasy that you can call up your local car insurance guy, tell him your 20-year-old 26-foot *Sinkmenot* is worth \$110,000 and be set.

First and foremost, you need liability insurance that covers damage you do to another boat, damage you do to a marina, damage you do to your guests, and damage you do to the environment. Most likely, your marina won't let you tie up until you have proof of insurance. Common sense says you should buy insurance as soon as possible. Don't fool around with this. A lawsuit or two could put you out of business. Worse, you could have to explain to Aunt Fannie what happened to the brooch she gave you.

Beyond liability insurance, it's a tough call on whether you get comprehensive coverage or not. If you bought the boat with a secured loan, you'll have to carry comprehensive insurance. You won't be required to carry comprehensive if you have clear title to your boat. Personally, if I don't owe the bank, I don't want to throw money at an insurance company. I need my

folding dough for bait and beer. I trust my own skills, judgment, and mechanical abilities. Besides, the risk and exposure makes me that much more careful. Make up your own mind.

You will need to provide the insurance company with a résumé of your boating experience. Some companies offer a discount for completion of a United States Power Squadron or Coast Guard Auxiliary safe boating class. Some will flatly deny coverage due to insufficient experience. It's almost a certainty that whatever insurance company you deal with will want an insurance survey less than one month old before they bind you with a policy.

An insurance survey is less thorough than a full C&V (condition and valuation) survey. Primarily, the surveyor will be looking for problems that will cause the boat to burn, break, or sink. As a buyer, you will probably want a C&V survey to make sure you aren't buying a pig in a poke. Insurance companies will accept this to begin coverage, and a good C&V survey gives you an excellent starting point for a repair list. (A C&V survey generally runs \$10 to \$15 per foot.) Some insurance companies maintain a list of surveyors that they regularly use. It's a good place to start looking, as is NAMS (National Association of Marine Surveyors). (*Address and telephone numbers on Page 12.*)

Obviously, if the oil pump outlet discharges directly overboard and the propane tanks are located next to the engine along with the briquettes and starter fluid, there are some things you will need to fix. An insurance company will sometimes offer to carry you as a "port risk," meaning you can stay at the boatyard, but you can't put the boat into the water and use it.


Understandably, most yards are unwilling to accept "port risk" boats anywhere except the farthest

reaches of the back of the yard. As soon as you send the insurance company satisfactory proof of repairs, you're on your way to watching Myron yack over the side on a spanking reach across Lake Pristine. Satisfactory proof of repairs can mean anything from Polaroid photos and a photocopy of a receipt, to a signed statement from a marine contractor. It depends on the company insuring you.

You will also want to negotiate coverage amounts and deductibles with your insurance company. Most marinas will tell you how much liability insurance they would like you to carry. Find out how much that would cost, and compare that to the cost of the next step up.

If you can afford it, go one step higher. If you can get a discount by restricting your insured cruising area to your home waters, go for it. Be realistic: don't buy insurance for the whole East Coast if you'll never leave Long Island Sound.

Depending upon where you live, you might be able to save some money if you move your boat north for hurricane season. Also, some insurance companies offer towing services as well as other benefits at a discounted rate. Take a look at a few quotes before you settle on one company. Be sure and ask about the claims process. Make sure you understand how to get in touch with a representative and what you should or shouldn't do in case of an accident.

The bottom line is that you don't want to get caught unprotected. If you don't carry liability insurance, get it. If you're looking at buying a used (good old) boat, budget for insurance premiums and a survey every couple of years. You'll have a lot more fun with your boat that way, and you won't have nightmares about T-boning the M/V *Litigious*. 

Prioritize your upgrades



At *Good Old Boat*, we recently received an email letter asking us to list some good old boats and put a price on what it should cost to upgrade them. While it would be nice to develop a simple rule of thumb, we were at a loss. However, it got us to thinking about upgrades. What follows could save you some money.

Odds are you've heard *that* promise before, and you're skeptical because what usually follows is an invitation to spend some money now to avoid spending more later. Worse, the money spent now is very tangible while the avoided

expenses are usually a little fuzzy. At ease.

This is not one of those.

Picture in your mind's eye a beautiful good old boat sailing in a beautiful place in the same year she was built and commissioned. The crew members are all smiling. They are competent recreational sailors thoroughly enjoying themselves. It is a lovely snapshot in time. What is missing in the picture? Be historically accurate

now. Got it yet? When that boat was built, many of the upgrades we might hang on it today didn't even exist. Many of the ones that did exist were not common. What you're conjuring up is a fairly simple good old boat, one which is making the crew happy and working well without most of today's upgrades.

Let's start with that reference point instead of the one we commonly carry around in our heads in which there are so many things "you gotta have" on your boat. The implication is that if the boat was a good design to begin with, if it has been well maintained, and is being used as the designer

intended, it may not need any upgrades. This is a radical departure from the

advertising copy you may be accustomed to, so let's go step by step.

Rule Number One: Maintaining and upgrading are different activities. Good maintenance does not require adding new gear.

Rule Number Two: The "best boat" must be understood in the

context of the best boat for a particular owner and crew. They must be able to afford, understand, and work it. It should be well-suited to the ways they use it in the area where they use it. Using a blue-water voyager for day sailing and coastal cruising is an expensive equipment mismatch, unless that bluewater boat really will be heading out to sea in the foreseeable future.

Rule Number Three: The "necessary upgrades" for a boat should be determined by the locale and the use.

Rule Number Four: The "optional upgrades" should be understood to be just that.

Rule Number Five: Upgrading one kind of boat until it is another kind of boat is an expensive plan that rarely produces a fine boat. Daysailers, weekenders, coastal cruisers, bluewater voyagers, and racing boats are all designed with their primary function enhanced at the expense of their secondary functions. All design is a compromise.

by Jerry Powlas

Most new boat advertising tries to make you believe this is not true. Manufacturers and distributors often paint a picture of a boat that maximizes interior space and convenience. It has accommodations for a large crew and is extremely fast, seaworthy, comfortable, and safe. It is solidly built but wins races and can be sailed short-handed by a couple. In short, it exceeds in all areas.

Sorry, all design is a compromise, and the best boat designers were the ones who made the best compromises. Even the term “best compromises” must take the intended use into account. If your boat’s essence and spirit are in the lightness and quickness of her design, adding tons of gear to make her a voyager will prove disappointing. Tread lightly.

Rule Number Six: Speaking of lightly, upgrades not only cost heavy money, but they also add weight. Regardless of the type of boat you have, add weight sparingly. Too much gear can crush the spirit of a club racer and compromise the properties of a voyager. If you sail in an area where an all-chain anchor rode is not needed, use rope. It is much lighter and easier on you and your boat. The same is true of anchors. Heavy ground tackle will often require a heavy windlass. This is going to be up in the bow remember, not in the keel. Think twice before upgrading all that ground tackle to the point where you can’t lift it without an expensive, heavy windlass mounted high and forward.

Those are the concepts. Now let’s apply them. First, just so you understand what’s at stake, make a list of all the upgrades you can think of that you might want on your boat. Then get out a catalog and add up the cost in dollars, hours of installation and modification, and pounds of added

gear. Don’t be surprised if the costs are a significant percentage of what you paid for your boat. Even the weight may be a significant percentage of the boat’s weight. Be careful to look for the domino effect, in which the increased electrical usage requires a generally upgraded system, and the improved anchor gear requires a windlass. Last, look where the weight will go. Lower is better than higher. Too much weight in the ends is not good either. New toys on the mast take away stiffness. The higher they are, the worse they affect the properties of the boat.

With the list prepared, determine the purpose of each upgrade. Common purposes may be:

- Replacing weak, worn, or obsolete and defective equipment.
- Enhanced safety.
- Improved navigation.
- Improved communications.
- Improved speed.
- Improved comfort.
- Improved convenience
- Adding to or changing the “mission” of the boat.
- Just plain novelty.

Make your own list of purposes, but be honest about why you would want a particular upgrade and what you hope it will do for you. Note here not what the ad copy says it will do for everybody, rather what you hope it will do for you.

Next, list how you use your boat. Include all the types of uses the boat has been put to in the last few years and will be put to in the next few years. These might be:

- Daysailing.
- Weekend sailing.
- Coastal cruising.
- Long-distance voyaging.
- Racing (perhaps even list the types of racing).

Again, make your own list. Try to avoid the “I-think-I-might-want-to-sail-around-the-world-someday” type of thinking. Be realistic. Now apply Rule Number One: Forget about upgrades until all the maintenance is done and done well. If you buy some new gear in the process of making things work, that’s fine. For example, it may not be cost-effective to repair a 1966 depth sounder. Replace it. That’s not really an upgrade in the sense we’re talking about here, even though the new instrument may have more features than the old one. New sails, standing rigging, and the like are not really upgrades for the same reason. They’re maintenance.

To apply Rule Number Two, look at your boat and how you use it. Only when comparing your boat and crew to the intended uses can you determine what reasonable upgrades may be needed, which are optional but will enhance some important aspect of your sailing experience, and which are expensive mismatches.

For example, if you really only daysail in very familiar waters with a very shallow-draft boat, the only instrument you may need is your weather radio at home. You will probably want a compass and depth sounder if you have a vessel with a deeper fixed draft and you could get caught in situations which you can’t navigate “by eye.”

Rule Number Three should help you remember to review how and where the boat is used. Go ahead and pick some upgrades. Now look at each one in terms of its cost, weight, and the possible domino effect. Because you have made a list of the intended enhancements that these upgrades would provide and what they will do for you — not in general terms but in specific terms considering you, your boat, and how you use it — you can ask the next question. It is: Given that I will spend that much

money and add that much weight, is this the best way or are there better ways to get the enhancement I want?

Will you, for example, sleep better at night with a plow anchor and 300 pounds of all-chain rode or with two smaller, lighter anchors set Bermuda-style on nylon rode? The smaller anchors and rodes may cost the same or less, and you can lift them without a windlass. Identify the enhancement, then find the most cost- and weight-effective way to get it. Don't go for gear, go for what it does for you and choose from alternatives.

Rule Number Four helps you know when you're considering optional upgrades, as opposed to necessary upgrades. There are gray areas here, but think of it this way: all the gear that goes in the category of "that would be nice (or even really, really nice), but I don't need it today," is optional. Optional upgrades are OK to have on a boat but not until the necessary upgrades are in and done. In the list above, for example, replacing weak and worn or obsolete and defective equipment, enhancing safety, improving navigation, (and maybe) improving communications might be the necessary upgrades for your boat. However improving speed, comfort, and convenience; adding to or changing the "mission" of the boat; or adding novelty items would fall in the optional upgrades category. Mark your own list to help you remember when you're considering something optional.

Rule Number Five is the one that has to do with changing the mission of the boat. Many good old boats were designed as dual-purpose club racers. By appealing to one of several rating or handicapping systems, it was hoped that a family coastal cruiser could be a competitive racer as well. To some degree this worked, and a lot of sailors got a chance to try racing

as well as cruising without having to support two boats.

You may well be the owner of a racehorse that has been put out to pasture, and you probably want to go cruising with it. In the case of these dual-purpose boats, this works fairly well, provided you keep some things in mind. Every boat has a spirit or personality which is the sum of what the designer put into her lines and specifications and what the builder put into her construction.

This gets a little gray, too, but hang in there, it's an important point. There will be some things that the boat does very well. These will be the things you enjoy doing most with that boat. Be very careful not to harm the best characteristics of your boat in an effort to change the mission capabilities of the boat. Adding a large three-bladed prop to a fast light fin-keel boat is an example of this. It is possible to modify a boat until it doesn't do anything well. It is difficult to enjoy a boat like that.

Club racers can take on some weight before they become overweight, slow, and sluggish. A rough estimate would be to weigh the intended racing crew (say four or five deck gorillas) and consider the ones you will not carry when cruising as the weight you can add without too much harm to the properties of the boat. If you cruise with two, you can add three-gorillas-worth of gear, and she will still float on her lines. The added gear will not immediately jump to the high side in a tack, so she will not be as fast as she was in racing trim, but she will be good enough for cruising.


Heavier boats, boats with long overhangs, and those that never made any pretensions about being dual-purpose club racers can usually take on more weight gracefully. It is important to recognize however, that you can add enough weight to ruin the properties of any boat. As you consider your

upgrades, think about what they weigh. Remember that if you want to cruise, you will take on heavy stores. Leave room for them in your weight budget.

There are some upgrades that are definitely worthwhile. Good life jackets you are willing to wear are worthwhile, as are good foul weather gear, sea boots, and deck shoes that will grip a wet deck. The newer man-overboard recovery equipment is also worth the investment. Every boat with an inboard engine should have a minimum of two fuel filters also. If you have a reliable, but aging, Atomic 4 in your boat, take care of it, and don't change a thing except maintenance items. If it does not always start and run the way you want it to, there are upgrades for it that are worth the cost.

Some upgrades seem to offer little bang for your buck. Electronic wind speed and direction repeaters cost hundreds of dollars and are almost as good as an experienced sailor looking at a dinghy sparflly or a tuft of yarn. These electronics seem to have a high failure rate, probably because in many cases they are working year-round.

There are many advances in navigation and communications that have taken place since the majority of good old boats were built. If you need it, GPS costs very little and provides a valuable margin of safety. Like everything else on a boat, it will eventually fail, so you need to know how to navigate without it. Learn to do that, and practice doing it regularly so you have the equipment and skills ready when that little gem takes a timeout.

That's it. What's good is only what's good for you. Evaluate your boat, crew, and usage, and upgrade accordingly. Experienced sailors respect seamanship, not equipment lists. Perhaps this kind of thinking will save you some money and help you fit your boat out in a way that is right for you. 

Consider your tax breaks

Our lives are rich with opposing forces, dilemmas we continually face and cope with. One of the most onerous examples is the need to earn wages and pay taxes in order to enjoy that life's-blood we call boating. This grubbing for shekels is hopelessly intertwined with the replenishment of our souls. Can it be made less painful? Yes. In fact, I'll show you an extra \$10,000 or \$15,000 that you may have for your project. Read on, fellow sufferer.

Let's talk about ways to make sure you pay no more than your fair share when the tax man cometh ... ways you may not have realized were there ... ways you may have thought were available exclusively to land-lubbers. We'll talk only about Uncle Sam and his merry band of IRS elves. But each state also has tax laws that must be considered on their individual merits. In addition, you have to be able to itemize your deductions; if you're claiming the standard deduction, these savings won't apply.

We will discuss three aspects of federal income tax law that can save you hundreds or thousands of dollars each year. No "creative" schemes, no shaving the facts, no innovative (and untested) approaches. Just solid U.S. tax code.

Savings Number One — Your Boat is a Second Home

Your boat is considered a second home by the IRS for tax purposes. Their sole stipulation is that it must have a sleeping facility (berths), kitchen facility (galley), and bathroom facility (head). There is no minimum time that you have to spend on board each year nor even a requirement that the boat be in the water. It just has to have those facilities. As a second home, the boat mortgage or boat loan interest is deductible from your taxable

by Bob Wood

income. If you secure a loan to rebuild an older boat using the boat as

collateral, that is equivalent to a mortgage, and the interest on that is deductible above and beyond the primary boat loan used for purchasing it.

As an example, with a \$40,000 secured boat loan on a qualified boat, you would be paying approximately \$4,000 per year in interest at 10 percent. If your income is in the 28 percent tax bracket, your savings would amount to 28 percent of that \$4,000 or \$1,120 per year. Congratulations! Uncle Sam just bought you a VHF and a GPS and filled the cooler with refreshments. Next year you can let him buy you new lines or cushions with your savings. Additionally, any personal property tax that your state

may impose on your "second home" is deductible.

An alternative savings can be realized if you have purchased real estate with a dock for your boat. The same rules apply: purchase payment interest is deductible on the real estate, IF the property is used to secure the loan and IF the real estate has the qualifying facilities. Your real estate needs to have sleeping, eating, and bathroom accommodations to qualify as a second home. Also, any improvements that you make to your property (i.e., build a dock, run utilities to the boat, build a sidewalk or driveway, etc.) will have deductible interest if you get a second mortgage on the property to secure the loan. And like your boat or primary home, any general real estate taxes are deductible also. Please note that special assessment taxes are generally not deductible.

Note the word "alternative" in the above paragraph. The IRS says you may only take the income tax deductions from two homes: your primary residence and one other. The only way you could take the deductions from financing a boat and some accompanying real estate would be if the deductible mortgage were against one or the other ... and as long as it has the qualifying facilities.

As a different option, you may choose to simplify your life by taking out a second mortgage (home



equity loan) on your primary residence and using the money to buy a boat, waterfront property, new sails, or anything else. And the interest on the loan will be tax deductible, if you are itemizing deductions.

Concerns with this approach are first that you may not have enough equity in your home to borrow all the money you need, second that an additional mortgage secured by your primary home will make it too easy to overlook some important items on your new purchase — such as titles, recordings, surveys, and insurance — and third that your home and boat are inextricably linked for the length of the mortgage.

Specifically, if assets have to be divided due to divorce, death, or disaster, the simplifying and expedient feature of a single property carrying the mortgages may become a liability instead. In some situations, it can be an advantage for each component of

your life to carry its own financing without obligating or risking your primary residence.

Savings Number Two — Use for Business Purposes

If you are in a marine-related occupation and if you use your boat in conducting business, you can offset your income from that business by the operating expenses for the boat prorated for the amount of time it is used for business vs. the amount of time it's used for pleasure.

Wait! Don't groan and turn the page, it's not hard at all! Document the usage with your ship's log. You do keep a ship's log, don't you? Record the business activity conducted (demonstrated new high-tech marine widgets, showed prospective customers waterfront property for sale, etc). Record the persons/clients/customers who were on board. Divide each day used for business by the total number of days the boat is used for the

percentage of operating expenses you may claim.

Example:

Boat is used for business 49 days in 1998.

Boat is used, in total, 153 days in 1998.

49 days divided by 153 days equals .32 or 32 percent.

If your boat operating expenses for 1998 were \$8,200, then business operation equals 32 percent of the total \$8,200 expenses (\$2,624), if the business conducted, in part, by boat operation put you in the 28 percent bracket, then you just saved 28 percent of \$2,624 or \$735. The savings probably just filled your diesel tank and chart locker.

Examples of operating expenses that can be prorated between your personal and business uses are:

- Slip/marina fees.
- Slip utility bills (water, electricity, phone, garbage collection, etc.).

- Repairs to boat and/or slip.
- Boat insurance.
- Fuel/propane supplies.
- Security system/service costs.
- Annual licenses, fees, stamps, inspections.
- Operating supplies (flares, life vests, charts, tide tables, etc.).
- Depreciation.

Some words of caution:

The business conducted should be marine-related. If you are a chef and consummating a contract for fresh produce, don't meet on board your boat and call it business. The IRS makes it quite clear that you cannot deduct the cost of using a boat, plane, or flying saucer for entertainment. Business, yes; entertainment, no.

Along the same lines, deduction of food and beverages as operating expenses can be justified under some circumstances, but I wouldn't go there.

Savings Number Three — Limited Rental Income

Uncle Sam has blessed us with this last generosity: if you rent or charter your boat or boat/property

for two weeks or less per year, the income is not taxable. This is considered casual rental by the elves and does not have to be reported. For example, if your floating palace chartered for two weeks at \$1,000 per week, your income would be \$2,000. If you are in the 28 percent bracket, you just saved a nifty \$560. This will buy you breakfast for two at the Beverly Hilton or onboard groceries for a month ... two months for me.

As with all tax issues, the secret to staying out of hot water is to carefully document, log, record, and itemize, and to save the information to substantiate the claimed deductions for at least seven years. Since you should be saving most of this information, anyhow, it's a small effort for big returns. There are many more tax issues, especially for business purposes, that are beyond the scope of this article. Some, like depreciation methods, offer significant savings and deserve their own article.


When deducting interest paid on a boat mortgage, a boat second

mortgage, a slip condo or real estate mortgage, a condo/real estate second mortgage, or a primary residence mortgage, use Schedule A, Itemized Deductions. If your lending institution doesn't supply you with a standard mortgage Form 1098 for your boat interest (and most won't), you will need to supply the bank's name and identification number on your return if claiming that deduction.

When claiming business expenses as self-employed, use Schedule C. When claiming business expenses as an employee, use Form 2106.

It seems that there is always a "bottom line" to financial pieces. For me, the term often carries with it the connotation of wretched news for the reader. Preferably, articles with good news should contain a "top line." Similarly, explanations of stupefying accounting methods should have a "numb line." Instead, this article has been all good news.

How does a story on saving a lot of dollars have anything to do with mariners focused on maintaining and restoring older boats? It means fewer corners to cut. Or maybe that extra teak grating is now within reach. Upgrading your tankage became doable. If you want to get serious, an annual \$1,800 savings would equate to \$150 per month which could be leveraged to finance about \$14,000 in needed improvements using an equity loan, of course, for more savings. Money makes an excellent restoration tool.

We do need to pay our taxes to pay for the country's infrastructure. But we don't have an obligation to pay more than our fair share. So don't. If you have some moral objection to getting back your rightful dollars, send them to the Old Sailors' Home in Seattle. My friends, this is a tax story with a good ending: a top line. Smooth journeys and a happy gurgling wake. 

Savings	Details	Savings/year
Savings Number One		
Loan to purchase boat	\$40,000 @ 10%	\$1,120
Secured loan for improvements or	\$12,000 @ 12%	\$403
Loan to purchase dockage	\$65,000 @ 8%	\$1,456
Secured loan for improvements	\$ 9,000 @ 12%	\$302
Property taxes	\$1,400	\$392
Savings Number Two		
Business use for 32 percent of operation	\$8,200 annual operating costs	\$735
Savings Number Three		
Casual rental for 2 weeks	\$ 2,000 total income	\$560

(Assuming an income in the 28 percent tax bracket)

With fond memories of

SMALL BOAT

JOURNAL

The concept of small is something all boat owners understand. Even on a VIP's, 60-foot mega-yacht, the washing machine is usually a diminutive version of the Maytag back at the mansion. Space is always at a premium aboard boats — large, small, and in between. And those who manage to take best advantage of what room is available usually end up with a tight boat and happy crew.


A decade ago, a magazine called *Small Boat Journal* capitalized on doing big things with small boats. I had the pleasure of writing for that publication and was sorry to see it go, taking many small, but useful, ideas with it. Many others also mourned its passing, and a few of them asked *Good Old Boat* to recreate what they had lost. So the founders of *Good Old Boat* have asked me to bring back the essence of *Small Boat Journal* in an ongoing column; in other words to take the theme of small-is-good one step further and apply it to good old boats. I'm flattered but a bit pensive.

To begin with, how do you apply smallness to something that isn't? In my own 30-foot Eldredge/McInnis-designed sloop, I've been sort of answering that question annually for the last 12 years. For instance, recently I moved the head from a spacious midships area in the forward compartment to a 3 x 3-foot space on the port side off the main saloon. This made the forward compartment berths a little more, shall we say, healthy? But it also brought the head space down to the bare minimum.

At the same time, I also decided to upgrade the head's discharge system to include a more realistic holding tank. Strapped for space and seeing no reason for any holding tank whatsoever, the previous owner had installed a five-gallon bladder tank just to comply with new regulations. Nearly inaccessible and practically uncleanable, it was never used. But these days, environmental considerations demand better.

In a 3 x 3 space on a 30-foot boat, however, even a five-gallon holding tank is too big. Square, round or polygonal, there just didn't seem to be any reasonable solution. So I started searching and found that Raritan Engineering Company of Millville, N.J., stocks a holding tank that actually fits around that empty space directly underneath and around the bowl of the toilet. This otherwise unused area is enough for a holding tank with a five-gallon capacity.

Of course, my wife immediately pointed out two shortcomings. With the tank fitted tightly up against the bowl and pump mechanisms, cleaning becomes a problem. So when I installed the tank, I used quick-release fittings on the piping. Pop the tank out and cleaning is a snap. She also noted having a half-filled, translucent tank sloshing around at your feet might revolt some sailors. So I painted the tank white and then painted some amusing fishes and sea-things for comic relief.

Ultimately, we were able to do more with less. In future issues, that's what this column will be about. Suggestions, criticisms, and payola are always welcome at: HC #33, Box 24-A, Arrowsic, ME 04530, or emailed to ktextor@biddeford.com. 

by Ken Textor

Is fiberglass

Like all of us, boats age; but unlike humans, old boats don't necessarily die. Given enough tender loving care, there's no reason why a venerable boat — whether fiberglass, wood, metal, or even concrete — can't be kept in service indefinitely. Similarly, antique car buffs maintain vehicles that are 50-100 years old — often in better-than-new condition. However, the vast majority of autos are scrapped within 20 years of manufacture, at the point their current owners decide they're no longer worth fixing. The average fiberglass boat is basically like a run-of-the-mill car, although its service life will probably be longer. In either case, the trick is determining when it's no longer worthwhile to keep the aging trooper going.

Even more so with boats than cars, it's not the chronological age of the boat which really matters. Much more important are the quality of original construction, service history, and maintenance. A well-constructed boat that was lightly used and properly maintained can be a better bet after 20 years, than a shoddily-built three-year-old vessel.

Of course, certain boats (like certain people) can be awfully good at hiding a shady past, so it's vital when contemplating a used boat to investigate very carefully and, in most cases, to engage the services of a skilled professional surveyor. It is equally important to make realistic estimates of the costs involved in restoring or upgrading, not forgetting the value of your own time for do-it-

As the forerunners of the fiberglass revolution reach their 50th birthdays, more and more questions are arising about the ultimate longevity of GRP boats. As is so often the case, there are few easy answers ...

yourself projects. Nautical dreamers have too often become the custodians of never-ending boat restoration projects.

All cautions aside, there are a lot of sound and serviceable older boats out there. But to identify a good candidate (or for that matter, to keep one you've already got in good health), it pays to know something about fiberglass and boat construction in general.

Early days of fiberglass

Experiments in fiberglass boat building began in the '40s, but it was not until the late '50s that the boom began. The ball got rolling with smaller boats. Boston Whaler, for example, got its start in 1954.

Hatteras and Bertram were pioneers in using fiberglass construction for larger power boats, while Pearson and O'Day led the charge in the sailboat field.

By and large, the early fiberglass boats were built very conservatively, with massively thick hull lay-ups and quite often all-wood decks, cabins, and interiors. Working with an unfamiliar material, shipwrights tended to hedge their bets by overbuilding and, as a

result, a goodly proportion of the earliest fiberglass hulls are still plenty strong enough to take to sea.

The '60s brought explosive growth to the fiberglass boat building field and real competition within the industry. "Making it a little worse and selling it a little cheaper" could easily have been the unwritten credo of certain unscrupulous operators. Some others probably had the best intentions, but lacked the skill and knowledge to put out a good product. On the other hand, there were many excellent fiberglass boats from the late '60s and '70s — honest boats that decent maintenance

and occasional refits should keep going almost

by Sven Donaldson

indefinitely. By now, most of the real dogs from this era will have fallen by the wayside (or at any rate, be easily recognizable).

By the '80s, fiberglassing supplies were a lot more expensive than they'd been in the "old days," and most surviving boatbuilders had become considerably more sophisticated about using them. Cored construction was becoming commonplace and uni-

forever?



Some older boats — Hinckleys such as the one shown here and many others — are well worth an investment of time and money. The quality of original construction, service history, and maintenance are factors in determining which boats are good investments.

(Photo by Mary Jane Hayes)

directional reinforcements began to find a place alongside traditional mat and roving. Engineering advances such as bonded hull liners incorporating “force grids” also helped to produce some genuinely superior boats — lighter and faster, yet as robust as ever. On the other hand, greater sophistication also introduced new opportunities for things to go wrong ... as always, it’s buyer beware.

Causes of deterioration

Some of the oldest fiberglass vessels have had excellent service records — a fact that has contributed to the myth that fiberglass is largely immune to degradation. In one study, Owens-Corning reported no detectable loss of physical properties in the hulls of 1952-vintage patrol boats when test samples were assessed in 1962 and again in 1971 (the year the boats were retired from active service). In another detailed evaluation, the U.S. Navy found that samples taken from fiberglass fairings on a submarine built in 1954 had suffered virtually no deterioration after 11 years in service. But lest we read too much into these results, it should be noted that these vessels were built to rigorous military specs generally using nothing but well-consolidated, woven reinforcements (no chopped strand mat containing soluble binders). In fact, the submarine laminate, made back in 1953, was

Why call it fiberglass?

Owens-Corning, probably the world’s largest and best-known manufacturer of glass fiber, introduced the trade name “Fiberglas” after World War II. Prior to that, the “exotic” composite material made of glass fibers in a matrix of thermosetting resin was generally called glass-reinforced plastic or GRP.

Indeed, outside of North America, it’s still usually called GRP, although Owens-Corning’s advertising campaign was pervasive enough that the anglicized variant “fiberglass” has become a regular part of the language in the U.S., United Kingdom, and Canada. In fact, because typical laminates are about 75 percent resin and only 25 percent glass fiber, GRP is actually the more descriptive term.

vacuum bagged! It was common practice also, to paint the finished structure (rather than to lay up over opaque gelcoat) so the translucent laminate could be visually inspected to detect internal voids or other imperfections.

But once fiberglass pleasure boats started rolling off the assembly lines and popping out of backyard boat sheds, quality control seldom, if ever, measured up to military specifications. The following is a list of the most common deficiencies found in fiberglass pleasure boats. Of course, very few boats exhibit all of them, and some have few or none; but it's important to know what to look for:

Weathering — Sun and atmospheric contaminants will gradually attack gelcoat, causing it to dull and eventually chalk. A sacrificial layer of wax, renewed periodically, offers some protection. Weathering is usually more a cosmetic problem than a structural threat. The rare exception is a dark-colored boat in tropical sunshine which may get so hot that the resin in the underlying laminate loses a portion of its strength.

Hydration and osmosis — Polyester gelcoats and laminates will gradually take up small quantities of water if immersed for extended periods. Whether this hydration causes only insignificant softening of the superficial laminate or more serious damage depends upon a wide variety of factors relating to the materials used and construction quality. In rare cases, osmosis and/or water invasion are grave problems. However, more often it's no more serious than rust spots on the fender. Most older boats are overbuilt enough to tolerate a fair bit of superficial osmosis (particularly if it's confined to the outer skin of mat that normally overlies the roving layers) without becoming dangerously weak.

Under-cure — Molding that cures too slowly at overly low temperatures will lose too much styrene through evaporation. The result is a soft, weak boat because styrene monomer is not just a solvent, but an integral

Repairing gelcoat cracking

Even small, localized areas of gelcoat cracking should not be neglected. Although they don't always indicate stress damage to the underlying laminate, they represent pathways for water intrusion that may ultimately cause structural deterioration. The minimum satisfactory repair entails opening up each crack so it becomes a V-shaped groove (a hand-held power tool works well); then filling with new gelcoat. Accurate color matching is always a challenge. If cracking recurs, the underlying laminate probably needs beefing up.

component in the polymerization of polyester resin. Builders who worked out of small, chilly shops were (and occasionally still are) the principal culprits.

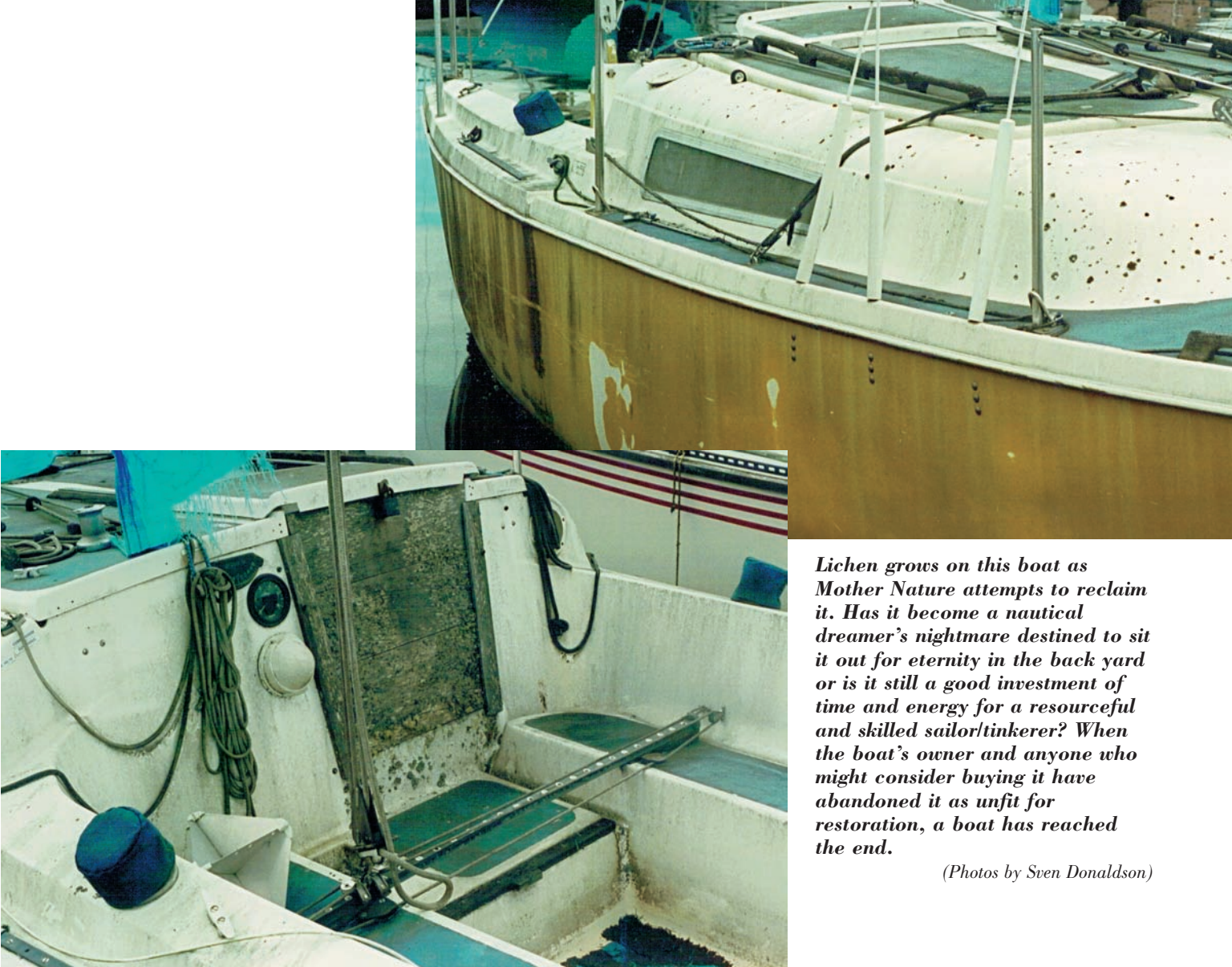
"Dry" laminates — Inadequate wet-out of the glass fiber reinforcements will result in a weak, flexible laminate that's likely to soak up water. Resin-starved areas in a hull or deck are much more likely than an entire "dry" part. However, when the latter does occur, it becomes very difficult to either upgrade, or to repair localized, accidental damage.

Micro-cracking — The Achilles heel of ordinary polyester resins is their brittleness and low "elongation to break." Glass fibers will typically stretch about 5 percent before they fail, but the average laminating resin gives way at only 1- to 2-percent strain. In a fiberglass laminate, the resin will typically break away from some of the fibers on a microscopic scale, leaving the laminate permanently weakened and more flexible than before. This typically happens when portions of a hull or deck deflect too much due to insufficient laminate thickness or inadequate internal supports. It may also happen in portions of the laminate that are excessively resin-rich. Furthermore, high local loads such as having the topsides impact hard against the fenders can cause "bruising" of the underlying laminate (tough to detect if the boat has been subsequently re-faired and painted).

Stress concentrations — Sharp corners, cut-outs such as hatchways, and the abrupt termination of internal members such as engine beds can create situations in which internal forces are focused within a comparatively small part of the laminate. This may lead to micro-cracking or, occasionally, a catastrophic failure unless the stress concentration zone is appropriately reinforced. Fortunately, gelcoat cracking or crazing is often a good indicator of an incipient problem. The gelcoat is more brittle than the laminate beneath, so surface cracks don't necessarily mean structural damage. All the same, an area of cracked gelcoat is a potential danger signal that warrants investigation and repair. (*See sidebar above.*)

Core problems — If your boat is old enough, it will likely have "solid laminates" in both hull and deck. However, many boats dating back even to the late '60s feature "sandwich construction," with plywood or end-grain balsa, particularly in transoms and decks. Encapsulated plywood is especially problematical, because if water gets at it, the rot tends to spread laterally at a good clip. End-grain balsa is somewhat better, although the saw cuts in "contour-cut" balsa can easily become water channels if not properly filled with resin.

Another common core-related problem is "delamination" (*See Bill Sandifer's article on Page 38.*): having one or both of the fiberglass skins part company with the core due to local impact or other excessive stress. This can usually be detected by tap testing



Lichen grows on this boat as Mother Nature attempts to reclaim it. Has it become a nautical dreamer's nightmare destined to sit it out for eternity in the back yard or is it still a good investment of time and energy for a resourceful and skilled sailor/tinkerer? When the boat's owner and anyone who might consider buying it have abandoned it as unfit for restoration, a boat has reached the end.

(Photos by Sven Donaldson)

the boat (delaminated areas make a dull sound instead of a sharp click when struck with a coin or other small metal object). If the delamination is extensive, a deck will crackle and feel spongy underfoot. Minor delamination can be repaired by injecting epoxy resin. More serious cases may require replacing the outer skin and core material — a costly proposition.


Worth restoring?

As often as not, it's the condition of major equipment such as engines, rigging, hardware, furnishings, etc. that will determine whether an older fiberglass boat is worth saving or not. In practical terms, a boat "dies" when its owner (and everyone who considers buying it) decides that it's too nasty and unsafe to use "as is," and too expensive to restore to an acceptable condition. Although anything made of fiberglass can, in principle, be "made

new" again, there comes a point when the exercise ceases to be worthwhile.

Some old fiberglass boats — Hinckleys, Swans, etc. — have become collectors' items and are worth lavishing time and money upon because there's a good chance that they'll appreciate in years to come. However, many will never become classics and will therefore someday reach the point of no return. It's wise to keep this basic principle firmly in mind when walking the docks in search of that ultimate "bargain."

When the end finally comes the carcass itself becomes something of a problem, because fiberglass doesn't decay like wood and can't be readily recycled like steel or aluminum. Of course, some fiberglass boats catch fire and burn up (releasing clouds of poisonous smoke in the process), and a

few are shipwrecked on exposed shores and pounded to shreds. However, the great majority of today's fleet may still be around in a recognizably boatlike form 50 years from now. Interestingly, one of the most satisfactory methods of disposal is the construction of artificial reefs to serve as fish habitat. More frivolous-sounding suggestions such as swimming pools and low-cost housing may not, in fact, be entirely outlandish in all cases. Finally, there are pilot programs under way to recover and recycle the chemical constituents from old fiberglass — potentially the best solution of all when an elderly boat is plagued with overwhelming problems. 

This is a revised version of an article which was published in Pacific Yachting, September 1995.



Photos by Mary Jane Hayes

The skewered wreath on the facing page, the “winter palette” above, the dinghy lying in wait at right, and the wintry whites photo below were all taken at the James Landing Marina and Young’s Landing Marina, both in Scituate, Mass. The cover photo of Renaissance, part of this collection, was taken at the James Landing Marina.



Wintertime blues



*Those of you who have no winter,
please allow the rest of us this
moment of grief ...*

Paradise found

Ken and Pat O'Driscoll have lived abroad, seen the sights, sampled the foods, and tasted the wine in faraway places. So now, as they adjust to retirement living, they do not feel compelled to sail *Fineen III*, their Niagara 35, to distant ports. They say they are not finished exploring the many nooks and crannies of the paradise they call home.

Their paradise is the North Channel, a secluded part of Lake Huron offering natural beauty, clear

water, pure air, and loons. It is the escape destination of many who sail lakes Michigan, Huron, and Superior, but because of its location, it is unavailable to weekend sailors and doesn't get overcrowded as a result.

As the name suggests, *Fineen III* is the third in a line of sailboats for the O'Driscolls. The name underscores Ken's Irish

heritage. When he and Pat were considering marriage, Grandpa O'Driscoll sat Pat down and gave it to her straight: "You're marrying

by Karen Larson



into a family of pirates." This was news to Ken, too, but Grandpa sang from memory the chantey tale of *Fineen* (pronounced Finney-in) the pirate:

*What ho! For Fineen the Rover,
Fineen O'Driscoll the Free,
As straight as the masts of his galley
And as wild as the waves of the sea.*

Pat married Ken anyway, and over the years the couple has learned many verses of *Fineen's* escapades from other O'Driscolls and *Fineen* admirers. A trip to Baltimore, Ireland, confirmed the hard-to-believe stories of the early 17th century Irish clan chief. The sailing namesakes of all *Fineens* — I, II, and III — justified calling the vessels "he."

Ken's very first boat was not named *Fineen*, since he had yet to learn the tale of *Fineen the Rover*. It was a rowboat with a sail and one oar, which he bought in New York at age 12 for \$2.50. And there was a Sunfish later in life that didn't qualify for the moniker either.

The O'Driscolls first raised five children and enjoyed a series of foreign sabbaticals as a part of Ken's job as a professor of chemical engineering doing research on





... and not too far from home

Ken and Pat O'Driscoll enjoy sailing Fineen III, their Niagara 35, in and around Ontario's North Channel and Georgian Bay. A favorite photo from their scrapbook, at right, of Fineen III anchored in the North Channel's Benjamin Islands shows why.

polymer (plastics) chemistry. The sabbaticals took them to Japan, Germany, Sweden, England, and Australia for several months to a year at a time. And one sabbatical allowed for a trip down the Intracoastal Waterway to Florida, but that's getting ahead of the story.

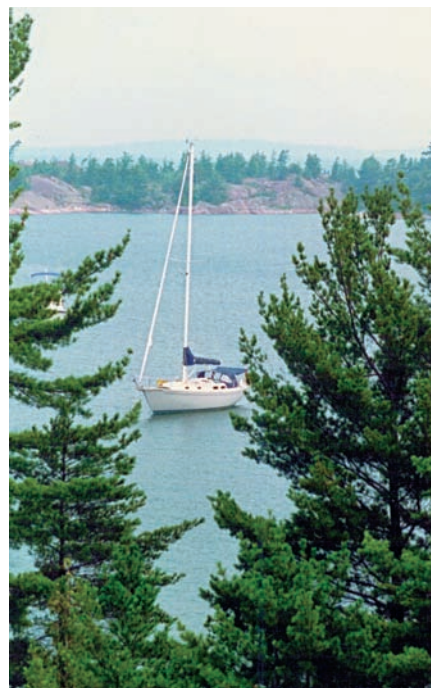
As they reached their 40s, with the children generally grown, Pat suggested that they attend the boat show in Toronto. She knew Ken had always enjoyed boating and realized that the timing was right for a new adventure. "We wanted something we could do outdoors together," they both say.

It was 1974, and they saw an affordable 21-foot Sirius at the show and decided to buy it, they agree, "for no particular reason." But the purchase was on the condition that the salesman come out sailing one day and introduce them to their new boat.

By this time the O'Driscolls had moved to Canada where Ken was teaching at the University of

Waterloo. They had become landed immigrants on their way to eventual Canadian citizenship, and the Sirius factory was just 100 or so miles from home. So they visited the factory and set a new family precedent: visiting the locations where their boats were built. They had plans to check out three marinas on the way home from the factory visit. The first marina didn't seem right for them, but the second was so right that they never visited the third. They got a slip in Wiarton, Ontario, on the east side of the Bruce Peninsula which separates Georgian Bay from Lake Huron.

One of the earliest adventures with the Sirius involved a sudden storm while they were within a half mile of the marina. It seemed to Pat at the time that the marina was unreachable far and that they'd be blown out of the bay and out to sea. Over the years their sailing skills improved, of course, along with their abilities to deal with storms and unexpected breakdowns, but their loyalty to the first *Fineen* eroded.



"A 21-foot boat is not suited for cruising," Pat says, and cruising was what they wanted to do.

Within two years they bought a used C&C 30 — another Canadian boat. Once again they visited the factory to learn about the boat they wanted. They spent some time climbing around in the 27- and 30-foot models and decided they liked the larger boat, since the overhead on the 27 was too low for Ken. But



they preferred the price of the smaller boat and spent the rest of the summer looking for a used 30-footer priced below the cost of a new 27-footer.

When they found the right boat, a 1974 model, the five-year-old boat was beginning to show signs of neglect. The first owner had used the boat as a racer; the second as a party boat which never left the dock. As a result, they bought an anomaly: a used boat with brand-new anchor tackle.

The O'Driscolls cruised and raced *Fineen II*. The racing was done with other members of the marina. It taught them new sailing skills and provided for many fun post-race gatherings in the clubhouse as the finishes were calculated and winners declared.

The C&C was the boat they took down the ICW in 1983. That trip was very enjoyable, but it was the beginning of the end for *Fineen II*. "It was five months of camping out," Pat says. "For example, we had installed pressure water, but had no dodger, refrigeration, heater, or shower." (The low boom on many early C&Cs made protection from a dodger impossible.) Pat says,

"Opening ports would have been a distinct advantage, since going south included some very hot weather. Cooking below was a challenge — how many fresh, cold shrimp can you eat?" On the positive side, she adds, "We have so many memories of that slow, relaxed trip south with sightseeing and many visits with friends and relatives. It took from mid-June until November to reach Florida. The images are like a movie in the mind: forever replayable, adventures included!"

The new Niagara 35, built by Hinterhoeller and designed by Mark Ellis had much in common with the C&C they had sailed for seven years. Mark Ellis had worked for C&C earlier in his career, and *Fineen III* reflects a shared heritage. Ken is fond of saying that the Niagara 35 is just a larger C&C 30. However this boat has many amenities which move life aboard out of the "camping" category: a catalytic propane heater, a propane grill on the stern rail, a propane oven and three-burner stove, pressure water, a water heater, a dedicated nav station, a shower stall, enough bunks of reasonable size to make it possible for a couple to have a dedicated sleeping area without making the saloon do double duty as bedroom and dining room. (*If there's a hint of envy here, realize that Jerry and I "camp out" in our C&C 30, which we convert from sleeping to eating quarters and back each day. He says we're going to add a modification soon, and it will change into a car as well and drive us home, but he's still working on that invention.*)

Pat points out the expanded galley with refrigeration, the generous ports which open for ventilation, and the thoughtful touch of a covered mast. This is a modification which any manufacturer could have done and which any boatowner bothered by a cold piece of extruded aluminum in the saloon can do easily. The Niagara masts, which are keel-stepped, come with a padded, insulated

cover which is wrapped around the mast and fastened with Velcro ... truly a revelation to anyone who has backed into a bare piece of aluminum early on a cold morning.

Instead of putting in hanging curtains, Pat created simple and effective window covers — oval in shape and exactly the size of the windows. These are fastened into place at night using small Velcro "dots." She's also working on a modification to keep the contents of the refrigerator cooler longer. She developed an insulated Styrofoam board covered with a "space blanket," which they slide in place when they don't need access to the contents of the refrigerator. But the board's a bit bulky to store when they're in the cooking mode, so Pat will replace the insulated board with a space blanket with batting quilted inside it. This can be rolled up and stored more easily.

Designer Mark Ellis said of this boat, "She is a cruising boat that made sense." Ken and Pat placed their order for *Fineen III* in November 1988 and made several trips to the factory to watch her creation. They were particularly impressed with the craftsmanship and pride that the builders showed



in the work they were doing, particularly their love for woodwork and fine finishes. The new boat was delivered in spring of 1989, and unfortunately the company went out of business about a year later. The last Niagara left the shop in 1990.

Fineen III was not raced. “Would you race your living room?” Pat asks. Since retiring, they’ve asked themselves whether another trip down the ICW might be on the horizon. “We thought about another trip down the waterway,” Ken says, “but we may have aged out of that. It was a lot of work. We were up at 6 a.m. every morning and moved an average of 35 miles per day when we moved. We’ve often thought of shipping the boat partway and spending a month or more in the Chesapeake, which we found contrasts nicely with the northern cruising areas that we are so familiar with and fond of.”

These days they enjoy the sociability of sailing — the people


they meet on their longer trips and the people they enjoy seeing often at the Warton marina. Daysailing on Colpo Bay (eight miles long) or 25-mile trips to nearby peninsula ports and anchorages provide spectacular views of the northern end of the Niagara Escarpment. The water is clear and deep. A week’s trip to Tobermory makes a memorable cruise. A trip to or around the islands at the mouth of Colpo Bay and anchoring provides weekend escapes. They have usually enjoyed a three- or four-week vacation to the North Channel each summer and weekends in and around Georgian Bay. With retirement, they are looking forward to longer periods of time aboard, primarily in the North Channel.

This is a pattern that suits the area where they sail, they say, and it suits them, too. They like being able to take their time on weekends and longer trips, choosing weather for crossings and feeling unhurried by calendars and clocks. Ken says

vacation starts when his watch comes off, and the white strap mark disappears from his wrist.

We spent one day sailing with Ken and Pat, watching them work together and marveling at how much can be accomplished conveniently from the cockpit of the Niagara 35. This is a well-found coastal cruiser, and Ken and Pat are experienced and competent coastal cruising sailors.

“It has been said,” Ken notes, “that sailing is either the world’s most restful or most challenging activity — sometimes both in the same hour. We’re working at making it the most relaxing activity,” he says, aided by Pat, who notes that it is sometimes challenging nonetheless.

Their years of sailing together have bonded the O’Driscolls into a formidable team, one which can handle the challenges while enjoying the relaxation. *Fineen III* is just right for the O’Driscolls and their retirement dreams. 

Below, a forward-facing nav station is located near the quarter berth. At right, the galley offers adequate space and an opening port for ventilation.



Niagara remains a winner

For offshore or coastal cruising, this Mark Ellis design is still popular eight years after the last one rolled off the line

The original Niagara 35 design, the “Mark I Model,” was intended for offshore use. The galley and head are positioned amidships near the companionway ladder. The layout has port and starboard quarter-berths. This non-traditional arrangement allows for two cabins with shared head access and moves the saloon farther forward. The traditional saloon area becomes the second cabin, and the V-berth is optional and usually eliminated, making way for a small workroom or sail storage area at the bow.

Later in the life of the design, Mark Ellis was asked to provide a coastal cruiser version of the 35. *Fineen III* is the “Encore Model,” with a more traditional layout. This boat has a spacious V-berth, with a head and adjoining shower stall to port. The central passageway through the boat is offset to

and companionway ladder on the starboard side. The port quarterberth of the “Mark I Model” gives way to a cockpit lazarette in the “Encore Model.” Mark Ellis is also known as the designer of the Nonsuch boats, the Limestone series of deep V-shaped powerboats, the Niagara 42 (but not the smaller Niagara 31 which was designed by German Frers), and the North East 37+ made by Cabo Rico Yachts.

The Niagara 35 has an end-grain balsa-cored hull and deck, modified fin keel, and moderate bow and stern overhangs. The hull has moderate sheer and balanced ends. The J-dimension, at 16 feet, is quite long. This makes even the standard 140-percent genoa a large sail

with 360 square feet of sail area. The large J-dimension is enhanced by the novel bowsprit made of robust stainless steel tubes supported by a bobstay. (See photo with Pat on the bow on Page 32.) This unique fitting holds two

anchors and provides a forestay mounting place well forward of the hull. The bow hardware is altogether a very robust and sensible arrangement.

The main tackle is sheeted to mid-boom and, instead of having a traveler, two separate

mainsheet tackles are mounted to the deckhouse port and starboard. We watched Ken work this system and agreed that it is a good arrangement.

With a roller furler on the bow, Ken and Pat are able to set, strike, and reef sails — all from the cockpit with a minimum of fuss. While at anchor during our day with the O’Driscolls, Ken identified a rapidly building storm cloud. He predicted that within a short time the storm would reach us, and decided to get under way. Pat raised the anchor and, without leaving the cockpit, Ken had the main up and reefed in less than a minute.

The boat is rigged with rod rigging and single spreaders. Ken says he uses a 100-percent genoa in spring and fall and the 140-percent genoa for their summers and cruising vacations. *Fineen III* carries enough sail to move well in light air. At our request, the O’Driscolls put us out in their inflatable dinghy to get some photos of the Niagara 35 under sail. Winds of 5-7 knots kept the sailboat moving so briskly that we ran the



starboard and lines up with an offset companionway hatch. A catalytic propane heater is mounted on the starboard bulkhead near the settee, and the drop leaf table and a U-shaped galley are in the larger area to port. A nav station is nestled forward of the quarterberth

dinghy's 3-hp motor full out in order to stay up with them. Several times we were unable to catch them at all.


Fineen III easily makes 6 knots under power with the Universal M35D 35-hp four-cylinder diesel. Engine power is transmitted via a V-drive in an arrangement whereby the propeller shaft passes underneath the engine and is connected to a transmission coupling forward of the engine and transmission. This arrangement has not been entirely trouble free, according to the O'Driscolls. The propeller shaft is connected to the coupling with a keyway and set screw. Ken says he lost two keys

into the bilge when the set screw sheared while in the North Channel. A new coupling that doesn't rely on set screws, plus clamping the key in the propeller shaft with a hose clamp, has solved that problem.

Good access is provided to the engine and transmission by tipping the entire galley sink and cabinet console forward into the cabin.

The boat has good soundproofing, but while *Fineen III's* engine is quiet, a great deal of vibration is transmitted through the hull for a four-cylinder engine.

In summary, the Niagara 35 is a comfortable, sensible boat with a good balance of features for coastal cruising. It can be sailed by two persons, and it reinforces the high

opinion we have of Mark Ellis and Canadian sailboat builders. It fits with the O'Driscolls' philosophy of sailing. 

Specifications:

LOA	35' 1"	10.7 m
WL	26' 8"	8.1 m
Beam	11' 5"	3.5 m
Draft	5' 2"	1.6 m
Sail area	598 sq. ft	55.6 sq. m
Ballast	5,500 lb	2,495 kg
Displ.	14,000 lb	6,350 kg
Headroom	6' 4"	
Hull	End-grain balsa-cored fiberglass	
Spars	Aluminum	



REEF EARLY AND

For too many years, sailing, for us, meant not only doing it, doing all of it, but overdoing all of it. We virile males pushed and horsed vessel, crew, guests, and ourselves not only to their full capabilities, but also well beyond until something physical or interpersonal broke. "Testing the limits," I believe counselors of adolescents call it.

When we got our first sloop, we noticed that the mainsail was adorned with three rows of rather quaint pieces of rope. It took us several seasons to learn what they did ... and it took another season to learn how to do it. It took even more to actually do it.

We learned that these pieces of rope are called reef points. On a sailboat, as in a car, it is possible to adjust the power according to conditions. The prudent sailor would no more try to sail through heavy winds with full sail up than a sensible driver would move through heavy traffic with full throttle down.

The three sets of reef points enable a vessel to shorten sail and be appropriately suited to roughly 20, 30, or 40 knots of wind. Otherwise, you ship lots of water over the side and/or break something. If that happens, both vessel and relationships may be severely damaged.

Only once have I ever set out with a triple reef. That was when David came from Alaska for his first (and thus far, only) sail on the Maine coast. Unfortunately, his one available October day found it blowing a gale. Therefore, we set out.

Suddenly, we found ourselves in the midst of a snow squall. We struggled to find Round Pond in the approaching darkness — a simultaneous whiteout and black-out. Once we located the harbor, we had to locate the considerably smaller mooring. Just as David found the mooring, the prop found

the pendant. "Oh dear," I said politely. To unwind the mess, I dove, naked as a jaybird, from the white deck into the whitecaps. I have not employed three reefs since.

It was only after two decades of living in this state of arrested development —

cruising with too much sail up, too little ballast

down, too much seawater over the gunwales and into the cockpit, too many numbing rainy days, too much terrifying fog, too many broken gaff jaws, and too many rough passages accompanied by too much lunch lost overboard — that we made an important discovery: One can deliberately choose to

avoid excess. It is possible not to subject self, others, and vessel to the punishing, brutal, uncomfortable, and unsafe experiences which lie in endless supply offshore.

It was then we discovered a New World which forever transformed our lives at sea. We had

landed upon what is now known as the "Comfort Factor."

At first, of course, this was a discovery made in the names of women and children. While others reveled in the new order, we men merely tolerated sanity at sea. But now, when faced with a decision about whether to set out, to stay out, to motor rather than sail, to reef, to hang it up for the day at

by Roland Barth



OFTEN

cocktail hour rather than groping in the dark, we have begun to hear ourselves say, "Let's consider the Comfort Factor." By doing so we have enshrined **Cruising Rule 12:**

Reef early and often.

It has dawned on us that a version of the Boston ward heeler's political advice — "Vote early and often" — may also be good nautical advice. At sea, you can't control the winds, but you can control the sails.

Reprinted from Roland's book, Cruising Rules. The book is available from Cyclops, 888-729-4105; Armchair Sailor, 401-847-4252; and other book stores.



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September/October 1998

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Delamination is not

*Deck delamination conjures up
images of free falling ...
straight through to the bilge ...
but it need not frighten the
most resourceful among us*

The word “delamination” causes instant visions of a good old boat coming apart at the seams. Worse, those visions may be equated with an unsalvageable hulk lying in the mud of a river bank. Bad jokes have been published of a prospective buyer falling through a deck or into the bilge. These visions and jokes ring somewhat true sometimes, but does a delamination problem predict the end of a good old boat? Is there useful life after delamination? Let’s examine the causes, effects, and eventually the cure for this common good old boat problem.

Delamination is the separation of layers of fiberglass cloth and resin from each other or from the core sandwiched between the layers. The cause of delamination is usually physical stress to the fiberglass surface. This ruptures the surface skin and allows water to enter the laminate and migrate into the core. Delamination can also occur from repeated surface impact even if the skin is not broken and water does not enter.

Most delamination occurs on the decks or in the cabinhouse structure of a boat, although it is possible for delamination to occur in the hull itself, particularly if the hull is cored.

Some builders used cored hulls for rigidity, as well as for sound and temperature stability. The core material (usually end-grain balsa squares, occasionally plywood, and sometimes foam) separates from the fiberglass skin above or below.

Once the separation takes place, the core deteriorates from water intrusion or turns to dust with repeated impact.

When an area is delaminated, it is substantially weaker and will feel soft when walked upon. An easy way to check for delamination on a horizontal surface is to walk barefoot on the surface and to dig your toes into the deck or cabinhouse. A soft or giving feeling will indicate potential areas of delamination. These can then be critically examined. A solid deck should feel like a rock.

Depending on the size and

location of a good old boat’s delaminated area, a cure may be possible, affordable, and

prudent. It is never cheap or easy. Commercial boatyards charge exorbitant sums just to attempt repairs and usually will not guarantee their work. The reason is that without totally disassembling the area, cleaning out the damaged core, and recoring the structure, it is often difficult to assure that all of the area has been repaired.

Easy fix?

Several technical publications recommend an “easy fix” which involves drilling a series of holes through the top skin of the deck and forcing epoxy resin into the holes until it fills the void and emerges from another hole. This method is unsatisfactory for the following reasons:

- The delaminated area must be completely dry for the epoxy to bond to the top and bottom skin. There is no way, even if core samples are taken, to know if all of the area is dry.
- Due to working “blind,” you cannot be certain that the epoxy completely fills all the voids.
- A small solid, non-delaminated area may form a dam and restrict the epoxy from flowing into all areas of delamination.
- The cost and physical effort required to attempt this cure are not justified, given the unknown final results.

There are two other methods to solve the problem and, though costly in time and material, will guarantee a successful result. Depending on the construction of the vessel, one or both of these

**Story and photos
by Bill Sandifer**

spelled d-o-o-m

methods may be used to make the repair.

My own 1961 Pearson Ariel is a good example of both. In a nutshell, the entire main deck and cabinroof were one spongy mess that gave under a person's weight. The foredeck aft to the chain plates had been destroyed over a number of years by "deck apes" jumping on the deck in race conditions. The forward cabin under the foredeck did not have a liner installed, so the underside of the deck was fully visible. The sidedeck and main cabin area had an interior liner which precluded direct access to the underside of the decks and coachroof. The side decks were delaminated as a result of improperly filled holes when the genoa tracks were moved. The coachroof was delaminated due to the roof-mounted winches, cam cleats, etc., being mounted, moved, and remounted without properly sealing the original holes.

The mast was deck-stepped and had sunk three inches into the deck due to water-induced rot in the mast support beam. This was caused by poorly sealed fittings around the base of the mast.

If you have read this far, you're probably saying, "What did this nut see in a totally destroyed boat? He must be crazy!" Well yes and no. I had very little money (less than \$2,000) and wanted a capable sailboat very badly! The price was right. The Ariel was the boat I wanted, and I had a plan. The boat's past racing life, which had caused much of its problems, also provided the method to afford the rebuild.

First the good news ...

The boat had eight good racing sails. I sold the six I did not want for more than I paid for the boat. I made a \$300 profit and became the proud owner of a Pearson Ariel with an Atomic 4 engine, *(More about this in the January/February issue of Good Old Boat)*, a good mainsail, a good 120 genoa, hull, mast, boom, and rigging. The only problem was the deck, maststep, and, oh yes, the bunk had rotted out, and the galley area was trashed.

To get the boat home, I fixed the engine and felt I should be able to sail (in case the engine quit). I used 4 x 4s and a hydraulic jack to support the mast and push it back into its correct position. And on April 1, 1990, (April Fools Day/Ship of Fools!), my wife and I departed the New Orleans Municipal Harbor for home on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, 11 hours away. Since I am writing this article, we obviously succeeded in completing the voyage. Would I do it again? Of course! There is little enough adventure in this world, and taking the tried and true route is no adventure at all!



The rotted core just below the fiberglass was not a pretty sight.

We were towing a dinghy with a motor to provide a third method of propulsion (or lifeboat, if need be). We had picked a bright sunny day with a good forecast, filed a floatplan with our children, had a VHF radio onboard, and stayed close to shore in about eight feet of water. We figured we could fill up but not sink below the surface. You may be asking, "What does all that have to do with delamination?"



The side deck was cleaned, sanded and ready for a new core.

Everything. It shows that a boat can have an extreme problem and yet be saved. Here's how.

Start with the worst case

The first task was to remove the mast and all of the deck fittings, lifelines, bow pulpit, and so forth. The foredeck was the worst case, so I tackled it first. I determined what the camber (crown) of the deck was and laminated wood beams to conform to the curvature and length required to span the deck on the underside.

Once the beams were made, I cut out the entire underside of the deck fiberglass laminate and core from below. I scraped all the coring off and sanded it so only a very thin (1/16-inch) fiberglass skin remained. I cut waterproof 3/8-inch

mahogany plywood panels into four sections in the shape of the deck. Then I fitted new beams and plywood to the underside of the deck and prepared to push them up against the underside of the foredeck, forming a new wood deck beneath the old skin. I assembled the beams and panels in the V-berth area, screwing and bonding them together with epoxy. After a "dry fit" to assure that all was well, I coated the new deck with a mush of epoxy mixed with chopped mill fiber (at a mayonnaise constancy), raised it up, and propped it in position against the deck skin.

Working from a dink in the water to avoid putting any weight on the fragile deck, I set stainless steel screws through the top skin of the deck into the deck beam to assure

complete contact between the interior wood deck and the exterior fiberglass skin. The old deck skin was so thin it was possible to be sure that there were no air bubbles to interfere with full adhesion.

When the epoxy cured, I removed the props and taped the beams to the hull sides for final strength. Next I removed the stainless steel screws and filled the holes with the epoxy/chopped mill

fiber mush, faired the deck epoxy, sanded it, and painted it with non-skid paint. I used the same method to refurbish the coachhouse overhead in the forward cabin.

Next side decks, roof

The sidedecks and main cabinroof area could not be worked from the inside, due to the liner, so this time I started from the outside. With a circular saw (carbide blade), I carefully cut the sidedecks and roof out in one rectangular-shaped piece each. I lifted them off as three pieces (two sidedecks and one roof). I scraped each clean of the wet balsa core and set it aside. I removed the ruined core down to the outside of the inner liner, sanded each area clean, and allowed it to dry.

I cut strips of 3/8-inch mahogany plywood about three inches wide and the length of the area to be filled, taking care that the strips landed on a solid support surface or bulkhead fore and aft. I cut and fitted enough strips to build up the new area to the level of the old roof and decks, with the exception of the "saved" pieces of deck and roof. The strips were numbered, so they could be replaced exactly where they had been fitted.

With all in readiness, I mixed the epoxy/mill fiber mush mixture and coated the outside of the liner. I wet out the strips with unmodified epoxy (no mill fiber filler), and set these into the mush on the liner. I followed this process until I had reached the desired height.

Next I coated the roof and deck panels with the mush and returned them to their original positions on the hull. I allowed the epoxy to dry, taking care to assure a complete bond between the strips and the underside of the old panels.

*Would I do it again?
Of course! There is little
enough adventure
in this world, and taking
the tried and true route is
no adventure at all!*



The new core was installed on the side deck.

The reason for using the old panels is twofold. First, it saves material and, if carefully prepared, reduces fairing of the surfaces to the original camber. Second, the roof panel incorporated the rails for the sliding hatch which would have had to be remade in wood, bedded, and so forth.

I simply removed the mast step beam and replaced it with a new beam when the coachhouse roof was replaced.

The final finish work was not as hard as you might imagine, due to the reuse of the old skin panels. After a good fairing with a long board and 80-grit sandpaper, I rolled high build epoxy primer paint on the panels. These were sanded and primed again, sanded a third time, and then painted with three coats of polyurethane one-part deck paint, sanding between each coat. I mixed the final coat with non-skid compound for a non-slip finish.

The original deck piece was replaced.

More good news

Did it work? The answer is a resounding "Yes!"

After eight years of 12-month-a-year service, averaging three days a week, there have been no failures, no leaks, and no soft spots. I've repainted the deck once more for cosmetic and aesthetic value.

Was it worth it?

Again, "Yes." The boat became ours April 1, 1990, and we motored it out of the harbor. We have motored, sailed, motorsailed, and used the boat ever since. The work on the deck was done during intense weekends over a two-month period. The boat was "out of commission" for two-week periods as each stage was accomplished. The deck, beam, interior,

and so forth were done afloat between uses.

I prioritized the work. The foredeck came first, mast beam next, bunk and interior third, side decks and coachroof last.


Since we live in a southern climate, it was possible to complete all the work over the span of one year. The non-structural work — replacing the pulpit and lifelines,

putting in new port lights and running lights, etc. — was worked in as time and budget allowed.

When I review the refurbishment work done over the past eight years, the volume seems overwhelming, but when viewed in small segments, it was achieved and has not been onerous.

I had the assistance of family and friends some of the time, but the bulk of it was done without help. Having the use of the boat while working on it was a big plus and kept my spirits soaring. I believe if I had chosen to lay the boat up until everything was complete, I would have become discouraged and lost interest and momentum.

My wife loves the boat but hated the project "mess." For this reason, I kept one or two areas neat so she could feel comfortable while I messed up the other areas. The V-berth area was torn up considerably, but the main cabin and cockpit were usable and neat. Doing the sidedecks did not mess up the interior, and the V-berth was completed and "neat" by that time. The same is true for the coachroof.

Today, the boat is in excellent condition. Motor and sails are without problems, and it looks great. Now, if I could just figure out how to stretch the boat to a 36-footer in the same condition. Hmmmmm. 



Vang/preventer:

a fast, effective safety device

I was guilty of contempt. Never a good thing, in this case it turned out to be a serious error. I had held a thunderstorm cell in contempt all morning. It was over *there*, and we were over *here*. We had been sailing for hours in strong winds that were probably feeding that cell, but it had been such a joyful ride I couldn't bring myself to quit. We had the 110 up with two reefs in the main and were on a screaming reach. We had been flying like this for hours. Occasionally we would have to tie a foot reef in the jib and put in or shake out another reef in the main. But we were moving. Madeline Island was to windward, and the seas hadn't much fetch. But the wind was getting over the island, and we had plenty of it.

At the bottom of the island we headed up but kept our speed. Eventually we breasted the red nun that marks the shoal, tacked, and fell off on another screaming reach.

Karen is the smarter of the two of us. I don't deny that. She suggested that perhaps the storm cell was moving toward us and we should probably shorten sail. I delayed. Each gust seemed to offer a chance to explore new territory on the knotmeter. It was intoxicating.

Finally Karen said we should at least get our foul weather gear on. She went below first, perhaps to set a good example. Then I went below to dress for the rain that I had to admit was looking more likely. In the middle of my costume change she said, "You've got about

*In which the technical editor
makes certain confessions
and beseeches forgiveness
from his wife ...*

a minute." That call was probably accurate to within 10 seconds. I don't know why I don't listen to my wife more carefully.

The squall hit. We were deeply reefed but not deeply enough. The wind came from dead astern at maybe 60 knots. I looked out through the companionway and saw that Karen was doing all she could do and doing it exactly right. She was steering dead downwind, not letting *Mystic* jibe or broach. With that course and speed *Mystic* would be a monument in downtown LaPointe on Madeline Island in

about five minutes, but I didn't think we would

make it that far. *Mystic's* beautiful spoon bow was being pushed down hard by the wind. She was clearly outside the envelope. I popped out of the hatch without bothering to replace the lifejacket I had removed in order to put on my slicker. We always wear our lifejackets, but just when I needed mine the most, there was no time to put it back on.

I crawled to the mast and cast off the main and jib halyards. Fortunately, they didn't tangle or

catch; the beautifully simple jib hanks and mainsail lugs did what they were supposed to do, and the press came off our spunky little *Mystic* before she could pitchpole or broach. Bare poles were just right for good speed and control. My arrogance would be forgiven — this time.

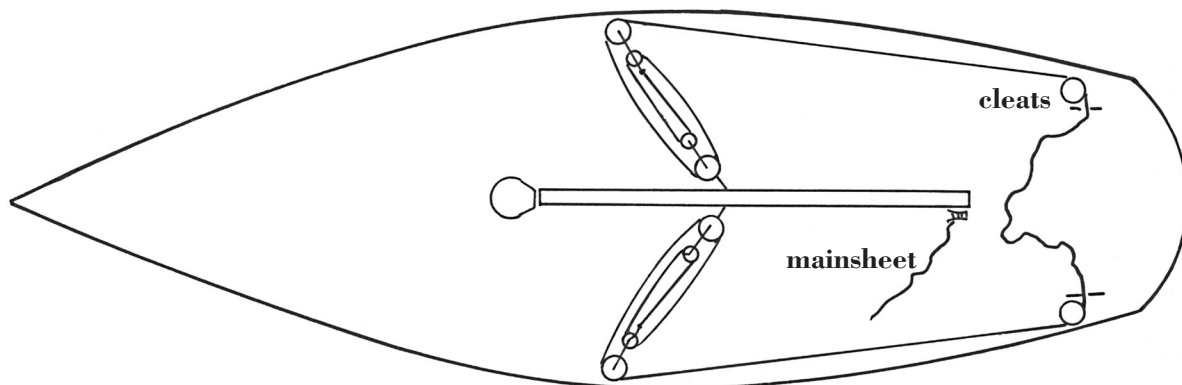
Lessons learned

As I look back on it, several factors combined to limit that experience to a good scare and a lesson survived. The person who designed our C&C 30 knew his business; my beautiful wife used great skill in steering without broaching or jibing; the hanks and lugs ran free and fast; and the vang/preventer did exactly what we had intended it to do.

Vang/preventer? We knew of no existing term for this rigging, and we had to call it something. On *Mystic*, the vang/preventer is a pair of 4:1 tackles leading from mid-boom to the port and starboard toerails just abaft the stays. A single control line runs from both tackles aft through fairleads and cam cleats port and starboard of the helm. Because there is only a single line, as the boom swings off, line taken by one tackle is given up by

by Jerry Powlas

Vang/preventer



the other, so very little excess line clutters the cockpit. A flick of the wrist controls the boom.

On *Mystic* the vang/preventer is actually a better vang, a better preventer, and a better traveler than anything else we could have devised. *Mystic* had a traveler when we bought her, but it was a simple affair with no control lines. The idea was to lift the detent pin and move the car stop to the new location. The traveler was about two feet long and resided on a beam between the cockpit seats just in front of the wheel. (Shown in photo at bottom right.) It could not be moved under load and was only useful when beating. It was too short to help on a reach.

A message in this

The previous owner kept the original vang in the starboard lazarette made up like a hangman's noose. After using it for awhile, I was convinced he had the right idea. The people at C&C were not about to give up any sail area that could be easily had, so *Mystic's* boom sweeps very close to the deckhouse. This leaves the (conventional) vang at a very poor angle when led between mid-boom and the base of the mast. Fortunately, when the boom is close in for beating, the vang is not necessary; the traveler controls the sail twist. It took some getting used

Viewed from the bow, the photo above right shows the starboard vang released and the port vang trimmed. Photo at right shows the control lines led to the helm station. Notice the double-ended line.





to — unloading the main to move the traveler — but we managed and were glad for the lack of cordage the simple thing offered. The real problem was the vang. We could lead it to the toerail on reaches and runs, but doing so required the crew to scamper about the deckhouse and side decks ... sometimes in darkness or heavy weather or both. A jibe demanded tedious choreography and a minimum of two crew. We wanted better.

The night my good friend stuck his head out of the hatch just as an eddy gust from the shore jibed the main, was the last straw. We had been becalmed and so had not set the vang as a preventer to the toerail. It was viewed as a bother in any circumstance and certainly was not deemed necessary when there was no wind. The blow of the boom could have killed him. He recovered and finished the cruise, piloting us skillfully through the Apostle Islands in a late October storm with near-zero visibility. We didn't have radar then or even GPS; we had Steve, the beginning sailor but experienced aviator, and that jibe had nearly eliminated him.

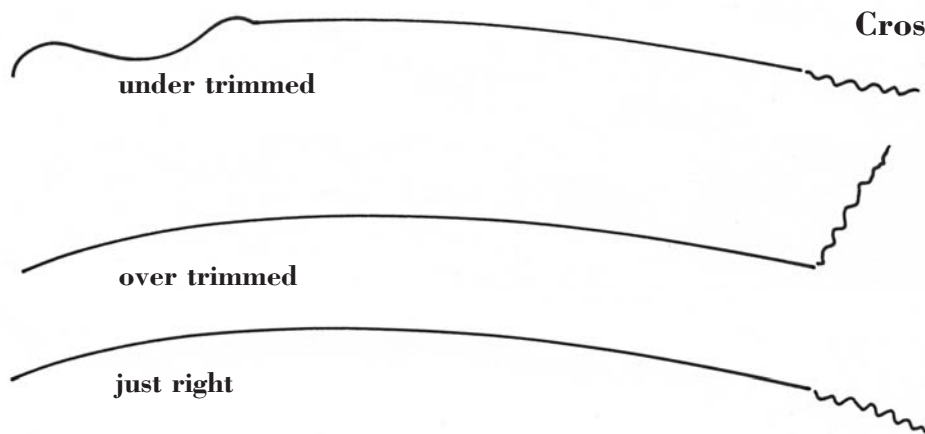
Development of the rig

I wanted a way to set up a preventer in a second — something that did not need to be removed from the toerail in a jibe. Our vang/preventer was the answer. The first version was 3:1 and used horn cleats. It was good, but not good enough. At 4:1, we could get good downward force on the boom no matter what position it was in. The bonus was that the preventer was now a good sail trim control.

The purpose of a traveler and vang is to allow good mainsail leech control. By moving a traveler to windward on a beat in light air, the main can be given the twist necessary for good performance. As

Vang continued on Page 46

Photo at left above shows the control line and cleat and the caribiner that eases the release and prevents premature recleating. Photo at left shows how a flick of the wrist sets up the vang/preventer.



Cross section of the mainsail

Adjust the mainsheet and vang(s) to make the trailing edge telltails fly straight back.

Other preventer systems

Another preventer that is sometimes suggested is one that leads from the windward jib sheet winch to a turning block on the bow and back to the boom end. Proponents of this arrangement point out that if a boat rolls her boom end into the sea, any vang that leads from mid-boom to the toerail will give the sea too much mechanical advantage so that if the sea moves the boom end either aft or forward it could overstress the boom, mast, and stays. In those specific conditions I think a preventer from the bow would be a better arrangement. It is, however, not a very convenient rig so it might be better to have both a vang/preventer and a preventer led from the bow if one feels the need. Once the preventer from the bow is rigged, the vang could be eased so the rig would be better protected. The vang/preventer provides a lot of safety in all weather conditions, the preventer from the bow only contributes in very heavy weather.

Our boat is a club racer put out to pasture and would be better thought of as a coastal cruiser than a bluewater sailor, but we do routinely cross Lake Superior with her and so might claim that handsome is as handsome does. Each boat will be a different case. We will probably never run a vang off the bow because we view it as awkward to rig, forcing crew to move about the decks rigging, unrigging, and rerigging it. We sail with two normally, and I singlehand often, so we have no one to spare for this work. Our boom is quite low with a full main, but as each reef goes in, the boom end goes up more. With all three reefs in, I have to stand on a seat to reach the end of the boom. If the boom end ever gets to the sea, I'm fairly sure we will have gone past the point of positive stability and will turtle anyway.

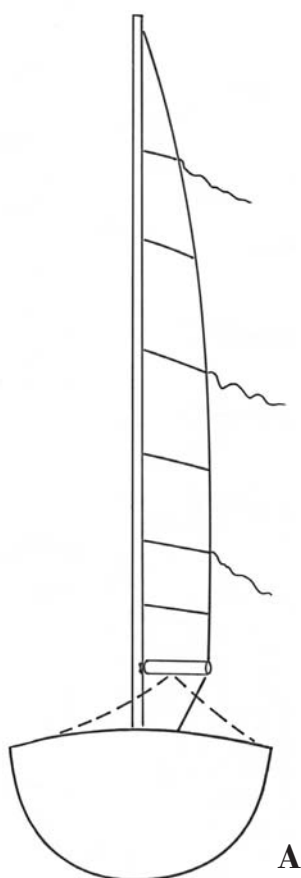
We do not intend to use even a reefed main in the kind of conditions where we might risk rolling

the boom into the sea. We carry a storm trysail, which is cut to be usable with or without the boom, and we have a sea anchor and 600 feet of rode as well. We actually prefer to sail downwind in heavy weather conditions with just a jib. This is also controversial because our rig has only single lowers, and it is held in some quarters that sailing downwind without a main with this type of rig will cause the mast to oscillate enough to make it fail. Our mast has not failed in such use, but we can't say that other masts will do as well. Once we learned of this problem, we began using a stabilizing line from an extra sail slide raised to about the spreaders and led back to the boom end. A little mainsheet tension on the unused boom makes the mast extremely stiff, and shifts the resonant frequency up too high for there to be a problem. We use a Kevlar line for this, believing that it contributes to the stiffness we want to achieve.

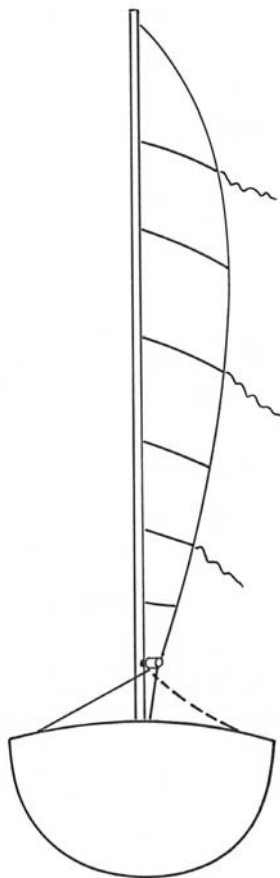
We actually have seven extra slides that reside permanently above the mainsail headboard, riding up and down with it. There is room for these slides on most mainsail/mast arrangements because sails are normally cut to leave a little space at the masthead. We use these slides to attach the storm trysail, thus eliminating the need for an extra track. We use the same slides to set a stabilizing line for sailing downwind and also to stop the mast from pumping in high beam winds when we are in a slip. But these tricks are another story.

Special thanks go to Matt Grant at Sailrite for helping us to develop our storm trysail. It was his idea to put the extra slides in the track above the head of the main. Matt also designed the storm trysail with special hanks that fit the special heavy duty slides.

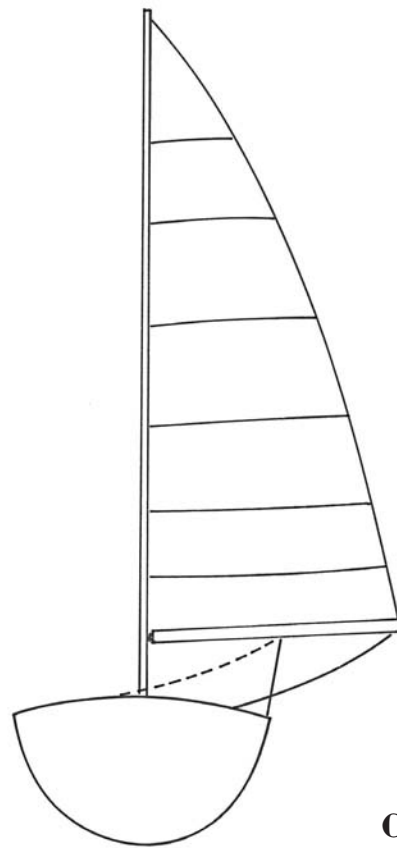
We have sailed for four years with our vang/preventer. In that time it has gone through three fairly complete revisions. We think it is just about right now. It provides better sail trim than more complicated racing gear and is much safer.



A



B



C

Vang continued from 44

the breeze picks up, the traveler is let down in stages to leeward which, in combination with increasing mainsheet trim, will give progressively less twist. In a blow just before a reef is put in, the traveler is let down all the way to leeward, and the main will luff a little near the mast and reduce heel. As the wind goes aft, the vang takes over the job of pulling the boom down to control twist. If the boom is mounted high enough, the vang can lead to the base of the mast. But in the best of circumstances, the stresses are high on the vang, boom, and mast because the angles do not favor the task.

With our vang/preventer we have a better traveler than if we had an elaborate track, car, and tackles like a racer. In light air if we want to add twist, we trim the windward vang. The boom lifts just as it would with a fancy traveler. As the air picks up, we ease the windward vang and add some mainsheet trim. When we are a little overpowered, we trim the leeward vang, and the main untwists and luffs a little along the

A: Heavy air beat – Mainsheet controls angle of mainsail and twist. Close reach – Mainsheet controls angle. Trim the leeward vang to remove twist; trim the windward vang to add twist.

B: Light and medium air beat – Trim windward vang to bring boom inboard; trim mainsheet to reduce twist.

C: Broad reaching and running – Trim leeward vang to set up preventer, hold boom down, hold boom out in light air, and take out twist.

mast. When we bear off, we ease the main and trim the leeward vang a little more to keep the twist from getting excessive. A few telltales on the main make it easy to see what must be done. As we steer farther to leeward, the main is eased and the vang taken up. The preventer goes on automatically in the course of getting good trim, so it is there when we need it.

A jibe is a joy with this rig. There is enough friction from the vang/preventer to keep a flying jibe from being very fast, even if we just let it all go. We don't do that, of course. We ease the vang and trim the main until it pops over, then we let out the main and set up the new vang — all very easy, fast, and smooth. It is also very safe; no one leaves the cockpit.

On light wind days we used to have trouble keeping the boom out on a run because the weight of the

mainsheet was enough to cause it to swing back in. With a vang/preventer we just trim the boom out to where we want it, and it stays there.

The vang/preventer is a good singlehanded rig also. I sailed *Mystic* alone for a couple of weeks last summer in winds up to 35 knots as cold fronts pushed through the Apostle Islands near our home port. The vang/preventer was handy for this, since all the control lines, mainsheet, jib sheets, and both vangs were within easy reach of the helmsperson.

Would we have jibed in that thunderstorm without the vang/preventer? Other boats did. Would I have had the courage to go to the base of the mast knowing that the boom was free to jibe and wipe me off the deck? I think it made a difference.

Next time I'll listen to Karen. 

Roller furling or bags on deck: which system is right for you?

Does the “new” form of reefing, the reefing/furling unit, make more sense?

These systems have certainly been one of the most successful “fix-all” products



Cruisers are always looking for ideas which will make sailing easier, and there are a multitude of products on the market to do just that. It is interesting how often we lose sight of simple solutions when a new “fix-all” product hits the market. For instance, today when we want to reduce headsail size, we automatically think of using an elaborate reefing/furling unit instead of simply installing a line of reefs in the sail. Let's compare the merits of both methods.

by Matt Grant

The simple solution to reducing headsail size is to add a line of reefing points. Reefing points are grommets spaced about 12 to 30 inches apart on a line roughly

parallel to the sail's foot edge. The row of grommets is placed high enough to remove from 15 to 25 percent of the overall sail area. To reduce sail area, the foot of the sail is rolled and tied, and the grommet holes are used to secure the roll.

This is not unlike reefing a mainsail. In fact, the installation and use of reef points in a main and headsail are practically the same. The one notable difference is that

with a mainsail, the boom can be used to attach blocks and cleats to allow

for single or dual line reefing which can usually be accomplished from a cockpit location. With a headsail, the foot must either be tied up before bending the sail on or the headsail must be lowered and shortened under sail. The difficulty





Reefing/furling units sound great but they do have some disadvantages. The wraps taken in reefing tend to “bulk up” (because of hems and patches) at the top and the bottom of the extrusion and, thus, the sail becomes fuller in the middle (the opposite of what is desired). Several methods of improving this situation are promoted. One of

of the latter method is in direct correlation with wind and sea conditions. Weather conditions may require several trips to the foredeck to set or shake out the reef.

In addition, this form of manual reefing does not look too good and, when you’re done sailing, the sail must be lowered and bagged to protect it from ultraviolet and wind damage.

So does the “new” form of reefing, the reefing/furling unit, make more sense? Reefing/furling systems feature an extrusion to which the sail is attached. The extrusion is made from a plastic or aluminum tube that has a small slot on the aft edge into which a taped rope, placed on the forward edge of the sail, is fed. There are no hanks on the sail’s edge, just this small line that feeds into the slot. Once fed into the slot, the reefing/furling unit is made to roll causing the sail to wrap or roll up.

These systems are certainly popular. From a reefing standpoint the amount of sail reduction is variable and easily accomplished from the safety of the cockpit. And it is neat: nothing can come loose to flap in the wind. At the end of the day the entire sail can be rolled onto the headstay and stored that way, as long as the leech and the foot have been protected with a sacrificial cover.

these is adding a foam luff (essentially a pad of foam along the luff in the middle part of the sail). A foam luff helps to “bulk up” and decrease the fullness in the middle of the sail. But it adds cost and its effect varies depending on how much the sail is furled. Even when the sail is not reefed, boat performance may be affected since sail designers tend to make furling sails flatter than normal in order to help the sail roll onto the extrusion without creases. And a furling sacrificial cover adds a good deal of weight to the sail, making it less effective in light air.

Other issues to consider have to do with the use of the reefing/furling unit itself. These units are complicated by comparison to the standard wire and hank arrangement. Maintenance can be an issue. Some systems require lubrication and replacement of ball bearings from time to time. The reefing/furling systems can make trailering more difficult for smaller boats and yearly mast stepping and unstepping more complicated for larger boats.

The units are also expensive. The price range for a 30-foot boat can be from \$600 to \$2,000. And in most cases, furling line and deck hardware must be purchased and installed.


Cost considerations include more than the reefing/furling unit itself. Any sail to be used on the unit must have that small taped rope edge installed. If the boat has an extensive headsail inventory and all will be used, they must all be modified.

The process is further complicated if each sail is also to have a sacrificial cover to protect the exposed sail edges when the sail is fully rolled. These conversions are expensive and add weight to the sails. An average sail conversion for a 30-foot boat will run around \$375.

Costs are low with simple headsail reefing points. Adding reefs to an existing headsail can cost as little as \$40. And there is no cost in making the boat ready for use of the newly modified sail.

Sail versatility is maintained. Indeed a sail with one or more rows of reefing points can be thought of as a replacement for two or more sails. And all headsails in the boat’s inventory can still be used since no rigging modifications have been made (of course they cannot be reefed unless reef points are added).

But, perhaps the biggest advantage of the simple headsail reef is that the intended shape of the sail need not be compromised. The sail can be designed for its best performance instead of flattening it to allow for roller reefing.

There is no really right or wrong way to go. The issue is what makes the most sense on each individual boat. The reefing/furling unit certainly does a lot to make sailing easier and safer, but if reefing and sail performance are the primary concerns, take a second look at the downsides. Often a simple, elegant, and inexpensive row of reefing points is the perfect solution to reefing a headsail. 

Editor’s note: We’re not done with roller furling. This is a very popular option, one we’d like to cover in more detail in future issues. Send your comments and questions, and we’ll come back with another round.

Point *(on behalf of hanks and bags)*

My personal preference is for hanks instead of roller furling. The concept of being able to easily roll your jib to different areas without leaving the cockpit is compelling. The execution is less so.

In general, a partially roller-furled jib will exhibit a sail shape so poor that if the same shape were found on a non-roller-furling sail, a competent sailmaker would recommend that the sail be retired from service. Further, even before the purpose-built furling sail is roller furled, it will necessarily be excessively flat and high cut.


Issues of safety would be more compelling if roller furling always furled. It does not. It is, in fact, least likely to work in high winds when the safety considerations are most pertinent. Some failure modes leave the crew with a jib that cannot be furled or lowered. I've seen extrusions twisted into a helix that reminded me of a sheet metal screw ... probably didn't happen in light air. Roller furling is convenient. Only that, and nothing more.

Most good old boats were built with hanked-on jibs. Hanked-on sails have good shape, so they perform well, and the sail handling system is extremely reliable. If foot reefing is added to the

smaller jibs, these sails will perform well with the reef in. This is because a well-designed jib is flatter at the top.

If you already have roller furling, you can enjoy the convenience. However, if you want really good performance, you will need to carry almost as many sails as we do and change them almost as often. Even then, they will be overly flat and high cut. Maybe you don't want good performance, but if you give away a quarter of a knot too many times you will have the same speed potential as a mooring buoy. It takes more sailpower to punch through the big waves that are encountered when reefing is necessary.

If you don't have roller furling yet and it tempts you, sail around on a windy day and look at the sail shape of other boats. Pay attention to the shapes of the roller-furled sails and compare these shapes to the shape of sails without furlers. If you still want roller furling, don't undersize it when you buy. Fit the largest furling gear you can to your boat. While more expensive, it will be much more reliable and less likely to jam in high winds.

Just my opinion ... 

by Jerry Powlas

Counterpoint *(for furlers)*


I have a Fammet roller furler with a 130 Yankee jib on our Downeaster 32 cutter *Chip Ahoy*. This is a good setup. The internal halyard does add weight, but it also adds convenience. Having a halyard for the spinnaker is nice, too. The furler works just like it is, rolling the jib in and out to full size. (Now, if they could make a sail that has shape when it is half out that would be a trick ...) With my cutter rig I use the roller furling either all the way out or completely rolled up.

Despite its inherent limitations, use of a roller furler must be looked at from a safety and speed vantage. The roller furler makes taking in the sail from the safety of the cockpit fast and easy. Then I usually go forward on deck to manually raise the staysail, as I generally use one or the other.

In downwind conditions the sail works well enough partially furled — but then I haven't had to reef much going downwind. Going upwind in a stiff

breeze is another story. The partial jib can't begin to compare to the staysail's shape and its stability with the lower center of effort and the way it will go into the wind.

Although it would be "quaint" to hank on sails, and have bags of them everywhere we look, I still prefer roller furling and the reduced clutter on deck as well as below, where storage space is precious.

We sail on Lake Superior long into the fall season when the weather can change in an instant. Having the ability to roll that thing up quickly is real handy. Many times we have been caught in squalls when visibility was nonexistent — not the best of times to be out raising or lowering sails on deck. We also do a lot of night cruising. Going on deck at night for a sail change while my wife is asleep below is not that appealing to me ... but then, neither is waking her. Roller furling gets my nod of approval. 

by Scott Perkins

Sailors' resources: Save about a "bazillion" dollars

What's the difference between "A fool and his money are soon parted" and a sailor who consistently goes to the same supply sources for all of his or her needs? The answer: very little.

Somewhere on the back of your hand or the bathroom mirror write down this Eleventh Commandment: "There shalt be no sole source that is the best for everything, every time." This commandment will save you, in an average sailing career, about a bazillion dollars. Of course you won't have any left over at the end because you'll be spending it on other fun stuff, but you get the idea. With the information outlined below, you can make an educated choice when a need arises, as opposed to a stab-in-the-dark "I'll-take-it" approach.

Here's a corollary to the Eleventh Commandment: "If an item is retailed as a marine product, count on a significant markup." Part of the reason has to do with small production runs versus, say, an item ordered and stocked by Wal-Mart. But part of it is also due to the mystique and mistaken impression of a moneyed aura surrounding the words "boating, marine, yacht, America's Cup, etc." If you are looking for thru-hull fittings or navigation lights, buy

products made for mariners, and buy the best that you can afford after checking at least three different supply sources. If you need clothing, tools, interior items, or outfitting supplies like food, check the marine supply sources, but concentrate your search on non-marine sources to save a bundle.

The sources listed here are not all-inclusive, nor are they permanent. They represent nationally known suppliers that are major players in their areas of expertise plus some thought-provoking alternative choices for you. Some of them are targeted toward a different market but have items of use to sailors. Add new ones as you run across them, and keep *Good Old Boat* magazine informed, too, so your discoveries can be shared with other sailors. This is the beginning of a comprehensive list of suppliers for sailors of good old boats. It will appear on the *Good Old Boat* website and in print from time to time as it expands.

They are broken into five major categories: general marine supplies, tools and related supplies, clothing, food, and miscellaneous.

by Bob Wood

General Marine Supplies

Your local hardware store may have lots of stuff like nylon (anchor) rope and stainless steel hardware at very competitive prices. They may also be able to special order many items such as fiberglass resins and cloth. Large lumber supply stores may have access to woodworking supplies at competitive prices ... especially if you remind them of your purchasing volume with the upcoming house addition or garage. Local glass shops might not be able to supply a port-light frame, but can replace that clouded plastic in the hatch cover or the port-light glass with a customized fit, no less, if you bring the cover or frame in.

West Marine

Marine supply house by which all others are measured
1-800-262-8464

Tugboats

General and commercial marine supplies, equipment
1-305-743-4585

Defender Industries

Discount boating supplies
1-800-628-8225

M&E Marine Supply, Inc.

Marine supplies
1-800-541-6501

Sailrite

Sailcloth and canvas supplies
1-800-348-2769

Landfall Navigation

Marine and navigation supplies
1-800-941-2219

Boat/U.S.

Marine supplies and insurance
1-800-937-2628

Seattle Marine and Fishing Supplies

Commercial marine gear and clothing
1-800-426-2783

Fisheries Supply Co.

Commercial and recreational marine equipment
1-800-426-6930

Tools and Related Supplies

Local retail stores, such as Wal-Mart and Sears, run sales that may meet or beat many catalog stores. There is something to be said for supporting your local economy when possible. If you belong to a local sailing or yacht club, explore the possibilities of volume purchasing through local vendors; they'll listen. If you are buying a major tool, such as a band saw, table saw, etc., check with your high school and area vocational schools. They replace high-quality used equipment on a scheduled basis and may have an auction or sale coming up. You probably never have to pay full retail for mechanics' tools. At least in my part of the country,

many smaller auto garages are closing due to increased restrictions from the EPA and OSHA, resulting in tool sales at give-away prices.

Northern Hydraulic and Tool Supply

Tools and related equipment, excellent selection
1-800-533-5545

Harbor Freight Tools

Economical tools and related equipment
1-800-423-2567

Hartville Tool

Woodworking tools and supplies
1-800-345-2396

Tool Crib of the North

Woodworking tools
1-800-358-3096

Plexmar

Fiberglass resin and supplies
1-800-368-6892

5 Star Autobody Supplies

Fiberglass resin, accessories, and tools
1-602-451-4451

Goudgeon Brothers, Inc.

Epoxy, fiberglass supplies (WEST System)
1-517-684-7286

Fiberlay, Inc.

Fiberglass supplies
1-800-942-0660

US Chemical

Epoxy, fillers
1-800-321-0672

JC Whitney

Tools, motor, and electrical supplies
1-312-431-6102

Jamestown Distributors

Woodworking supplies
1-800-423-0030

Clothing

While local discount stores may easily beat some of these specialty stores' prices, the quality may not be comparable. Clothes for stripping bottom paint is one thing; a limited wardrobe of offshore clothing is another. Don't overlook a government surplus outlet; G.I. (government issue) clothing is high quality, wears forever, and is often inexpensive. If you are planning some distance cruising to the Caribbean or Pacific, grab a box of T-shirt overruns when you see them; they work as terrific gifts wherever you make landfall.

Wilderness Outfitters

Recreational clothing
1-800-778-3636

REI

Recreational clothing – \$15 membership fee
1-800-426-4840

WearGuard

Modestly priced work and outdoor clothing
1-800-388-3300

Lands' End

Reasonably priced recreational and casual clothing
1-800-356-4444

Outback Outdoor Catalog

Outdoor clothing
1-719-542-0022

LL Bean

Classic outdoor apparel
1-800-221-4221

Gander Mountain

Recreational clothing and fishing supplies
1-414-862-2331

Outer Banks Outfitters

Recreational clothing, fishing supplies
1-800-682-2225

Food

Your local supermarket has many items at a fraction of the specialty prices. Especially check out the packaged varieties of rice and pasta dinners that need only oil and water to reconstitute. Spices will keep for a long time in one of the "zip-type" baggies as long as the baggies themselves are protected in a Tupperware®-like container. Items that no galley should be without, whether on a 22- or a 48-footer: peanut butter, jam, crackers (sealed in plastic), and canned juice. They provide a quick energy boost, work well in hot or cold climates without cooking, require no refrigeration, keep for a long time unopened and combat bouts of seasickness.

Brinkman Turkey Farms

Canned beef, turkey, chicken, pork, soups
1-419-365-5127

Mountain House

Freeze-dried foods
1-800-547-0244

Nutrition Headquarters

Dietary supplements, vitamins, etc.
Fax 1-618-529-4553

AlpineAire

Freeze-dried foods
1-888-889-6373

Best Prices Storable Foods

Freeze-dried and canned foods
1-972-288-0262

Meyers Custom Supply

MREs (meals, ready-to-eat)
1-800-451-6105

Miscellaneous

Although these specialty stores are targeted toward another market, some of their products are uniquely suited for the marine/boating environment.

Shomer-Tec

Police supplies, intrusion alarms/motion detectors, waterproof pouches, etc.
1-360-733-6214


US Cavalry

Police supplies, clothing, MREs (meals, ready-to-eat)
1-800-777-7172

Glen-L Marine

Boat plans, fiberglass supplies
1-562-630-6258

Finally, when you throw your hands up in frustration at not finding exactly what you want, remember the thousands who've sailed before you with very little in the way of marine-specific supplies. A person could literally build a boat from commonly available local sources, sew sails from local fabric store material, and sail for six months on supermarket foods.

Whatever specialty sources you may take advantage of beyond this, consider as plusses. That home-grown boat may be slightly lumpy and misshapen looking, sailing only downwind ... but after not quite stooping far enough for companionways and kneeling on anchor chocks while wrestling a snapping genny, I'm slightly lumpy and misshapen, too. Besides, I *like* sailing off the wind. 

For sale

Dufour 31

1977 sloop. Fast, roomy, well-built, seaworthy. Volvo diesel, Harken roller furling, equipped for cruising. Located in Rockport, Maine. \$17,500.

Contact Lenny Reich
207-465-2334
lsreich@colby.edu

Tanzer 22 Fin Keel

Tanzer 22 in good condition. 22' 6" loa, 19' 9" lwl, 3' 5" draft. Fin keel version. 222 sq. ft. sail area. Four bunks, 2900 lb., tiller steering. Located in Lee, NH.

Contact Michael Farrell
603-659-2380

(Our apologies to Michael. If you saw this ad in the last issue and tried to call him, please try again using this phone number! We didn't just have one typo in the number. It was worse: we weren't even close!)

Etcetera

LiveAboard Magazine

is THE online magazine for LiveAboards, Cruisers, and Wannabes. **Join us at:** <http://www.LiveAboardMagazine.com/> and share in discussions. Tie up to our virtual marina and exchange info with experienced LiveAboards and Wannabes. We have a great classified service and our own online marine center for books and supplies for your boat and much more. Don't delay, stop by today.

Mark T. Brown
Editor in Chief/Webmaster
<http://www.LiveAboardMagazine.com/>

No storage in your cheap off-shore bag? Or, it's all in the wrong place? Want to match your yacht lettering on the bag? Been looking for someone to put a picture of your "baby" on a tote?

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Just lookin'

Sailboat Postcards

Collector of lighthouse and sailboat postcards looking for cards to buy or trade.

Contact Lynn Jorgensen
612-820-8340 (days)

Ad Rates

Classified Ads

All subscribers will be given one classified ad per year.

Free ads should be text only and not exceed 50 words. If a larger ad or an illustration is desired, we will give you credit of \$25 against our regular rates for classified ads:

Classified text or text/picture ad:

- \$.50/word (\$10 minimum ad).
- \$20 for pictures or art (2 inches maximum art/photo size).

Classified display ad:

- \$25 per column inch (1½ inches wide).

We plan to limit all ads to a maximum height of 3 inches. Classified display ads should be 1½ inches wide by 1 to 3 inches high. Provide camera-ready art, if possible. Otherwise, provide text and photos/art suitable for scanning. All classified ads (display and text-only ads) will be published in the magazine, as well as in the

following *Good Old Boat* newsletter and on the *Good Old Boat* website. Due to limitations with email distribution, we will run text-only ads or a text-only version of the display ads in the newsletter and on the website.

Send materials to:

Karen Larson, Editor
Good Old Boat Magazine
7340 Niagara Lane N.
Maple Grove, MN
55311-2655

If you have questions, contact:

Karen or Jerry at
612-420-8923;
612-420-8921 fax;
ads@goodoldboat.com.

Deadline
for Jan./Feb. issue:
Nov. 30

Dear good old boat supplier,

Our ads are cheap; directory listings free

Advertise inexpensively in *Good Old Boat* magazine while our prices are low and reader enthusiasm is high! Our readers have told us we've got the right advertising niche for the many businesses which supply services and products for our good old fleet. In fact, they've told us they *want* to see your ads. They've asked us what we're waiting for. They told us to get in there and bring them the information they need.

Since good old boaters want to know who you are, it's our job to help you tell them. We'll make this easy for you. It won't cost too much, because we believe you're running small businesses much like ours.

In addition to offering you affordable advertising opportunities, we're putting together a directory listing all the companies we can find offering products and services for good old boaters. **Being listed in the directory costs you nothing, because we want it to be complete.** We'll post it on our website <<http://www.goodoldboat.com>>, and we'll print it from time to time in the magazine.

Our mission is to provide resources for our kind of sailors. If you offer a service they need, you are a resource we're looking for. Please contact us to be listed in the directory or to advertise. We will welcome your contact in either case!

advertising in GOOD OLD BOAT is a bargain

Size	Width	Height	Color	B&W	Discounts:
Full bleed	8 1/8	11	\$500.00	\$350.00	3x run 3%
Full	7	10 1/4	\$500.00	\$350.00	6x run 5%
3/4	7	7 1/2	\$375.00	\$262.00	12x run 10%
1/2 horiz.	7	5	\$250.00	\$175.00	prepay 10%
1/2 vert.	3 1/4	10 1/4	\$250.00	\$175.00	Deadlines:
1/4 horiz.	7	2 1/2	\$125.00	\$88.00	Jan./Feb. Dec. 1
1/4 vert.	3 1/4	5	\$125.00	\$88.00	Mar./April Feb. 1
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					July/Aug. June 1
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☐ I'm enclosing information about my company. Please list me in your directory of services!

☐ Please call me to discuss my ad.

- ☐ 1 issue
☐ 3 consecutive issues
☐ 6 consecutive issues (one year)
☐ other

Call us (612-420-8923) or send to:

Good Old Boat
7340 Niagara Lane North, Maple Grove,
MN 55311-2655
advertising@goodoldboat.com

Mail Buoy continued (we couldn't help ourselves)

Mail continued from Page 5

Wisconsin than in Minnesota because the engineers who designed it never anticipated having to burn gasohol. But at least during part of the year, Minnesota law prohibits the sale of gasoline without alcohol.

How about an outboard?

I read your review of the Atomic 4 and gasoline safety. What about replacing a poor-quality gas inboard with a gas outboard? I've weighed my opinion:

Advantages: low initial cost; cabin does not smell after running the motor; won't snag lobster pots; if it snags, can untangle without getting wet; safer than an inboard; easier to maintain; no prop drag.

Disadvantages: limited electrical power generation; cavitates or comes out completely in short, heavy chop; on-boat maintenance risks dropping parts or spilling oil; ugly, ugly, ugly.

Dave Pomerantz
Marshfield, Mass.

Edible boats

While we were sailing in the wilderness this summer, we needed to make some minor repairs to our wooden kayak paddles. John Vigor had suggested the use of ordinary kitchen flour as filler for epoxy resin in his article "Rubrail Revival," in the premier issue of Good Old Boat. We had epoxy aboard but no purpose-made filler, so we used wheat flour from our galley. Later I emailed John that I was surprised at the good structural properties of flour/epoxy mix, and commented that the material was not easy to sand by hand. His reply:

Thanks for the flour/epoxy info. Yes, I'm sure flour makes a good bonding filler. If you want a good bonding filler, you need only add dried yeast to the mix to create millions of microballoons. And if you let it cure in an oven for 30 minutes at 400 degrees Fahrenheit, you'll have a loaf of epoxy/sanding filler/bread — the world's first edible epoxy. Future shipwrecked mariners will never starve — they'll simply eat their boats. Better patent it quick before someone else makes a fortune out of it.

Good advice, John. Please don't try this at home. This bread should only be made by professionals!

For the love of our boat

I am the original owner of *Rondelais* (1976 Pearson 36.5) and have over 30,000 offshore miles on her. I would not be able to replace her today. She has always returned and delivered us safely and in style.

Joseph Pignato
Brentwood, N.H.

Kudos

The first issue impressed me enough to subscribe. The second issue made me very glad that I did. Keep up the good work. I just don't like the thought of having to wait TWO months for the next issue. I'd wish you enough luck to make it a monthly magazine but then, I fear, you'd never have time for sailing.

Bob Bofferding
St. Pete Beach, Fla.

I just received Volume 1, Number 2 and was immediately impressed. It feels like a comfortable old home. The article about old friends Jim and Connie Grant made me think about when they helped my wife start her sail business in Fort Wayne, Ind., which she now conducts in Maryland as The Nautical Needle. We still see Jim and Connie at the Annapolis Boat Show every year.

Next I read the article about the Pardeys, whom I have always admired and even had the opportunity to meet in Chicago about 15 years ago. They offer sound advice for all sailors.

Next I read the article, "When is an Ericson really an Alberg," and swore I was reading about our experiences regarding the selection of a boat. We chose a Luders 34 for very similar reasons that Dan Hauptert chose his Ericson. It is a full-keel CCA-designed vessel but heavier than the Ericson. It was built by C.E. Ryder, and I had it built as a cutter-rigged vessel with tall (3- to 4-inch) toe rails. It has a Universal Diesel engine and a small fuel tank, as does Dan's Ericson. It does have a 24-foot waterline, which I sometimes wish were longer, but that is typical of the CCA designs. We chose to purchase a "kit boat" from Ryder and to complete it ourselves (which we are still doing to some extent). This included canvas, woodwork, plumbing and electrical systems, and everything that goes with putting a boat together.

As Dan says, there is nothing like putting the system together to know how it works and where everything is.

The bottom line is that I really liked your magazine and identify with it considerably. Keep up the good work.

Bruce Worster
St. Leonard, Md.

The folks at *Good Old Boat* have captured a good mood for the magazine that I hope endures: Good Old Boats and Good Old Folks. It is a blend of several good magazines — the photos of *Sailing*, the people of *Latitudes & Attitudes*, the technical advice of *Practical Sailor*, and the adventure of *Cruising World* ... it's a keeper.

Randy Palmer
Altoona, Wis.

This magazine is past due. Finally a magazine for those of us who appreciate the *reality* of sailing.

G.N. Korhman
Biloxi, Miss.

Once again a great issue; I'm impressed with the quality and content of *Good Old Boat* — actual "useful" articles! Thanks for filling this important (to us anyway!) niche. A true notch above the run-of-the-mill mainstream skills for the new boat manufacturers.

Mike Keers
Hereford, Ariz.

My kind of boats, my kind of folks, my kind of magazine. My subscription is enclosed.

Richard Turner
Villa Grove, Ill.

Sign me up as a subscriber. I anticipate your publication will bring joy to this sailor's soul while stuck on the frozen hard this winter.

Dick Baum
Jackson, Wyo.

Send questions and comments to Good Old Boat, 7340 Niagara Lane North, Maple Grove, MN 55311 or by email to jerry@goodoldboat.com. We'll get a response to you prior to the next scheduled publication and promise to respond whether or not your question is selected for publication.

Introducing the "Ultrafeed"

a walking foot machine for canvas & sail at the incredibly low intro price of \$399!

This well built, all metal, straight stitch sewing machine features a high lift powered walking foot for the ultimate in feeding ability. It makes feeding heavy, slippery and even sticky fabrics like window material a breeze. It even **walks over bumps without skipping stitches.**

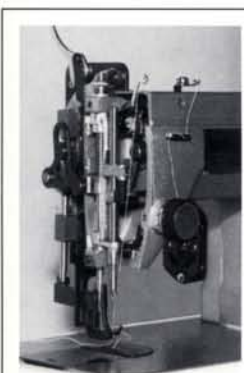
On most sewing machines the presser foot simply holds the fabric down and all movement is accomplished with a single, bottom feed dog. The Ultrafeed uses a

mechanical "WALKING" presser foot which moves forward and back in time with the feed dog to ensure that the layers of fabric are moving together and easily through the machine.

Since it feeds so well, the stitch length stays very consistent. And, because the walking

foot is designed with a high lift, it better accommodates thick fabric assemblies—as many as 10 layers of canvas.

Walking Foot Capability at a low, low price! \$399



Cover removed for a close-up of walking foot

Its variable stitch length mechanism allows for **very long straight stitches**—up to 6mm. This is great for sewing Sunbrella which tends to needle pucker (the longer the stitch the less the pucker). And, its lever activated reverse makes back stitching easy.

Weighing 42 lbs. the Ultrafeed is built to take the pounding encountered in working with outdoor fabrics and upholstery. And, it stays put—it **won't walk all over the place.**

Power is enhanced by a 1.5 amp motor. A cogged belt and pulley drive system eliminate slippage. This is an amazingly powerful, durable machine. *Great for cottage industries!*

The Ultrafeed is produced and supported by Sailrite, for 30 years a source for canvas tools, products and supplies. That support includes a guidebook with very complete instructions (even learn machine timing) and schematics. There is also a toll free tech/support line.

Use the Ultrafeed for canvas and sail work, upholstery, crafts, draperies, quilting and general sewing.

We are so happy with the Ultrafeed that we've given it a 60 day money back, two year parts & service warranty.



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www.sailrite.com.

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Last tack

“I never had a thing that ain’t been used ...”


My refrain in recent months has been the theme from Barbra Streisand’s song “Secondhand Rose.” “I never had a thing that ain’t been used.” In the tradition of Secondhand Rose, I have a good old boat, a good old car, a good old house, even a good old husband. None of them is working as well as it used to. All need a little extra maintenance, patience, and tender loving care. They have become idiosyncratic. You have to learn to live with them. Unlike Rose, I understand their ways and love them all dearly.

Older equipment means a simpler, less high-tech, more manual lifestyle. I have a manual camera which requires that I turn the knobs, focus the subject, push the button, and make the decisions ... incorrect and too late though they may sometimes be. I’ve seen fancier computerized cameras that do everything but point and click for you. A miniature screen gives you information on what settings you’ve selected and choices they’re making on your behalf. I fear I’ll lose track of the plethora of possible settings and eventually have no understanding or control of the end result ... even though it is usually correct and always fast.

by Karen Larson

My older car is manual, too. I hadn’t noticed all the things the newer cars could do until my son bought one: electric door locks, windows and seat belts, automatic transmission, of course, and more. Interior lights dim slowly after the car is turned off. I constantly fight the seat belt that is set in motion every time I open or close a door. This car does everything but drive for you. Some of the newer ones have navigation, and they’ll be following car lanes soon, too, I hear.

And, of course we have a manual boat. Winches are tailed by Karen or Jerry. Anchors are raised hand over hand. Jibs are raised with the help of hanks and halyards. (And we never have the right jib up for the conditions of the moment, sailing in and among islands as we do.) Both halyards are led conveniently — to the base of the mast, rather than to the cockpit. But that doesn’t matter. We’re on deck all the time anyway for one reason or another — usually to change the headsail the old-fashioned way.

Did I mention that, like my used house and recycled husband, I love my manual camera, car, and boat dearly? I wouldn’t trade any of them. 

Reflections

I

by **Bob Wood**


have a hobby that almost eclipses my love of freedom and sailing — watching people. And boat owners working on their true loves are very watchable.

If one could gather a hundred owners, have them put down their scrapers, their sanding blocks, their varnish pots, and their triple-jointed four-foot extension sockets, one would find exactly a hundred different reasons why they are at the boatyard. For starters, not all of the hundred would have that feverish “I gotta get it in the water and *soon!*” mad gleam in their eyes. Maybe less than half would qualify as mad-gleamers.

There’s a large segment for whom the work is a labor of love and actually an end in itself, rather than a means to the water. You may have met some of them, like the guy who keeps coming up with projects on a perfectly reasonable boat. It’s usually a craftsman who enjoys the art of joinery or some other esoteric nautica. For him or her, building a masterpiece is the reason for ownership, launching is secondary if it’s considered at all beyond a certain dread.

I’ve also watched and admired the perfectionist, the maritime professional. This person works slowly and patiently, knowing the sea or lake is an unforgiving world. A piece of wood is shaped and fitted, fitted and shaped, until an exact joint is formed. Bonding the surfaces may take weeks while the proper adhesive and connectors are ordered. Absolutely no shortcuts here. A job worth doing is worth doing right. Or rip it out and do it over. The boat is solid, tight, reeks with confidence. You look for a name like *Resolute* on her stern.

And then there are folks like me. If you look closely at my varnish work, you’ll see some brush strokes. There’s a better-than-even chance that my bilge is not bone dry and painted white. The companionway cover was made with exterior plywood, not marine grade. And if you turned over the cushions that I so proudly made, you’d see some extra tucks and pulls on the seams. I brush, caulk, fit, and sew with a distant palm-studded horizon in my eyes. The fixes and repairs are sturdy, not exquisite. I don’t excel. But I don’t own a slightly dowdy older boat; I own a dream. It’s my tangible insurance that I can escape when I want. It works for me.

How many good reasons are in that gathering? Oh, about a hundred. We are all fixing our toilets to enjoy whatever our personal moonrises are. Each reason is unique, each goal special, and each fixer brings something to the rich fabric of our boatyard or marina. Appreciate them, one and all, for making our moonrises fuller. 



Here's what's coming in January/February:

- Tanks a lot: fuel, water, waste
- Good old vendor: Moyer Marine
- Cruising memories



- History of the Allied sailboats
- Ted Brewer on flag etiquette
- *Small Boat Journal* revisited
- The project from hell
- Life without an icebox

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