

GOOD OLD BOAT

The sailing magazine for the rest of us!



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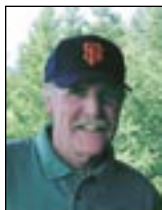
Gregg Nestor (*O'Day 23*, Page 4) is a contributing editor with *Good Old Boat*. More than 20 years and four boats ago, he discovered sailing and has been an avid "trailer sailor" ever since. When not sailing or writing about sailing, Gregg runs the family farm.



Alan Lucas (*Building the skipjack*, Page 8), an Australian from New South Wales, has been cruising for 40 years. He and his wife, Patricia, have built or restored all eight of the boats they have owned. Alan is the author of several Australian cruising guides.



Ted Brewer (*All about berths*, Page 14; *Ericson 29*, Page 40) is a contributing editor with *Good Old Boat* and one of North America's best-known yacht designers. He also is the man who designed scores of good old boats... the ones still sailing after all these years.



Ed Lawrence (*Yacht Constructors: Pioneers in glass*, Page 17) is a contributing editor with *Good Old Boat*. Though a professional writer with thousands of ocean racing miles under his keel, when aboard his wife's San Juan 23 his mantra is, "Aye, aye, Captain."

Marili Green Reilly (*There have always been boats*, Page 20) says she has not yet yielded to her husband's suggestion to "sell up and sail away." She prefers shorter cruises in the Pacific Northwest. The two are refitting the Cascade 36 her father launched in 1975. A freelance writer, Marili is working on a history of pleasure boating families on the Columbia River.



In the early 1980s, **Dave Martin** (*The feeling that money can't buy*, Page 24) spent 2 years sailing his Cal 25, *Martini*, from Seattle to New York City via the Panama Canal. Between 1988 and 1995, Dave and his wife, Jaja, circumnavigated aboard their 25-footer, *Direction*.

Between 1998 and 2002, the Martins, along with their three children, voyaged to the Arctic aboard their 33-footer, *Driver*. More about the Martins is in their book, *Into the Light: A Family's Epic Journey*.

Cathy McIntire (*Cruising safely and in comfort*, Page 25) and her husband, Ken, moved aboard in 2001. They traveled from Lake Pepin on



the Minnesota and Wisconsin border down the Mississippi and Tennessee-Tombigbee waterways, across the Gulf of Mexico, through the Florida Keys, up the East Coast to New England, and back down to the Bahamas, where they cruised for 6 months.



Don Launer (*Magnetic fascination*, Page 30; *Diesel Engines 101*, Page 42; *Reflections: Things that go slap in the night*, Page 89) is a *Good Old Boat* contributing editor. He built his two-masted schooner, *Delphinus*, from a bare hull and sails her on the East Coast from his home on Barnegat Bay in New Jersey.

Tom Young (*A Christmas tale*, Page 33), a lifelong sailor, lives on the coast of Maine in Rockport village. Tom and his wife, Mary Ann, have sailed from Down East Maine to the Exumas, Bahamas. They enjoy sailing the New England coast with their two children in *Christmas*, their 1961, 38-foot Alden Challenger yawl.



Amy Cawvey (*Hawaiian tradition*, Page 41) is a military wife who began sailing as a diversion when her husband was serving in Korea for a year. Before long she was teaching other women to sail. She never looked back.



Marine artist **Alan Eddy** (*Art spread: Soft 'scapes*, Page 44) has always felt connected to the sea and the ships that sail upon her. In addition to painting nostalgic historical yachting scenes and portraits of classic J/Boats, he paints luminous landscapes, coastal scenes, and figurative and still-life paintings. Visit his website at <<http://www.alanjeddy.com>>.



Marianne Scott (*Salute to Karen Thorndike*, Page 46) started writing about marine subjects when she and her husband, David, sailed from Victoria, British Columbia, to Bora Bora on their good old boat, *Starkindred*, a Niagara 35. She's the author of *Naturally Salty — Coastal Characters of the Pacific Northwest*, published this spring.



Silver Donald Cameron (*In search of comfortable cruising*, Page 50) is the author of several books about ships and the sea, including the award-winning *Wind, Whales and Whisky*, the story of a



circumnavigation of Cape Breton Island in his previous boat, an engineless cutter. He lives in D'Escousse, Nova Scotia. Visit his website at <<http://www.islemadame.com/sdc/>>.

Jeremy Keene (*Chasing dreams*, Page 54) is a transportation engineer in Missoula, Montana. He learned to sail in a Denver (Colorado) Parks and Recreation boating program, sailing a fleet of battered Sunflowers around the tiny lake in Washington Park. He and his wife, Heather, and daughter, Thea, sail *Chiaro di Luna*, a San Juan 7.7, on Flathead Lake (Montana), where they are hard at work on *The Dream*.



Homer Shannon (*Cinderella and the Dutchman*, Page 58) started sailing in his high school's Frostbite club. He and his wife, Dee, have migrated from a Cape Dory 25 to a Vega 27 to their present Bristol 29.9. Their home port is Newburyport, Mass.



John Karklins (*Simple solutions: Armored portlights*, Page 63) always had an interest in boats. Latvian-born, he emigrated to the U.S. at age 10 and learned to sail on Lake Michigan. He lives in Chicago. His sailboats have included a Cape Dory Typhoon, a Bristol Sailstar Corsair, and the current Allied Seawind.



Lon Zimmerman (*Simple solutions: Vern's great idea*, Page 66) retired after 25 years spent teaching in Alaska. His favorite good old boat was a Nor'Sea 27, which he sailed from Seattle to Seward, Alaska, in 1994.



Bill Brockway (*Quick and easy: A pulled-together toolkit*, Page 69) grew up sailing and dumping a series of small boats on Lake Michigan. These days he's in northern New York sailing and racing Rangers, Olsons, Solings, and J/Boats. After 8 years as senior editor of *Tools of the Trade* magazine, he has a unique perspective regarding the tools used in any trade.



Bob Steadman (*Quick and easy: Let there be LED light*, Page 70) built a 37-foot cutter, based on a Cascade 36, 20 years ago and has been sailing ever since. He has cruised Mexico in her three times and is getting ready to take off again next year for more distant anchorages.



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About the cover...

Christmas, a 1961 Alden
Challenger, shows her
charms following an
extensive refit. Tom Young
tells the story of finding
a classic sailboat well on
her way toward becoming
scrap, seeing her potential,
and bringing her back.
The story, in Tom's words,
begins on Page 33.



Smiles on all their faces

Several had never raced before.

Many raced only occasionally.

And all had a great time.

JUDGING BY THE ELATION OF A COUPLE OF
hundred Annapolis sailors, racing is
a stimulating, exciting, and exhilarat-
ing way to spend several hours on the
water. Jerry and I did not race in the
Good Old Boat Regatta last October,
but we were at the party site ashore
as absolutely delighted sailors docked
or anchored and dinghied ashore to
compare opinions of a race that each
had seen from a uniquely personal
perspective. Who finished first or last
didn't matter. There were no protests.
The weather had given them perfect
conditions. These folks clearly had
been having a good time.

In 4 years the Annapolis Good Old
Boat Regatta has grown faster than our
magazine (*which is doing very well,
thanks!*). The inaugural year, 2000,
drew 21 boats to a Saturday race. By
2001, 34 boats signed up for the event,
which was expanded to span two Sat-
urdays. The following year saw 53 boats
for the two weekend races. By October
2003, 73 boats signed up. There was
talk of making more starts for the larg-
est groups and of finding a new party
location to accommodate the expand-
ing crowd of skippers and crews.

This last regatta occurred just
weeks after Hurricane Isabel had
flooded Annapolis and left destruc-
tion in her wake. But boats and crews
were happy to put that behind them
and have a good time rejoicing in boats
“of some maturity,” as they character-
ize good old boats. They swapped race
stories and compared modifications.
They went home with race trophies,
free subscriptions to our magazine,
and smiles on their faces.

A bit farther north and one month
earlier, the Heritage Classic Regatta
Series for Good Old Boats had a rough
inaugural year. This series was set for
four Saturday races, two of which were
canceled by Hurricane Isabel. The
other two were poorly attended since
many sailors had hauled their boats




Joseph Picciolo

out of the water in anticipation of the
storm. But this race series also offers
fun racing for good old boats and will
be back for a good time once more in
September this year.

The venerable Swiftsure Inter-
national Yacht Race out of Victoria,
British Columbia, is considering the
addition of a division for good old
boats. Held each May, the Swiftsure
may offer yet another opportunity for
folks with boats like ours to compete,
compare, and come back with smiles
on their faces.

There are ground swells for more:
Lake Michigan and Lake Erie may be
next. For more about the good old
regattas sponsored by *Good Old Boat*
and for race results of the regatta in
Annapolis, visit our website at <[http://
www.goodoldboat.com/regatta.html](http://www.goodoldboat.com/regatta.html)>.

If there's one near you, even if
you've never raced, give it a go. The
elation on the faces of those return-
ing from the Annapolis event could be
yours. Several had never raced before.
Many raced only occasionally. And all
had a great time. 

Karen Larson



O'Day 23

*A whole lot
of cruisability
in just 23 feet*

by Gregg Nestor



GEORGE O'DAY, 1960 OLYMPIC sailing gold medalist and 1967 America's Cup winner, was one of America's leading production sailboat builders. Over his lifetime, George designed, created, or implemented no fewer than 32 boats. The company he founded spanned more than 30 years and had a reputation for building boats that were easy to handle and performed well under sail.

At one time, the company's offering included sprightly daysailers, comfortable weekenders, and luxurious blue-water cruisers, from 12 to 40 feet in length. Many sailors are aware of the O'Day Widgeon, Javelin, Daysailer, and the 19-foot classic Mariner daysailers. It was in the 1970s and early 1980s in particular — when trailerable cruisers represented a significant portion of the sailboat market — that O'Day became the undisputed leader in building trailer-sailers.

Early in the life of his company, George utilized the talents of many noted marine architects, such as Uffa

Fox and Phillip Rhodes. In the later years, C. Raymond Hunt Associates provided the mainstay designs. In 1971, the O'Day 23 left the Hunt drawing board.

The production run of the O'Day 23 began in 1972 and lasted approximate-

“The exact figures are not known, as most of the O'Day records unfortunately are lost, but it's estimated that nearly 1,700 O'Day 23s were built.”

ly 13 years, with the last boat leaving the assembly line at the Falls River, Massachusetts, plant in 1985. The exact figures are not known, as most of the O'Day records unfortunately are

lost, but it's estimated that nearly 1,700 O'Day 23s were built. During its life span, the company was assimilated by a series of conglomerates and unfortunately folded in 1989.

For its time, the O'Day 23 was a very different small cruising boat. It was one of the first pocket cruisers to have full 5-foot headroom below, an optional pop-top that could increase headroom to 6 feet 4 inches, berthing for four, a private head, and even a hanging locker.

The boat has a long waterline of 19 feet 6 inches for swiftiness, a wide beam of 7 feet 11 inches for added stability, 1,200 pounds of encapsulated lead for stiffness, a 27-inch shoal-draft keel for gunkholing as well as easy launching and retrieval, and a manageable weight of 3,085 pounds for trailerability. The boat looks and feels larger than its size because of a clever utilization of available space and the attention to detail that both pleases the eye and eliminates the discomforts often found on boats of this size.



Design and construction

The profile of the O'Day 23 shows little sheer, moderate freeboard that is responsible for the generous sitting headroom, a pronounced bow overhang, and a flat stern. The height of the coachroof blends well into the overall lines of the boat, and its turtle-shell forward end is classic. Both the hull and deck are fiberglass. The hull is solid hand laminated; the decks are a sandwich of two layers of fiberglass with a core of end-grain balsa. End-grain balsa is extremely light, resists crushing, and provides good insulation against heat, cold, and sound. All deck hardware is backed with either stainless-steel backing plates or marine plywood.

The O'Day 23 sports a shoal-draft keel comprised of 1,200 pounds of lead bonded in place. It also incorporates a lightly weighted fiberglass centerboard that, when down, increases windward ability and adds lift. The centerboard is easy to raise or lower by hand without the aid of a winch. With the centerboard up, it draws only 27 inches, com-

pared to 5 feet 4 inches with it down. The transom-mounted spade rudder is a fiberglass-and-foam core sandwich. The rudder does not extend below the depth of the shoal-draft keel. It is unnecessary, therefore, that it be a kick-up type, and it does not kick up. This shoal-keel/rudder combination facilitates backwater cruising. The

"It was one of the first pocket cruisers to have a full 5-foot headroom below . . ."

tiller is varnished ash. Also located on the transom are a stainless-steel swim ladder and an adjustable outboard motor bracket.

On deck

The 6-foot foredeck is clutter-free and features a flush anchor locker with

overboard drain. Fourteen-inch-wide sidedecks, inboard shrouds, a molded-in fiberglass toerail, non-skid decking, and 5 feet of teak handrail make for reasonably comfortable maneuverability on deck. Stainless-steel bow and stern pulpits, stanchions, and single lifelines complete the package. Brightwork is at a minimum. It is limited to the hand-

A lot of boat in 23 feet, the O'Day 23 was one of the first pocket cruisers to offer 5-foot headroom below. The flush-mounted forward hatch, above right on facing page, and the anchor locker, lower right, are additional thoughtful features. The cockpit, above at left this page, is a roomy 6 feet 3 inches long, and the wide companionway, below at left, leads to a relatively roomy interior. Pelican, owned by Joe and Mary Ann Smith, spends her summers sailing on Pymatuning Lake on the border of Ohio and Pennsylvania.

rails, hatch boards, and companionway slides.

The 6-foot 3-inch cockpit is roomy and can be used to expand the living/sleeping area with the addition of a canopy or boom tent. It is self-draining and has a bona fide bridge deck to prevent water from cascading below should a wave fill the cockpit.

To starboard is a molded-in icebox with drain, ideal for easy drink access. Just aft of the icebox is a fuel-tank locker, which easily accommodates the standard 6-gallon fuel tank. The port seat locker houses the battery and accesses a cavernous storage area. The cockpit coamings flow nicely back from the cabin and are of reasonable height. They offer back support and a feeling of being "down in the cockpit." The hull-to-deck joint is lapped, sealed, mechanically fastened, and covered with a two-piece vinyl rubrail.

Belowdecks

Below, the O'Day 23 utilizes a molded fiberglass pan that incorporates the cabin sole and a similarly constructed overhead liner to supply most of the structural support. Access to hardware is gained by removing flexible plastic plugs in the headliner to expose the fasteners. A foam-backed fabric hull liner gives the boat interior a finished look and adds insulation and sound absorption. Teak bulkheads, cabinets, and solid trim complete the interior. A large fiberglass sole panel provides access to an almost nonexistent bilge. Without a well-developed bilge to collect water, any significant amount of water that finds its way below will quickly rise above the cabin sole and slosh about the



O'Day 23

Designer: C. Raymond Hunt

LOA: 22 feet 9 inches

LWL: 19 feet 6 inches

Beam: 7 feet 11 inches

Draft: 2 feet 3 inches/
5 feet 4 inches

Displacement: 3,085 pounds

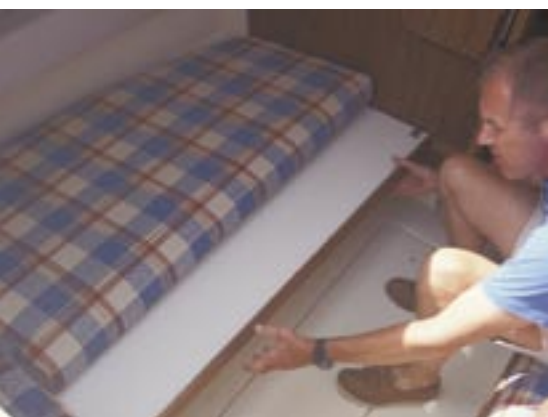
Sail area: 246 square feet

Ballast: 1,200 pounds

interior, soaking anything not protected by watertight containers.

Forward is a comfortable V-berth, measuring 6 feet long by 5 feet 5 inches wide. This includes a removable insert. Just aft of the V-berth on the port side is a Porta Potti with a sliding molded fiberglass sink with manual pump and storage vanity above. Across from the head on the starboard side is a hanging locker. Overhead is the flush-mounted forward hatch, offering light and ventilation. This area is separated from the V-berth by a partial teak bulkhead and from the main cabin by a full teak bulkhead with a folding door. The layout of the main cabin is traditional, with settee berths to port and starboard. The starboard berth measures 5 feet 11 inches, while the port is 6 feet 6 inches and incorporates a slide-out extension converting it to a double. The four fixed portlights provide good daytime illumination but do not open for cross-ventilation. At night, four 12-volt cabin lights adequately illuminate the boat's interior.

The galley is divided into two units, one to port and the other to starboard. The starboard section is an ingenious one-piece unit comprising a stainless-steel freshwater sink with manual pump (which drains overboard via a bronze through-hull gate valve), cutting surface, and utensil storage bins. The entire unit is on tracks and slides aft to store under the cockpit when not in use. The port galley section is also on tracks and is a simple laminated counter for food preparation, which also accommodates a tabletop stove. Completing the main cabin/galley is a bulkhead mounted drop-leaf table and a molded,



The O'Day 23's cabin has two center-facing settee berths, one of which converts to a double with the use of a pullout shelf, as Joe Smith demonstrates at left, and a V-berth with an insert, above. The galley unit above the starboard settee is shown in a stowed position at right.





The starboard galley unit is partially deployed, at left. Additional counter space for a cook stove and meal preparation is available in a similar manner on the port side, at right. A drop-leaf table, below, contributes even more counter space in a compact 23 feet.



insulated, self-draining icebox that doubles as one of the companionway steps. Underneath the starboard cockpit seat and galley unit is the deck-filled 15-gallon freshwater tank. Including the forepeak, the hanging locker, under all berths, and behind the settee backs, there are more than a dozen bins and places to stow gear.

The rig

The O'Day 23 sports a 27-foot mast, stepped on deck with a hinged tabernacle. The mast and boom are anodized aluminum. The boat has a single-spreader rig with upper and single lower shrouds and a single backstay. The sloop is masthead rigged with 246 square feet of sail consisting of a Bermuda mainsail and genoa. The original mainsails came with one reefing point, jiffy reefing, and a cringle for a cunningham downhaul. All halyards are external and cleated at the mast base. The genoa tracks are located on the sidedecks adjacent to the cockpit coamings. Located on each of the coamings is a Barlow #16 winch and jam cleat. There is a 4:1 boom vang and end-boom sheeting. The mainsheet tackle attaches to a small triangular plate located on the lower section of the backstay. This clears the cockpit of any running rigging.

Underway

The O'Day 23 is a very satisfactory first cruiser. It was designed and built to be sailed in relatively protected waters. Like most trailerable boats, it is a bit tender. When the wind picks up, it develops weather helm. To eliminate this and reduce the angle of heel, reef the mainsail at about 12 to 15 knots of wind. At greater than 15 knots, reduce



"The boat looks and feels larger than its size because of a clever utilization of available space and the attention to detail..."

the headsail area. This will flatten out the boat nicely and allow it to cruise at hull speed. Since the sheeting angles are quite wide, it's not very close-winded. Remember to keep the centerboard down when going to windward to help it point better. On a run, lift up the board to reduce drag and pick up speed.


Things to check out

Remember that an O'Day 23 can be anywhere from 19 to 32 years old. Some will be in great shape, while others may require extensive work. Check the deck for delamination caused by a balsa core saturated with water. Pay keen attention to all fittings. Delami-

nated areas sound dull and hollow when you tap them with a plastic hammer or the handle of a screwdriver. Mast compression is another potential problem. Look for signs of cracking, bending, or movement of the mast-support beam. The forward hull sections have been known to flex or oil-can, so check for cracks. Caulk spread lavishly around fittings and ports is a good indication of leaks. Also look for and question any holes that were cut in the overhead liner. The gudgeons and pintles are a bit undersized and might need to be replaced with a more substantial set.

Unfortunately, the O'Day Corporation of yesteryear is no longer in business; however, there are several active websites for O'Day owners, including <<http://www.odayowners.com>> and <<http://home.att.net/~oday>>. D&R Marine, which owns the rights to O'Day, can provide parts and technical support. The company is also beginning to offer a few new O'Day boats, "Rebuilding a Legend One Boat at a Time," in the words of the advertisements. Contact D&R at <<http://www.odaysailboats.com>> or its new site <<http://www.drmarine.com>>.

In summary

The O'Day 23 is an inexpensive, nicely equipped and appointed pocket cruiser. It's designed for cruising in relatively protected waters. It's a cruiser, not a performance boat. As a weekender, the O'Day 23 is near perfect. Due to its outstanding use of cabin space, it'll be comfortable for a week's vacation. Prices, which usually include boat, outboard motor, and trailer, range from \$3,000 to \$6,000, depending upon condition and equipment. 

Building the skipjack

Experienced sailors build a comfortable, shallow-draft 50-footer

by Alan Lucas



IN THE 1960s I WAS ANCHORED OFF the Gold Coast of Queensland in Australia aboard my home-built plywood ketch. She had galvanized rigging, no engine, and drew 6 feet on a length of 30. My only neighbor at the time was a Californian who had recently crossed the Pacific Ocean to Australia on a yacht of similar length. The big difference was that his boat drew just 10 inches. She was a skipjack.

Her coffin-like accommodation held no appeal, but I was immensely impressed by her minimal draft and the fact that she could cross oceans. A desire had dawned to own a shallow-draft yacht one day.

Some years later I owned a bilge-

keeler whose design was loosely based on the American catboat. It sailed like a haystack and had a draft and keel area more like a displacement motor cruiser than a yacht. After 3 years with her, I returned to deep-keelers.

The 1980s found me sailing around the world with my family in one of those deep-keelers, spending a year in the U.S. en route. In the Chesapeake Bay I haunted the Calvert Marine Museum and ogled every skipjack. I also bought Howard Chapelle's little book, *Notes on Chesapeake Bay Skipjacks*, in which he produced the lines of many a vessel plus notes on their history and performance. This would prove pivotal to our future. I had one more deep-keeler to go first.

This was the Angelman-Davies-designed ketch, *Renée Tighe*, whose restoration was described in *Good Old Boat* (January 2003). With the family temporarily ashore, she admirably suited my singlehanded ambitions but proved inadequate at the end of that era. Change was inevitable.

Impossible job

The change came in Maryborough, Queensland, January 1998. My wife, Patricia, and I had just returned from a full Great Barrier Reef cruise revising my guide, *Cruising the Coral Coast*, and were facing its pre-press production. This proved quite impossible aboard *Renée Tighe*. Building a new and much larger boat seemed like a good idea.



Soleares sailing and under construction, on facing page. The projection forward of the wheelhouse is the top of the daggerboard. Note the case's original length in photo at lower left before it was trimmed 2 feet to cabintop height.

Coincidental with this need came the availability of space in a huge waterfront shed on the Mary River in Maryborough. As the shed was flood-prone, the rent was very reasonable. The region was familiar to us, since we had built a ferrocement schooner there more than 20 years before. And next door, at the boat launch, a shipping container was available as a studio. The decision to stay came easily.

The whimsy of being able to finish a book and build a boat at the same time was quickly recognized, with the former falling by the wayside in favor of the latter within the first few months. But it did produce a sense of urgency and a promise that the studio would be the first cabin to be fitted out. But that was some time off. First, the lines plan had to be drawn.

From Howard Chapelle's book we chose the skipjack (actually called a two-sail bateau), *Lena Rose*, and redrew the longitudinals to flatten out a distinct bustle she displayed aft. A box-section full-length keel was added for strength (despite the few inches it added to the draft) and the bulwark cap became the sheerline, an act that almost doubled the topsides height.

Glass beam

In deference to the chosen building material (fiberglass), the chines were softened with a 14-inch facet along their entire length. This not only rounded the corners a little but, most importantly, it would allow the top-

"And as I was already a couple of years into my seventh decade, with Patricia not far behind, saving money and keeping the work as light as possible made good sense."

sides and bottom glass to double and thus produce a massive glass beam from stem to stern on both sides (see illustration on Page 10).

Finally, we chose a daggerboard over the traditional swinging board to reduce centercase area and improve windward efficiency. That such a system is less tolerant of groundings, I am well aware, but the trade-off seemed worthwhile. This is being written 3 years after launching and with more than 6,000 miles under her keel. So far, we have not forgotten to lift the keel when approaching shallow water.

We chose fiberglass, not so much for

all its well-known virtues, but because it is a material that can be worked in small amounts. This eliminated the need to call in outside labor for periodic heavy lifts and allowed just the two of us to build the boat unassisted. As I was already a couple of years into my seventh decade, with Patricia not far behind, saving money and keeping the work as light as possible made good sense.

As attested to by the production-line boatbuilding industry, fiberglass lends itself admirably to being laid up in a female mold. But this is only economical if the mold can be used again as often as possible. It is not economical for a one-off vessel. The male plug is the way to go. But a male plug also presents a dilemma. For a start, it produces a rough exterior and a smooth interior — the opposite of the preferred outcome. And regardless of how cheaply it might be fabricated, it still costs the same in time and is thrown away after the hull is built. There had to be a better way.

Stripped framing

My response was to use high-quality marine plywood, set up over rough framing. Only the framing is stripped out later; it is then dressed and used in the hull's fit-out. The plywood is left in

Two-sail bateau/skipjack

Boat name: *Soleares*
(a flamenco dance)
Rig: boomless ketch
Sail area: 1,250 square feet plus twin headsails
Length: 50 feet 0 inches
Beam: 16 feet 6 inches
Draft: 3 feet 8 inches
Engine: Chinese Motor Company (CMC) 45 hp
Fuel capacity: 264 gallons
Water capacity: 264 gallons
Displacement fully loaded: approximately 14 tons

The *Lena Rose*, which inspired *Soleares'* design, shown below left. As shown at right, the author flattened the aft bustle, softened the chines, removed the beakhead, and replaced the swing keel with a daggerboard. *Soleares'* sheerline was struck from the original bulwark rail, giving her topsides nearly twice the height of the original craft. The wheelhouse is over the engine room.

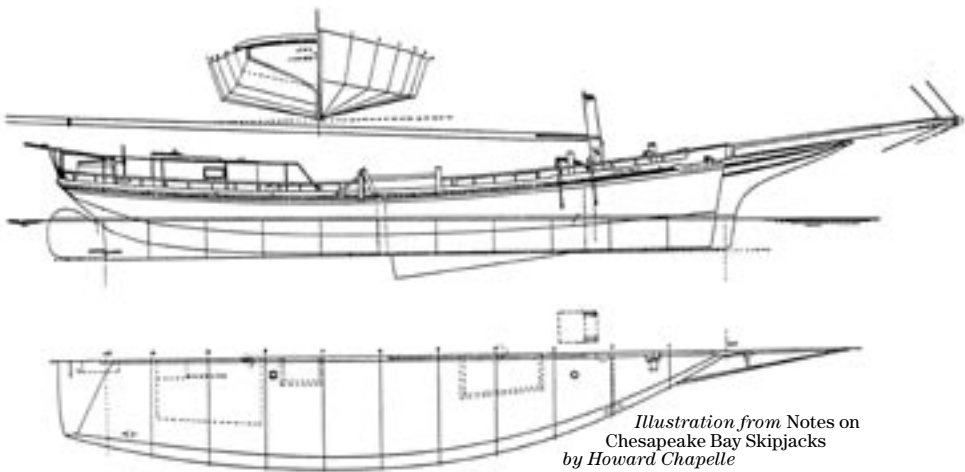
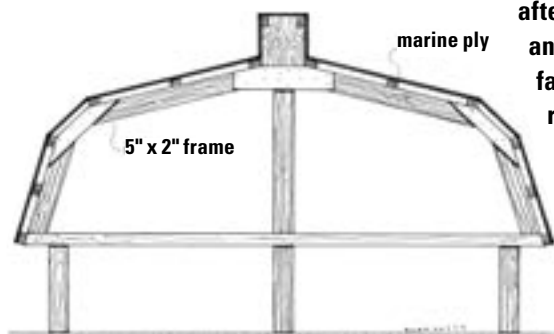
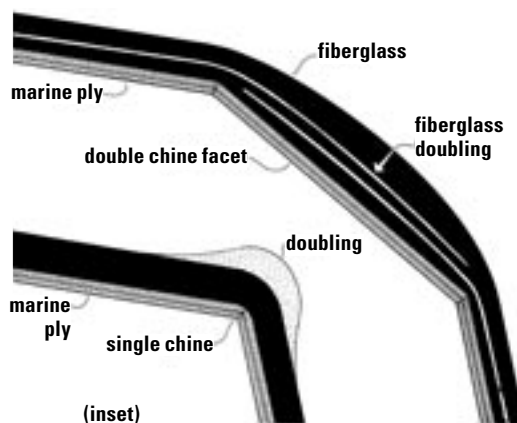


Illustration from Notes on Chesapeake Bay Skipjacks by Howard Chapelle





All mold support frames, diagrammed at left, were easily removed and reused after rolling the boat upright. At right, an illustration of how the double chine facet produces a rounded effect, rather than the ugly knuckle at the doubling, shown in inset. Photos below show Alan Lucas and Bill Pool setting up the frames, at left. Alan prepares to add the marine ply just 2 weeks after the hull was first lofted, at right.



place. This eliminates waste, and there are other advantages.

Leaving the ply in the hull means that a timber interior is produced in a fiberglass structure to which all fittings are then easily attached — just like fitting out a traditional wooden boat. And with a few notable exceptions, fastenings throughout the fittings are unnecessary, the strength being in the hull and decks and not in their associated ply backing. This saves an enormous amount of time and money, and the glue consumption is similar to conventional methods.

During the first month of building, Patricia worked on preparing *Renee Tighe* for sale while I started lofting and setting up the mold. It is an indication of the simplicity and speed of the chosen system that, working alone, I had the hull ready for glassing in less than 4 weeks. Over the next few months our days became a routine of mixing resin by the bucketsful and wetting out glass by the hundreds of feet, taking a break only on those days of high humidity. Boxes of glass stacked as high as we could reach and no fewer than 17 44-gallon drums of resin waited patiently around the worksite for their turn to be morphed into a boat.

Most of the glass was chopped strand mat (CSM) for its bulk and

multi-directional strength. But we also used five layers of woven rovings for their uniform thickness, greater strength, and the tension they impart. CSM wets out easily but woven rovings can be almost self-defeating in their resistance to resin. To digress a moment: woven rovings are obligatory

“It is an indication of the simplicity and speed of the chosen system that, working alone, I had the hull ready for glassing in less than 4 weeks.”

in any hull built to survey standards, yet they can become the weak link in a glass structure. Because their weave traps more resin than a cloth or CSM and the actual rovings resist saturation to a greater extent, delamination becomes increasingly possible. The answer is to do multiple wet-outs.

Sandwiched rovings

Where just CSM was involved, we laid up one laminate at a time where cir-

cumstances dictated, and two or three at a time otherwise. Where woven rovings were concerned, we laid them up sandwiched between two CSMs in a triple wet-out process. This was the only way of assuring integration of the rovings into the whole. For all that, I remain unconvinced of their necessity and am thankful that they were among the earliest of the laminates that are now buried under a huge majority of CSM laminates.

As an economic measure, nearly all the resin was polyester, the exception being the last two laminates that were wet-out using vinylester resin for its superior imperviousness. There seems little doubt that a carefully hand-laid hull will not suffer from later osmosis regardless of its resin, but an exotic finish is a good feeling.

All resin was wax free to reduce the amount of sanding between wet-outs, but it certainly did not eliminate the need to sand, as is so often thought. Every cured surface must be roughed up to improve its key and to rid the surface of fibers that may produce a bubble under the next laminate. Sanding a 50-foot hull dozens of times in a few months is the least exciting of my building memories.

In the interest of those intending to dabble in glass, an observation: during



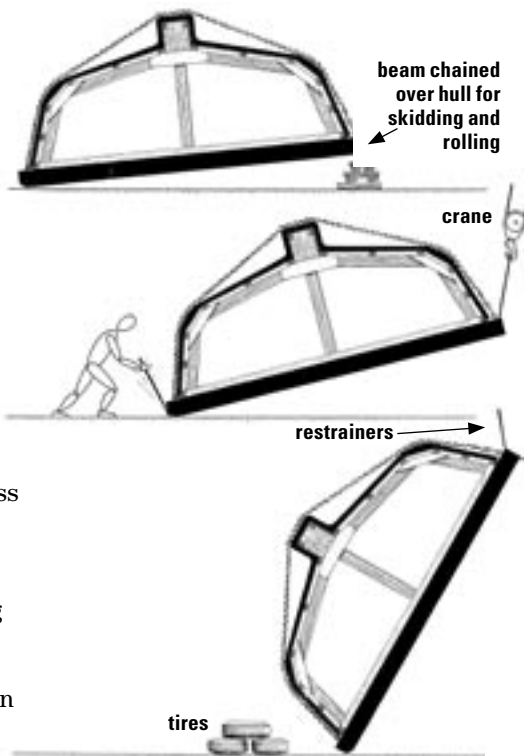
the glassing process, I lay in bed at night scratching my forearms bloody, presuming the reaction to be from the power sanding despite elbow-reaching gauntlets. It was not until the job was nearly finished that the true cause of my distress was identified. It did not come from the sanding so much as from the almost invisible cloud of dust that came when tearing chopped strand mat to size, a process during which I wore no protection.

Good guessing

While I claim zero score for reading my own body signals, I can claim a high score for quantity assessment regarding the resin. Incredibly, when all glassing was finished — including bulkhead attachment, rudder, and centerboard — there were just 2 liters left from a total of 3,825!

I fared less impressively on glass management — the mountains of CSM needed constant replenishment — but timber assessment was good with virtually no shortage nor excess from the original stacks of recycled, old-growth hoop pine and Australian red cedar. Of the latter, the boat consumed nearly 1½ cubic meters (roughly 650 running feet).

The great advantage of having most materials on hand at the beginning of the project was in being able to “guess-timate” weight. To establish displacement and thus waterline, I employed the faithful old Simpson’s rule formula and came up with a weight figure that matched anticipation as well as expected material consumption. It proved precise at 13.5 tons. A friend with a naval architecture program in his computer ran the same figures



The illustrations above show how the hull was rolled. Diagram below left shows how interior glass was added from chine to chine with extra thickness tapering from the keel. The cross-section below right shows the deck beam, clamp, and deck shelf; the inset shows how plywood protruding above the deckline was cut away before laying deck ply. In photo below, the hull is almost stripped and ready for interior work.



through and came up with a displacement (dead weight) of 22 tons. Instinct told me it was wrong, but it nevertheless gave us cause for concern until proven so. The dramatic way in which Simpson’s rule would absolutely, but prematurely, be proven the victor was every boatbuilder’s nightmare. A flood was imminent but more on that later.

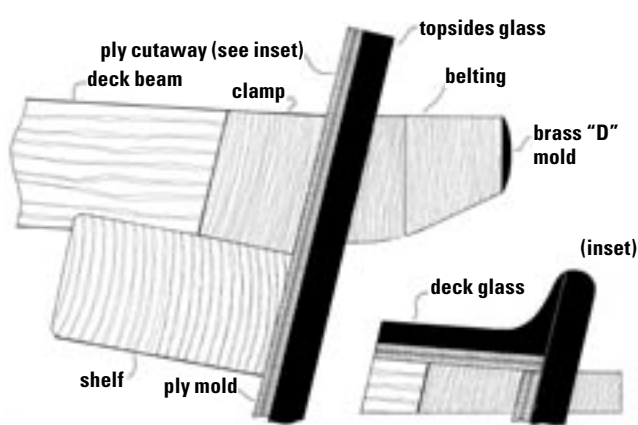
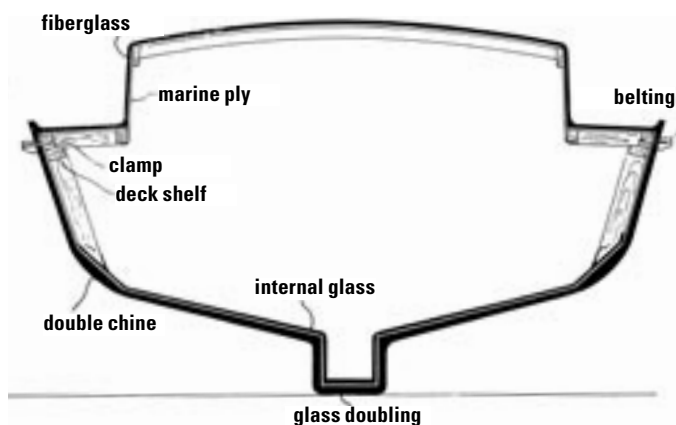
July 1998 saw the hull glassed and ready for rolling, but we chose to fair it while it was still upside down. This required only that the rippling effect of hand rolling be smoothed out, the lines generally being pretty fair already. Our chosen bog was a resin-rich, pigmented epoxy primer recommended by the manufacturer where heavy build-up was not anticipated. We added micro-balloons to it.

Unfortunate change

It proved easy to work and produced a good finish, but after 2 weeks spent fairing, we ran out of stock at a time when the manufacturer had committed all his stock to a large order. Rather foolishly, we changed products. The new product also came with glowing reports, but mostly from the company’s resident chemist on its information line. He assured me that it would do the job admirably and was quite compatible with the previous product. We forged ahead, troweling on buckets of the stuff.

Trouble came within a few days. The new product was not only peeling but also lifting the previous treatment wherever it was overlaid. It was then discovered that it was extremely solvent-rich, with the solvent striking inward, hitting the fiberglass, and lifting everything off. Two weeks’ work had turned into a shambles.

The company denied having misled



us, leaving me to relish the idea of litigation, but time and finances were too limited to even knock on a lawyer's door. This destroyed our resolve to have the smoothest hull in the fleet and we pressed on, rippling and all, to the next stage. This was rolling the hull upright (see illustration on Page 11).

Although our building shed was huge (having once been part of a ship-building yard), our allotted space was limited. The hull could not be rolled like a barrel and instead had to be lifted, skidded sideways, and then landed exactly where it was. To this end, large hardwood beams were bolted and chained across the vessel with a few inches projecting each side. One side of the vessel was then lowered to the floor using an ordinary 2-ton automobile jack. The corners of the bearers were rounded at their point of contact to facilitate their being skidded sideways.

Controlling tackle

We used a crane to lift the opposite side, a team of willing volunteers and I encouraging the skidding motion with steel levers. Before the hull reached its point of balance, restraining lines were secured and then controlled with a tackle. The crane then slued toward the hull. Gravity did the rest, the lower chine coming to rest on a bed of tires.

Now the work really began. After we leveled and cradled the hull with simple shores and keel blocks, we stripped all plug framing and stringers and stacked them ready for dressing and re-use. The centerboard case, fabricated from glass over a sacrificial chipboard mold, was inserted and bogged into its keel slot (cut before rolling). The bilge area was also roughed up with an angle grinder and coarse discs in preparation for interior glassing.

Like the exterior glass, the interior glass was at maximum thickness around the keel and

The building program was delayed by a major flood in Maryborough. When the fear of being crushed against the roof subsided, the experience became nothing more than an interesting nuisance.

"This was a future of uncertainty when nearly a week would be spent alone in a huge flooded shed against whose roof we would be crushed if the height prognosis was correct."

garboards, tapering out toward the chines. Internally, it stopped at the top chine, leaving the topsides ply exposed for aesthetic as well as practical reasons. Between the 1¼-inch thickness of exterior glass around the keel, the ¼-inch plywood plug, and the interior glass, the total thickness of the hull in this area was almost 2 inches.

Before rolling the hull, a rubbing strip, or belting, was through-bolted to the sheerline. Now with the hull upright, these bolts were removed in controlled sections and replaced after fitting the internal clamp. The principle was essentially the same as in traditional wooden boatbuilding, where long bolts sandwich the hull between belting and clamp and produce a very strong fore-and-aft member at this critical part of the hull. Complementing the clamp was a deck shelf that also played the traditional role of supporting the deck beams at their outer ends. The nearly 200 bolts employed in this service were the only ones used in the entire structure.

Salvaged frames

Next came the topsides frames of dressed 5-inch x 2-inch hoop pine salvaged from the plug. These were glued in at centers of a little over 2

feet. Screwed into the deck shelf at their tops, their bottoms were glassed into the interior bilge glass. Wherever detail glassing of this nature was necessary, only vinylester resin was used due to its greater adhesion to ply and timber.

The topsides frames were almost as much for show as they were for practical purposes. They looked right, as well as being useful for securing most benches and bunks. They very definitely contributed to the prevention of oil-canning, as can happen in slab topsides.

Bulkheads were of 1-inch marine plywood glassed into the bilge glass along their bottoms and the ply topsides along their sides. Their ultimate consolidation came when decks, cabin sides, and cabintops were added.

Bilge webs were glassed in where necessary, but hull strength came from its sheer thickness plus integrated cabin soles and furniture starters. We resined lead ballast around the centerboard and left all further ballasting until after launching.

The only plans used in the entire construction to this stage were the half-frames chalked onto the lofting floor months before. Now we drew a rigging plan to establish load-carrying bulkhead positions and chainplate positions. Otherwise, work continued using only imagined concepts and known facts. Of the latter, a good example was the engine, whose length dictated engineroom bulkhead placement.

Roomy and protected

My studio had to be as roomy as possible if the boat were to serve as an office, and Patricia wanted her own space for correspondence and crafts. Furthermore, having spent decades in open or semi-open cockpits, our skin said "no

more." It was time for a fully integrated wheelhouse with a lounge where sitting was a pleasure, rather than an exercise in perching. This we achieved with two Peugeot 504 car seats upholstered to complement the dinette, which was also in the wheelhouse.

When it was all said and done, we were trying to fit out an oyster





Having already floated high in a flood aboard *Soleares*, Alan and Patricia Lucas could afford a great deal of smugness in knowing she would float exactly where predicted at the official launching on June 12, 1999.

been proved wrong. Although the headwaters were experiencing their highest peaks in the century, Maryborough, quite inexplicably, had a flood of just average proportions.

When the water receded, an unbelievable mess remained. The shed floor was littered with debris and coated with mud. The local fire brigade, in what is apparently a post-flood ritual, soon arrived and hosed the place out, a free service that reduced our clean-up time enormously.

The flood gave us a sense of delicious smugness for the upcoming launching. We would be able to laugh off those inevitable onlooker quips like, "Do you reckon she'll float?" or "Have you got some paint ready to raise the waterline?" The enormous question mark that hangs over every launching simply didn't exist any more.

Four months after the flood, on June 12, 1999, we launched her into the Mary River. This was just a little under

Continued on Page 32

dredge to be roomy and comfortable without threatening the hull's form stability. It became a constant and often artistically challenging balancing act between maintaining a low profile and having adequate headroom. To this end, we erected and adjusted stick profiles according to measurements inside the boat and aesthetics outside.

Modern glues have eliminated the dependence on good joinery for mechanical strength. Dovetails, mortises, and even simple scarfs have become little more than artistic expressions. In this department, I have to confess, I did not rise to the challenge. Instead I used plain butt joinery with no fastenings worth mentioning and placed absolute dependence on epoxy glue. She was, after all, a fiberglass boat being dressed to look like a timber boat — not the other way around.

Swollen river

1998 had been a wet year. By February 1999, heavy rain in the hinterlands had swollen the river to a terrifying 76 feet, and this volume of water was on its way down to Maryborough. *Soleares*, as we had named her during the building, was not the only boat in the shed, but she was by far the largest. All others had the luxury of seeking high ground upon trailers or trucks, leaving us to face a most extraordinary future alone. This was a future of uncertainty when nearly a week would be spent alone in a huge flooded shed against whose roof we would be crushed if the height prognosis was correct. In Maryborough, the experts were anticipating a maximum flood of 41 feet.

Grateful that *Soleares* was the right way up, with all seacocks in, but with no other mechanical or electrical fittings working as yet, we prepared.

We put a mattress, food, gas light, and cooker aboard, along with piles of building materials that had to be cleared from the shed floor. The preparation for the flood, the actual flood itself, and the subsequent clean-up cost us 2 precious weeks of building time. But at least we were destined to know her displacement.

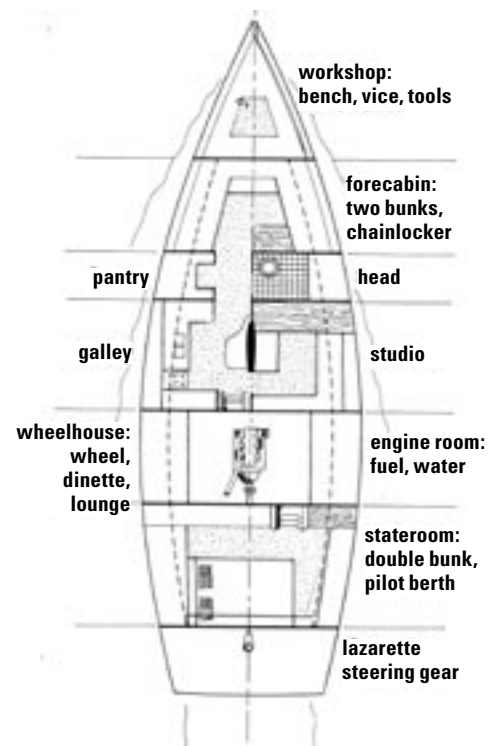
As the muddy Mary River broke its banks, *Soleares* lifted with her waterline (just a pencil line) more than 9 inches above water in perfect trim. With rig, ballast, fuel, water, and the things of life, we knew she would sit on her marks perfectly. We secured warps to hold her against an impending increase in current and toasted the success of that old technology called Simpson's rule.

Soon after, an upstream peninsula collapsed and redirected the water through our open-sided shed, turning a calm-water back eddy into a torrent of overfalls and mini-whirlpools that had our warps working overtime. And above was the roof, getting closer by the hour.

Sink or squash?

Contrary to popular myth, boating is not all pleasure. It is sometimes extreme anguish, and this was one of those moments when agonizing decisions had to be made. Is it better to let the cabin be squashed and save the hull, or would sinking the whole lot be more sensible? But what if she were crushed anyway in a waterlogged, semi-submerged state? What if she overloaded the warps and was swept down a river running at around 10 knots? The predictions remained static at 41 feet.

And then sudden relief. With 15 feet of water over the shed floor and about 7 feet of space above us, the flood peaked at 31 feet. The predictions had



All about berths

A prominent yacht designer discusses the importance of beds

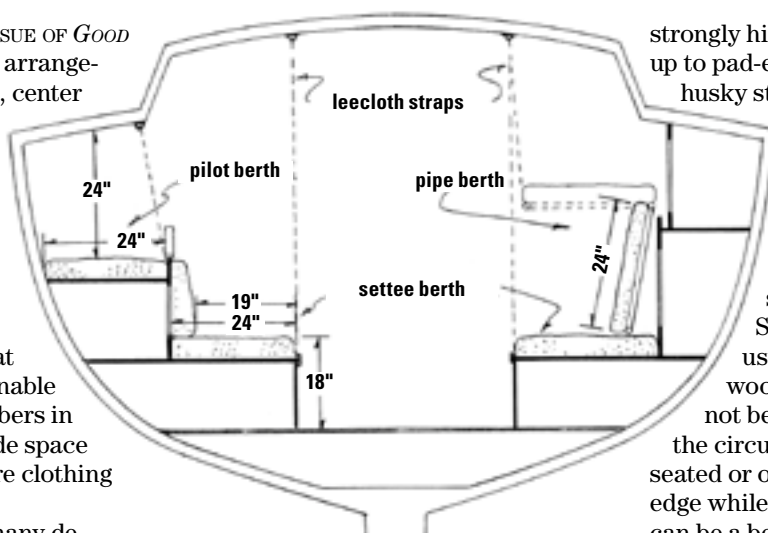
by Ted Brewer

IN THE NOVEMBER 2003 ISSUE OF *Good Old Boat* we discussed arrangement plans: aft cockpit, center cockpit, and pilothouse. It's time to take a closer look at interior furnishings but — regardless of type — the average cruising yacht is not going to provide palatial accommodations. Essentially, sailors want an interior that will accommodate a reasonable number of adult crewmembers in modest comfort and provide space for them to store their spare clothing and other amenities.

Unfortunately, far too many designs have an excess of berths at the expense of a workable galley, comfortable head, and adequate stowage. Indeed, the number of berths has no relation to how many the boat will accommodate in comfort. Usually it's the reverse: more berths equals fewer accommodations and less comfort. Most readers know how I rant and rave about six-berth 25- to 28-footers. Who in their right mind would want six people aboard a small boat overnight? Even the smallest cruising yachts require a certain minimum of amenities if they are to provide snug comfort for anything more than a cramped weekend. Sacrificing a decent galley, head, or stowage for unnecessary berths makes absolutely no sense at all. 'Nuff said.

Deserves thought

For a true cruising boat, a comfortable berth is every bit as important as a workable galley and deserves an equal amount of thought. Size is important, and though a tired crew can sleep in a berth as narrow as 22 inches, 24 to 26 inches is desirable, particularly for chubby old-timers like me. With people growing taller, the minimum length is



Berth types, amidships of a typical 38-footer

6 feet 3 inches, while 6 feet 6 inches is better yet. The distance between upper and lower berths should be 24 inches or more, as much less makes it impossible to roll over. However, you need about 36 inches clearance in order to sit up in a berth.

Mattresses are usually a semi-rigid foam these days and should be 3 inches thick for modest comfort, while 4 inches is very desirable, and 5 or 6 inches is a pleasurable luxury. I've slept peacefully on 2 inches of foam, but then I'm one of those lucky sailors who can sleep on a wet cockpit sole if need be. Indeed, I've done just that in my younger days. Most sailors will be happier with a bit more padding under them, and a 3-inch-thick foam mattress is a reasonable minimum. For safety at sea, all berths should be fitted with a bunk board or, better yet, a leecloth, at least 8 to 10 inches high above the mattress, about 40 inches long, and with the ends left open about 18 inches for ventilation. In order to keep the crew in place in a serious knockdown, a wooden bunk board should be very

strongly hinged and a leecloth triced up to pad-eyes in the overhead with husky straps or lacing.

Settee berths

This is the most common type of berth on small and medium-sized cruising yachts. The seats in the saloon double as berths. Settee-berth cushions are usually held in place with a wood trim rail, but this should not be too high or it can cut off the circulation in your legs while seated or of a limb flopped over the edge while asleep. These days, Velcro can be a better way to hold the cushions in place.

The cushions need to be about 18 to 19 inches wide for comfortable seating, but that is too narrow for a reasonable berth. One answer in the good old days was a pullout extension of the seat bottom (see photo on Page 6), but this is not as common as it used to be in the days of all-wood interiors. It's more usual now to see a removable or hinged seatback that can be shifted to widen the seat to a reasonable berth width. Thought should be given to stowage if the seatback cushions are removable; using a shock cord or Velcro tabs to fasten the cushions to the overhead beats storing them on a wet cabin sole any day.

The settee berth upholstery needs some thought as well. Naugahyde and leather are slick and sweaty in hot weather. I prefer good canvas sailcloth myself, as it is tough, durable, and comfortable in any clime. Unlike some of the fancy materials you'll see at the shows, sailcloth is also washable. Fancy and costly upholstery is completely out of place in a yacht where it will be subjected to sea water, spilled coffee, spaghetti sauce, and even the contents of upset stomachs.

“Unfortunately, far too many designs have an excess of berths at the expense of a workable galley, comfortable head, and adequate stowage.”

Pipe berths

In former times it was not unusual for the seatback to hinge up to form an upper berth that would be held in place by webbing straps or Dacron lashing line running to pad-eyes or a strong wooden handrail fastened to the overhead. This is still a sensible solution to an extra berth on a small cruiser.

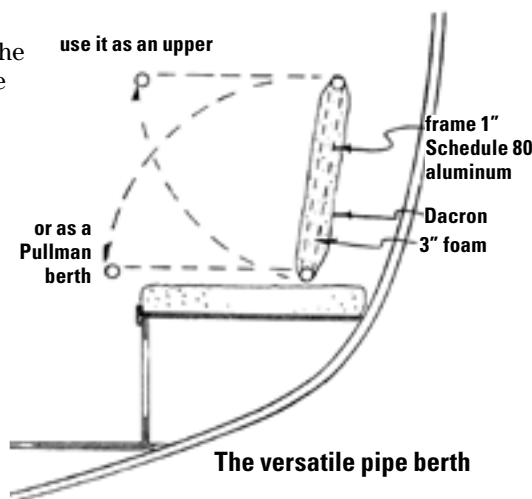
Experienced sailors often chose an upper berth on a long cruise as the straps could be adjusted to level the berth at sea. I learned this on the 1969 Transpac Race. Being the last man to join the boat, I was stuck with grabbing an upper berth. But I had the last laugh, sleeping level and comfortably while the yacht was heeled 15 to 20 degrees for days on end. Then, when we finally jibed, I simply readjusted the straps and slept on the level again.

The hinged upper can be made of sturdy plywood, but a frame of 1-inch or 1¼-inch Schedule 80 aluminum pipe with a Dacron bottom tightly laced in is better. A thinner cushion can be used with this cloth bottom so 2 inches of foam is generally quite adequate for comfort, and in hot weather the cloth bottom is even cooler if used without a mattress. A point to note is that a sturdy grabrail is highly desirable above the inboard edge of the berth in order to aid the sleeper in getting in and out of it. Leecloths are very much an essential as well since the level upper can become terribly unlevel if the boat is tacked in the middle of your off-watch.

Pipe berths are often fitted in other areas, in the forepeak above sail bins, for example, or above workbenches in order to provide extra sleeping accommodation for racing crews.

Root berths

This is another Dacron-bottom berth, having its outboard edge fastened to a sturdy strip along the hull and its inboard edge sewn to a length of pipe (see illustration on Page 16). This pipe is pulled out to sit in racks fastened to bulkheads at each end of the berth. There are usually several positions in the racks so the berth can be stretched taut or allowed to sag, not unlike a hammock, to hold the sleeper in place in heavy weather. The berth takes virtually no space at all when stowed



and makes a very useful upper when additional sleeping accommodation is needed. A leecloth will provide safety if the berth is used at sea.

A root berth can also be used as a seatback if a lower rack is fitted to lock the pipe down in place and keep the Dacron berth-bottom taut. The mattress could be held in place on the Dacron with Velcro and would provide the padding necessary for comfort when the root berth is in its seatback position.

Pilot berths

Pilot berths are built outboard of saloon settees and are usually just enough lower that the seatback forms a low bunk board. In any case, the berth should be low enough that there are 22 inches or more above the mattress. The pilot berth, being located roughly amidships where the motion is least, is often the most comfortable berth on a small yacht. Sleepers are well out of the way of traffic so they can usually get a good kip, even in rough weather, without having someone occasionally falling or sitting on them.

The pilot berth requires a good leecloth, as the seatback is usually too low for safety in extreme conditions. A friend of mine was thrown from

the weather to the lee side of a beamy 54-foot keel-centerboarder in a knock-down, simply because there was no leecloth. Since it was about an 8-foot drop to the leeward berth, it woke him up in a painful hurry! A judiciously located hand grab is also useful, as it will help the off-watch exit the pilot berth gracefully without having to step on someone snoring away on the settee below.

Unfortunately, a pilot berth will steal about 2 feet of width out of the accommodations and use up useful locker and bookshelf space outboard and above the settee. For this reason, only one pilot berth is usual in yachts under 40 feet, although larger, beamier craft may fit pilot berths port and starboard in the saloon to good effect.

Quarter berths

The quarter berth, located under the cockpit alongside the engine, is not my favorite setup in a yacht. To the best of my recollection, I've never slept in one. All too often the exposed part of the quarter berth is used as a seat for the navigator, while the tunnel is simply a catchall for clothing and loose gear.

The problem with the quarter berth is that it is often poorly ventilated and therefore stuffy. It can be warm in hot weather and both warm and noisy other times, particularly if the engine is running. In addition, the sleeper may also get a refreshingly cool shower of rain and spray or an invigorating dollop of icy sea water whenever the companionway hatch is opened. He'll also be able to overhear everything that's going on in the cockpit above: pounding feet, grinding winches, and the skipper's screamed orders.

Unfortunately the quarter berth is *de rigeur* on many production cruisers today where it uses up valuable cockpit sail bin stowage space. Indeed, some yachts have two of the things or, often, a doublewide quarter berth is made into an even stuffier aft "stateroom" to waste even more useful stowage space.

If a boat must have a quarter berth, it should be arranged so the sleeper does not have to scrunch into a long narrow tunnel. The berth should be comfortably wide — 26 inches or better, have ample height so the sleeper can pull his knees up, and have enough

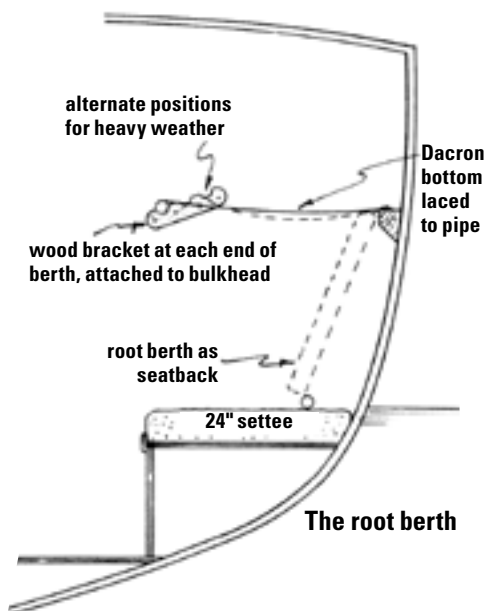
length of berth in the cabin proper so that access and egress do not require him to be a contortionist (see example on Page 38). Getting in and out of the typical quarter berth can be a problem for large or less agile crew members, so convenient hand grabs are desirable here. If the berth is to be used at sea, some kind of curtain to protect the sleeper from lights in the galley and the occasional spray of water also would be welcome.

V-berths

The forward cabin often poses a problem to the designer. It is not a good place for sea-going berths, as the berth is laid out at a sharp angle to the boat's centerline. As a result, sleepers have either their head or their feet elevated when the boat is heeled under sail or both alternating if the boat is rolling in a beam sea. V-berths usually taper, being narrower at the feet than at the shoulders, and this can pose problems for anyone using standard sheets and blankets.

Still, the V-berth is one that is readily converted into a double by using a filler and, as the cabin can be given some privacy with a door or curtain, the V-berth is almost essential for a couple cruising on a smaller boat with guests or children. If the berth is to be used with a filler, the side rails should not extend above the berth bottom, or they will dig uncomfortably into the sleepers.

In the typical boat, the V-berth gets wider the higher it is fitted, due to hull shape forward. The temptation is to make it high and wide then, but remember that 36 inches is required for sitting upright so the V-berth should not be too high in the boat. If the berth is located well above the sole, and I've seen a few 3 feet high, it's very desirable to have a good step in order to ease access and add to safety. Since boats also tend to get pointier as you proceed toward the stem, while feet don't, the V-berth should not be fitted too far forward in the hull either. The foot of the V-berth should be a minimum of 16 to 18 inches wide. Even that is on the snug side for two average adults, yet I've been aboard boats where the berths actually came to a point just behind the stem. That would hardly suit my size 11 triple Es!



Double berths

You'll see "double berths" as narrow as 36 inches advertised in many small cruisers, but they'll only fit tiny and anorexic couples who will still be miserably uncomfortable in warm


weather. A tight double is at least 42 to 43 inches wide, while a regular double berth is 48 inches wide, at least at the shoulders. Indeed, on larger yachts most owners request 60-inch-wide queen-size beds.

Leecloths are essential and, if a double berth is to be used at sea, the mattress should be split down the middle and a leecloth fitted. This way the sleepers do not wind up getting crushed together on the leeward side if the yacht is sailing at a good heel angle or rolling in beam seas. I shared a queen-size berth with the owner on another Transpac race and was very glad indeed that I'd specified a sturdy central leecloth! We both slept better.

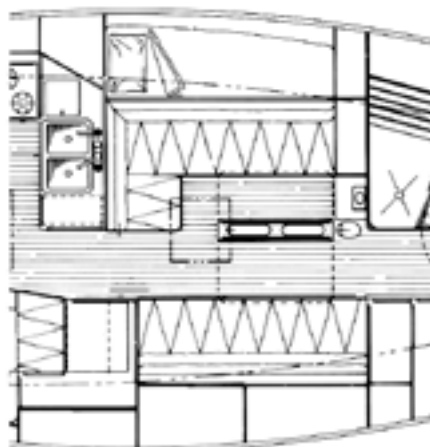
One problem with double berths on smaller yachts is that they can rarely be located so each sleeper can get in and out easily. Too often the berth is tucked against the hull side or a bulkhead, so the person who draws the short straw has to crawl over the other in order to get into the sack. That can be a real nuisance. A double berth on a large yacht can have good access to each side.

Dinette tables are often used in smaller yachts to convert the dining area to a double berth. This can work satisfactorily if the table is sturdy and the fiddles are removable, but the climb-over problem remains. In any case, I do not favor dinettes on a sailboat, as athwartship seats are difficult to sit on comfortably when the boat is sailing at a steep angle. A U-shaped dinette gives some usable space on the outboard side when the boat is heeled, but I prefer a fixed table for the sea-going yacht with perhaps one L-shaped leg for additional seating.

Athwartship doubles are not uncommon but, unless they're king size, they are not very convenient at sea since either your head or your feet are raised when under sail. They're better suited to coastal marina hopping or lying in a quiet anchorage each night.

Incidentally, I started this article as a single feature about yacht furnishings in general, but it hasn't yet progressed beyond berths. I had no idea there was so much to say about the simple berth. Even so, I'm sure I've left out something that keen readers will remind me about. Right now I'm going to start an article about galleys. Watch for it. 

"For a true cruising boat, a comfortable berth is every bit as important as a workable galley and deserves an equal amount of thought."



This features a pilot berth and L-shaped settee to port and a settee berth to starboard.

Five satisfied boatbuilders: Henry Morton, Jarvis Gould, Wade Cornwell, Merle Starr, and Tom Green.



Yacht Constructors: Pioneers in glass

*This small little-known company
built one of the first fiberglass
auxiliary sailboats*

by Ed Lawrence

IN 1956 FIVE ENTERPRISING GENTS, MEMBERS OF THE ROSE CITY Yacht Club (RCYC) in Portland, Oregon, began combining concoctions of liquid chemical compounds and resins. By the time they were done mixing their brew and applying it to rolls of a recently developed woven fabric, they had produced not a witches' brew but one

Continued on Page 18

Chinook No. 3, *Tamara*, owned by Tom Green, on the Columbia River near Portland, Oregon, circa 1956.



Building the plug for the mold of the Chinook, 1955, above.



The finished plug.



Wade Cornwell, Henry Morton, and Jarvis Gould prepare to remove the two-piece mold from the first Chinook.



Second half off.

of the first fiberglass auxiliary sailboats. The sailing world hasn't been the same since.

That was 11 years before Mr. Robinson (Murray Hamilton) advised young Ben Braddock (Dustin Hoffman) in the movie, *The Graduate*, that he'd do well to find his future in plastics. After the Portlanders christened their first sloop, a 34-footer they named the Chinook class, they founded Yacht Constructors, one of the first manufacturers of fiberglass sailboats produced in series.

The development of polyester-fiberglass boats began during World War II. The first production boats — mostly dinghies and small runabouts — appeared right after the war, in 1946 and '47. With the Chinook, the Portlanders entered the market the same year as Californian Fred Coleman and the 40-foot Phil Rhodes-designed Bounty II.

Fifty years later, at age 89, Wade Cornwell, one of the five founders of Yacht Constructors, Inc., still occupies a desk in the company's offices. During the intervening years, marinas across the country have filled with sailboats made of fiberglass, the dominant boatbuilding material today. The obituaries of many of its progenitors, however, are numerous. Gone are Cal, O'Day, Ericson, and Pearson. Not so Yacht Constructors. Now under the ownership of Hans Geerling and operating as Cascade Yachts, the small shop still manufactures sailboats and a number of powerboats.

A brainstorm at the club

The formula the yacht club group followed to success was simple, Wade Cornwell says. "We started with a good design, a strong hull, and attention to detail."

Interestingly, the endeavor did not originate with a dream of starting a boatbuilding company. Its genesis was a gam session between 11 RCYC members during the club's annual spring cleaning. Each professed an interest in building his own boat. Their object was to cut in half the purchase price of a new boat and at the same time

produce a lower-maintenance vessel. "A problem with wooden boats," Wade emphasizes, "is that they require lots of maintenance," especially in the rainy Pacific Northwest. When it came time to pay the piper, however, only five of the 11 men anted up.

These five came from vastly disparate backgrounds. Wade Cornwell was a purchasing agent at Union Carbide. Tom Green was an engineer and plate shop foreman at the Hyster Company. Merle Starr, Ph.D., was a physics professor at the University of Portland and an amateur astronomer. All three were past commodores of the Rose City Yacht Club.

They were joined in the enterprise by Jarvis Gould, a physician and hospital administrator, and Henry Morton, an advertising executive. None had experience working with fiberglass, but Tom Green and Merle Starr, after talking with a truck manufacturer and a

fishing boatbuilder who worked in the medium, were convinced that fiberglass was the material that should be used for their project.

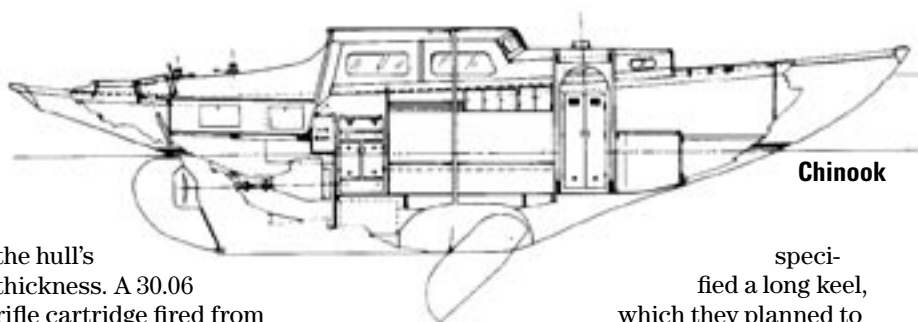
Tom Green, the floor boss and overseer of the construction effort, is described by Wade as "easy-

going, because everything mechanical came easily to him. Merle and Tom were the primary drivers behind the effort to experiment with fiberglass." Merle he remembers as being "exact-ing, with a dry sense of humor, smart, and professorial." Wade says that he, Jarvis, and Henry "were gofers. We did whatever we were told."

One thing they had to do was overcome skeptics of fiberglass who derided it as cheap plastic. "Bottle boats!" they scoffed. Both to satisfy themselves and to learn, the group experimented with various resin-hardener-glass fiber combinations. A test strip of the final product, a long, thin piece of woven roving and cloth, is still prominently displayed near Wade's desk.

"We tested the laminate by firing a .38-caliber pistol into it from a distance of 10 feet," he says. "The slug only penetrated 50 percent of

"One thing they had to do was overcome skeptics of fiberglass who derided it as cheap plastic. 'Bottle boats!' they scoffed."



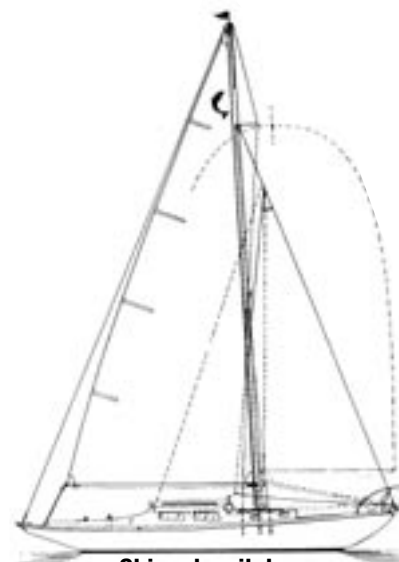
Chinook

the hull's thickness. A 30.06 rifle cartridge fired from a distance of 10 feet produced a perfect hole, but the laminate didn't fracture." Tough enough, they concluded, and forged ahead.

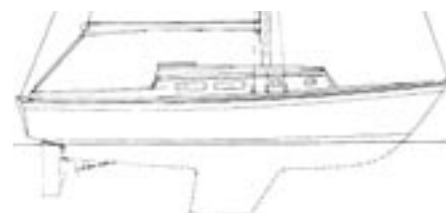
Because the group was preparing to build for themselves, each member had a vested interest in producing a high-quality product. Each also was motivated by the desire to own a fast, comfortable, seaworthy boat — not by profitability. There was no interference from bureaucrats or a corporate infrastructure; they spent their own

specified a long keel, which they planned to fill with cement and metal, and a centerboard.

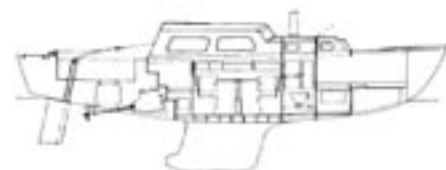
The next challenge was finding a designer who could incorporate their requirements into a single design. Though eventually home to Bill Garden, Bob Perry, and Laurie Davidson, the northwest in 1954 was hardly a hotbed of yacht designers. Group members wrote letters to numerous yacht designers requesting assistance. The only architect to respond was Frederick Geiger of Philadelphia,



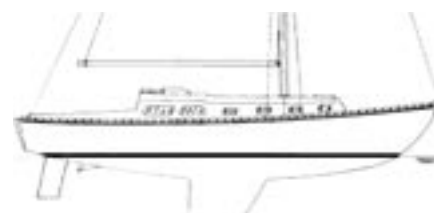
Chinook sailplan



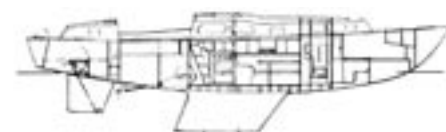
Cascade 27



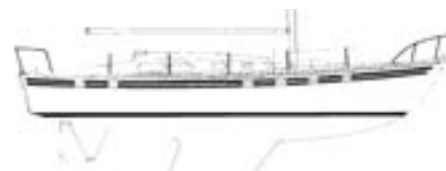
Cascade 29



Cascade 36



Cascade 42



Cascade 42 HS

	Cascade 27	Cascade 29	Chinook 34	Cascade 36	Cascade 42
LOA	27' ½"	29' 0"	34' 0"	36' 0"	41' 9"
LWL	21' 6"	24' 0"	23' 0"	29' 0"	34' 0"
Beam	8' 11"	8' 2"	9' 0"	10' 0"	11' 8"
Draft	4' 6"	4' 9"	3' 10"-6' 6"	5' 6"	6' 0"
Displ.	6,500 lb.	8,500 lb.	12,000 lb.	13,000 lb.	18,450 lb.
Ballast	2,275 lb.	2,375 lb.	4,500 lb.	4,455 lb.	6,180 lb.
Sail area	351 sq. ft.	405 sq. ft.	470 sq. ft.	590 sq. ft.	800 sq. ft.

money, made their own decisions, and continued their professional careers, spending evenings, weekends, and holidays on construction. "We didn't spend much time at the club," Wade says.

The design

The five builders were clear about the characteristics of the boat they wanted. They were serious racers interested in increasing boat speed over their current boats. The easiest way to increase speed is to reduce displacement. Still, the boats had to stand up to the prevailing northwesterly winds on the Columbia River, where 25- to 35-knot breezes are common. Wind blowing upstream 80 miles from the ocean funnels at a place called The Gorge, the boardsailing capital of the U.S. And the boat had to be strong enough to handle crossing the Columbia Bar at Astoria, where the Coast Guard tests rescue boats because of the near-certainty that they will be rolled 360 degrees.

Because stiffness was imperative, they gave no thought to constructing a retractable keel, which might have been an easy choice considering the river's shallowness. Instead, they

Pennsylvania. One of his designs was the 34-foot Vigilant class sloop, a handsome yacht that enjoyed great popularity on Chesapeake Bay.

The group agreed on Frederick's design because it was traditional, sleek, and had a shallow draft. The keel/centerboard configuration gave a draft of 3 feet 10 inches with the board up and 6 feet 6 inches board down. The entire transaction took place between strangers who had never met.

Frederick had zero familiarity with fiberglass, but the task of converting a wooden boat design to fiberglass failed to daunt the group. By rounding some corners and tweaking the design until it fit their needs, Merle and Tom eventually produced construction drawings.

Work commences

In early 1955, the group drew up a contract for the sharing of expenses and labor. They drew straws to determine the order in which each member would receive his boat. (Jarvis Gould got the first one.) They next spent months working to construct a wooden male plug from which the fi-

Continued on Page 22

There have always been boats

Tom Green's daughter remembers him traveling around the Northwest giving advice to sailors completing their own Chinooks and Cascades.

by Marili Green Reilly

I CAN'T REMEMBER A TIME WITHOUT BOATS. The day after my first birthday my father, Tom Green, launched the first Chinook. He was one of a handful of sailors at Rose City Yacht Club (RCYC) who wanted freedom from dry rot and varnishing. The graceful, 34-foot sloops, made from a material that until then had only been used to build sailing dinghies and small powerboats, made their first appearance on the Columbia River in April 1956.

By the time I was 25, Dad and two of those five pioneers, Wade Cornwell and Merle Starr, had formed Yacht Constructors, Inc., and were building five sizes of Cascades, having phased out the Chinook. Although the Columbia River at Portland, Oregon, was by then teeming with fiberglass sailboats from many manufacturers, the local boats had collected a loyal following.

As a child, I saw little of Dad during the week. After working days at the Hyster Company, he came home for a nap and dinner, then headed down to the "boatworks" to put in a few hours before the 11 p.m. news.

Weekends, however, were for fam-



I've never heard of a Cascade Yachts rendezvous, although for years our Rose City Yacht Club cruises have often taken on the appearance of one. Dave and I were in good company in July 2001 when we rafted *Tamara* between Chuck Fisher and Karen Jacobsen's *Ursa* and Mike and Delphi Godsil's *Trig* at Cathlamet, Washington, on the lower Columbia River.

ily and usually spent at the river. When we weren't proving our mettle against competitors' boats, Dad was making the rounds at the club or on cruises, advising those who were building their own Cascades.

As much as he promoted his boats during those sunny days on the water, he couldn't simply relax on a rainy weekend. Sunday drives could lead us to half-completed dreams hidden in backyards and garages. Dad offered his suggestions as the owners showed off their handiwork. Then he beamed like a proud parent all the way home.

Neither were family vacations an excuse to suspend his enthusiasm. Whether we were sailing the Columbia River or cruising British Columbia's

Desolation Sound, he always stopped to talk to other Cascade and Chinook owners or to answer questions posed by those who were making do with less. The Christmas vacation we flew to California and rented a car was no different. We visited Disneyland and Golden Gate Park like other families, but we also toured backyards and garages.

At 12 I was baffled by the excitement one man expressed over finding a pair of shiny new winches under his Christmas tree. I understood Mom's giggles, however, when his wife pointed out the dusty white hull outside her kitchen window. She'd grown so tired of the long-term project framed in that view that she'd arranged rows of potted geraniums on the patio in front of it.

In his footsteps

From Newport Beach, California, to Newport Bay, Oregon, we visited customers and searched for "our boats." Though I may have whined at each new stop, the tradition stuck with me. Now, whether we're cruising the San Juan Islands or driving Florida's A1A highway, whenever my husband and I travel, we head for the nearest body of



My parents, Tom and Connie (pictured) Green, were still sailing their "first *Tamara*" when I was born, but Dad was already at work on the Chinooks in April 1955.

water to count “our boats.”

My husband, Dave, and I have also found that other Cascade sailors seek us out wherever we cruise. The camaraderie among the owners of these boats goes beyond the usual comparison of factory-installed features. There seems to be a desire to continue to network in hopes that someone else’s innovations will improve upon a vessel that’s never quite finished.

“Did you build it or buy it?” a woman asked us in Astoria. She alluded to the unfortunate fact that not all who took home a hull to finish were capable of the same quality found in the Cascades completed by the shop. Her words got me thinking about what had made Dad so successful as a salesman.

He had an unshakable confidence that any man could build a boat, that any man could be a craftsman, that any man could do what he had done, given the bare hull, a few shop-made components, and the inspiration gleaned from a tour of a well-built boat.

Renewing the enthusiasm

It was not until Dad was gone and I started meeting Cascade owners from other ports that I realized he must have been disappointed when some boats fell short of his ideal, landing squarely in the category of “kit boat.” I remember him shaking his head



I was one day past my first birthday when Dad and his partners launched the first Chinook: April 20, 1956.

“He had an unshakeable confidence that any man could build a boat, that any man could be a craftsman, that any man could do what he had done, given the bare hull, a few shop-made components, and the inspiration gleaned from a tour of a well-built boat.”



Once we had our own boat in the water, *Tamara* — hull No. 3 — Dad put me in charge of the helm ... at least while we were at anchor.


one day when a Cascade 29 named *Covered Wagon* cruised by us. That I didn’t recognize it seemed a relief. “Maybe others won’t notice it’s a Cascade, either,” he winked.

I recalled that conversation the summer Dave and I cruised to Port Townsend, Washington, and another Cascade 29 escaped my notice. The wooden sides of its non-traditional trunk cabin were weathered and molting varnish, and the gelcoat on the hull was dulled by too many docks and too few fenders.

That evening we heard the now familiar greeting, “Isn’t this a Cascade?” It was the owner of the 29.

As he described his refit plans, his eyes sparkled with anticipation. I couldn’t help but remember the winches under the tree and was reminded that the passion that had belonged to Dad and the first generation of builders still burned in the souls of those who bought second-hand boats and poured their hearts into refurbishing them.

As we begin our own upgrade of Dad’s Cascade 36, Dave looks at the yard at Cascade Yachts and calls it a “field of dreams.” It could be true that some of those boats will sit on the hard until they’re eventually sold, but I like to believe, as Dad did, that their owners will see their dreams through. No one has arranged geraniums in front of their work in progress, but at least there *is* progress. With a few more hours and a few more dollars, those boats may yet sail again.

“I always hated to bother him about boat stuff on the docks,” RCYC’s Commodore recently told some perspective members. Larry Corderman, himself the owner of a lovingly rebuilt Cascade 36, summed up Dad’s gusto: “It turned out, there was nothing Tom liked better than to talk about his Cascades.” 



The five partners launched the boats as they were finished, but didn’t put the masts on until all were in the water. Here we’re motoring on Chinook No. 1. When the partners drew straws for the finished boats, this one became Jarvis Gould’s boat, *Tag*.



Towing Chinook No. 1 to launch.



A local newspaper reporter covers the first launch.



Tom Green oversees the launch of *Tag*, the first Chinook, owned by Jarvis Gould.



The first launch: *Tag* floats in Portland, Oregon, April 20, 1956.

Continued from Page 19

berglass female mold would be taken. Constructing a plug is an exacting, time-consuming process, because any imperfections in the plug are transferred to the mold and on to the hull unless corrected.

The plug was completed in September, followed by the mold, and the group commenced laying up the first hull. Rather than using chopped strand mat, which is cheap and easy to apply but is not as strong as continuous fibers and takes a long time to build up adequate thickness, the group used woven roving for the bulk of the laminate. Two layers of fine cloth were used on the outside to minimize fairing.

Five professional men rolled resin from #10 paint cans and hand-squeegeed the excess, producing a 50-percent glass-to-resin content. That is surprisingly close to the 60- to 70-percent target of today's builders. They installed ballast, floors and engine, and the outline of an interior. Cabin sides were made of mahogany. There were fixed berths for four. Headroom was 6 feet 4 inches.

Hull No. 1 was successfully launched on April 20, 1956, at a cost of \$4,500, less than half that of a comparable wooden vessel. They named the class Chinook after "the biggest, fastest, sleekest, and best-tasting salmon in the Columbia River system," Wade says.

The Chinook is a beauty. She has a gently sloping sheer, a long cockpit, generous overhangs, and a squarish, stepped cabintop that is very classy. The fractional rig has a single set of spreaders and jumper struts to keep the unsupported section in column. Sail area is 470 square feet with 327 feet in the mainsail and 143 feet in the small, club-footed jib.

Hull No. 2 followed that summer. At launching, her sturdiness was tested when she was dropped 15 feet into the water by a crane operator. No problem.

All five were sailing by 1957, and the Chinook quickly established a winning record on the racecourse, with Tom and Merle winning 12 of the first 15 races they entered.

Building for others

Once all five members had their boats, three expressed interest in starting a business. Henry and Jarvis, satisfied with the unencumbered ownership of their boats, abandoned the enterprise, leaving Merle, Tom, and Wade to continue.

A three-page article in *Yachting* magazine produced hundreds of inquiries. An order for hull No. 6 came before the end of 1957. There was little risk for the principals. Wade, Tom, and Merle maintained full-time employment, so they weren't going to miss any mortgage payments if the company folded. They had their boats, and they were paid for.

Three years after launching hull No. 1, the business was incorporated as Yacht Constructors, and the first two employees were hired. Work proceeded on hull Nos. 7, 8, and 9. Interestingly, Tom and Merle continued in

their careers until reaching retirement age. Wade eventually joined the company on a full-time basis as general manager only because Union Carbide was downsizing, and his name was on a list of employees designated for layoff.

At the dawn of fiberglass boatbuilding, many sailboat builders offered kit boats. Yacht Constructors was probably the first to do so.

"We thought the best way to go was to produce hulls and decks with several interior options for do-it-yourselfers," Wade says. A typical owner might buy the hull and deck and as many other components as he could afford — keel, rudder, bulkheads, tanks, and everything else that goes into a finished boat. Plans and raw materials like polyester resin and fiberglass were also available for purchase.

The result was a win-win situation. The shop avoided having to hire employees from the various disciplines (glass layup, woodworking, electrical, etc.), the buildup of costly inventory, and overhead. An owner eventually completed a sailboat capable of cruising in deep water and maybe saved

"Five professional men rolled resin from #10 paint cans and hand-squeegeed the excess, producing a 50-percent glass-to-resin content."

enough money to start a cruising kitty.

Yacht Constructors was perhaps somewhat unusual in the number of boats actually completed. We've all seen the bare hull sitting unmoved and unloved in an empty lot next to a construction shed, symbolic of a project that ended with an unfulfilled dream. That was not the case in Portland. "We've only had three or four boats that were not completed," Wade says proudly.

Prospective owners also took part in the evolution of the boats. "Five hundred people have built our boats, and they were all thinking," Wade says. For example, customers concerned with aesthetics asked that the chainplates be relocated inboard from the outside of the hull, and so they were. Chainplates were bonded to a



Early Chinooks established a winning record on the racecourse.

Bob migrated to Portland and in 1961 was racing a stylish prototype for a 28-footer of his own design that caught Yacht Constructors' attention.

"It was a different style than the Chinook, less traditional and stiffer," Wade says. Bob was commissioned to draw lines for the Cascade 29 (see *Good Old Boat*, November 2002), which was introduced in 1961. In 1964, a bare hull sold for \$1,775.

The company next commissioned Bob to draw designs for a center-cockpit 42 (1964), 36 (1967), and the Cascade 27 (1978). The 42 was offered in an updated aft-cockpit version called the 42 HS, as well as a 44 by adding on a stern extension. With the delivery in 1968 of Chinook No. 70 to an owner in Maryland, that model was discontinued. A 9-foot 6-inch Cascade Dinghy also was offered for a time. By the late 1960s, boats were being shipped to all points of the compass, including Venezuela and the Philippines. Tanzer Industries in Quebec, Canada, was licensed to produce 50 boats, as was a Japanese firm.

"National distribution was simple because railroads hadn't figured out how much money they were losing on shipping," Wade says. "We were shipping boats from coast to coast for \$500, a charge that eventually increased to \$10,000."

The 42's keel was cast iron while the 29's was welded steel plate, both problematic and inferior to lead, which is denser and corrosion-resistant. Even-

tually, the plywood decks were replaced with decks of molded fiberglass.

A variety of auxiliary engines were installed, including the Atomic 4 and Unimite 4 gasoline engines, and the small Volvo Penta MD 1 and larger Westerbeke 4-107 diesels.

Through it all, the company's employee population did not exceed one dozen, including the three hardworking principals.

"We had no desire to compete with the big guys," Wade says. "We were never tempted." Unlike a lot of other boatbuilding companies that succeeded right into bankruptcy, Yacht Constructors stayed small and endured.

Enter Cascade Yachts

At the ripe young age of 75, Wade, the sole survivor of the original group,



June 1958, Chinook No. 6, *Falcon*, the first boat produced for sale, sits in the yard at Yacht Constructors, ready for customer Donald Laird (pictured).

Y-shaped strap encapsulated in fiberglass. "We have never had a failure," Wade adds.

Weight of the boats was kept light despite the use of 3-inch mahogany floor timbers, mahogany bulkheads and rails, teak-and-holly cabin soles, fir subflooring, marine plywood for the deck, and a spruce mast and boom.

Adding to the model line

About this time fin keels started to replace traditional full keels. In Southern California, Bill Lapworth's Cal 40 was dominating racecourses with its fin keel and spade rudder.

Enter Bob Smith, a designer who apprenticed at the prestigious New York design firm of Sparkman & Stephens and who had participated in the design of the famous yacht *Dorade*.




Tom Green working on Cascade 42 No. 1, built for Donald Laird. Donald bought the first production boats of both the Chinook and the Cascade 42.

sold the company to Hans Geerling, who renamed it Cascade Yachts, Inc. At the time, it was the oldest U.S. production boatbuilder under continuous ownership. That's really technical nitpicking though, since Wade still goes to the office every day and sits at his desk.

The company continues to operate in the same 7,200-square-foot building, and its yard is filled with boats under repair. A Cascade 29 is currently undergoing extensive renovation there by its owner.

Only minutes away by ground transport, but decades away in time, several Cascade sailboats, including Wade's own Cascade 27, occupy berths in Columbia River marinas.

Good old boats? You bet. A good old company? That, too. 

Resources

Cascade Yachts, Inc.

7030 NE 42nd Ave.

Portland, OR 97218

503-287-5794

<<http://www.cascadeyachts.com>>

Essential items

- ⌚ sail
- ⌚ anchor and rode
- ⌚ Coast Guard-approved safety gear
- ⌚ flashlight
- ⌚ bucket for bailing
- ⌚ chart
- ⌚ sharp pencil
- ⌚ compass
- ⌚ warm blanket
- ⌚ food
- ⌚ water

The feeling that money can't buy

Successful cruising means knowing what you don't need

by Dave Martin

TWENTY YEARS AGO, FITTING OUT A boat for cruising was less complicated because products such as solar panels, 12-volt refrigerators, inverters, navigational electronics, and communication systems were scarce — not to mention pricey, compared to the actual cost of the boat. When the era of electronics and electrical appliances was relatively young, it was easy to make do without these “newfangled items.”

Nowadays, the glut of advertised goods can make us feel old-fashioned

unless we load our hybrid boats with all the latest and greatest. It's human nature to want just a teensy bit more than we already have or can afford.

This attitude is what the marketing gurus count on. Lately, it is also human nature to expect around-the-clock comfort and convenience. On a boat, catering to comfort is where it starts getting expensive.

“If the dream to go cruising is ripe but the budget is rotten, sacrifices are inevitable.”

If the dream to go cruising is ripe but the budget is rotten, sacrifices are inevitable.

What saddens me is hearing tales of

financial woe from folks who want to go cruising, but have given up on their dreams because they believe that fitting out a boat is too expensive. Well, fitting out a boat *can* get expensive — if you let it. The truth is, the magical cruising lifestyle is no different from a shore-based lifestyle; to ultimately succeed requires spending within your means and being happy about it. The hard part is having to suppress how you'd *prefer* to be doing things.

So what does one actually *need* for a successful cruise? That depends on the individual. Assuming the hull of my boat is sound — and by that I mean predictably watertight — here is a list of essential items needed to get *me* cruising:

A sail, an anchor and rode, Coast Guard-approved safety gear, a flashlight, a bucket for bailing, a chart, a sharp pencil, a compass, a warm blanket, food, and water.

My boat is now ready for cruising. Everything else I might think of is not essential. Period. All right, this is a sparse list, but it's important to understand the bottom line.

Most of us will want a tad more

Continued on Page 26



For 5 years Dave and Jaja Martin and family sailed and lived aboard their 33-foot sloop, *Driver*, in Newfoundland, Greenland, Iceland, and the Arctic waters of Norway and Spitsbergen.

Cruising safely and in comfort

A liveaboard sailor makes her list of essential gear

OLDER BOATS USUALLY COME OUTFITTED with a variety of gizmos, courtesy of the previous owner. It's one of the perks of buying a tried and proven vessel. Nevertheless, it is likely that you will want to add to, or update, the inventory to suit your own cruising needs. If your plan includes cruising on bigger waters, such as the Great Lakes, the coastal U.S., or beyond, you may find, as we did, that some of the items you viewed as non-essentials become critical for safety, comfort, or both.

We have lived and cruised aboard our 1982 Baba 30, *Kahlua*, since January 2001. Because we want to be able to cruise for years, we take safety seriously. The following is a discussion of the items we would not want to be without.

GPS

This one almost goes without saying, yet we have encountered boaters who got into trouble and were unable to tell the Coast Guard their position because they did not have GPS aboard. We carry a spare GPS as backup. Interfacing a GPS with other instruments aboard can provide the equivalent of crew to a cruising couple. Of course, the prudent cruiser will always navigate using multiple methods to ensure against errors — user or in-

strument error — or in case of sudden failure of all electronics. We always track our position, heading, and speed at least hourly on paper charts.

Autopilot

This is a highly valued crewmember. Used and monitored closely, an autopilot is a tremendous safety device, particularly for couples cruising without other crew. An autopilot prevents the fatigue that comes of steering a boat hour after hour. And fatigue has been found to be one of the most common causes of crisis on a cruising boat. Our autopilot is interfaced with our GPS to steer the boat and track

a course, freeing us to change sails and to monitor water depth, other boat traffic, and our course.

The integration of GPS and autopilot is a wonderful convenience. The autopilot is able to correct for leeway and drift, keeping us on course. If the wind and seas are too rough for the autopilot to effectively steer, we place the autopilot on

Cathy McIntire and her husband, Ken, who is shown with an additional crewmember, see cruising as a calculated risk. Their goal is to tip the odds in their favor.

Essential items

- ⌚ GPS
- ⌚ autopilot
- ⌚ SSB
- ⌚ VHF
- ⌚ radar
- ⌚ life preservers
- ⌚ generator

by Cathy McIntire

standby and steer by hand, using the cross-track error readout to help us steer the course. This is very helpful in the Bahamas when one of us is on the bow watching for coral heads and the other is steering around them. We still know precisely where our course is, thanks to the cross-track error readout.

Single-sideband (SSB) radio

We would not venture out into any bigger waters — whether crossing an ocean or coastal sailing — without an SSB radio or a ham radio. Period. VHF is wonderful and a must-have for communicating with other boats, marinas, bridge tenders, and so on. In fact, we prefer to have two VHF's, one a handheld. But when reception is poor or when you are out of range, such as when crossing the Gulf Stream to the Bahamas, there is a tremendous safety value in having SSB.

We left Rum Cay in the southern Ba-
Continued on Page 28

"An autopilot prevents the fatigue that comes of steering a boat hour after hour."





Non-essential items

- ⌚ radar
- ⌚ autopilot
- ⌚ refrigeration
- ⌚ wind generator
- ⌚ inflatable dinghy
- ⌚ lightweight anchor
- ⌚ electric windlass
- ⌚ self-tailing winches
- ⌚ flimsy rig and sails
- ⌚ pressurized water
- ⌚ watermaker
- ⌚ shorepower cable

gear than what is on this list. However, instead of wondering what gear should be added, ask this: What gear can be ignored? The following guide highlights some of the non-essential gear (expensive stuff you can live without) that is taken for granted on most cruising boats today.

Electronics

In this age of electronic overabundance, if there were just one 12-volt navigational system I was allowed to bring along, it would be a basic depth sounder. Knowing the depth at a glance is a valuable aid for piloting and safe anchoring. GPS would be my next choice. It not only gives an accurate position, it also renders the knotmeter obsolete. And if I have GPS, I really don't need radar. Radar is a luxury item. An autopilot is another luxury item that can be avoided if money is scarce. A VHF radio is handy for receiving weather bulletins and calling for information or assistance.

Refrigeration

This is one of the most expensive luxury items of cruising. A well-insulated refrigerator robs a boat interior of valuable storage space, and trying to keep up with the power demand can be expensive. A success-

ful refrigerator power system usually requires high-amp-hour batteries with a complicated regulator sparked by a big alternator. There is no greater waste of an engine's horsepower than to use it to spin an alternator on a daily basis to charge batteries — all for the sake of cold food and drinks. And unless one has a good working knowledge of refrigeration, paying for repairs will be costly.

Solar panels and wind generators

Solar panels are my first choice for charging batteries because they are quiet, do not have moving parts, and don't require fossil fuels for operation. They are maintenance-free. Although solar panels are great for basic on-board energy demands (lights and electronics), they often fall short when trying to keep up with refrigeration.

Wind generators pack more amps, but they have moving parts and require maintenance. Some models are extremely loud. The last thing I want when I'm on my boat is to listen to superfluous noise. A paradox with wind generators is they need wind, but the definition of a good anchorage is one without wind.

Hard vs. inflatable dinghies

Inflatables are expensive. They have a relatively short lifespan in the tropics, and they are difficult to repair. It's not a good idea to drag them over barnacle-covered rocks and up coral-encrusted beaches or to tie them to splintery pilings. They don't tow well, and they are challenging — if not impossible — to row. More often than not they require an engine. Outboard engines are expensive to buy and operate, and they require a long list of spare parts for maintenance.

A hard dinghy, on the other hand, is relatively cheap (especially if home-built), and a good design can be easily rowed, towed, or sailed. A hard dinghy without an engine provides exercise. Getting around in a hard dinghy takes

longer, compared to zooming around in an engine-driven inflatable, but what are you going to do with all that extra time? Repair something? An engineless hard dinghy is also less likely to be stolen.

Anchors

Most boats are pathetically under-anchored. This is somewhat understandable because the weather, for the most part, is relatively benign. But all it takes is one storm to send a boat dragging onto the beach or into another boat. As soon as your boat bumps into anything but water, a repair bill is the likely result. Think of a big anchor as cheap insurance.

Often I see advertisements for anchors that are relatively light, but tout the holding power of a heavier anchor. The advantage is they are easier to deploy and retrieve. Isn't that a contradiction? I want my anchor to be difficult to retrieve. That means it's doing its job. Regardless of what the manufacturers advise, you can't go wrong with a large heap of metal at the end of your rode. Here's a good rule of thumb for *all* anchor types: for light-displacement boats, one pound of anchor per foot of boat length; for heavy-displacement boats, one pound-and-a-half of anchor per foot of boat length. When people tell me that my anchor is too big, I know I am on the right track.

"Before purchasing a mechanical item I consider whether it will enhance my self-sufficiency or merely hinder it."

Anchor windlasses

Electric windlasses are convenient, but they require huge amounts of 12-volt power. If the boat loses power, the electric windlass is useless. Now that you have a big anchor, it will be heavy

work to retrieve it. A manual windlass embodies self-sufficiency and reliability. I wouldn't install a windlass at all on a boat less than 28 feet in length.

Self-tailing winches

Ordinary winches cost less and work just as well. Dollar for dollar, I would rather buy a bigger winch than a smaller one that self-tails.



Dave and Jaja Martin, along with their three children, have been cruising parts of the world for more than a decade. Between 1989 and 1995, they made a tropical circumnavigation aboard their 25-footer, *Direction*.

Sails and rigging

Sails and rigging should follow the same worst-case psychology as anchors. Best to err on the stout side, especially if the cruising itinerary includes offshore sailing.

A flimsy, running backstay-dependent rig has no place on a cruising boat. A sailboat's gear should be capable of handling a 40-knot line squall under full sail. If a boat is caught out and the sails get blown to pieces before they can be doused or if the rigging snaps, the boat and the crew might be in grave jeopardy. Also, it is quite a job to replace a mast that has fallen down.

Cockpit cushions

I'm astounded at how much money can be spent on custom-made, closed-cell foam cockpit cushions. They look nice, but I can get equally comfortable results by going to a sporting-goods store, buying sleeping-bag pads or closed-cell pool floats, and cutting them into squares.

Upholstery

Cabin upholstery can also cost a fortune. Fortunately, sewing is not very complicated. A trick I use when making cushion covers is to use semi-lightweight fabrics that an ordinary sewing machine can cope with. I don't care if my friends think my cushions look homemade; it makes my boat more homey.

Deck canvas

I can usually find Sunbrella cloth at a well-stocked yardage store. Seconds-

quality material is often thinner but it works well and is easier to sew — especially with an ordinary machine.

Pressurized freshwater systems

Foot or hand pumps work well, are less complicated, and don't require 12-volt electricity. Most importantly, however, manual pumps save water.

Watermakers

Reverse-osmosis desalinators are power-hungry luxury items right up there on the list with refrigeration. When cruising in regions where water is scarce or tainted, a sailor has to be water conscious. Even if fresh water costs 25 cents a gallon to buy, it is cheaper than buying a watermaker and coping with power demands and maintenance.

"I would rather have a few choice pieces of gear than a boatload of second-rate liabilities."

Shorepower

Marine-quality shorepower cables and related fixtures can be expensive. I use an ordinary extension cord and snake it down the companionway. Cheap and effective. Actually, if I need shorepower on a regular basis, it means I am spending too much time in marinas.

To spend or not to spend?


When I do make a gear purchase for my boat, I would rather spend a little extra and buy a quality product. I know this contradicts my observation about the high cost of gear discouraging folks from going cruising, but I would rather have a few choice pieces of gear than a boatload of second-rate liabilities.

Purchasing cheaper stuff may allow me to start my cruise with more hard cash, but cheap stuff tends to wear out or break when it is least convenient to replace or fix it, or when I am least able to afford it. If I have to

replace a cheap item, it means that I have actually bought the same piece of gear twice. Worse yet, if it fails during a storm or while I am maneuvering, my life might even be in jeopardy.

Marine gear is like any other type of equipment — you get what you pay for. Quality gear usually looks the part; it is pleasing to the eye. I get suspicious when something is out of proportion or painted a weird color. Why would a manufacturer invest in a product that's funny-looking? For the most part, I stick with dependable brand names.

Before purchasing a mechanical item I consider whether it will enhance my self-sufficiency or merely hinder it. If the piece of equipment has to be taken somewhere for repairs (everything that has moving parts eventually wears out), then I am no longer self-sufficient. Even if a product has a great warranty, it doesn't help me if the item breaks when I am mid-ocean, in a remote anchorage, or in transit on a foreign shore. I like gear that I can take apart and fix myself. Many products offer spares or rebuild kits and come with schematic instruction manuals. There is no worse feeling than relying on equipment that fails and then not being able to do anything about it.

For my wife, Jaja, and me, a boat and its gear are essentially a means to an end. The basic premise for our cruising is to feel free and to shed some of the material weight typical of shoreside living. Cruising is all about picking up the anchor and experiencing the thrill of being under way, meeting people, and sharing experiences. We have learned that onboard whistles and bells can enhance our cruising experience, but they don't automatically buy the feeling. In fact, the feeling is the thing money can't buy. 

For further reading...

Read more about the Martin family's cruising experiences in *Into the Light: A Family's Epic Journey* (2002), available at <http://www.goodoldboat.com/bookshelf.html> or by calling 763-420-8923.



So who's right? Nobody's wrong

by Jerry Powlas

AFTER READING HIS BOOK, *INTO THE Light: A Family's Epic Journey*, we asked Dave Martin to write an article about keeping cruising simple. Not long after it arrived, Cathy McIntire submitted her view of what's necessary for cruising. Neither has seen the other's opinion. We think the reader is well served by offering these opinions in their original form, rather than making this a debate.

In the two articles, you will find two moderate opinions about how to equip a boat for cruising. I say moderate because I can easily find opinions on the subject that are much more extreme in either direction ...and also are not wrong. Lin and Larry Pardey prefer to cruise without an auxiliary engine and without GPS. They are also strongly opposed to the use of epoxy in boat construction, preferring the use of other glues in every case. At the other end of the spectrum, the Amel Yard offers a well-thought-out boat ready to sail away as soon as you add provisions. It is very well equipped. It is one of very few high-priced boats that I really admire for a variety of reasons, including the integration of an extensive list of equipment.

It would be easy for *Good Old Boat* magazine to choose the low-cost end of this spectrum, but it would not serve the reader as well. It would be easy to take the position that because Dave and Jaja Martin have more miles under their keel than Cathy and Ken McIntire do that Dave's opinion is the right one. But this reasoning does not serve the reader well either. Cathy and Ken have more than enough experience to justify their opinion.

The selection of a boat is a very individual thing. That's why there are so many different kinds of boats out there. The equipment list for a boat is also a very individual thing. That's why there is so much equipment out there. What is exactly right for you may not be exactly right for another sailor. Here are my thoughts:


- You have to be able to afford it.

- You have to be able to understand it, which means use, maintain, and repair it.
- You have to be able to do without it because everything fails.

For one reason or another or perhaps for several reasons, you can't have it all. Limits of cost, weight, and complexity will pertain. If you ignore these limits, they will no doubt get your attention at some point.

It is often said that good equipment will not compensate for good experience, and you will often see very experienced cruisers opting for simple setups. Why? One reason is that many of the sailors who have spent much of their lives cruising have needed to be frugal. These sailors may make a little money writing the books and articles we read, but most can't afford a lot of gear. If you are fortunate enough to be able to consider this lifestyle at a very young age, and if you are also fortunate enough to be free of the encumbrance of great wealth, the simple approach is the obvious choice.

If you have been a working stiff for most of your life, wading through — or even enjoying — the complexities and demands of family, career, and other shoreside obligations before getting the opportunity to go cruising, you will probably find yourself with an older body, a less interesting sailing résumé, and possibly more funds to commit to cruising. I don't think you need to sail around the world backward in high heels to join "the club." You may choose to equip your boat more lavishly. You will be told that a good, well-equipped boat is somehow bad, and you will be told that a good, well-equipped boat is the only way to go cruising.

The reality is that you start from where you are when you cast off the lines. You apply the resources and experience you have at the time, and you go. You are never really properly equipped, and you never really have enough experience. That is why you go. 

hamas one afternoon bound for Mayaguana, 129 miles away. About 4 hours out, the winds picked up to 25 knots instead of the 10 to 15 knots that were predicted. The 5- to 7-foot swells grew substantially higher with waves on top of them, some breaking. We were closehauled and motorsailing.

Suddenly we were hit broadside by an errant wave and rolled more than 35 degrees while being simultaneously tossed in the air. The engine raw-water intake took a gulp of air. The engine lost its prime and became airlocked. The seas were so rough we were unable to get the sea water pumping through again.

We diverted under sail to Clarence Town, Long Island, in the middle

"We would not venture out into any bigger waters ... without an SSB radio or a ham radio. Period."

of the night. While struggling to get the motor working, we both suffered from significant seasickness. During that time we were able to talk to our friends on *Windborne* via SSB at our regular nightly chat time. Already in Clarence Town when they heard of our troubles, they decided to monitor their SSB through the night in case we needed help. In the morning when we arrived, they arranged a tow into the marina for us. Their support and assistance were very welcome during that long, dark night. With SSB, we could have called for emergency help, if needed. Without SSB, it is unlikely anyone would have heard us on VHF, as we were more than 25 miles from land, and most of the islands there are sparsely populated.

Other friends making the same trip 2 days later, but with only an SSB receiver and no way to transmit, were out in rough seas for 48 hours straight with no way to contact anyone in an emergency. After 8 hours, they lost VHF contact with their buddy boat. The buddy boat, meanwhile, developed an emergency, requiring one

individual aboard to be airlifted off. I simply wouldn't venture out without an SSB.

We also use our SSB to receive weatherfaxes and verbal weather reports in the U.S. and Bahamas and to listen to various cruisers' nets, which broadcast important information about weather, sea conditions, and so on. In the Bahamas, particularly the southern Bahamas, there are few sources of weather information, and often no information is available via VHF. This makes the SSB our only reliable way to obtain weather reports. Cruisers can also arrange for personalized weather forecasts via SSB. Without SSB, cruisers can be left with no way to monitor a developing weather system. Many people use ham radio, requiring a ham license, giving them an extended range of radio frequencies to use, but a SSB requires only a ship's station license and no individual testing or licensing. It is, therefore, easier to obtain.

Radar

Before moving aboard *Kahlua*, we purchased a new radar unit. The new systems are nothing short of remarkable. They are invaluable safety features to have aboard. Fog is only one of several circumstances when radar is useful. We use radar to monitor the seas for other vessels, particularly large, fast-moving commercial vessels, which often travel at 25 knots or more. Day or night, we find we are able to spot such vessels earlier using radar. We use the radar to determine the vessel's range and bearing to our boat, plotting it on a collision-avoidance plot chart every 3 minutes or so in order to determine the vessel's heading, which, contrary to what you might think, is not always obvious.

We have also used radar to monitor the development of squalls, which show up on the radar screen, allowing us to alter course or run for a protected anchorage until the storm

has passed. While we can see an approaching squall without it, radar allows us to determine the extent of the storm and whether there are more developing behind it.

And radar is invaluable in fog. We were able to make our way safely up the New Jersey coast from Cape May to Atlantic City in a fog that developed after we were offshore. We could see nothing but a thick grayness all around us, but the radar gave us "eyes."

Life preservers

Ken and I each have a SOSpenders life preserver, which we wear whenever we are underway. These inflatable life jackets are so comfortable that we don't balk at wearing them routinely. Even when cruising in bathing suits, we wear our inflatables.

We decided before we moved aboard that we didn't want to debate about when the weather is rough enough to require life jackets. We agreed that the prudent thing is to make a habit of wearing them at all times when under way. Cruisers

have been known to fall off or be knocked off the boat even in calm conditions. A human head floating in the water — about all you see when someone falls overboard — isn't much bigger than a coconut and quickly disappears from view in even a light chop.

Our life jackets have built-in harnesses, making it easy and convenient to attach ourselves to our jacklines in rough weather. And the easier it is to use a safety device,

the more likely we are to have it in place it when we need it.

Generator

While we certainly can cruise without a generator, we found that when things go wrong at sea, the ability to maintain power to vital electronics (GPS, SSB, and VHF) can be critical. During our difficult night in the southern Bahamas, when we did not yet own a gas-powered generator, we were fortunate we did not end up out to sea for any longer than we did.



Ken and Cathy McIntire and their boat, a Baba 30 named *Kahlua*, were featured by *Good Old Boat* magazine in the March 1999 issue. Starting in 2001, they sailed and motored out of Minnesota via the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway, across the Gulf of Mexico, around the Florida Keys, and up and down the East Coast and back and forth to the Bahamas.

Once we turned and sailed downwind in order to reach a safe harbor, the power output from the wind generator was reduced and couldn't quite maintain our battery levels with the electronics we were using. The drain of the GPS, navigation lights, VHF, intermittent autopilot use, and SSB usage slowly depleted our batteries. This could have left us in an uncomfortable position if we had needed to cruise longer to reach a safe harbor.

Being able to call for help via SSB, which uses a substantial amount of power, could be critical. Being able to maintain power to the GPS or autopilot would also be desirable. A gas or diesel-powered generator is an excellent safety precaution and, in addition, offers the benefits of saving wear on the engine from running without load when charging batteries at anchor. It also allows us to use 110 volt-powered tools on the boat. We recently purchased one of the new, compact, ultra-quiet models, and folks moored next to us cannot hear it.

The above items are ones we consider beneficial for the safety and well-being of the crew. The next few items are ones we find greatly increase our cruising comfort.

Wind generator

A wind generator is wonderful for making power at anchor when the wind is blowing. If it is blowing at 15 knots or more, our wind generator keeps us in power — enough to run

Continued on Page 80

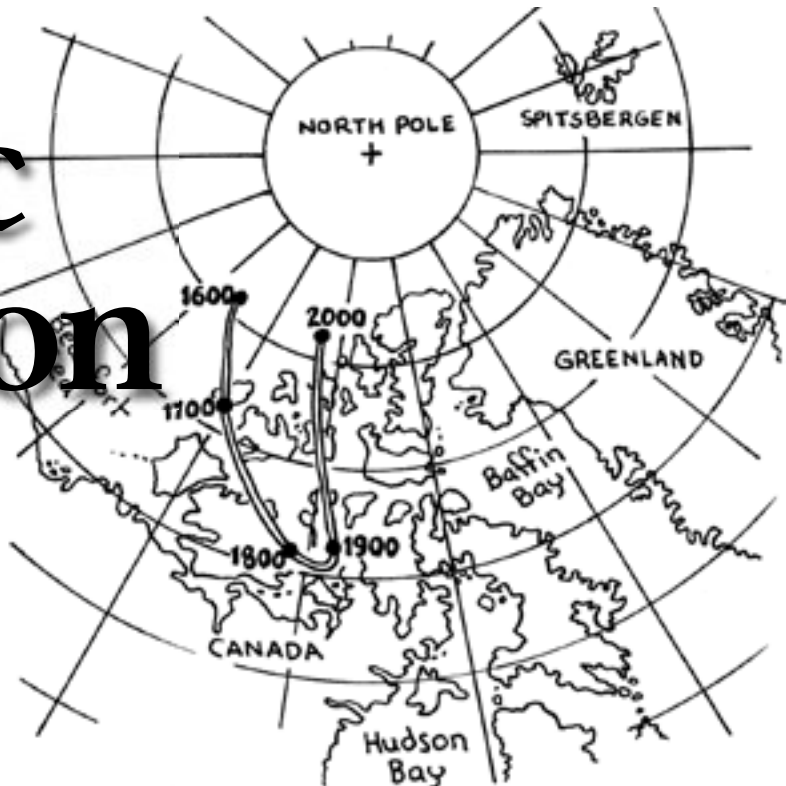
For cruising comfort

- ⌚ wind generator
- ⌚ watermaker
- ⌚ raised-bow dinghy with large tubes
- ⌚ macerator pump
- ⌚ windscoop
- ⌚ PocketMail

Magnetic fascination

Why there will be no magnetic compasses for future generations

by Don Launer



AROUND A.D. 1090 THE CHINESE first reported the use of a magnetic needle to indicate north. This primitive compass was an iron needle, magnetized by a lodestone, inserted into a straw, and floated in a bowl of water. In Europe, the discovery of the magnetic compass didn't occur until more than a century later, in the early 1200s, and historians don't know whether this European discovery was independent or whether it came to them from the East.

The compass finally allowed 13th-century European mariners to determine direction, even under overcast skies or during stormy weather. It was such a simple device, with only one moving part, it seemed like magic. Many captains were afraid to use it. It was the age of the Inquisition, and sailors feared that if they were seen using this device they could be accused of witchcraft, which could result in torture or death. It wasn't until nearly a century later, during the 1300s, that seamen could finally use the compass openly and without fear.

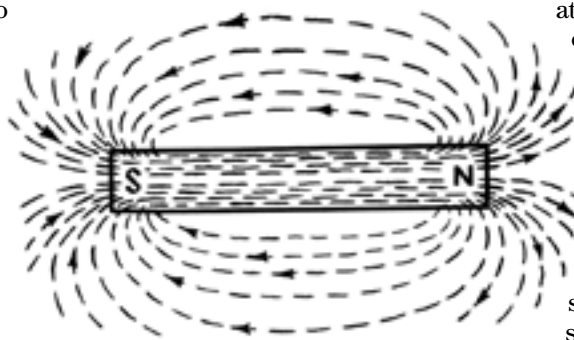
For the next 100 years, mariners believed the compass pointed to true north, but during the 1400s scientists determined that there was a difference between compass north and true north. Finally, in the 1590s, the Portuguese developed surprisingly accurate tables that showed the difference between true and magnetic

north (variation) at various places on the globe.

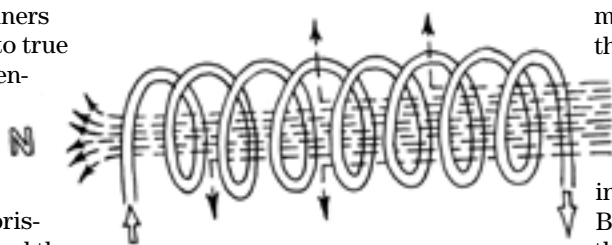
In the 1600s, it was discovered that the magnetic poles changed location from year to year and that the intensity of the magnetic field also varied. Our concepts of a simple magnetic planet were beginning to change.

Magnets

There are basically two types of magnets: a simple bar magnet and electromagnets, which are created by the flow of electricity.



Bar magnet



Electromagnet

Since the 1500s, the magnetic north pole has moved from the Arctic Ocean into northern Canada. It is moving back to the Arctic Ocean at an average speed of about 10 to 15 miles a year.

In nearly all representations of the Earth's magnetic field, the Earth's magnet is represented as a simple bar magnet. In reality, the Earth's magnetism is more closely related to that of an electromagnet.

The Earth's magnetic field is created in the molten iron in the Earth's outer core, about 1,850 miles below the Earth's surface. The Earth's magnetic field is produced by electrical currents that originate in this hot, liquid, outer core of the Earth, which is moving around the solid inner core and acting like a huge electromagnet. The field is influenced to some extent by the solar wind — those charged particles streaming from the sun.

Wandering poles

The magnetic north pole has been wandering around the polar regions for millions of years. By using data from the 1500s to the present, we see that during this relatively brief period in the history of the Earth, the magnetic north pole has made a trip from the Arctic Ocean into northern Canada north of Hudson Bay, and it is now on its way back to the Arctic Ocean at an average speed of about 10 to 15 miles per year. The

“... the magnetic north pole has made a trip from the Arctic Ocean into northern Canada north of Hudson Bay, and it is now on its way back ...”

magnetic north pole will probably be exiting Canada's borders as early as 2004. This, however, is strictly a guess, and as Larry Newitt of the Geological Survey of Canada says, “Although it has been moving north or northwest for a hundred years, it is not going to continue in that direction forever. Its speed has increased considerably during the past 25 years, and it could just as easily decrease a few years from now.”

In addition to the long-term movement of the magnetic poles, there is also a daily (diurnal) movement of the poles. This daily movement of the poles roughly follows an elliptical path around the pole's average position. Sometimes this daily movement follows the path of a very small ellipse and sometimes a very large one. This can cause the pole to move more than 100 miles during a 24-hour period. It's believed that this diurnal movement is caused by the solar wind and that solar storms on the surface of the sun can cause a change in the size of this elliptical path.

To make things even more confusing, most scientific organizations, such as the American Geophysical Union, consider the term “magnetic pole” to be an oversimplified representation, and prefer to describe at least three different sets of poles, with the International Geomagnetic Reference Field (IGRF) Model Dip Pole as the closest to what most cartographers, and the public in general, refer to as the magnetic pole.

Variation and isogonic lines

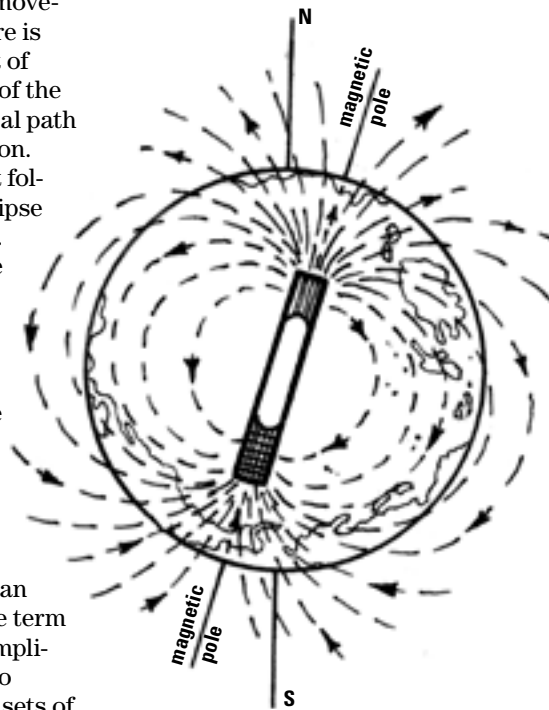
The difference in angle between magnetic north and true north is called variation by mariners. In the scientific community this difference is often called magnetic declination or deviation. This is unfortunate since, for the sailor, deviation means something quite different.

Although the magnetic lines of force shown around simple magnets are smooth and regular, the magnetic lines of force around the Earth are extremely irregular, primarily due to the non-uniform distribution of magnetic material within the Earth. Those erratic lines that show the same varia-

tion are known as isogonic lines, and maps are available that show these lines worldwide. But these large-scale maps don't show the many small irregularities existing locally that, in many cases, can be enormous. Off the Australian coast, for example, there is a position where, in the distance of two football fields, the compass changes by 90 degrees.

Reversing magnetism

There is another bizarre event that occurs with the magnetic poles. About every 250,000 years the poles reverse themselves — the north pole becomes the south pole and vice versa. During the last 5 million years, this has hap-



Earth is frequently depicted as a simple bar magnet, but it actually is more closely related to an electromagnet.

pened about 25 times. But it has been 780,000 years since this last happened, and a reversal is long overdue. However, since the timing of this reversal has always been erratic, it's impossible to tell when it will happen again. Nevertheless, the planet's magnetic field is showing signs of wanting to make the gigantic switch once more. The prelude to this changeover is the gradual weakening of the Earth's magnetic field until it becomes zero. Results from measuring the Earth's magnetic field in 1980 by the MAGSAT satellite and in 2000 from the Ørsted satellite show a reduction in strength is in progress. When the Earth finally becomes non-magnetic, it will remain that way for possibly several hundred years. Then the magnetism will begin to build up in the opposite direction. For the last 4,000 years, this weakening has continued to progress. Just in the past century, the strength of the magnetic field has decreased 5 percent, and scientists predict the Earth's magnetic field will cease to exist in several hundred to a few thousand years — just an instant in geological time.


During the time when the Earth is non-magnetic, compasses will point nowhere in particular. They will be relegated to museums and children will ask their parents, in awe, “Was the Earth once really a magnet?”

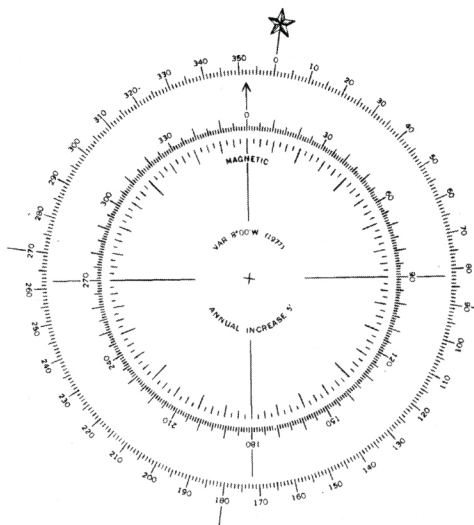
Perhaps the many centuries it will take for this to happen will give migratory animals, such as birds, who make use of the Earth's magnetic field, a new way to locate their seasonal destinations. And it's probable that harmful radiation levels reaching the surface of the Earth will increase during this period, when the protection of the magnetic field surrounding the Earth has vanished.

The compass rose

For the mariner, the nautical chart's compass rose distills all this theoretical information into a convenient, simple, and usable form. The outer ring of the rose shows bearings to the true north pole — the axis of the Earth; the next inner ring of the rose shows magnetic bearings — the direction to the magnetic north pole; and on the inside ring is printed the variation, in degrees east or west, as

well as the annual predicted change in that variation — along with the date that this change was predicted. The yearly predicted change in variation is only applicable for a few years from the date shown since, as we have seen, the movement of the magnetic north pole is erratic and unpredictable in the long term.

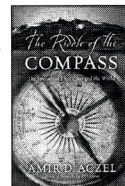
Although it can be intimidating to reflect on all the changes that are taking place in our magnetic Earth, don't throw away your compass yet. In our lifetimes it will remain as our basic tool for non-electronic navigation. 



A compass rose

For further reading...

For a fascinating historical perspective on the history of the compass, read *The Riddle of the Compass: The Invention that Changed the World*, by Amir D. Aczel (2002), available at <http://www.goodoldboat.com/bookshelf.html> or by calling 763-420-8923.



Building a skipjack,

continued from Page 13

17 months since the day I started lofting and was, in fact, minus a month spent delivering *Renee Tighe* to her new owner, the 2 weeks stolen by the flood, plus a total of 14 weeks spent on the road rounding up boat gear from southern cities. The true hands-on time was thus only one year. This represented about 3,000 hours work from each of us to produce a 50-foot boat. Our chosen construction method had proven undeniably fast.

Three-year overlap

In truth, we launched a trifle prematurely. Diminishing funds and a need to get back to the real work of cruising-guide production pushed us on. It is often difficult to define exactly when the building stops and maintenance begins; in the case of *Soleares*, there would be an overlap of around 3 years. But at least they would be 3 years of extensive cruising while continuing boatwork whenever circumstances permitted.

Initially, we remained alongside a Maryborough dock for 2 months testing the engine, checking tanks, and rigging the ship as a fairly low-aspect-ratio ketch. But one with a difference. She had no booms of any description. Not even on the mizzen.

My motives for designing this rather unusual rig were twofold. First, booms can be deadly during an uncontrolled jibe. And jibes themselves, controlled or otherwise, can be very threatening to the ship and gear in bad

weather. Second, my secret weapon would be the high-setting fisherman sail. This upside-down mainsail places its largest area up high where the wind is really happening. It compensates for the shortcomings of a low-aspect rig but needs a wishbone boom if it is to keep working off the wind.

I have used wishbones in the past

"The true hands-on time was thus only one year. This represented about 3,000 hours work from each of us to produce a 50-foot boat."

and am a proponent but not when they are set from aloft. They can be mechanically unsound and generally unwieldy, especially in light air and troubled seas. And yet, without booms of any description, all sails must collapse and become useless in following winds.


Sensible old rig

My response to this dilemma was to use a fundamental and very sensible cruising rig from the past. This was

the twin-headsail configuration, where poles are hung and saddled to the mainmast when not in use but are hoisted out to spread the two sails when needed. The result is a spread of sail that almost matches the wing-and-wing area of a poled-out jib and boomed mainsail but without their dangers.

Twin headsails set entirely forward of the mast and not attached to the forestay in any way can be very reliable self-steering devices in themselves. Admittedly, they are inconvenient, even difficult, to set for short durations, but for long distances they are supreme.

Now, 3 years since launching and having sailed the east coast of Australia several times, *Soleares* has fulfilled our every expectation despite — dare I admit it? — having only one-third of the ballast aboard. Her natural stability is nothing short of extraordinary, her ride being rather like that of a catamaran fitted with shock absorbers, and her overall versatility continues to be a thrill after all those years in deep-keelers.

To the purist, it is no doubt disappointing that a classic sailing vessel like the skipjack should be reduced to nothing more than a glorified motor-sailer, but for our purposes she is ideal. Unless we discover the fountain of youth, I suspect she will be our last boat. If she really is the swan song, then we could not end on a higher note. 



A Christmas tale

*A classic Alden yawl
becomes a treasured family cruiser once more*

by Tom Young

THE 1961 ALDEN CHALLENGER yawl looked quite large on the jackstands that brisk fall day. The price and this somewhat rare boat made me curious. “Only taking a look,” I told myself. I wasn’t prepared for a pretty boat though. With her long overhangs, large shapely ports, stepped cabinhouse, and oval spruce spars with the sails still bent on, there was no mistaking the era of the design: Cruising Club of America (CCA) Rule, the 1950s and ’60s. She was lovely to look at. Before long she would be ours. We would name her *Christmas*.

A long, sharp, spoon-shaped bow loomed overhead as I approached. It was easy to imagine it slicing through a wave, gently pushing the sea aside as I walked aft along the waterline. A moderate beam and somewhat slack turn at the bilge amidships looked

like it would move easily through blue water. Following her lines aft to the graceful stern, I saw smooth water and a tiny wake in the shadow of her counter quietly moving away.

Above the solid fiberglass decks, the boat was built entirely of wood. Long wide sweeping decks framed the graceful mahogany cabin sides. A white cabintop met the sides in finely shaped moldings. Hatches, Dorade boxes, coamings, cockpit... these parts were built of fine teak and mahogany.

Dorade ventilators, heavy hatch hinges, stanchions, and cleats were all nicely forged of thick nickel-plated bronze. Details such as the boathook and its carved mounting block; the spruce spinnaker pole and chocks; the hand-cut, dovetailed corners on her deck box and Dorade boxes — all

showed a high degree of quality. The spars looked fit to be displayed on a wall. The workmanship was splendid.

All wood below

An old bronze lock under the John Alden identification plaque turned easily. The heavy mahogany hatch slid smoothly into the stainless-steel sea hood.

She was all wood below. Her large,

Christmas, a classic 38-foot 6-inch John Alden design built during the era of the CCA Rule, shows her overhanging stern and spoon bow to advantage in the fading light of a Maine sunset. One of the early fiberglass boats, she was one of approximately 50 Alden Challengers built in the 1960s.



Author Tom Young brought a water-damaged and mildewed interior back to a sunny and gleaming haven. He saw the quality woods and craftsmanship there and was not dissuaded by the project that lay ahead of him. He went at the project one step at a time, he says, taking great pleasure in building the pile of varnished parts, below, ready for re-installation in the spring. His goal through the entire project was to keep *Christmas on the water* and sailing each summer.



shapely old ports lit the interior as if the sun were in there. She was nearly all original after 40 years of what looked to be a lot of use. The boat wasn't ancient, just old enough to have some history.

Only about 50 Challengers were built in the 1960s. The fiberglass hulls and decks were laid up by hand at the Halmatic yard in England. This hull was then shipped to the Molich yard in Denmark. There the rest of the boat was constructed following the blueprints supplied by John G. Alden Naval Architects, Inc., of Boston. Designed to the CCA racing rules of the day, she resembled several similar boats of the era.

The boat I was looking at was priced below the lower end of the few Alden Challengers for sale or recently sold. She wasn't moving either. She needed a lot of work. So here I was: faced with the "old boat fixer-upper dilemma." A second offer had fallen through when the survey came in, lowering the boat's price...again. Her disrepair was obvious. Was this last fallen offer a ploy by the buyers to lower her price one more time for a third offer? After much thought and inspection, I decided not to find out. Was the boat worth it? Despite its problems, I thought it clearly was and more. I made a fair offer with no survey contingency. I wanted the sellers to know this was a real offer and I wanted the boat. (I don't recommend this tactic; it usually turns out to be a mistake.)

I had done my own survey. The design has some common problems in the built-in fuel tanks and chainplates. These were repairable. But I believe

her general disrepair caused the other offers to fall through. To someone without the skills to bring her back, the yard estimates would have been staggering.

"A full boatyard restoration, added to the cost of the boat, would quickly surpass her value. Luckily, I could supply the missing care she needed."

High-quality yawl

But I saw a different boat that day. I saw a 38-foot 6-inch CCA Rule design...a high-quality yawl. The Alden name alone put the boat in a class few others share. There was nothing like her in this size, quality, and price range. She had a bomb-proof 1960s-style heavy fiberglass hull, external

full lead keel, and bronze centerboard. She was fully equipped; few parts were missing. She had good sails: a Harken furling genoa, five spinnakers, and lockers full of sheets and blocks. She had gleaming two-speed self-tailing winches and secondaries. She had two full sets of ground tackle and a well-installed electric windlass for hauling them up.

There were well-installed compressed natural gas (CNG) tanks, a beautifully built original pedestal, and a fine compass as well as a lovely, old, finely joined wooden wheel with an added stainless rim. Docklines were coiled in a beautiful wooden deck box on the aft deck. What a wonderful idea.

There were shapely and well-built stanchions, pulpits, and double lifelines, all heavily installed with large stainless backing plates. A well-built hull-to-deck joint was sealed, through-bolted, and glassed together. On deck were the highest quality fittings, a well-designed dodger attached to a high mahogany curb, and stout yet well-finished wooden parts expertly joined and as strong today as the day they were assembled 40 years ago.

With care, they'd be good for another 40 years. This was quality construction.

Below I saw the same complete high quality. An old freshwater-cooled Japanese diesel looked to be installed nicely and had been well cared for. Cases of spare oil filters and fuel filters were a good sign. She held 80 gallons of fuel low in the bilge (and the tanks were full), and she had three stainless-steel water tanks holding a total of 120 gallons of water.



No-nonsense electrical

There was an older no-nonsense electrical system with two house batteries and a separate engine battery, plus heavy and well-installed wiring, meticulously led throughout. There were adequate electronics. Her galley stove was nearly unused. Plates, tableware, cooking utensils... everything was still with the boat.

Dozens of drawers and doors held tons of spares. Even a full complement of tools — from tiny screwdrivers to huge bolt cutters — was with the boat. Solid teak-and-holly floors were hidden under years of use. There was something else below: the 40-year-old work of skilled Danish craftsmen and the fine materials they used. To someone like me, this was priceless. She even had a beautiful old fireplace.

Another example of quality was in the two overhead hatches. These were well designed structurally and expertly joined in their day. Now crazed beyond recognition, the ½-inch-thick Plexiglas would have to be replaced with new Lexan. One of my first projects was to strip the ports of finish and hardware, replace the windows with Lexan, refinish, reassemble, and reinstall the ports. With simple maintenance, these wooden hatches and their heavy hardware are once again strong and finely finished.

“The Alden name alone put the boat in a class few others share. There was nothing like her in this size, quality, and price range.”

Fortunately for me, other buyers didn't see what I saw that first day. They saw peeling paint and varnish above and below the decks and realized the boat was in need of total stripping and refinishing. It was hard to see the fine wood below a sun-bleached layer of peeling finish.

The cabintop, built of ¾-inch plywood with a layer of fiberglass over that, was cracked and peeling. All ports had been leaking into the interior for some time. There were water stains and lifted varnish throughout. Water had damaged many under-deck ceilings as well. There were leak and rust stains through handholds, hatches, and other parts all over the overhead. Paint was peeling off in large chunks.

Common dilemma

Labor costs are high today. These repairs would no doubt bring boatyard estimates nearly as high as the selling price, a common dilemma today. A full boatyard restoration, added to the cost of the boat, would quickly surpass her value. Luckily, I could supply the missing care she needed. Despite the obvious damage, I suspected the boat had been well cared for with only a few years of recent neglect. This turned out to be true; research showed me that she was a New England boat that had been loved by members of one family for 35 years. She had been stored inside during the off-season.

I knew this restoration would require more than a few nights and weekends. *Christmas* needed to be on the water in season; that's our first priority for a sailboat. I would have to split the restoration into parts to be performed over time.

The biggest trick with a project like this — as I have learned during 25 years of building and restoring homes — is keeping the tasks achievable. There are times to step back and look at the total project, but the actual work is done in small increments. My

advice is to cut the project into parts. To restore a cabintop, the first project is to remove everything. Even that may be daunting. Just get one part off first. It starts with removing one screw, then another. When removing parts gets frustrating, go home and start stripping the ones you have. Keep yourself motivated by applying yourself where you are most productive and you can see results. With the “parts removal project” completed, the top itself is an easy project.

The first spring consisted of removing all ports, stripping the exterior cabin sides, rebedding the ports, and applying varnish to the cabin exterior. The next winter under cover involved removing everything from the cabintop. Refinishing the parts in a warm shop when time was available became a project within the project. Seeing the parts begin to build up ready for re-installation was a mental boost. I stripped the interior of paint and varnish. In my shop, I refinished any interior parts easy to remove.

Once weather permitted, I made fiberglass repairs to the top and followed that with a new coat of epoxy paint (brush applied). With the cabintop parts rebbed and fastened, the interior overhead was repainted. It was wonderful to see the leaks stop.

And so a restoration goes. Step by

The work on deck was no less daunting than the interior project. The ports leaked, the fiberglass cabintop was cracked and peeling, and lifted varnish was everywhere. The first spring consisted of rebedding ports in an effort to quell the leaks and stripping and varnishing the exterior cabin sides. *Christmas* spent the next winter under cover as all cabintop parts and hardware were removed, renewed, and reinstalled on the repaired and freshly painted cabintop.



***Christmas* had been owned and loved by the members of one family for 35 years (and was even stored inside each winter) before meeting with neglect. Now she sails again with Tom Young and his family, a foursome that is appreciating her fully and treating her once more in the manner to which she had previously become accustomed.**

step. A little more this year. Above all, every year she sails. Every year she gets better. A lot of work? Sure, but there are rewards. *Christmas* has become a welcome addition to our family of four. She is nearly perfect for our coastal sailing in New England. She's wonderful and very responsive, even in light air. She's well suited to our Maine coast cruising grounds. Since she's easily balanced under way, we often watch her sail herself. The large cockpit and wide decks make time under way and at anchor very comfortable. With her board-up draft of 4 feet, we go where many can't. Her yawl rig is easy to handle and fun to sail. When it pipes up around here, she can get us home.

Except for cutting down her enormous center table with seating for six, I left the old tried and true belowdecks layout alone. Although they were designed for racing crews, the two pilot berths are about as good as it gets for two kids. The lower extension berths make great seats and pullout couches for lounging around an evening fire. The forward cabin is large, private, and airy with tons of storage space. The head is the warmest spot below when the fireplace is burning, thanks to a grating in the bulkhead.

The no-nonsense galley/navigation area just works well. We love to cook at home and aboard. The huge stainless-steel icebox with a separate sump holds tons of food and ice and makes a good navigation station with a full-sized chart drawer above. These old boats hold so much gear and stores in countless lockers and drawers that the temptation to take off in them is always dangerously appealing.

More character now


The newly refinished African mahogany belowdecks glows like soft sunlight. Water-damaged ceilings over bunks provided templates for new contrasting birch veneer ceilings. The satin-painted overhead has more character now. There is nothing



like fine old wood, renewable yet enhanced with age. There is a feeling of a little history as you climb below. She raced to Bermuda in the 1960s. Would she do it again?

This isn't a boat for everybody. But if gently brushing varnish onto a newly prepared cabin side lowers your blood pressure, maybe an Alden Challenger is for you. Many good old all-fiberglass CCA designs are out there. Some will require similar labor-intensive restoration. High yard costs

to refurbish these boats may drive the price down on boats in disrepair. It will also drive up the value of performing these tasks yourself. Look closely. If the boat has the other important parts, supplying the restoration part may be cost effective.

Take a close look at some of these older neglected boats. Get a survey. What parts are missing? I still remember my first look at this boat that wasn't selling. That brisk fall day I saw a different boat. 

What did *Christmas* cost?


by Tom Young

WHEN I FOUND *CHRISTMAS*, SHE HAD RECENTLY BEEN APPRAISED FOR INSURANCE purposes at \$50,000. I made no offer at that time. Nearly a year later, after buyers backed out of contracts due to survey reports, I offered — and bought the boat for — \$30,000. After a year on the open market, a little down on her luck, I believe that was her value on that day.

I estimate that I have spent around 400 “mostly pleasant hours” on the general refit over 3 years. The high level of quality and workmanship that was evident when I surveyed the boat has resulted in little repair or replacement of major parts or systems. For me, this is the key in choosing a boat for a refit. The high labor costs necessary to refit older, tired boats with sound fiberglass hulls and quality parts reduce their value. High boatyard labor costs will create “project boats.”

Restoring boats is no way to make money. Nonetheless, sailing a pretty classic that doesn't cost too much is, for some of us, a real pleasure.

This CCA era in the 1960s produced some elegant designs with lasting appeal and now, for some, rising values. Alden Challengers in good condition have listing prices in the \$60,000-range and go up from there for the really-well-cared-for boats.

What *Christmas* is worth now can best be summed up by a surveyor who gave me an overview of the boat, prior to purchase. “A 38-foot Alden Challenger yawl, CCA classic, high Alden quality, and with the equipment that boat has in that price range...there is nothing else like that out there, nothing,” he told me, and he was so right. 



One boat, two captains

This enthusiastic couple cruises the greatest Great Lake

by Karen Larson

ALL HUSBANDS QAUE WHEN GREETED by their wives with the words, “Sit down. We need to talk.” Six years ago, those dreaded words led to good news for Dale Longtin, however. His wife, Cori Breidenbach, had received the call from a friend of theirs telling them he was selling his 1976 Ericson 29, *Carina*. Cori began thinking that perhaps it was time to sell their Chrysler 22 and revise their sailing activities. Dale and Cori called in an accountant to determine whether they had what it takes to make a purchase of this nature. They did — and they soon became *Carina*’s third owners.

Now that they have a liveaboard lifestyle in mind, Dale and Cori have begun looking for *Carina*’s fourth owners. The next family or couple to have wonderful sailing adventures on *Carina* won’t be hard to find.

Carina is a much-modified, well-maintained cruiser. Her second owner, Tom Embertson, was primarily the handyman who gave her her present name, modified her for cruising, and passed along the results of his accomplishments when he bought an Islander 36. Dale and Cori have been the happy custodians for 5 years, maintaining her while enjoying Lake Superior aboard.

Dale discovered sailing while spending summers at a family cabin in another beautiful cruising area: Lake of the Woods at the border of Minnesota and Ontario, Canada. His family owned powerboats, but another enterprising fellow brought a sailboat to the area and offered sailboat rides to paying customers. As a teenager, Dale’s appreciation of sailboats

changed the day the boat rounded up while he was at the helm. “I didn’t know what was happening,” he remembers, “but I was impressed by all that power.”

Summer sailing

After that he spent summers aboard a Sunfish knockoff by Arctic Cat, Inc. (of snowmobile fame). Somewhat later came a Force Five, an AMF design similar to a Laser. More than the Arctic Cat, this boat turned Dale into a sailor. “A Force Five teaches you to sail, because if you do anything wrong, you’re in the water,” he says. He swam frequently in the beginning and turned righting the boat into an art form. “I could capsize the boat and get it back

“Dale . . . encourages his wife. ‘This boat has two captains,’ he says with pride.”

up without getting wet above the knees,” he says. As it capsized, he simply climbed over the side to the centerboard, tipped it upright, and stepped back in.

About the time he’d worked it all out, Cori came into Dale’s life. “He courted me aboard that Force Five,”

Dale Longtin and Cori Breidenbach, above, rarely miss a summer weekend aboard *Carina*, at right, their highly modified and well-maintained Ericson 29.



she says. "We even sailed it on our honeymoon." Cori has a twinkle in her eye and an indomitable spirit. After having her hand on the tiller a time or two, she decided she could sail the boat solo. Dale wasn't sure she was ready, but she wouldn't be discouraged. Sure enough, the Force Five had a sailing lesson in store for Cori, too, and she soon learned that she didn't have the upper-body strength to right the boat by herself. That might have been the end of sailing for lesser women. Not for courageous Cori. This first solo was merely the beginning.

Eventually the two were sailing a Chrysler 22 on Lake Pepin, a wide spot in the Mississippi River not too far from the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, where they were living. They enjoyed frequent trips to the boat, and Dale took it to the Apostle Islands, where he soon decided that a larger boat would be better for this more extensive cruising ground. The couple wound up chartering boats, including *Carina*, in the Apostles.

Longer cruises

Once they'd purchased the larger Ericson and began cruising on a corner of Lake Superior, there was no looking back. Each year they made longer and more ambitious cruises on the big lake, one of which included a 44-hour passage to a distant point in Ontario and working their way back via the scenic and protected anchorages along the way. Most summers between launch in mid-May and layup in mid-October, Dale and Cori rarely missed a weekend at the boat. "The best 3 weeks of my life were 2 years ago when we spent 3 weeks cruising in Canada (on Lake Superior's north shore)," Cori says.

"For the past five years they had been talking about living aboard and cruising. They were discussing how they'd sell the house, quit their jobs, and make the timing play out."



During the time they spent sailing on *Carina*, Cori discovered an untapped facet of her psyche. She wanted to singlehand this boat so she could sail on weekends when Dale's work took him away from home. With the encouragement of Dale and three others, she became an accomplished sailor in her own right and was soon entering a low-key, but long and physically challenging race for singlehanders in the Apostles, a 27-mile solo circumnavigation of Madeline Island. She has competed in this fun contest twice. So far, Cori is the only woman ever to enter this race.

"I never understood what motivated women like Ellen MacArthur to enter a singlehanded long-distance race," Cori says, beaming. "But by the time I finished my first race, I understood. I didn't want to get off the boat. *Carina* and I had bonded. It was very empowering." Dale, who is not driven to race but who also singlehands the boat when Cori is unavailable for a weekend, encourages his wife.

"This boat has two captains," he says with pride. "One day I realized that when I was captain, everything was done beautifully by the 'crew.' But when Cori was captain, I wasn't following through. I wasn't used to doing all those things (like



The Ericson 29 has a usable and roomy interior with a large starboard quarter berth. Unfortunately, the galley lacks an oven and permanent range. The V-berth, bottom photos, is finished with wood battens. Notice the large flat tray with a flip-down door above the V-berth. It's a perfect place for storing charts.





getting out docklines and fenders). When I was captain, they just happened magically. I decided that when Cori was captain she had 'sh*# for crew,' so I had a hat embroidered with those words and wore it the next time I messed up. Now we both wear it at times."

Wonderful shape

Since Dale and Cori would rather spend time sailing than doing projects on their boat, they're lucky that *Carina* was in wonderful shape when they bought her. They have recovered the cushions and increased the insulation in the icebox. They bought a new mainsail and had the furling jib redone by North to add a couple of ropes in the luff. These ropes take up the slack better than foam, they point out, since foam is eventually crushed by spending most of its time in the furled position. Dale also enlarged the battery storage space in order to accommodate two 27s where a pair of 24s had been.

But previous owner Tom Embertson deserves the praise for installing the removable inner forestay, which allows them to hank on a storm jib. This forestay runs through the anchor rope locker and is tied to the hull. He added controls so all lines lead to the cockpit, installed a deck washdown system, and moved the shorepower outlet. Belowdecks, he added a nifty folding door to expand the room in the head to accommodate the knees of a sitting sailor, added storage above the settees, mounted the radar screen so it could be seen from the cockpit, added extra seating for the fold-down dining table, and built in a clever screen and chart storage shelf above the V-berth, among other things. Tom



"Now that they have a liveaboard lifestyle in mind, Dale and Cori have begun looking for Carina's fourth owners."

also rewired and replumbed the boat and added alarms to indicate low oil pressure, high water, low gas, and low battery.

All of these modifications make a 29-footer more livable, of course. And *Carina* was more than adequate during the summer of the 3-week cruise with all provisions aboard. But now Dale and Cori are contemplating a liveaboard life on the East Coast. For this lifestyle, *Carina* has a few disadvantages. Primary among them is the lack of an oven and the need for a permanently mounted range. Dale and Cori cook on a Coleman camp stove, which is inconvenient on long crossings, since it's not gimbaled or fastened as securely as necessary on lumpy seas.

Looking to live aboard

So they're looking for a 35- to 40-foot boat, believing that size to be as large as either one of them can single-hand. They may go offshore someday but are looking for a roomy coastal cruiser with storage capable of being a liveaboard. "I looked at boats in Annapolis," Dale says. "That changed our



An inner forestay (added by the previous owner for use in rough weather) is stowed along the mast and fastened to the deck when needed. An added partition in the chain locker allows the load of the inner forestay to pass through the locker to the hull.

outlook about what we needed. I began looking for something like a Tayana with a full keel. But now we're looking for a boat capable of bluewater cruising but lighter than the Tayana-type boat. Something with a modified fin keel. We want to be able to go out in lighter wind."

Sometimes cruising dreams are shifted from dream status to reality by a job change. Not long ago Dale lost his job as the lead of a team of field computer installation specialists. In the ultimate irony, they trained their replacements in the field and were then laid off. That led the couple to a crossroads. For the past five years they had been talking about living aboard and cruising. They were discussing how they'd sell the house, quit their jobs, and make the timing play out. They had a mindset of not accumulating more stuff and of divesting what was not needed. All they needed was the right timing.

The timing is now, since Dale is free to move. Cori has arranged for a job transfer from Minneapolis to Virginia Beach with her employer, Galyan's, a respected outdoor outfitter, where she is office manager. All the dominoes are stacked on the table. This couple will soon learn the pleasures of saltwater cruising in a much warmer sailing climate. *Carina* will go on to show another family what can be achieved in a well-executed 29-foot design. 

Ericson 29

A comparison with three of its rivals

by Ted Brewer

AVID NUMBER CRUNCHERS WILL SEE I've added a new item to the table below: the dates the boats were built. I feel this is significant for two reasons. First it's hardly fair to compare an older boat to a contemporary design. Surely we designers have learned something about performance, comfort, and so on over the intervening years. Besides, fashions change and what was considered generous beam in the 1960s and '70s is very much on the narrow side today. Also I think it reassuring to know that a particular design had a decent run of life. That indicates that the boat was well received by the buyers for a reasonable length of time and was not quickly dated — as many new boats are — or rejected because of inherent problems of design or construction.

I was pleased to find three boats to compare with the Ericson 29 that were all of the same era, had a good production run, and were alike in many respects, such as beam, displacement, and sail area. This makes it a very interesting group to consider and shows how changes in only one or two dimensions can markedly affect the resulting comparison figures and performance.


For example, the Ericson 29 is 180 pounds heavier than the Pearson 30 but is 3 feet shorter on the waterline. As a result, its Displ./LWL ratio is a very hefty 356.4 compared to the 30's rather svelte 237.7. Spreading the displacement over a longer waterline definitely reduces wave making and, ultimately, increases performance.

From a performance viewpoint, I

feel the Ericson has to be the slowest of this group by a small margin as it is carrying the heaviest displacement on the shortest waterline, has the shoalest draft, and spreads the least amount of sail. Its short waterline might give it an edge in light air, due to having a lower wetted surface, but all in all its figures do not add up to sparkling times around the buoys in average conditions. On the good side, the Ericson's husky displacement and short waterline should add up to the best motion comfort in a seaway and also give it a slight edge in the capsize number should the owner undertake a long ocean passage.

Both the Ericson and the Pearson have their rudders swept sharply aft, a style that was popular in that era. It looks "fast," but the boats would probably steer better if the rudder stocks were more vertical. That would increase rudder efficiency and ease the problem of an extremely strong helm when backing out of a slip under power.

Given the numbers — and that is all we have to go on — I would say any of these little yachts would make a fine coastal cruiser for a couple or small family. And with a decent Performance Handicap Racing Fleet (PHRF) rating, you could have a lot of fun in club racing as well. There are no extremes of beam. All the yachts have a reassuring ballast ratio and capsize figure. So with intelligent preparation, they could well make a reasonable bluewater passage.

Stainless steel was inexpensive and popular in the 1970s, however, so be sure to have a very thorough marine survey, particularly of the likely failure spots such as the rig, chainplates, keel bolts, rudder stock, and other stainless-steel fittings subject to sea water, before you bid adieu to your friends. Better safe than sorry. Fair winds! 

	Ericson 29	Cal 29	Pearson 30	Sabre 28
Years built	1970-79	1970-78	1971-80	1970-86
LOA	27' 7"	29' 0"	29' 9"	28' 5"
LWL	22' 0"	24' 0"	25' 0"	22' 10"
Beam	9' 3"	9' 3"	9' 6"	9' 2"
Draft	4' 4"	4' 6"	5' 0"	4' 8"
Displacement	8,500 lb.	8,000 lb.	8,320 lb.	7,800 lb.
Ballast	3,900 lb.	3,350 lb.	3,560 lb.	3,100 lb.
LOA/LWL ratio	1.30	1.21	1.19	1.24
Beam/LWL ratio	0.42	0.39	0.38	0.40
Displ./LWL ratio	356.4	258.3	237.7	292.6
Bal./Displ. ratio	45.9%	41.9%	42.8%	39.7%
Sail area	404 sq. ft.	434 sq. ft.	444 sq. ft.	403 sq. ft.
SA/Displ. ratio	15.52	17.36	17.3	16.39
Capsize number	1.81	1.85	1.88	1.85
Comfort ratio	28.1	24.9	24.1	25.5



Ericson 29



Cal 29



Pearson 30



Sabre 28



Author Amy Cawvey, Tammy Ward, and Izzy Koye on a Holder 14. Below, the Rhodes 19, christened in 1971 by group members as *Wet Hen*, glides across a Honolulu backdrop.

Hawaiian tradition

For a group of Air Force wives, it's been 43 years of learning to sail

by Amy Cawvey

A LOVE OF SAILING AND THE SEA brought a group of women together in 1961, and the group they founded has been going strong ever since. This group, the Wet Hens, is made up of military wives who volunteer their time to teach sailing to other women associated with the military. Classes are open to women in all branches of the service in Hawaii. Hickam Harbor on Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii offers beautiful turquoise water surrounded by a protective reef, the background of Diamond Head, and steady trade winds. It's a perfect place to sail.

Sailing is just what 10 women decided to do in 1961. At that time, no sailing classes were offered for those of the female gender. One sailor offered to change the situation. Papa Lou Foster had been brought to Hickam by the Air Force in 1957 to design the marina there. He and a few dedicated watersport enthusiasts built the marina using funds accumu-

lated from the profits of the base PX, theater, and similar operations. Papa Lou's philosophy was that in order to keep military personnel happy, their families needed to be happy too, especially when stationed far from home. Because there was a need, he taught the women to sail.

When I took my first sailing class from the Wet Hens, I had never stepped onto a sailboat. The Wet Hens made me feel comfortable. My husband was serving a one-year tour in Korea. The Wet Hens provided me with a great deal of support while he was gone. Before long, I was having so much fun I didn't even realize I was learning. Through my association with the group, I have developed a love of sailing and many friendships I will have the rest of my life.

Provided support

During a recent class, many students' husbands were also deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom, which started during our 10-week course. The class provided support and improved their morale during this rough time. When Papa Lou taught a few women to sail in 1961, he never dreamed that the Wet Hens organization would be just as important to military wives more than 40 years later. To date, a total of 1,700

Continued on Page 61



A little tender loving care brings longer trouble-free life

by Don Launer

DIESEL ENGINES ARE NOW THE ENGINES OF CHOICE FOR auxiliary sailboats, and with good reason. They have a superior record of reliability, use a safer fuel, produce fewer hazardous exhaust pollutants, have better fuel economy, and are nearly immune to the moisture that plays havoc with the complicated high-voltage spark-plug system of their gasoline counterparts.

Even though, in many ways, the operation of a diesel is easier to understand than that of a gasoline engine, many owners tend to look at it as mysterious. But with a basic understanding of its operation, coupled with tender loving care, a diesel auxiliary engine can provide years, or decades, of trouble-free service.

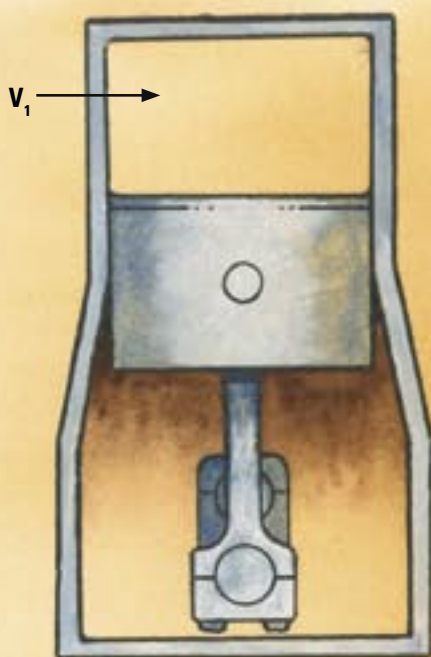
When Rudolf Diesel first patented his namesake in 1892, it was a revolutionary idea in internal combustion engines. His engine used the principle of auto-ignition of the fuel. The idea of his engine, based on the work of English scientist Robert Boyle (1627-91), was that you could ignite the fuel in the cylinder from the heat produced by compressing the air inside the cylinder. In modern diesel engines this compression is usually in the range of 16:1 to 23:1; that is, the air in the cylinder is compressed to $\frac{1}{16}$ to $\frac{1}{23}$ of its original volume. This raises the temperature of the air in the cylinder to between 800 and 1,000°F. At that point, diesel fuel is sprayed into the cylinder through an injector. Since diesel ignites at about 500 to 660°F, it will immediately catch fire.

Compression, then, is the key to a successfully operating diesel, and to meet the stresses of this compression a diesel engine must be built stronger and with closer tolerances than a gasoline engine. This increases the weight and cost of a diesel engine over a gasoline engine of similar horsepower.

Little maintenance

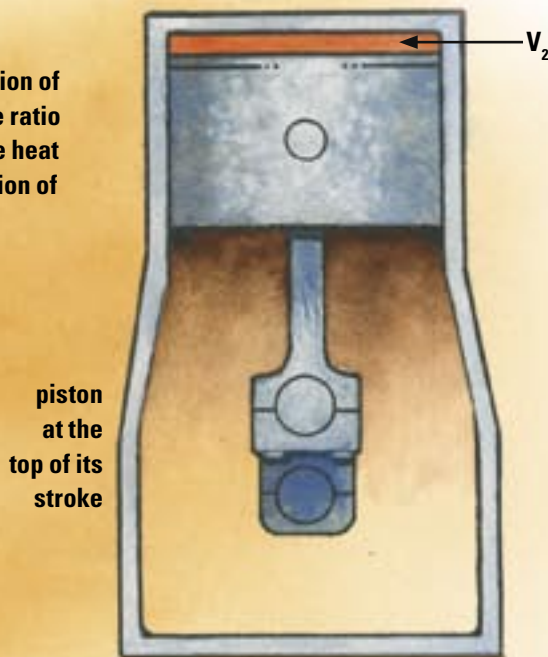
Diesel engines have a remarkably long life and reliability and require very little maintenance. But that minimum maintenance is of utmost importance in sustaining their long, trouble-free life span. A diesel requires clean fuel, clean lubricating oil, and a clean air supply. Owners of diesel engines should be almost fanatical in making sure these cleanliness standards are met; otherwise, the result is shorter trouble-free operating hours and expensive repairs.

The injector on a diesel engine is the most precisely built, expensive, and critical component in the engine. Even microscopic amounts of dirt, water, or bacteria in the fuel supply can ruin the injectors and score the engine's cylinders and pistons. Clean fuel, treated with a biocide, filtered while filling the tanks, and filtered again by regularly changed primary and secondary filters, is a requirement that can't be neglected. It has been estimated that 90 percent of all diesel engine problems are the result of contaminated fuel, so maintaining a clean fuel supply is one of the most important jobs for the diesel owner.

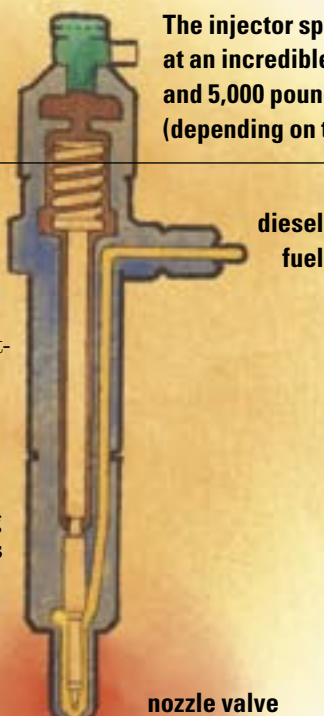


The high compression of a diesel engine, the ratio of $V_1:V_2$, creates the heat necessary for ignition of the fuel.

piston at the bottom of its stroke



piston at the top of its stroke



The injector sprays fuel into the cylinder at an incredible pressure of between 1,500 and 5,000 pounds-per-square-inch (depending on the injector type).

Clean lubricating oil is also essential. Lubricating oils for diesel engines have a prefix “C” (“compression” is a good memory aid), while gasoline lubricating oils use the prefix “S” (“spark” is a good memory aid). Using the correctly labeled oil in a diesel and changing it frequently are vitally important. Changing the oil often, while the oil is hot, is a job that should be done more often than in a gasoline engine.

Accelerated wear

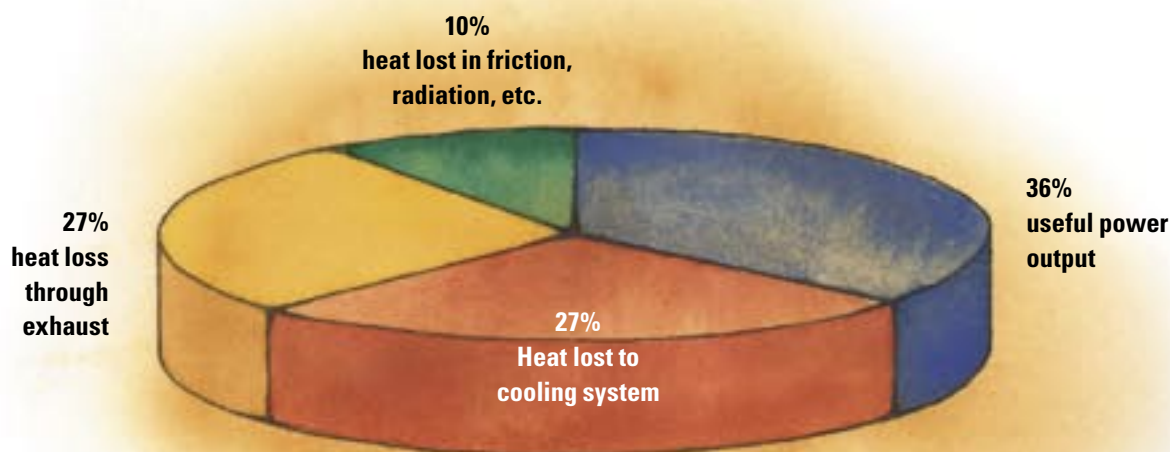
And don't neglect the air filter. If dust particles pass through a ruptured air filter, they can score the piston and cylinder walls, accelerating wear and resulting in costly repairs. To prevent a ruptured air filter, it should be changed in accordance with the engine manufacturer's schedule.

Diesel engines like to work under a load. Operating a

diesel under low load, such as running the engine for just charging the battery, creates more carbon than normal. This carbon then gums up the piston rings and coats the valves and valve stems. With little load, the engine runs cool and water condenses inside the engine, combining with sulfur in the diesel fuel, and resulting in sulfuric acid that attacks the engine's internal surfaces. So, low-load, low-temperature running should always be avoided.

But even for well-maintained diesels, after years or decades of operation, cylinder walls and piston rings eventually become worn and fouled with deposits, and internal parts become attacked by acids, so that they no longer make a good seal. Valves and valve-seats also become pitted and fouled and don't seal properly. Thus, it becomes much more difficult to get the compression necessary to create the required heat for ignition, especially when the engine block is very cold and rapidly saps away this heat. Injectors also will have become worn and inefficient, compounding the problem. For the owner of an old diesel, difficulty in starting, especially in cold weather, is usually a harbinger of some major repair problems.

Nevertheless, in exchange for regular care with the fuel supply, lubricating oil, and air intake, your diesel auxiliary will repay you with long years of reliable and trouble-free service. ⚓



The average diesel has an efficiency of about 30 to 40 percent. Although this may seem low, diesels have a considerably higher efficiency than the 25- to 35-percent efficiency of gasoline engines.



Soft 'scapes

by Alan Eddy







Home once again in Everett, Washington, world circumnavigator Karen Thorndike has resumed her film editing career. *Amelia* is a cozy haven belowdecks. On facing page, Karen arrives in Hobart, Tasmania.

Photo by Marianne Scott

Salute to Karen Thorndike

An interview with the first U.S. woman to sail solo around the world

by Marianne Scott

WHEN KAREN THORNDIKE SAILED into Hobart, Tasmania, in the late 1990s she was greeted as a hero. She'd just completed the longest leg — 96 days — of her world circumnavigation.

Suddenly, well-wishers showed up, clinging to her like barnacles to an unpainted bottom. Relishing the warm reception extended by locals, yachties, politicians, and reporters, Karen felt the deep satisfaction that, at last, people were taking her seriously ...that her goal of entering the Guinness Book of Records wasn't a menopausal delusion.

Karen wasn't a sailing wife or a 20-something looking for adventure, but rather a mid-50s woman aiming to become the first American female to sail solo around the five capes. A woman who'd not set foot on a sailboat before age 39. A woman many had dismissed as a dreamer.

When I met Karen on *Amelia*, the faithful steed that carried her around the globe, her framed Guinness certificate was screwed to a bulkhead. The 36-foot Rival, a fiberglass yacht built in Great Britain, was loaded with gear, and her re-stitched backup sails were stacked on a settee. Karen is short, with cheerful blue eyes and blond ringlets. Her stature makes you wonder how she continuously hoisted and lowered the sails, reefed them, climbed the mast, made repairs,

checked and rechecked the rigging and gear.

While performing these tasks, she also cooked, ate, slept, kept watch, washed, dried rain- and sea-soaked clothing, ensured the batteries were charged, wrote email messages, and eternally watched the barometer to divine the weather ahead. Her months of days and nights were punctuated by squalls, gales, and storms. Reading her logs gives clear answers to a common question: just *what* do bluewater sailors *do* while crossing oceans?

Nine-month estimate

When Karen left San Diego on August 4, 1996, she estimated her 33,000-mile journey would take about 9 months. When she triumphantly re-moored *Amelia* at the San Diego Yacht Club, 2 years and 2 weeks had passed. Why did the circumnavigation take almost three times as long as expected? Karen's passages show that, as in the old sailing ships of yore, once we set sail and leave the confines of our scheduled, controlled, and time-restricted lives, the sea, wind, and waves take

*“You must do the thing you think
you cannot do.” — Eleanor Roosevelt*

charge and impose the timeline.

The first part of her voyage — San Diego to Hilo, Hawaii — took 23 days. Before leaving, Karen had created a website and, through her laptop and Inmarsat C System, sent and received messages each day, weather permitting. Friends and schoolchildren from around the world monitored her electronic logs, asked questions, and sent encouragement. The electromagnetic waves often comforted Karen when she confronted mammoth waves and helped her cope with the loneliness of solo sailing. The log also reveals Karen's self-deprecating humor and occasional wry turn of phrase. Instead of telling readers, “it's gray and drizzly,” she writes, “there's no danger of getting sunburned.” She dubs the flying fish expiring on her deck “high-seas road kill.” She explains that GPS does not stand for “gray plastic sextant.”

But the log also demonstrates that offshore sailing can be most unglamorous. During the first leg, her engine transmission acted up, requiring serious repairs in Hilo. She had a “strange encounter” with a freighter (she calls them BOSS, for Big Oncoming Steel Ship), which altered course to parallel hers and then stopped to watch her sail away, without responding to her radio calls. The Aries windvane continually disconnected. Conflicting winds “battled over the same piece of ocean, creating crummy nights.”

Four weeks to Tahiti

After transmission repairs were made and Karen received a Hawaiian blessing bestowing “way good luck,” she spent four weeks sailing to Papeete in Tahiti. She had problems with lumpy seas, nasty swells, a failing water pump, and a seized exhaust valve. She discovered what it meant to be in the doldrums. She marveled at the flinty sharpness of tiny salt grains, “I swear the stuff could scratch diamonds.” Crossing the equator earned her the designation “shellback.” Then, delighted, she found “French bread, French wine, and French perfume” at the Papeete quay.

Rounding Cape Horn was next and Karen vowed to revive the ancient maritime custom of installing a single earring to commemorate the event. She arrived in the Falkland Islands 58 days after lifting anchor in Tahiti.

During that two-month passage, Karen realized that “solitude is a great place to visit but not to stay.” Her log relates the day-to-day survival issues of bluewater passing — including many 35-plus-knot winds — although her funny bone pops up regularly. In the horse latitudes (between 25 degrees and 35 degrees south, where, because of freshwater shortages, sailing ships once tossed livestock overboard), she reports she “hasn't had to throw any horses overboard yet, but they're getting on my nerves.”

Port Stanley in the Falklands is perhaps the only place on earth where windmills could provide all electrical needs. The winds blast continually and even moored boats are often tossed around, so Karen used 10 lines to secure *Amelia* to the dock. But she saw penguins, pierced her left earlobe, and met “amazingly kind and generous” people. Getting ready for the next, and longest, leg

*“For me, sailing
is like a disease for
which I haven't found
a cure.”*

across the wild Indian Ocean required repairs, recaulking, and new gaskets. While working on the boat and provisioning for the months to come, Karen wondered which among her “moldy clothes” would be suitable for dinner at the Governor's house.

Left in midsummer

Karen departed the Falklands on January 29, 1997, in the middle of the southern summer and ran smack into trouble. In those latitudes (about 51°S), summer doesn't mean warm weather or fair winds. Karen had caught a “touch of the flu” in Port Stanley and, as the anemometer readings climbed, so did her temperature.



Photo courtesy of Karen Thorndike

Endlessly buffeted by 50-knot winds, 20-foot waves, rain, and lightning, Karen's flu bug led to extreme fatigue and dehydration.

In her log, she wrote, “A potent storm was forecast for February 2 and when it hit, I had not eaten for 4 days and had slept very little. The storm struck hard and fast and, within the hour, built to 50 knots. I stopped looking at the wind meter when it hit 60 knots. My storm jib wasn't small enough to use as a steering sail, and I had to hand-steer through the worst of winds and seas. It rained so hard it hurt. With bare poles, the boat averaged 8 to 9 knots. I'd get the steering set and go below, and soon *Amelia* would lose control and go broadside into the waves. I'd dash on deck and get her downwind again. At one point, I experienced terrible chest pains and feared I was having a heart attack. Combined with fatigue, I didn't think I'd live through it so I sent a distress call by Comsat E-Mail to [my friend] John Oman in Seattle.”

Karen was lucky. She was still close enough to the Falklands, an overseas territory of the United Kingdom, that escape from her predicament was possible. John Oman immediately telephoned the Falklands (the storm had knocked out the lines) and



Photo by Marianne Scott

then called the United Kingdom Coast Guard. Thus, shortly after Karen's SOS, the HMS *Norfolk* received the search and rescue notice. The 400-foot, British Duke Class missile frigate was 250 miles south of *Amelia* and steamed toward her at 22 knots while maintaining contact with John Oman, who received updates from Karen every 2 hours. The next morning, the frigate reached the sailboat. Karen gratefully watched the tender coming across, with three men and one woman "to pluck me off at great risk to themselves. They all faced danger, as the small sea boat and *Amelia* were crashing into each other during the rescue." She explains that sailors should be wary of asking for help because it often puts the rescuers at risk. "But," she grins, "should such an unfortunate situation occur, I highly recommend being close to a British Navy vessel."

Sailed back

Although safely aboard the frigate, Karen fretted about *Amelia's* fate. "I'd been told," she recalls, "that if I couldn't return to the yacht and if the volunteers couldn't sail her back for me, the *Norfolk* would be obliged to sink her." Captain Peter Hudson, after receiving permission from the British Government (he had questions about liability), asked for volunteers to sail *Amelia* back to Port Stanley. Forty offered — four went aboard to rescue the vessel, while the *Norfolk* delivered Karen to the Falklands. There she was diagnosed as having angina pectoris, a condition that triggers severe chest pains when blood flow to the heart is restricted. Karen flew to Seattle for

medical treatment and recovery. Six weeks later, she returned. "I badly wanted to leave the Falklands. It was winter, cold, snowing. The winds just howled, and there were only semi-good places to tie up. Some folks recommended I go to Uruguay. But a friend advised me to winter in Argentina, and in the end I went there, to

"They [the yachtbrokers] patronized me: everyone knows women can't sail, don't like to sail."

Mar del Plata. It was a great place and the people were wonderful."

After spending nearly 6 months in that city, Karen left for Tasmania on November 1, 1997, a 96-day voyage during which she would pass the next three capes: Cape of Good Hope; Cape Leeuwin south of Perth, Australia; and South East Cape in Tasmania. She experienced bigger storms than those off the Falklands; worried about her cockleshell in the vast ocean, but enjoyed the albatrosses, petrels, dolphins, and bioluminescent krill; changed her sails incessantly; grew bored with her canned beans. She vowed her next circumnavigation would not be solo.

Karen did not grow up to be a sail-

or. Although her father had a keen interest in all things marine, his health kept him off boats. In the early 1960s, Karen enrolled at the University of Washington studying marine biology and communications. She wanted to be a photographer but found the cost of professional equipment beyond her reach. After learning about film, she edited a weekly ski show for several years, experience that eventually led to her becoming a film editor and negative cutter. She's also held positions as a script continuity supervisor and has worked for television shows like *The Fugitive* and *Northern Exposure*. During her off-hours, she favored hiking and climbing, scaling mountains like Rainier and Baker. But, one day, after a long tramp near Cape Scott on Vancouver Island, she crested a hill and peered down into a cove, where a white gleaming yacht swung at anchor. "Gee," she murmured to herself, "there are better ways of getting here."

Changed her life

This small epiphany changed her life. She signed up for sailing lessons with Wind Works Sailing Center in Seattle, then crewed on other people's boats. Karen raced evenings and weekends. She participated in Swiftsure International Yacht Races. She was a member of the first all-female crew racing the Vic-Maui. She got still more offshore experience bringing boats back from Hawaii. "I've scraped and painted my share of bottoms too," she laughs. "For me, sailing is like a disease for which I haven't found a cure. The old-time sailors had a saying, 'It's easier to swallow the anchor than to turn your back upon the ocean.'"

Karen's apprenticeship lasted a dozen years. She put off buying a boat of her own until she had a specific voyage in mind. "I wanted one true adventure in my life, and I wanted it to be sailing. But it was hard financially — I just didn't have enough money, nor did I know what boat I wanted." But she was unwavering in her goal. She bought a historic building in Snohomish and remodeled and sold it. Profits in the bank, she began shopping for a boat in 1994, telling yachtbrokers she desired a 36- to 38-foot boat, preferably steel, but fiberglass might serve. Not wood.

"They probably get a lot of people

saying, 'Oh, I'm looking for a boat to singlehand around the world.' They all looked at me and said, 'Sure, sure,' and never asked me about my experience. They patronized me: everyone knows women can't sail, don't like to sail. Without exception, these brokers showed me just the boats in their inventory, ones that were totally inappropriate: too big or with huge windows. 'This is the perfect boat for you and your boyfriend or husband, blah, blah, blah.' They really didn't take me seriously." Karen juts out her chin when remembering their condescending manner — she has not forgiven them.

Found her boat

Then, almost accidentally, she found the Rival cutter for sale at Shilshole, Seattle, a boat with 40,000 offshore miles under her bottom without having developed stress cracks. Karen renamed her *Amelia*, after the intrepid Earhart. She changed the rigging, loaded five anchors, added a life raft and EPIRB, stowed more than 300 paper charts, and ordered an additional set of sails. She did not make changes to accommodate her size or female strength.

"My only problem was the previous owner who, at 6-foot-4, set the mast steps for his long legs, but I thought, 'Hey, how many times will I have to climb the mast?' " (Several times, as it turns out.) She tried to get insurance, but despite her four trips to Hawaii and the 10 deliveries back, she was deemed uninsurable. "Many magazine editors — especially the men — said I would never make it."

When Karen reached Tasmania, any public doubts about her capability and persistence had vanished. She stayed 6 weeks, enjoying the intense sailing interest Hobartians exhibit, recuperating from the 3-month solo sail, repairing the windvane, and tending to the engine. After having passed South West Cape, the fifth and last on her circuit, she arrived in tranquil Dunedin on New Zealand's South Island. From Dunedin, she sailed east

"She tried to get insurance, but despite her four trips to Hawaii and the 10 deliveries back, she was deemed uninsurable."


staying between 35° and 40°S and then turned north to Tahiti, arriving 30 days later. After weeks of cooking out of cans, it was great fun to dine at the "roulottes" selling pizza, Chinese food, steak-frites, and crêpes. She felt quite at home disembarking again in Hilo, Hawaii, nearly 4 weeks later, a place where she could easily repair the roller furling that had split apart. To set the Guinness record, only one last passage — Hilo to San Diego — beckoned. Birds resting aboard, much floating debris, and several cockroach families kept Karen company. As always, her humor sparkled: "At least the cucarachas are the small ones and not the giant kind that move the furniture."

Her own day

The winds were light, so Karen moved slowly, taking 35 days to reach San Diego, a city that proclaimed "Karen Thorndike Day, First American Woman to Circumnavigate the Globe" after she arrived. The cities of Coronado, Port Angeles, and Snohomish also in-

stituted a Karen Thorndike Day. Many other honors followed, including being named *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* Sports Star of the Year and winning the Cruising Club of America's Blue Water Medal and 1998 Circumnavigation Awards.

Since her return to Seattle, Karen has resumed her film editing career, but the global sail has not stopped influencing her life: "I am more at peace and satisfied. I don't feel a need to prove myself to others. I wish I'd experienced that complete solitude long ago because it makes you search inside yourself and resolve what's truly important in your life." She's co-authoring a book called *Absolute Will* about her experiences. She speaks to kids, to Rotarians, and at conferences about the psychology of achieving. She's keeping the boat and dreams of sailing to South Georgia Island near the Antarctic Circle — maybe this time with a man who understands engines. "If only I were 30," she sighs, "I'd be gone in a flash."

"When you first go offshore, you're afraid," she says. "I was afraid of the Southern Ocean storms. During those first storms I was overwhelmed with fear, wondering what would happen to my poor old boat. When big waves crash against you, it sounds like a freight train rams the yacht. It's totally shocking. But then I'd lean back in the cockpit and get that sense of wonder, that feeling I was a guest, floating in a world that no one owns, a world I was privileged to experience." 

***Amelia*, Karen's Rival 36 cutter built in Great Britain, on facing page. Karen prepares for departure in Mar del Plata, Argentina, at left. An auto-graphed sail is shown in foreground.**

Photo courtesy of Karen Thorndike



In search of comfortable cruising



Pumpkin, a Viksund MS-33, was soon renamed *Magnus* and outfitted to explore the East Coast from Nova Scotia to the Bahamas.



A boating author falls in love with “an exceedingly odd boat”

by Silver Donald Cameron

PUBLISHERS ARE PUPPETEERS. Writers are marionettes. On a summer day in 2001, I had a call from Doug Gibson, of McClelland and Stewart, who modestly style themselves “The Canadian Publishers.”

“What are you writing?” he asked. “A novel.”

“Admirable,” said Doug. “But what about non-fiction?”

“Nothing.”

“But surely you have a book you’d like to write.”

“Nope,” I said.

“Come, come,” said Doug. “You must have something in the back of your mind.”

“Well,” I allowed, “I’ve just put an engine in our boat, and it has occurred to me to sail her to the Bahamas via the Intracoastal Waterway and write a book about that.”

“*Sailing Away from Winter!*” cried Doug. “Great! Who’s publishing this book?”

“It’s not a book,” I protested. “It’s just a foggy fantasy.”

“I’m going to make you an offer you can’t refuse,” he declared, and he did. If you’re getting paid for sailing, resistance is futile. I agreed to cast off in July 2003 and submit a manuscript the following spring.

An alarmed wife

My wife, Marjorie, evinced some alarm.

“Beloved, *Silversark* is wonderful,” she said sweetly, “but she is, um, very small. She has 5-foot 1-inch headroom and 20 square feet of living space. It would be like spending a year in a piano box.”

Darn. Our beloved 27-foot cutter was designed for crossing oceans, but

not for living aboard. She does have a reliable engine, a double berth, good social space, a well-planned galley, a comfortable cockpit, shallow draft, and two tables, so two writers could set up their laptops separately. But she lacks headroom, a shower, refrigeration, and such electronic niceties as radar and autopilot.

Furthermore, I have long believed that an intelligent sailor in Nova Scotia’s climate would have an enclosed steering station and a furnace. Only people who go to sea for pleasure would insist on a helm drenched by the cold, wind-driven rain, and spray. Only a chowderhead would cruise Nova Scotia without heat, as I did for 17 years. That’s why yachts haul out in October, while our fishermen sail all winter.

I checked the web. Yachtworld.com listed 51,580 yachts offered for sale

by 1,499 brokers — and just 130 were pilothouse sailboats between 32 and 38 feet. Almost all were too big, too small, too awkward, or too expensive. They were located in Greece, Slovenia, Norway, and Thailand. A few were in New England and Ontario. One looked perfect — a 34-foot Westerly Vulcan, located in Newfoundland. Alas, she was apparently the only Vulcan in North America, and another Nova Scotian had already bought her.

In desperate shape

After a few weeks, I discovered British Columbia. Happily, British Columbia was in desperate shape. Fishing, lumbering, and mining had all tanked at once. A new government was slashing jobs and services. British Columbians were not dreaming of buying yachts. They dreamed of avoiding bankruptcy.

The web described several affordable pilothouse vessels in B.C., including a beautifully finished 35-foot Endurance cutter named *Yucatan*. B.C. sailors would call her “skookum” — strongly built, powerful, substantial. She had all the features we wanted. A salty B.C. friend scrutinized her and loved her. The broker answered endless questions satisfactorily. The shipping cost would be daunting, but we factored it into our offer. The owner accepted. Our credit union authorized a truly skookum loan. In late April we flew west.

Yucatan was splendid, even better than we had hoped. But she had an astounding, utterly unexpected flaw. From the inside helm, the helmsman could see the bow of the boat and little else.

“Well, you can’t see out of most pilothouses,” shrugged the surveyor. But what’s the point of “inside steering” if you can’t actually steer from inside? We withdrew our offer.

A good sailor always has a Plan B. There were hundreds of boats for sale in B.C. For 2 weeks we prowled the coast from Anacortes, Washington, to Halfmoon Bay, British Columbia.

We did find vessels with usable pilothouses. But the enchanting Pacific Pilot was no larger than *Silversark*. The pilothouse of the New Bombay Clipper 31 seemed flimsy, and the interior was inflexible. The elegant Truant 37 was too expensive. The North Sea 34 was a workmanlike boat, plain, spacious, and simple. But her interior was



Vision from the helmstation was nearly impossible on the Endurance cutter.



The New Bombay had a flimsy pilothouse and inflexible interior.



The North Sea 34 was full of “mouse fur” and had suspicious exhaust.



The Warrior 35 proved to be profoundly tired.

finished with gray fuzzy stuff called “mouse fur,” and enormous clouds of smoke billowed from her exhaust.

A new focus

We moved our focus to center-cockpit yachts with fixed dodgers and aft staterooms. The Warrior 35 was profoundly tired. The Pacific Seabird 37 had an ungainly forward cabin. The Finnsailor 29 was small, well-designed, impeccably maintained. But with her stubby rig and shallow keel, she would sail like a 45-gallon drum.

We located a center-cockpit Bucca-neer 320 up the coast, built by Bayliner, the powerboat manufacturers. Not an inspiring pedigree. Her name was *Morning Wind*. Think about that. The Melancholy Slav who owned her would not fax us the particulars. We approached her with low expectations.

“This ees a trragedy,” declared the Melancholy Slav, unlocking her. “My wife cannot sail, and I have injured my back. So my future ees not on the ocean. But I luff thees bot.”

Small wonder. She was designed by the brilliant William Garden, and she had a more ingenious, livable interior than one would think possible in 32 feet. A private stateroom forward was followed by a lounge stretching right across the boat. To starboard, beside the companionway, was a full-sized head and shower. To port a passageway led to an aft cabin with a full-sized double berth and a second head. The passageway contained the galley and also gave generous access to the diesel. She was well-priced and well-equipped.

True, she was high-sided and boxy. *Practical Sailor* once cruelly commented that these boats look like layer cakes on the water, and they are only *tolerable* sailers. But her insurmountable problem was the Melancholy Slav himself. He had two surveys, and he would not permit another. Nor would he arrange a sea trial.

Protecting her name

“I have to save the name of my boat from smear,” he explained in an email. “Evil rumors will go around the coast if the boat keeps going up and down the ways without selling or out to sea for trials and don’t sell.”

“You see what’s happening?” said Marjorie. “He *luffs* this boat. He doesn’t want to sell it. He’ll put up one

obstacle after another until we quit. So let's quit now."

We flew home to Nova Scotia.

"Morning wind and mouse fur," said Marjorie. "It's been an education."

We had intended to spend the summer of 2002 in shakedown cruising aboard our new boat. Instead we continued to trawl the web and prow the boatyards. The LM-32 was lovely, but pricey. The Colvic Victor was sold. The Gulfstar 36 and the steel-built Fisher knock-off both had clumsy interiors. An acquaintance suggested I call King Nener, a retired airline pilot with a 34-foot Dutch-built Rogger motorsailer. Nener's health problems had kept *Seeboll* on the beach for 3 years, but he utterly refused to sell.

"I don't need the money," he said. "I'd only lose it on the stock market. Also, I subscribe to the belief that he who has the most toys when he dies, wins!"

But he applauded my impulse. *Seeboll*, he said, was seakindly and easy to handle. With a fair wind, the big roller-furling genny shoves her along at 6 knots. And otherwise?

"Forget about going to windward," Nener smiled. "There's an old saying: 'Gentlemen do not beat to windward. That's what Mr. Perkins is for!'"

A motorsailer, it appears, is an elderly gentleman's easygoing boat. Did it follow that I was morphing into an elderly gentleman? Oh, all right, it did. But where would I find an elderly gentleman's boat?

Only a few imported

During the heyday of fiberglass boat-building, motorsailers were built mainly in Europe and on the West Coast, for sailors in cold, blustery waters like the North Sea, the Baltic, and Alaska. Only a few were imported into eastern Canada. Which brings us to an idiosyncratic German we'll call Horst.

Horst imported *Seeboll* when he immigrated to Nova Scotia in the 1970s. (The Old German name means "lump-fish." Horst had the soul of a poet.) In 1984, he sold *Seeboll* to King Nener and bought *Seeboll II* — the very same Westerly Vulcan that captivated me months before. Neither *Seeboll* was for sale, and Horst bought no more motorsailers. Eventually he gave up sailing altogether, says King Nener, and bought "floating streetcars with huge engines."

We found a Finnish-built Nauticat 33 lying neglected on Nova Scotia's

"Never heard of a Viksund? Neither had I. But mid-September found me standing on a wharf near Detroit, cell phone to my ear."



***Pinta*, a Pacific Seabird 37, had an ungainly forward cabin.**



The Bayliner Buccaneer 320, *Morning Wind*, was for sale but not for sale.



The Nauticat 33, *Moomintroll*, was only nominally for sale.

South Shore, but — like *Morning Wind* — *Moomintroll* was only nominally for sale. Her owner, Chops Viger, cheerfully conceded that he was poorly motivated. He had set his price. If I wanted to pay it, fine. If not, not. Good-bye.

There's a pattern here. Motorsailer owners hate to sell. And there's a certain poignancy in this. Motorsailer owners are independent spirits — pilots, professionals, entrepreneurs. They march to their own drummers. They don't care if the high-testosterone crowd at the yacht club bar scorns their boats as "not real sailboats," and they're not saving for the future. This *is* their future. They can generally afford to leave their boats on the beach for years, if need be. They love sailing, and they don't want trawlers, but they *do* want more comfort than a traditional open-cockpit sailboat provides. So they buy motorsailers — and when they can't sail anymore, they just furl the sails and motor.

They're realists. They know their motorsailers are their last boats. Selling will mark the end of one of the great joys of their lives. Their heads say "sell," but their hearts rebel.

Pain of leaving

What I see here — and honor — is the love of boats and the sea, and the pain of leaving it behind. Wind in your face, the roar of the bow wave, a hammered silver sea. If you don't have to kiss it good-bye, why should you? I will be exactly the same when my turn comes.

But it wasn't my turn yet. And I still wanted a motorsailer.

In September, a curious boat named *Pumpkin* surfaced on the web, a Viksund MS-33 built in Norway in 1973. Never heard of a Viksund? Neither had I. But mid-September found me standing on a wharf near Detroit, cell phone to my ear.

"She's an exceedingly odd boat," I said.

"So she's off the list?" Marjorie asked glumly.

"Not yet," I said. "We'll talk again after I sail her tomorrow."

Pumpkin had all the essentials, and what she lacked could easily be added. She was heavily built, with deeply molded non-skid, a hefty rubber rubrail, a stout canvas dodger, handrails everywhere. Her mizzen mast was mounted on the aft cockpit bulkhead, and her wheel on the for-

Sydney Dumaresq

ward one, leaving the spacious center cockpit clear and open. Like other Scandinavian boats, she had a canoe stern. Her two short masts carried a low-aspect ketch rig. Her only exterior wood was the bowsprit, the cabin doors, and the flagstaff.

But she was an exceedingly odd boat.

Her inside steering was far up at the front of her house, behind a car-type windshield complete with wipers. Her working jib hung inside a canvas sausage, while a strangely-shaped sailbag in the rigging contained the genoa. Her trapezoidal portlights may once have been thought stylish. Her cockpit boasted two bar stools and a picnic table. Her afterdeck was crammed with anchors, fenders, fishing-rod holders, man-overboard gear, and unused pinrails.

Phlegmatically handsome

She looked stubby, functional, and seakindly. Handsome, even, in a phlegmatic manner. Still, if your taste in vessels was formed by the lean, feather-lovely lines of Nova Scotia schooners, *Pumpkin* would take some getting used to.

But then, the next morning, I went aboard with the owner.

I was stunned by her huge, airy interior. Two sets of upper and lower berths forward, and then a saloon with well over 6 feet of headroom — plus a big galley with fridge and freezer, a spacious convertible dinette, a sizable head and hanging locker, and excellent visibility from her inside helm. People could dance in the cockpit. Beneath it was a cavernous engine room with a little-used 35-hp Yanmar. Her roomy aft cabin provided a double berth and excellent access to her skookum steering gear. She was the only boat I had ever seen that seemed bigger inside than outside.

The more I looked at her, the more she looked like intelligence cast in fiberglass.


The Yanmar purred as we motored into Lake St. Clair. The wind whistled, and the racing sailboats were reefed and heeling. With all sails set, *Pumpkin* surged out into the lake — rolling some, but scarcely heeling at all. She was more stately than sprightly, and in light winds she would be underpowered. But in a lusty breeze she sailed very acceptably. She was not at all what I had in mind, but she was

perfect for us — and affordable. Back on the dock, I called home.

“Marjorie,” I said, “we’ve found our boat.”

Pumpkin arrived in Nova Scotia in early November — by truck. Two weeks later, Doug Gibson visited us to discuss the possibility that a book about the Gulf of St. Lawrence would precede *Sailing Away from Winter*, sending us north, not south, in 2003.

I led Doug to the boat shop. Climbing aboard, he sat at the wheel and gazed through the windshield.

“Ahhh!” he said, smiling. It was all his fault, and he felt not a shred of remorse. 

Silver Donald Cameron soon re-named his new boat something more befitting: Magnus. He and Marjorie are enjoying their new boat in their home cruising grounds of Nova Scotia. There are many more books yet to be written by this talented author. The next will, no doubt, feature Magnus in a leading role. —Ed.

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Chasing dreams

I REMEMBER EXACTLY WHEN IT ALL started. I was standing on a dock in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, looking at a lonely sailboat. A light breeze tapped the halyards against the mast and gently rocked her in her slip. My 2-year-old daughter toddled precariously over the water while my wife held the hood of her sweatshirt like a lifeline.

It was a cool May morning. Low clouds hung over the lake waiting for the sun. It was a strange place to find a sailboat, landlocked at the foot of the Bitterroot Mountains on this beautiful, calm lake. But why not? I looked at the long, graceful lines of the boat. I imagined the sound of the sails filling with air, the winches grinding, the boat beginning to heel, the waves slapping the bow. The dream began quietly.

One and a half years later, we were in Port Ludlow, Washington, chasing dreams. We were aboard a dirty, neglected little sloop with drooping lifelines and tired sails. Mussel shells littered the deck. The docklines were nearly chafed through. The mainsheet was sun-bleached and brittle. A winch was missing from the cabintop with only a broken chunk of plastic remaining. Barnacles hung from the rudder. The brightwork was awash in peeling varnish. I didn't even know where to begin. This boat hadn't left the dock in years.

"It looked a lot cleaner in the pictures," my wife said, inspecting the thick green slime clogging the cockpit drains.

I had my clipboard, my flashlight, and my screwdriver. I had Don Casey's book, *Inspecting the Aging Sailboat*. I had my checklist. I had no idea what I was doing. It was like trying to inspect the *Titanic* after it had already gone down.

Forgotten dream

This boat was too much like the others — another forgotten dream, left to rot at the dock. We were disappointed. I was beginning to wonder if this was a good idea, buying a boat. So far it looked more like a project than a pastime.

But the seed that was planted at that dock in Coeur d'Alene was nourished by sailing magazines and trips to the lake.

The idea was still vague, though. It was like trying to make out a distant object in the fog. Then I picked up a copy of *Cruising in Seraffyn*, by Lin and Larry Pardey, and read it in one day. I told my wife, "If you don't want to buy a sailboat after you read this book, I'll never mention it again."

But she was hooked too, and the idea began to take shape. We set goals. We made a plan: in 10 years we'd gain enough experience and save enough money to sail for a year. Pipe dream? Maybe. But it changed the way we thought. We restructured our lives around the Plan. It became the measure for all other decisions. A bigger house? A new car? Cable TV? Every decision was measured against the Plan.

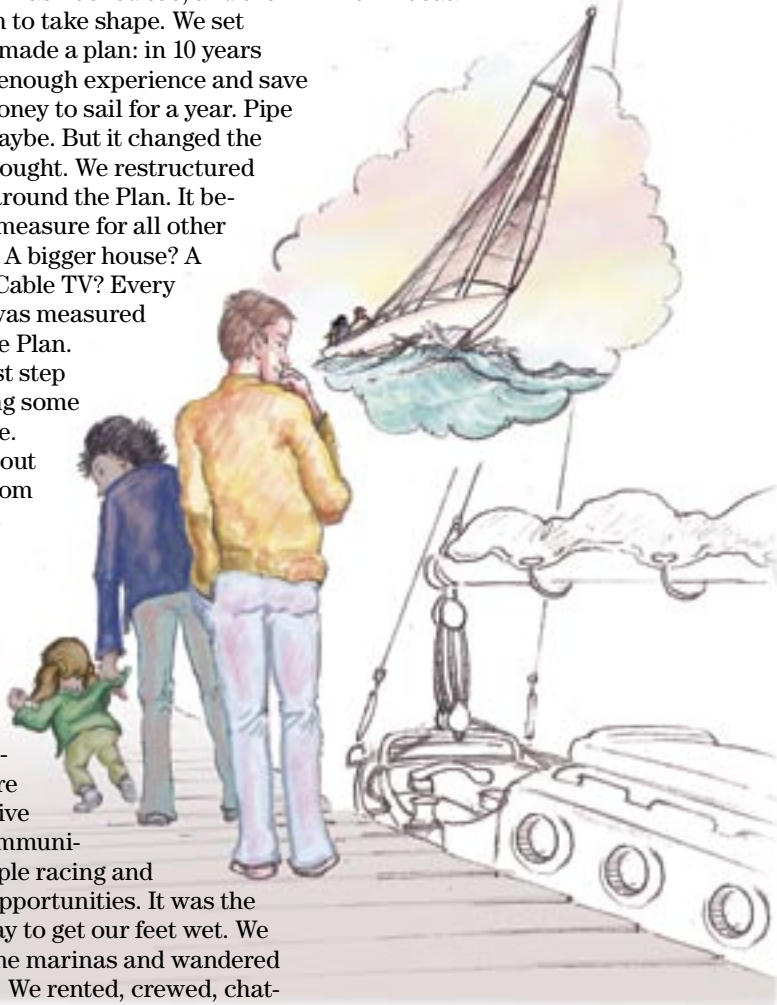
The first step was getting some experience. We live about an hour from Montana's Flathead Lake, the largest natural freshwater lake west of the Mississippi. There are an active sailing community and ample racing and cruising opportunities. It was the perfect way to get our feet wet. We haunted the marinas and wandered the docks. We rented, crewed, chat-

ted, and hitched rides. We took notes, made lists, and compared opinions. We read books, studied magazines, and surfed the Internet.

Learning on someone else's boat is valuable experience. But eventually the need to call for that critical sail change, make that key tack, choose to lay anchor, or just decide to go home overpowers the need to learn

under the steady hand of an experienced sailor. Eventually, you need your own boat.

*"We set goals.
We made a plan:
in 10 years we'd gain
enough experience
and save enough
money to sail
for a year."*



Illustrations by Fritz Seegers

Intimidating task

Buying a boat is wildly intimidating — there are hundreds of used fiberglass sailboats to choose from. We wanted the perfect boat: something well built and seaworthy, comfortable but still respectable around the buoys, safe for a small child, manageable on a trailer, something we could afford. Throw in a thousand different opinions, brokers, delamination, dry rot, blisters, bottom paint, cored hulls, engines, and trailers, and the task becomes a considerable challenge.

First of all, there is no perfect boat. It's more like the perfect compromise. My wife swooned over spacious cabins while I pointed out dumpy lines. I drooled over swept-back racing rigs while my wife pointed out the lack of a head. Slowly, as we refined our expectations — compromising speed for amenity, age for affordability — one boat emerged as the right boat for us.

And she happened to be for sale! She had a nice roomy cockpit, good lines, a workable sail plan, a comfortable cabin, a head, a small galley, and a trailer. But there were problems, too. She had an older inboard gas sail-drive — which ran fine, as long as you cleaned the soot off the spark plugs, according to the owner — but there was no alternator to charge the battery.

The price seemed high, but it was August, and the owner was making payments on a new, larger boat. If she was still for sale come Labor Day, he'd be motivated, and we'd be ready to make an offer.

Too late

A week before Labor Day he sold the boat. I kicked myself for not pulling the trigger. I felt like we'd missed a good opportunity. But my wife reminded me that I'd be glad I didn't have that old two-stroke stinking up my cabin.

We expanded our search, and on a cool October morning, we set off for Seattle, nearly 600 miles from home. The boats we saw resembled the dream in form, but failed to deliver in person. The brokers were excited to sell us a sailboat, but not about the idea of sailing. One told us he didn't even own a boat anymore — he was going into telecommunications just as soon as he could clear out his inventory. Another asked us confidently, "How much would you like to offer?" after

*"My wife swooned
over spacious cabins
while I pointed
out dumpy lines. I
drooled over swept-
back racing rigs
while my wife
pointed out the lack
of a head."*

she wouldn't let us raise the sails or start the motor on the rough-looking boat at her dock.

(A word to brokers: buying a sailboat is about passion. No one *needs* a sailboat. I'm not buying a car. *Humor me.* Feed the dream. I want to see myself cutting across the bay on a setting sun. If the dream is gone for you, I don't want to know about it.)

The last boat on our list was in Port Townsend, on the tip of the Olympic Peninsula. We crossed the Tacoma Narrows bridge and headed north through a light rain. The freeway dwindled to a two-lane road, and we passed through farm fields with signs for pumpkins and "u-pick-em" corn.

Try back later

An hour outside Port Townsend, I called ahead to the broker's office.

"Did Ray know you were coming?" the guy in the office asked.

"Yes, I talked to him a few days ago. He said he'd be around."

"He's off launching a boat," he said. "Should be back soon. Why don't you try back in an hour."

"Who's this?"

"Tim."

"We drove all the way from Montana to see this boat, Tim."

"Right. That's a long way."

"Maybe you could show us the boat?" I asked.

"Ray usually handles the boats."

An hour later, there was still no sign of the broker. We found Tim outside the office feeding a sandwich to the gulls. I asked him again to show us the boat. We had to head home the next day. It seemed a shame to come all this way and not to see the boat. Tim finally ad-

mitted that he didn't actually know where the boat was, but he did offer to call the owner.

After another hour, all he'd managed was a slip number: C58.

"Which marina?" I asked.

"Don't know, just said Port Ludlow."

Called again

It was getting late, so we found a place to stay and would try the broker in the morning. We opted for a nice meal and \$10 campsite over an \$85 hotel room. In the morning, I called the office again. It was Sunday, and now nobody was answering the phone. I left a message for Ray. I told him I had a pocketful of money and was hot to buy a boat, but if I didn't hear from him by the time I finished breakfast, I was going back to Montana forever.

We finished breakfast and headed for Kingston to get the ferry. I was angry at being stood up by the broker, and I was angry that none of the boats we'd seen warranted an offer. It would be a long drive home.

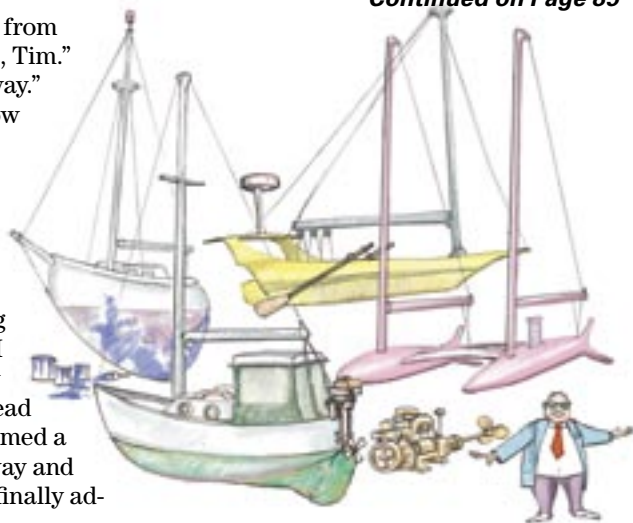
"There's Port Ludlow," my wife stated matter-of-factly as we passed a road sign pointing left.

"Should we try it?" I asked. "Maybe we can find the boat."

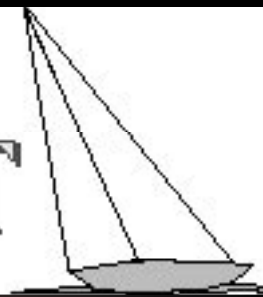
I turned around and drove back to the turnoff. Port Ludlow is a tidy little resort community tucked into the trees. A sign proclaims: "The Village in the Woods by the Bay." The only commercial activity, aside from a gas station, is a large new marina.

We found our way on to the dock and walked out to C58. The boat was there, with a blue Bluewater Marine sign and a fresh coating of bird drop-

Continued on Page 85



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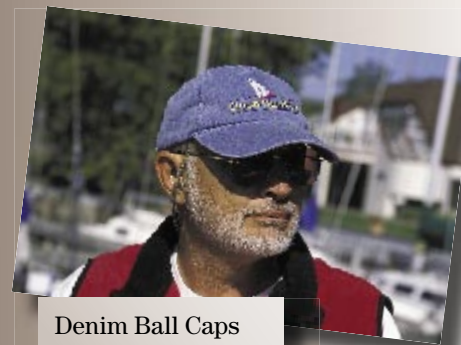
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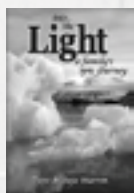
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Cinderella and the Dutchman

*This compatible couple
makes mainsail handling a snap*

by Homer Shannon



Homer's lines lead aft through a deck organizer. The starboard group, in order from the top, includes the second reefing line, the first reefing line, the topping lift, and the main halyard.

caught the battens when the sail was hoisted unless you were pointed absolutely dead into the wind. They did not assist in flaking the sail; in fact, they made it more difficult. The lazy-jacks needed to be tensioned for dropping the sail then loosened to flake the sail. Once they were loosened, the sail would fall onto the deck again. At best, they allowed us to delay flaking until we were safely on a mooring.

Several drawbacks

Several of our friends' boats are equipped with the Doyle StackPack system. We looked into this option and decided the system had several drawbacks. It's expensive to retrofit to the sail (about \$650). It's complicated, having significantly more hardware and rigging than the lazy-jacks. It would have some negative effect on the performance of the mainsail, a minor issue to us since we don't race often, but why give up any performance? Lastly, the StackPack system is a "stuff and zip" device that pretty much precludes proper flaking of the sail, a practice

that I wanted to continue since I believed it would extend the life of the sail.

An alternative solution was the Dutchman sail-flaking system. I had heard of this product but had never seen one

and did not understand how it worked. After making several phone calls and studying Dutchman's webpage <<http://clients.sailnet.com/dutchman/>

WHEN SAILBOAT OWNERS UPGRADE their sail-handling systems, the first thing they usually do is add a jib roller-furler system to the boat. When my wife, Dee, and I purchased *Cinderella*, a Bristol 29.9 sloop, it came with three good hanked-on jibs so it seemed a shame to waste that resource by going to a single-sail furler. The main, however, was completely blown out, probably original, and more than 20 years old. It had to be replaced. Our top priority was a new mainsail.

After negotiating a few dollars off the purchase price of the boat, we spent the savings on a Doyle 2+2 cruising main. This presented us with a new problem. Our previous boats had worn-out mainsails that could be easily dropped and quickly tied off to the boom. The new Doyle sail was hard and stiff and simply refused

to be tied in the same manner. We needed to flake the sail every time it was dropped. Flaking the sail involved hanging off the boom, swaying around in the wakes of passing motorboats with some risk of being tossed overboard. When the sail was down and in the process of being flaked, it blocked the helmsman's view.

At the beginning of our second season with the boat, I fashioned a set of lazy-jacks to catch the main as it was dropped. This wasn't much help. The lazy-jacks ("lousy-jacks," Dee called them) would catch part of the sail, but some of the sail still spilled off the boom. Additionally, they

"The Dutchman system solved our sail-raising, sail-dropping, and sail-flaking issues."

“Flaking the sail involved hanging off the boom, swaying around in the wakes of passing motorboats with some risk of being tossed overboard.”

sailflaking/sfindex.htm>, I realized it's a simple and elegant concept. To understand it, take a piece of paper and fan-fold it four times. Punch a skewer through the folded paper and voilà! You have the principle of the system. The Dutchman achieves the same effect by adding droplines that come down from the topping lift to the boom, weaving through the sail at points even with the track slides and parallel to the mast. As the sail drops, it fan-folds onto the boom and is held in place by the vertical droplines. In terms of implementation, its most complicated and expensive component is the set of special grommets that have to be placed on the sail. It also requires the sail cover to be modified to allow for the droplines.

Plain grommets

Once I understood how the system worked, my initial thought was to build the system myself using plain grommets in place of the special Dutchman-provided grommets. The cost of the system, installed by a professional sailmaker, however, was quoted at \$425, and building it myself, which would probably cost \$200, would put a nearly new \$1,500 mainsail at risk. It seemed a better idea to let the professionals do this job. We had Doyle Sailmakers of Marblehead, Massachusetts, do the work, and they did an excellent job.

One complaint I would make about the Dutchman system is that it comes with a replacement topping lift that forms a continuous loop with special fittings that attach to the vertical droplines. This special topping lift provides for adjustment of the droplines so they can be positioned directly above the line of grommets in the sail. While achieving the desired function of adjustability, the double line and associated fittings are quite heavy and flap and bang around on the sail, catching the roach and otherwise

cluttering things up. Once I had the adjustments completed, I solved this problem by removing the Dutchman-provided topping lift, taking measurements for the droplines from it, and replacing it with a standard single-line topping lift with the droplines tied in at the appropriate points. This much lighter system works fine and does not interfere with the roach.

The Dutchman system solved our sail-raising, sail-dropping, and sail-flaking issues. I had more grandiose objectives in mind, however, and de-



The reefed mainsail on Homer Shannon's Bristol 29.9, *Cinderella*.

cided that a single-line reefing system and lines led aft, combined with the Dutchman, would provide us with the ultimate in mainsail control. Both of our previous boats had traditional slab reefing, as does *Cinderella*.

Not well-shaped

I know how to lower the main onto the reefing hook and then tension the

main halyard and outer reefing line to complete the reef. The problem is that this never achieves a very well-shaped sail, and it requires some pretty fancy footwork at the mast just when conditions are deteriorating and staying in the cockpit would be advisable. It also requires close coordination between the helmsman and the reefier, a subtle set of commands that always seemed to break down between Dee and me.

A single-line reefing system works by using one continuous line to tension the luff and the leech of the sail simultaneously. This line starts at the end of the boom, goes up to the reefing cringle on the leech of the mainsail, down to a turning block on the boom, then forward to a second turning block on the forward end of the boom. It continues up to the reefing cringle on the luff of the mainsail, down to the deck, and back to the cockpit where it can be controlled. Tensioning

this line, while lowering the mainsail halyard, causes both ends of the sail to come tightly to the boom and the reef is achieved (see illustration on Page 60).

To build the system I would need to lead four lines back: two reefing lines, the main halyard, and the topping lift. I studied the problem for several months. I wound up purchasing three turning blocks, a double cheek block for the boom, a three-line rope clutch, a four-line deck organizer, one cam cleat, and a small winch.

I also needed two, much longer, reefing lines and a new topping lift. All this hardware was not cheap. The total cost of materials came in at about \$700.

Plan carefully

I don't think there are any set rules for how you go about planning and placing all of these items. The only rule I used was to plan carefully and think ahead as far as possible to avoid mistakes. One concern I pondered over at length was whether to through-bolt



Two lines lead through the sail, causing it to fold like a fan.

The Dutchman sail-flaking system on *Cinderella*.

all the components to the coachroof, which would involve cutting into the headliner, or to use screws that are screwed directly into the outer layer of fiberglass. I decided to compromise on this. All hardware with a vertical load (turning blocks) would be bolted using long bolts and large backing washers. Any hardware with side loads would be secured with screws and caulking. (All, that is, except the winch, which was located in a position where I could use bolts.) My reasoning was that a vertical load creates tension while a side load creates sheer. Screws work well in sheer-load conditions but bolts better withstand tension.

I also worried about the size and strength of each of the components I was installing. I had no guidelines as to what the actual loads on any of these components would be. I was particularly concerned over the loading on the upright double turning block that would handle the two reefing lines. This component would be handling loads somewhere near the load of the mainsheet. Line size ($\frac{5}{16}$ -inch yacht braid) and deck space dictated a small block. The component I ultimately chose had a working-load rating of only 600 pounds. I'm still concerned this may be too weak, but Dee and I don't cross oceans or sail in hurricanes. If I underestimated the loads and wound up with materials that are on the light side, I can at least say that nothing has broken yet and we have sailed many times in reefed conditions.

Little winching

The completed system works very well. We can hoist the main from the cockpit by hand-pulling the halyard. A little winching is required for the last 2 feet. The boat does not need to be pointing into the wind, as there are no lazy-jacks to foul. Dropping the sail requires only that the topping lift be tightened so the Dutchman droplines are tensioned. Once you've found the right position for the topping lift, a mark on the line allows you to get the tension right every time.

Getting the main to drop and flake perfectly does require that someone go forward and pull down the sail. Without assistance, the sail drops about halfway, then stalls out. By standing at the mast you can assure a

"Dropped in this manner, the sail is nearly perfectly flaked onto the boom at the time of the drop, and the helmsman never loses forward visibility."


full drop and start each fold of the sail, left-right, left-right, as the sail comes down. And it works so well! Dropped in this manner, the sail is nearly perfectly flaked onto the boom at the time of the drop, and the helmsman never loses forward visibility. I can do it by myself quite easily now. I come into the wind, secure the helm, go to the mast, drop the main, go back to the cockpit, and resume course with a perfectly flaked main — in less than 20 seconds.

The combination of the Dutchman with the single-line reefing system shows its mettle when the wind comes up and it's time to put a reef in the main. Without coming off course, I ease the mainsheet until the main luffs. I then ease the main halyard and slowly lower the sail while simultaneously pulling in on the reefing line. When the forward reefing cringle

comes down to a prescribed point on the mast, the point where the boom normally rides, I lock the rope clutch for the halyard. The reefing line is then put on the winch and tightened until the aft end of the sail is fully tensioned and the boom is pulled up to the reefing point on the luff of the sail. At this point I can retighten the mainsheet; the reef is complete.

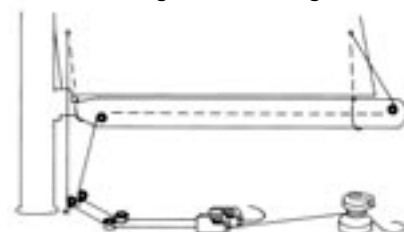
Ease and crank

Shaking out the reef is just a matter of easing the mainsheet again, putting the halyard on the winch, releasing the reefing line, and cranking the sail back to the top of the mast. The advantage of the Dutchman is that as the sail drops, the lines catch the flakes and keep them right on the boom. There is no need to tie in reefing points unless I know we are going to be sailing for days in crazy conditions.

Dee is still pushing for a roller-furling headsail for the boat, and I admit it would be a big convenience. Changing the headsail when the conditions change is a hassle, but I know we have our problems half solved. The mainsail controls work wonderfully, adding convenience and safety. When it's time to reef the main, we do so immediately, secure in the knowledge that we can shake out the reef or add a second reef quickly and conveniently. When it's time to drop and store the main, we have the solution for that too. The single-line reefing system, combined with the Dutchman sail-flaking system, has greatly improved our boat. 



Single-line reefing



Double-line reefing

Illustrations by Jim Sollers



The Wet Hens instructors pose for a group photo, May 2003.

students have learned to sail, thanks to the efforts of the Wet Hens volunteers.

The group came to be known as Wet Hens when his original group of students told Papa Lou they were thinking of buying a boat and starting a women's sailing club. His gruff answer was, "That's all I need around here, a bunch of wet hens." Before he knew it, Papa Lou was adopted by the members of a brand-new sailing club as the "ornery ol' rooster." In return, he gave the Wet Hens enormous support.

In 1962, soon after the group was formed, the Wet Hens launched *Kochi*, a 22-foot Star that they had found and refurbished. By 1971, a Rhodes 19 named *Wet Hen* was hoisted in. These days the basic sailing class is taught on Holder 14s but will soon be taught on brand-new Catalina 14s. The Wet Hens also teach an advanced class and actively race on the original Rhodes 19.

Since Wet Hens sailing instructors are all volunteers, their paycheck comes in the form of a smile on each student's face as she completes her solo sail at the end of the 10-week course. Wet Hens instructors today are very different from the original 10, yet they are alike in their love of the sea and sailing. Many now work out-

side the home and lead very busy lives, but they still find time every Thursday morning to make their way down to Hickam Harbor. If they're not teaching, they're working to further their skills. All instructors are certified in CPR and first aid and many are also certified U.S. Sailing instructors. The

basic sailing class incorporates the sailing vocabulary, a swim test, wind theory, knots, crew overboard recovery, capsize recovery, safety, racing, and most of all...fun.

Good deeds


The Wet Hens are busy helping others both on and off the water. They have always been actively involved in sailing-related activities, harbor projects, fundraising, and maintaining the boats in their fleet. They raise funds to help instructors attend the U.S. Sailing Small Boat Instructor course, and they get involved in community activities such as the salvaging of the ship *Falls of Clyde*. In 1982, the Wet Hens made history by becoming the first group to win the prestigious MacFarlane Trophy, which is presented annually to the person who has contributed most to yachting in Hawaii.

Wet Hens instructors' spouses, nicknamed The Henpeckers, support

"To date, a total of 1,700 students have learned to sail, thanks to the efforts of the Wet Hens volunteers."

their wives. Many of the husbands and children have also learned to sail. The Wet Hens and their families are active in the Pacific Yacht Club on Hickam Air Force base, which holds races twice a month and hosts other races for sailing organizations from around the island.

Every 5 years previous Wet Hens instructors return from all over the world for a reunion. Papa Lou Foster makes the trip from his home in California.

Today, at almost any military base, you will find someone who has benefited from the Wet Hens experience. Involvement in the Wet Hens is truly a lifetime thing. 

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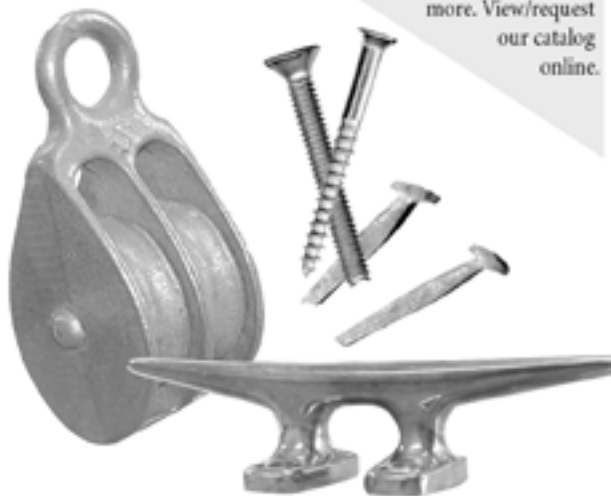
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Armored portlights

A patient sailor learns the hard way how to bulletproof his ports

by John Karklins

I DO NOT RECALL READING ABOUT A DETAIL I encountered while replacing the ports on my Allied Seawind, *Zvirbulis III*. These are the kind of ports in which Plexiglas is mounted in aluminum frames that themselves form a sort of sandwich around the outer skin and cabin liner. Long experience should have taught me that anything other than an exact replacement was likely to involve the discovery of a new wrinkle in the elephant. The commonly prescribed remedy for improving clouded, scratched, or otherwise obscured ports consists of several steps:

- Remove the existing ports by unscrewing the aluminum frames (usually secured by stainless-steel screws that have been blind tapped into the exterior frame). Cut new portlights out of acrylic stock using the old ones as patterns. A good jigsaw will do the job and, since you will not remove the adhesive paper protective sheets at this time, a pencil or felt-tip tracing is possible without resorting to grease pencils or sharp objects.
- Drill through the blind-tapped holes in the outer frame with an appropriately sized drill bit and buy some oval-head stainless-steel bolts with acorn cap nuts and twice that number of washers. Care should be taken with the length of the bolts. Figure the thickness of your new acrylic lights, plus the thickness of the two aluminum frames, plus the two washers, plus a smidgen for sealant on both sides of the light, plus enough exposed thread to provide a grip for the cap nuts. A smidgen, by the way, is about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch if you will use silicone sealant. Since standard bolts may not come in the required length, you may be faced with the prospect of purchasing the next size up, hacksawing through the threads, and filing them to accept the acorn nuts smoothly. This whole procedure is recommended because the original tapping after some decades of immobility in the original construction is likely to be sufficiently damaged or weakened to make re-use of the existing screws difficult.
- Remove the protective sheathing from the newly cut

"If you choose to take the armored portlights approach, one thing I have learned is not to use polycarbonate."



John Karklins' finished portlights above. He recommends against using polycarbonate. It gets cloudy, as the illustration shows. The teak spacer he added to compensate for the additional thickness of his "armor-plated windows" shows around the edges of the frame.

portlights and re-assemble the portlight sandwich. Use the acorn cap nuts on the interior. This operation is made easier with an assistant, but can be managed singlehanded by carefully holding the bolt gently by the threads with needle-nose pliers. The acorn nut is then fixed in place with clamping pliers and the bolt tightened by means of a screwdriver from the exterior. If your frames have about 18 bolts each and there are four of them, the single-handed operation involves a fair

amount of scurrying about. This is made more exciting by the dripping silicone, which periodically needs to be reapplied to the voids created.

- Clean up the silicone with paper towels, leaving the extruded parts on the acrylic to dry for peeling off later. It helps to have a large container to provide an easy target for silicone-covered paper towels. Despite how it sounds, this part of the operation goes comparatively well.

At this point the relatively simple job would have been done if, as mentioned earlier, I hadn't discovered the new wrinkle. This arose through my addiction to books, a number of which stated that the standard $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch acrylic glazing of portlights was woefully inadequate against rogue waves in the North Atlantic and such and recommended carrying $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch plywood shutters along with assorted bolts, brackets, and other paraphernalia for mounting them when questionable weather was expected. A few quick calculations indicated that if I were to carry these, along with all the other absolutely necessary safety equipment on an ocean passage, there would be no room for me or my stores without seriously compromising the buoyancy of the boat.

I decided to bulletproof the ports by using $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch or $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch polycarbonate instead of the $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch weakling. Unfortunately, the minimum required space between the exterior and interior aluminum frames exceeded the thickness of the cabin exterior and headliner sandwich by $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. This probably exceeded the structural capabilities

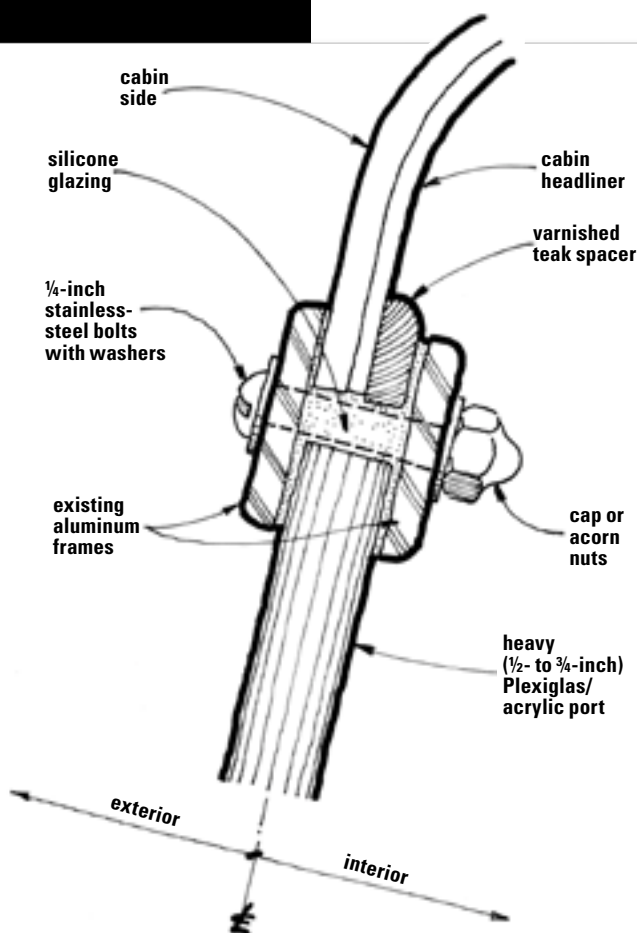
Continued on Page 64

Continued from Page 63


of silicone sealant, so I was forced to look for alternatives.

The varnished teak spacer, or gasket, I arrived at hand-somely trims the interior of the port and has given no trouble in the approximately 8 years it has been in place. Then again, we haven't encountered any rogue waves with which to test it.

The teak trim was made of 1/4-inch stock, traced directly from the portlight frame in six sections to conform to the end curves without spending a fortune on material. The radius was obtained with a Surform rasp and hand sanding. I pre-varnished the pieces and temporarily fastened them to the interior aluminum frame with silicone sealant and spring clamps. This eased



final assembly tremendously and held up well until the clamping of the outer and inner frames by means of the bolts took over the job.

If you choose to take the armored portlights approach, one thing I have learned is not to use polycarbonate. It turns milky with exposure to ultraviolet light and has reached the point on my boat where replacement is once again in the cards. If you're not looking to install "overkill portlights," you might still want to install thicker portlights. In this case, the trim gasket idea could work if the individually fitted teak strips were replaced with a one-piece marine teak plywood trim ring. 

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Vern's great idea

An elegant solution to the dropboard problem

by Lon Zimmerman

VERN ALLEN IS A retired pilot. He spent many years in Alaska, flying helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft for charters, sightseeing, and fire-and-rescue work. Most summer days he can be found on *Flapdoodle*, a 34-foot Columbia berthed in the Seward boat harbor.

I stopped by *Flapdoodle* to give Vern the *Good Old Boat* issue with the history of Columbia Yachts (May 2002). While I was there, Vern showed me his latest project.

Vern dislikes dropboards. They do seem to be a necessary evil. Dropboards keep water out when sailing under tumultuous conditions. But most of your time aboard a sailboat isn't spent testing raucous, big gray-beards intent on your destruction. Dropboards are cumbersome to remove when passing back and forth to the cabin interior, and what is there to do with them once they're out? I have trouble just getting the things back in the proper order and orientation.

A common solution is companionway doors with hinges that permit quick unshipping so you can insert dropboards when the weather pipes up. Vern has a better idea. He says the idea came from an airplane hangar he once owned in Texas. The doors folded up out of the way on a series of hinges.


"He says the idea came from an airplane hangar he once owned in Texas. The doors folded up out of the way on a series of hinges."

not used as a seat, it is simply an additional step to the companionway ladder.

Vern used ¾-inch oak boards on the inner and outer surfaces for a 1½-inch-thick door. Corner half-lap joints were used for the interior of the door. Stainless steel #6 screws 1¼ inch long go from the inside boards into the outside boards.

He used doweled miter joints on the exterior of the door. The bottom dropboard is long enough to fit into the dropboard slots, securing the companionway door. It's hinged to two more dropboards that have been shortened to clear the dropboard slot.

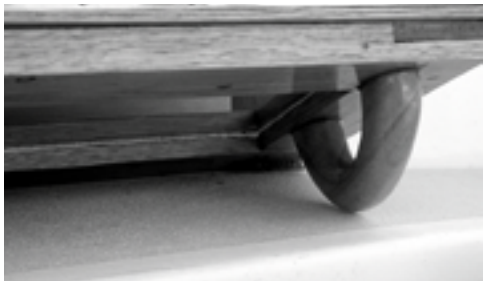
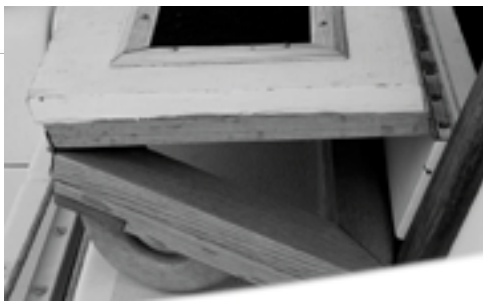
Hinges are 1¼-inch stainless continuous hinges. A ¾-inch flange is routed into the bottom of each dropboard for a water seal. Barrel bolts could be used to secure the boards in the dropboard slots. The window is ⅜-inch polycarbonate.

Vern's idea is not just a good idea, it is an elegant solution. But that's normal for Vern. 

Folded down, the middle dropboard becomes a seat, and the top dropboard becomes its brace. There is nothing to store. The dropboard seat makes a comfortable place to sit under the dodger out of the rain and keep a lookout. When

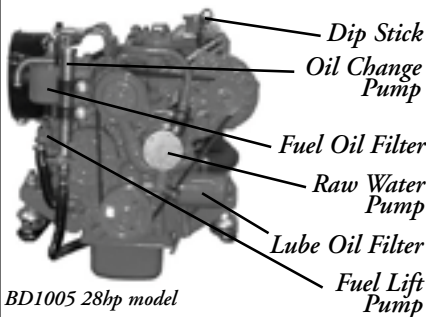


Inspired by a fold-up airplane hangar door, Vern Allen created folding hatchboards, above. When the hatch is open, the boards present no storage problem since the resulting "step" is sturdy enough to sit or step on. A closer look at the step and the view from inside on facing page.



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A pulled-together toolkit

These sockets and drivers won't fall apart in use

by Bill Brockway

THE 41-PIECE TOOLKIT FROM LINK TOOLS IS A VERY NICE SET of sockets and drivers with solid steel forging and a chrome finish that just feels good in your hand. The unique locking mechanism that holds the pieces together was first developed by founder Pete Roberts in the 1960s. It uses sliding collars that lock each piece to the next and won't come loose accidentally. You can string together both extenders and the UniDriver between the ratchet handle and the socket, giving you about 18 inches of reach, and not worry about anything ending up in the drink.

The high-point of the kit is the universal-joint attachment, a well-machined and versatile tool that will solve most of the tricky tight-access situations so often encountered when working on marine engines.


While it's true that any socket currently in use is secured by the locking mechanism on the ratchet handle, the rest of the sockets, drivers, and attachments are very vulnerable to a spill. The molded plastic case lacks what I consider an essential feature in an on-board toolkit — a positive lock feature that holds onto each piece that's stored in the case. The pieces all nestle nicely into the slots designed for them, but there's nothing but gravity holding them in place. If the case slides off of a seat or table when it's open, you could have 39 of the 41 pieces rolling around in the bilge. Just as "north" changes every



Marine writer Bill Brockway received a Link toolkit for review. The locking mechanism is nice, he concluded, but don't drop the case full of loose parts!

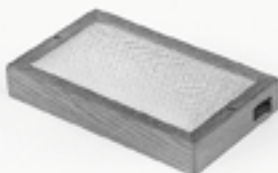
few seconds on a boat in motion, so does "down."

The set includes the Link Automatic-Locking ratchet handle, the UniDriver, two extenders, and the Universal joint, plus 9 SAE sockets ($\frac{9}{16}$ inch to $\frac{13}{16}$ inch), 11 Metric Sockets (8 mm to 18 mm), two spark-plug sockets ($\frac{5}{8}$ inch and $\frac{13}{16}$ inch), and these socket-mounted bits: Torx 25, 30, 40, 45, 50; Hex $\frac{3}{16}$, $\frac{5}{16}$, $\frac{3}{8}$, 6 mm, 10 mm; Phillips bits #1 and #2; and 5-mm and $\frac{9}{32}$ -inch slot bits, all in a custom-molded plastic case.

The 41-piece kit lists for \$249.99 on the Link Tools website, but I've seen it listed at about \$180 both at Link Tools (on special) and elsewhere on the web. Check it out at <http://www.link-tools.com>. 

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Let there be LED light

*How to bring
a kerosene anchor
light into
the 21st century*

by Bob Steadman




A traditional lamp is brought into the 21st century with the addition of an LED bulb with six diodes. The current draw for such a lamp is practically non-existent.

FIRST I FOUND A GREAT KEROSENE ANCHOR LIGHT AT A MARINE swapmeet. Then I brought it into the 21st century with an LED bulb. The housing of the lamp had a big Fresnel lens. I decided to use it and install an electric bulb. I found a white LED bulb that has six diodes arrayed in a circle. It is quite bright, and uses less than 0.07 amps. If I forget to turn it off in the morning, who cares? The project itself

proved to be absurdly simple.

I took the original burner unit out of the bottom and threw it away. Next, I cut out a disc of ¼-inch plywood that would fit under the top lid. On the plywood I installed a surface-mount socket that would take a standard double-contact, 12-volt bulb. The socket placed the LED almost in line with the center of the Fresnel lens, so I used a couple of washers to shim it up. Since the bottom of the housing was now open, due to the absence of the burner, the cable was able to dangle out of the bottom. I had already installed a plug in the cockpit for my searchlight, so this provided a ready power source.

Instead of hoisting it aloft, I hang the light on my backstay about six feet off the deck. I like this arrangement much better than a masthead site, as my boat is more likely to be seen by a vessel at night in close quarters, where it really counts. 



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Surface-mount bayonet socket for 12-volt bulb

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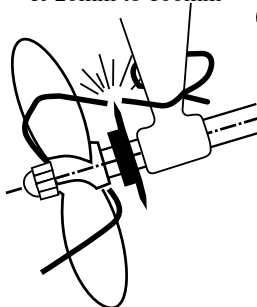
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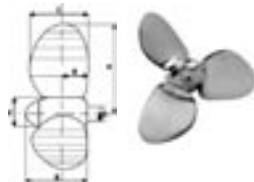
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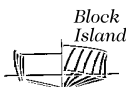
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Watermaker

The benefit of a watermaker is not just saving 25 cents or more per gallon of water. If that were the only benefit, I'm not sure we would have one. We find the water made by our watermaker tastes far better than most of the water we can buy. In some places we have found the water for sale to be barely drinkable. But the real benefit of having a watermaker is that it allows us to spend days at anchor without being forced to go into a marina or port. This can be a safety feature when the weather does the opposite of what was predicted, and we need to remain within the safety of a protected anchorage for longer than anticipated. On one occasion in the Exumas, the weather changed suddenly, and we were held up at an anchorage for a week waiting for good traveling conditions. We know of cruisers who have left an anchorage in inclement weather because they were out of fresh water and had no watermaker. Our Little Wonder unit makes between 5½ and 6 gallons an hour and allows us to sit happily at anchor for many days at a time.

Better dinghy

This is one item we are recommending that we don't yet have ourselves. Our next dinghy will definitely be one

with a raised bow and large tubes. Our 9-foot dinghy with relatively small tubes fits well aboard our 30-foot boat and has served us well in many areas, but we have found it to be an uncomfortable and wet ride when we have to travel a mile or more in it, particularly in choppy seas. Despite our 8-horsepower outboard, our dinghy will only plane when the seas are flat, the wind is from behind, there are only two of us aboard, the moon is in the seventh house, and Jupiter is aligned with Mars. Any kind of chop, and we don't plane. From our observations and discussions with other cruisers, dinghies with a raised bow and large tubes give the most comfortable and driest ride.

Macerator pump

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markable. Put it up with more wind, and you get a nice wind-tunnel effect.


PocketMail

No, it's not boat equipment, but we have found it so useful that I am including it in our list of recommendations. Wherever we go, whether in the U.S. or the Bahamas, we've been able to stay in touch with family, friends, and cruisers we've met via PocketMail. It is small, travels easily to shore and back, is reasonably priced, and has worked everywhere we have traveled. In the Bahamas, where phone calls to America cost \$1 per minute and snail mail is truly snail, we are able to communicate more information with more people via PocketMail for much less than a 5-minute phone call to one person.

We find we rely on it even in the States because carrying the small device ashore prevents excessive wear and tear or water damage to the laptop we'd otherwise bring ashore. For \$10 to \$15 per month, cruisers are able to make an unlimited number of calls to send and receive email, and in the U.S., the calls are free. We recently upgraded to a new device, which works with any phone, including cell phones. We just aren't comfortable cruising if we can't stay in touch with family and friends.

Not necessary

So, are all these items necessary? No. You may talk to other cruisers whose priorities differ from ours. But we would not cruise without the first six items (or seven if we include the VHF). They could prevent an emergency or save our lives. Nobody plans to get into trouble out there, and most of the time we don't. However, every time we go out to sea, we are taking a risk that things might go wrong. We have listened to many emergency calls between the Coast Guard and cruising boats in trouble, and we have seen for ourselves how suddenly conditions can deteriorate.

Ken and I have come to see cruising as a calculated risk. We do not want it to be a crapshoot. Sure, many folks do just fine with very little fancy equipment. However, more often than not, their descriptions of close encounters with disaster suggest luck is a prominent reason for their survival. We have decided to do whatever we can to keep the odds tipped in our favor. 

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Rawson is the baseline

We never see reviews or articles on the Rawson 30 and appreciated Bob Perry's brief mention of it in his Bill Garden memoir (September 2003). We purchased a Rawson 30, *Fair Wind*, three years ago in Astoria, Oregon, largely because she "looked pretty." With a basic American Sailing Association (ASA) sailing course and 12 hours on the water as experience, we enlisted a relative with no boating experience whatsoever to help take her home to Alaska.

Fair Wind became our teacher as we crossed the Columbia River Bar and turned north. With the three of us overconfident from a background in aviation (how tough can 5 knots be?), we grossly underestimated the task at hand. *Fair Wind's* Rawson pedigree provided safety and security with her stout construction, simple design, reliable systems, and honest, predictable performance. With a Comfort Ratio of 39.24, *Fair Wind* provided never-ending lessons in seamanship while transiting the real world environment provided by the Inside Passage, Gulf of Alaska, and Prince William Sound. Having ricocheted off docks and experienced mal de mer and other embarrassments during the journey, we arrived in Whittier, Alaska, considerably more grounded and experienced in real world cautions and capabilities.

Today shopping for the ideal boat, we "baseline" from the Rawson 30 in deciding exactly what a good old boat is. It's interesting that most of the boats we would consider in our future were designed by Bill Garden or Bob Perry.

John and Mary Hallinan
Anchorage, Alaska

Trailersailor forums

There are some great trailersailor forums at <<http://www.Trailersailors.com>>. I am especially keyed into the Clipper Marine forum. The Clipper Marines were designed by Bill Crealock. You wrote an article on Bill Crealock a while back (July 2003), but I was crushed that he didn't touch on the Clipper Marine boats. At the time, the CM26 was the largest trailerable boat, a significant "innovation" by Crealock. They are really well built. There is quite a cult following for these boats, and the forums are invaluable.

Steve Harrington
Albuquerque, N.M.

Regatta and Tartan website

Thanks yet again for sponsoring the Fourth Annual Good Old Boat Regatta. It was a fun couple of weekends and a real opportunity for good old boats to get out and enjoy themselves. It was definitely good old boat weather!

Also thanks for the historical article on Tartan Yachts (November 2003). While I've heard many stories about the company, it was nice to see it in print along with the timeline. I did notice that the Chesapeake Tartan 30 Association was inadvertently left off as a Tartan owner's resource. We have a website <<http://tartan30.org>> with a compilation of technical articles published over the years in *The Hook*, our association newsletter. Membership and contact information is on the webpage.

Gene Gottschalk
Pasadena, Md.

Regatta sponsorship worked for us too!

Thanks so much for your sponsorship of the Good Old Boat Regatta these last two weekends. It was wonderful to see all the great old boats and their owners having such a good time, and you couldn't have picked two nicer weekends. It was wonderful! Thanks again. Please sign me up for a 2-year subscription.

Ed Poe
Towson, Md.

And now a good old song!

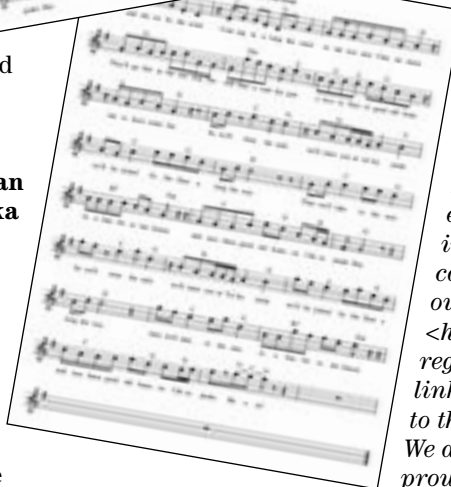
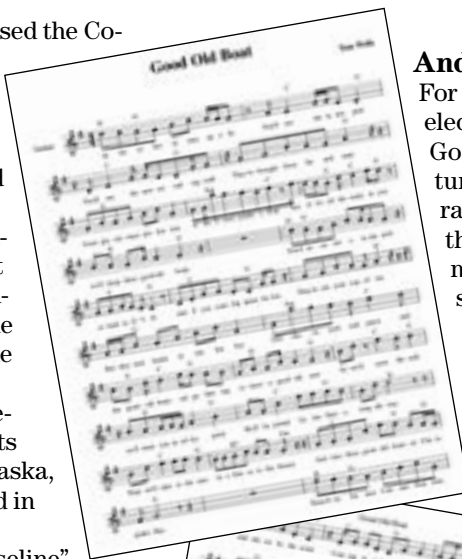
For the second year in a row, we traveled to Annapolis and took part in the Good Old Boat Regatta. The race itself is turning into a classic! After the post-race presentations, a group gathered on the upper deck and got out the instruments. During the jam, we sang the song that is attached. It was the debut, since it was written for the event.

I used some software to produce the music, but I am not a professional, so if notes, rests, and so on are wrong, I apologize. At least the tune, chords, and lyrics should come out OK.

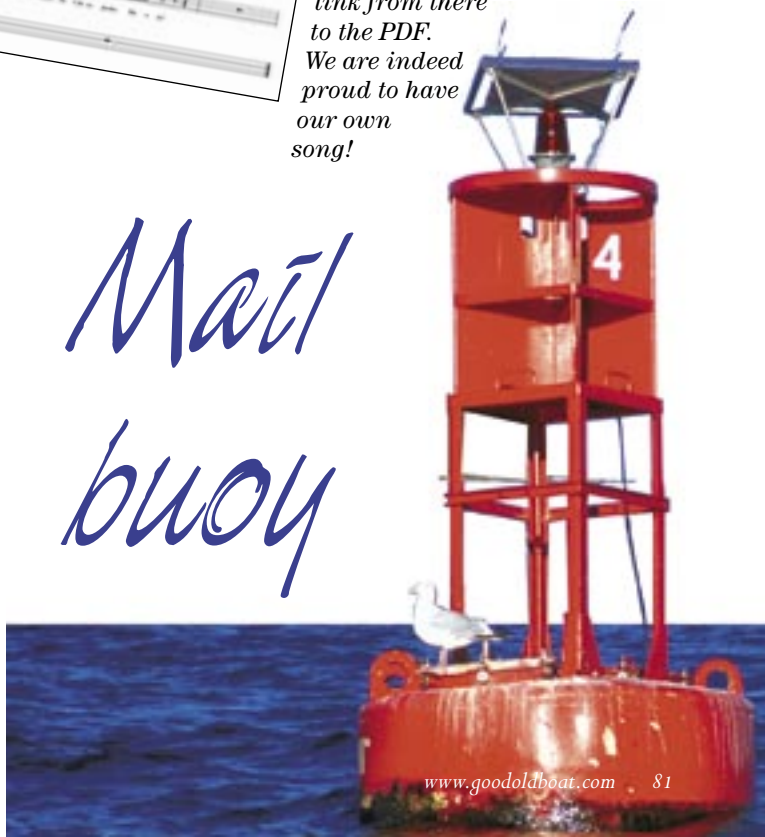
Congratulations on another wonderful event.

Tom Wells
Columbia, Mo.

Our hats are off to all who worked so hard to put the regatta together. It's an amazingly well-run event. Thanks for writing the song, Tom. People can view a PDF version on our webpage for the regatta, <http://www.goodoldboat.com/regatta_2003.html>. There's a link from there to the PDF. We are indeed proud to have our own song!



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Another source of pride

And while we're feeling so smug, *Good Old Boat* magazine was recently honored as the winner of a Silver Award (second place) for Overall Excellence by the Minnesota Magazine & Publications Association. The category was for special-interest publications with circulation less than 50,000. We were in good

company with other (older/larger/richer) magazines in the winners' circle. As we had never entered this prestigious contest before, we are feeling flattered and a bit giddy. **Editors**

We couldn't have done it without her. *Good Old Boat* Art Director Mary Endres beams with the new MMPA award for Overall Excellence. Once she began designing and laying out the pages of this magazine, we gained the confidence to enter this tough magazine competition. These days, Mary's good work shows throughout our issues.



Bill Garden's *Oceanus*

I enjoyed your article about Bill Garden (September 2003). The mention of Bill's boat, *Oceanus*, rang a bell. His boat

has been in Anacortes' (Washington) Cap Sante Boat Haven for about 12 years to my recollection. She is now on the hard at North Island Boat Company in Anacortes. The termites are still holding hands, so with some TLC and the latest high-tech stuff she should be ready to traverse any ocean. Been there for a year. I enclosed a couple of shots of this lovely creation.

**Spencer Swain
Anacortes, Wash.**



Bill Garden is still boating

Very much enjoyed the article on Bill Garden by Bob Perry. Bill is currently living right up the sound from me, and I even think I saw him in August motoring past Salt Spring Island. I got a nice wave from the friendly gentleman in his small custom trawler. Anyway, *Oceanus* is currently holed up in an Anacortes, Washington, boatyard looking very forlorn and weather-beaten. Looks like somebody is trying to restore her, albeit very slowly.

**Chris Ackerman
Anacortes, Wash.**

Morning after

This is a photo of my 1968 31-foot Irwin (Ted Hood design) the morning after Hurricane Isabel came through the Northern Neck of Virginia. As you can see, the tide is higher than normal; the dock is under water. I worried all night

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about the boat and drove down to check on it first thing in the morning. I could not believe the destruction I saw on the way to the boat, along with the destruction I saw along the shoreline. If you look closely at the picture, off in the distance is a mast of a Catalina 22 that sank during the storm that night. Normally the Irwin sits in the slip facing the opposite direction, but a couple of days before the storm I spun it around so the bow would face the storm. I also doubled up the docklines and removed the sails, pedestal cover, and so on. The night of the hurricane, I told myself, "This boat has been around since 1968, and the reason it has is because of its seaworthiness and that it's a good old boat." This is now



one of my favorite pictures. To me it is a symbol of strength and the ability to overcome the invincible. And, yes, I know how lucky I am.

Kurt Seastead
Glebe Harbor, Va.

Emergency life raft for small boats

Survival Products has introduced a new six-man life raft (we already make a 10-man size) perfect for offshore racers who are required to carry an ORC-category 1, 2, 3, 4 raft. Pack size is only 5 x 14 x 19 inches and weighs only 37 pounds. It's priced at only \$3,225. These rafts evolved from the lighter, more compact 6- and 10-man MAC ORC Cat II Modified, made for the Chicago- and Port Huron-Mackinac races. Good old boat sailors will note that a four- and a nine-man raft series is also available starting at only 12

pounds, 4 x 12 x 14 inches, and just \$1,095. Rafts can also be rented. Call 954-966-7329, <<http://www.survivalproductsinc.com>> or <sales@survivalproductsinc.com>.

Donna Rogers
Survival Products, Inc.



I'm on to you now

I've wised up to your ploy. When I was looking for some help to build a hard dodger for my boat, Google brought up *Good Old Boat*. I sent off for the article and received a copy of the magazine: "Nice mag, I should order it." But didn't get around to it. Next month another copy arrives. By this time my wife has discovered the magazine and loves it. Good-bye, *Cruising World*. Next month's preview shows some more great articles. I discover your ploy is to send out samples knowing that such a great magazine will be impossible to resist. Well, you've succeeded. Please enter my subscription for a year.

Bill Jaine
Port Hope, Ontario

27-foot pilothouse

We are sending you a photograph of our good old trailerable boat, a Watkins 27-foot pilothouse, shown below. We enjoy your magazine very much and thought your readers would like to see that there are folks who trailer boats that do not have swing keels, water ballast, an 8-foot beam, and so on. On the road, we are 10 feet wide, 14.5 feet tall, and 52 feet long. That is a foot larger, in every direction, than an 18-wheeler! Our load weighs about 11,500 pounds.

We pulled the boat from South Florida to Knoxville, Tennessee (800 miles), at 55 mph, using our Dodge RAM 2500 with a Cummings diesel and automatic transmission. It pulls great (right through Atlanta, 8 lanes of traffic)! We might take it back to Florida in the winter season.

We would be interested in talking to other owners of boats like ours if they would like to correspond. As far as we know, these boats are quite rare. We think there were 10 built in 1980 and eight built in 1981. That's all we know about. Our *Shangri-La* is a 1981, hull No. 8, (we think the last one built). These boats are worthy of mention in your magazine!

Glen Simerly
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Typo

Betty (Brewer) pointed out an error in the November 2003 issue. The cover photo was taken on Tod Inlet, not Ted Inlet. It's

a long, protected inlet where you can anchor for a day, or longer, while visiting Butchart Gardens. We've anchored there many times. It's one of our favorites: very peaceful but with occasional Saturday night fireworks shows when Butchart is doing them in the summer.

Ted Brewer

Gabriola Island, British Columbia

My Christmas present

(In response to a renewal notice):

Good Old Boat is my Christmas present from my wife. She wraps one issue and puts it under the tree. This is why I only go one year at a time for the subscription. She will probably take care of the bill shortly. I never see it. Your magazine is the best: I purchased a 23-foot Tempest for \$1,200 about the time your first issue came out. I've incorporated many of the ideas and les-

sons of the many articles. The boat has had successful voyages in and around the Chesapeake Bay.

Bud Brown

Virginia Beach, Va.

Canceled the others

I should have mentioned how much I enjoy the magazine. I, too, have canceled all other boating magazine subscriptions. *Good Old Boat* is my mag of choice. So much value, so much content. Karen and Jerry and all of the rest of the staff sail boats like I do: weekends, holidays, on a budget, fixing stuff myself, pecking away at the improvements. So my interest in the latest \$350,000 yacht or \$5,000 radar system is fairly low. *Good Old Boat* doesn't go there, which is why I will always renew my subscription. On the plus for *Good Old Boat*, you all offer professional, thoughtful, thorough articles on projects and issues that mean the most to me. Bravo, and thanks!

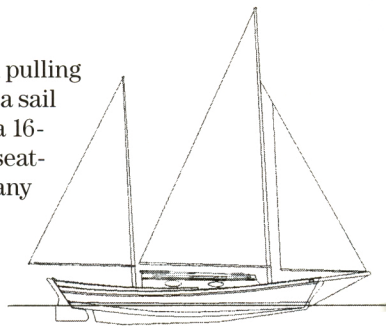
Richard Bailey

Jacksonville, Fla.

What's new?

We hear from Lakeland Boatworks, Inc., which is building a line of four classic-style watercraft: a 16-foot dou-

ble-ended pulling boat with a sail package, a 16-foot two-seater mahogany runabout, a 22-foot fisher/run-



about/cruiser, and a 32-foot ketch-rigged sharpie. This last one, the Charlevoix, is a shallow-draft 8-foot-wide trailerable cruiser. For more about the company, call 269-948-2947 or visit their website <<http://www.lakelandboat.com>>.

Newsletter is a bonus

Please be certain my subscription does not expire. The newsletter was worth the price of the subscription with the mag thrown in.

Bill Jowell

Midkiff, Texas

Gee, Bill, we meant for it to be the other way around: the newsletter is meant to be a bonus for subscribers.

For the rest of us

As always, your magazine teaches me with every page, and teaches in a way that makes me want to know more. Too often other magazines seem to pontificate, patronize, and ridicule us lesser fellows who are on the first part of our journey into the wind and waves. But your *Good Old Boat* gives joy and encouragement and talks about the boats that perhaps one day I might actually be able to crew upon or own. Your motto is perfect.

Ed Verner

Plant City, Fla.

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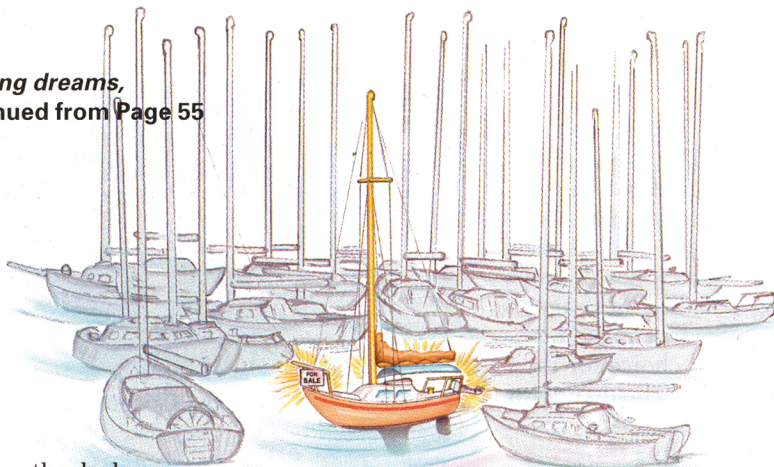
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Chasing dreams,
continued from Page 55



pings on the deck.

We went through the motions, filling out my checklist, inspecting every part of the boat, hoping that if the price were low enough, this could somehow be a good deal. But it was not. I could feel it right in the bottom of my stomach: that nebulous void that takes the things you love and makes you hate them. I could see the black hole near the bilge that would swallow years of my life and piles of my money.

End of a dream

This boat was where dreams end, where the money ran out, the marriage broke up, or the tumor became malignant. It made me sad, because somewhere, sometime, this boat was loved. It represented the same hopes and dreams we were having...the same dreams that seem so fresh and alive. Dreams of a simpler, less ordinary kind of life, measured in quality instead of quantity.

I wondered if this boat had any of the dream left in it.

We started back to the car. My eyes scanned the rows of boats — other people's dreams — lined up in their slips. My eyes rested on a tidy sloop with beige topsides and a maroon stripe. It was the same kind of boat we were looking for.

I stopped.

There she was.

It was like walking into a wall. Her deck was clean. She had crisp, tan sailcovers and tidy new docklines. A four-stroke outboard hung neatly from her stern. Her hull was sleek. The rigging was fresh. The lifelines were stout. Bright new halyards ran down the mast, and a little red "For Sale" sign was wired to the bow pulpit.

"Should I call?" my wife said.

"Yes, call," I replied and realized my throat was dry.

Five minutes later we were aboard with the owner. We sat in the cockpit and talked like friends. For the next hour, he patiently answered our ques-

tions and shared his stories of 12 good years with the boat. She warmed as he talked, the teak glowed, the lines were supple and clean.

All the gear

She had new sails, an autopilot, a Bimini, cockpit cushions, a cockpit table, a wind chute for the forward hatch, an extension to make the double bed a little wider, and a custom icebox built for the Sea of Cortez.

"You had her on the Sea of Cortez?"

"Three times."

A friend had told me, "You'll know when you find the right boat."


This was the one.

The only thing we hadn't discussed was price. I was afraid to ask. She would be out of our range — she had to be. She was too clean, too well maintained. The sails were too new. There were too many extras. There was no way we could afford her.

I asked, braced for disappointment, "What are you asking for her?"

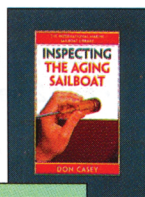
He answered without hesitation. The other shoe never dropped. His price was fair.

I met my wife's eyes. We tried not to smile, but inside we were jumping up and down. He sensed it, I think, because he asked, "Do you have time for a sail?"

There is always time for a sail. 

For further reading...

Don Casey's *Inspecting the Aging Sailboat* (1996) and Lin & Larry Pardey's *Cruising in Seraffyn* (1992) can both be found at <http://www.goodoldboat.com/bookshelf.html> or by calling 763-420-8923.



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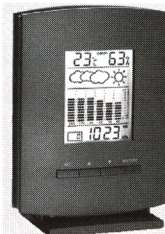
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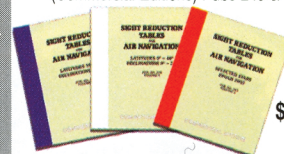
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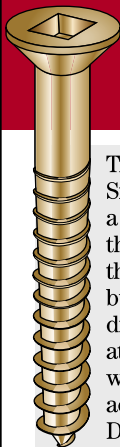
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A house to cruise home to

Some sailors need a house just as much as they need a boat

by Jerry Powlas



OVER TIME I HAVE COME TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE MOST CRITICAL item of cruising equipment for us is a house. “E-e-e-k!” says the critic. “Heresy again. It’s common knowledge that every cruising dream starts with selling one’s home. This is, in fact, how one raises the money for the 40-footer to go cruising in. Only the very, very wealthy can afford a boat big enough to live aboard and go cruising in and have a home ashore as well.”

That is the standard dream. It’s favored and promoted by those who need to sell 40-footers and, in all fairness, by some of those who have 40-footers.

Chris White, who designs fine multihulls, once told me he’d designed a boat for a client who sold his home and moved most of his belongings aboard. He said the boat kept sinking lower and lower in the water until it was just an overloaded barge instead of the fast cruiser it was intended to be.

The lesson here is that we are not fish. We are creatures of the land. Our boats are made from bits and pieces of the land, and they have a critical, unavoidable need to be supplied and maintained from the land. No vessel made by mankind is independent and self-sufficient at sea indefinitely. The tools, spares, and consumables needed to operate any small pleasure craft over its natural service life would sink it if they were brought aboard on commissioning day. So would the possessions found in most shoreside homes.

My house serves my boat in a critical way. The radial arm saw, drill press, shaper, band saw, jig saw, and several hundred pounds of smaller power and hand tools are in the shop and garage at home, thus sparing the boat a load that would exceed her capacity. The boat makes brief sorties out onto

the water without these, but in the end they are necessary to support a 28-year-old boat. You either own at least some of these things, or you hire somebody who does.


Because this stuff is not aboard our boat, Karen and I can cruise for many weeks without resupply. Because our boat is an old 30-footer instead of a new 40-footer, we had it paid off 5 months after we bought it, and we didn’t sell our house to do it. Are we living aboard? In one sense at times we are, and in another sense we are not. We could go out for a month or a bit more at a time without resupply and

live on the boat. We routinely live on the boat for 2 or 3 weeks at a time. Our boat is a small coastal cruiser, not intended for crossing oceans, but it gets around on Lake Superior, which is, for those persons not familiar with it, about twice the size of Denmark. There is plenty of room to cruise.

There are many sailors who have only their boat. As I said, that is the standard dream. They manage without the heavy equipment. They take on their supplies at each port call.

They carry a few tools and spares,

and they manage because they are skilled and resourceful. Nothing wrong with that...but maybe it is not the only way. I kind of like having a few 4-by-8 sheets of marine plywood in stock and enough power and hand tools to turn them into bits and pieces and sawdust in a long day. I like buying epoxy 2 gallons at a time, and I like to occasionally sleep in a king-size bed with my lady love in a home that does not roll or pitch and has withstood many a storm without anyone there to mind it.

There are lots of ways to go cruising. The journey is on the inside anyway. 

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I'M BAD. I ADMIT IT. I'VE BRAZENLY JUMPED aboard other people's boats without even asking "permission to come aboard" and made modifications to their rigging.

I must confess to some timidity, however. I've only done this when no one was aboard, and it was usually about 2 a.m. when the slap of their halyards against their aluminum masts rivaled Chinese water torture.

You've heard the sound — halyards slapping the aluminum mast on a windy day. At night in a marina, this is like someone knocking on the door all night.

My wife, Elsie, and I spend lots of time aboard our schooner, *Delphinus*, visiting ports along the Eastern seaboard. Some of this time is spent in marinas, and the noise of slapping halyards is our particular nemesis.

Don't get me wrong; I believe in everyone's freedom to do his own thing, but when it comes to blatant lack of consideration for your neighbors, I draw the line. And I secure the lines.

I knew a kid once at a yacht club in New Jersey who loved the sound of slapping halyards. He said it was soothing. He kept his sailboat on a trailer next to the house under his bedroom window so the halyard slap could lull him to sleep at night. He later became a psychiatrist. I suspect his next-door neighbor was his first patient.

I've tried subterfuge: "Aren't you afraid that slapping halyard will wear away the anodizing on your mast?" Or: "I've heard the Dacron strands weaken when they keep slapping the mast like that." The response is usually a grunt; he sees through my little scheme, and he's not buying it.

Planning revenge

I've lain in my bunk at night with my good ear buried in the pillow, wishing my bad ear was a little worse than it really is, and planning my revenge: "I'll go over there with a knife and cut the danged halyard."

Sometimes when drifting into the twilight zone, or after a general anesthetic such as Mount Gay, I envision climbing aboard with my cable cutters and dropping the mast into the water. Of course I only dream of these things. My mother taught me to respect other people's property. I'm trapped in middle-class morality.

There are lots of cute little gimmicks on the market

"My mother taught me to respect other people's property. I'm trapped in middle-class morality."

designed to keep the halyards from slapping. They work. I've tried them all. But they're actually unnecessary, and I've discovered they don't float. Just tying halyards off to the shrouds or flipping them around the spreaders solves the irritation problem and undoubtedly prolongs the lives of the halyards and the sanity of your neighbors.

It's not just other people who cause the problems. I can be the culprit too. It usually happens in the middle of the night when the wind picks up from a new direction. I'm in a deep sleep. Claudia Schiffer has invited me for cocktails and has excused herself to change into something more comfortable, when the sound seeps through: slap, slap, slap.

"Nuts! I forgot about the flag halyard. Maybe it will stop."

It doesn't.

My wife clears her throat. That's my cue. I crawl out of the bunk in my pajama bottoms, mumbling to myself, and slide the hatch back. Why do the slides only make that awful noise in the middle of the night?

Not alone


I'm just finishing the job of tying off the halyard and am starting to wake up when the light of a cigarette from the cockpit in the next slip tells me I'm not alone, and I see two outlines watching me. I feel like an idiot out there in my pajama bottoms with bare feet on a deck wet with dew, so I affect an

air of nonchalance, causing me to trip over the coaming as I enter the cockpit and bump my head on the boom. The hatch squeals like a pig again as I close it, and the form in the forward bunk rolls over.

"I've got to fix those slides one of these days," I mumble to myself, "Maybe tomorrow." I slip my cold, wet feet under the covers, hoping I can resume where I left off. All is quiet now. I've done my duty in preserving peace and tranquility.

OK, so the sound of halyards slapping doesn't bother you, and those it does bother are just paranoid. Well, it's the same as the kids in public places who blare hard rock from their portable radios at levels approaching the threshold of pain. They're destroying their neighbor's environment just as certainly as if they were throwing garbage overboard.

So, if you're in a marina and the schooner *Delphinus* is in the next slip, please watch those slapping halyards — I don't want to disappoint Claudia Schiffer twice. That would really try my patience.

Now, where did I put those cable cutters? 

Things that go slap in the night

Driven mad by noisy halyards, a sailor plans his revenge

by Don Launer

KNOW • THE • ROPES

Do you know which rope is best for each application on your boat? Mainsheets are more likely to suffer from wear and dirt absorption than other sheets. A spinnaker halyard needs a little "give" to take the shock of loading and losing the sail. A roller furling Genoa halyard can be made up of two different sized and types of

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