

GOOD OLD BOAT™



THE SAILING MAGAZINE FOR THE *REST* OF US!

www.goodoldboat.com

Issue 86 September/October 2012



GOOD OLD BOAT™

THE SAILING MAGAZINE FOR THE *REST* OF US!

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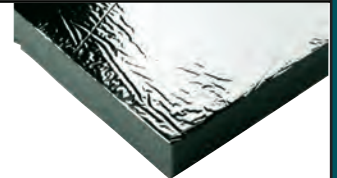
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About the cover ...

Hamburg Cove on the eightmile river, just off the Connecticut river in Lyme, Connecticut, is considered by many to be a good hurricane hole. Massachusetts photographer paul rezendes considers it to be one thing more: a good place to find good old boats in a scenic setting. paul's site: <www.paulrezendes.com>.

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News from our two sites: GoodOldBoat.com and AudioSeaStories.com, our download site

Sailboat sites galore

When *Good Old Boat* magazine was just getting started, we had no idea how many companies produced good old boats over the years. We soon found out, however, when we started a small list of associations and individuals with websites focused on just one kind of sailboat. There were (and still are) hundreds and hundreds of boats! Look around: www.goodoldboat.com/resources_for_sailors/owners_associations.php. If you know

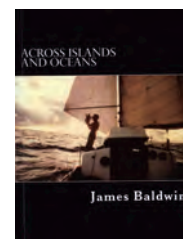
of more sites to list or if you find sites that are no longer active, please let us know.



Book reviews

Every book review written by a *Good Old Boat* staffer, associate, friend, or reader since our first issue in 1998 is posted on our site. That's a whole lot of reviews and a lot of good books. If you're looking for some undiscovered reading material, we have a great source of sailing books and their reviews.

www.goodoldboat.com/reader_services/book_reviews



Sailing tunes

We developed our AudioSeaStories site specially to make downloads possible, so music downloads of a nautical flavor are an obvious addition. Since there are so many, we're starting with a few musical friends. The first of our singer/songwriter/sailor friends to be posted is Scott Perkins. A BMI recording artist, Scott has written, performed, and produced four albums of original songs, including his latest release, "Ships & Giggles." Scott's four albums are available for \$9.95 each.

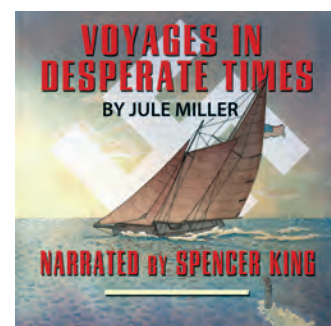
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Voyages in Desperate Times

Jule Miller has written an excellent book that we were happy to add to our audiobook library. *Voyages in Desperate Times* is a work of historical fiction about the little-known role played by the U.S. Coast Guard during World War II, patrolling the U.S. East Coast in all weather on watch for German U-boats. The boats commandeered by the Coast Guard for government duty were primarily private sailboats. Jule tells a harrowing tale about the 54-foot schooner *Tiger Lillie* and her crew.

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Out of the wilderness

Exploring the social side of sailing

by Karen Larson

Magazine time being what it is (and our short seasons in the Northland being what they are), I write this as our sailing season is just beginning, knowing it won't be published until our season is nearly over. Our C&C 30 is cleaned up, launched, and ready. The sails are on, rigged properly (reefs and all!), and the tanks are full (or empty, depending upon the purpose of the tank).

Best of all, we've already been out sailing! At this time of year, when the boatyard jobs are behind us, I am overcome with the joyous feeling that all's right with the world. I am therefore able to be expansive and grandly optimistic about how the summer season will unfold. In fact, this season is going to be vastly different from our summers during the past 10 or so years.

We started our cruising lives in Lake Superior's wonderful Apostle Islands near Bayfield, Wisconsin. There, more than 20 islands offer protection from virtually any wind direction, although they're far enough apart that you do have to keep an eye on the sky, tune in to the weather radio, and have the ability to plan your evening anchorage well in advance. You must also be flexible in case it doesn't work out. All Apostles sailors have stories about weather surprises.

This 69,000-acre archipelago was a marvelous place for us to earn our cruising credentials, to learn about our sailing preferences, and to become very familiar with our boat. There were always fellow sailors, good friends all, in the anchorages where we settled in for the evening. We had a great time and we acquired a vast storehouse of local knowledge.

Eventually, Jerry and I wanted to explore wider horizons, and we began to think in terms of "wilderness cruising," in which we traveled farther distances from towns and marinas and often went for days or weeks without seeing another boat. We enjoyed the solitude, the new scenery, and the increased challenges.

In 2010, we took the entire summer off and circum-navigated Lake Superior during a three-month cruise.

Last summer we condensed our cruise to a month spent primarily on the north shore of the lake. This summer we'll cruise for a whole month again, but it will be back in our original cruising waters of the Apostles.

Although it's been nearly 10 years since we spent much time in the Apostles, it's home to us. Over the years, I have missed the area more than I can say.

So we have given up wilderness cruising for the summer. The new twist for us is that, since we'll be reliably close once more to civilization (bed & breakfast inns, grocery stores, and restaurants), we have invited some friends and family members to come sailing. We weren't able to do that easily in

the past when sailing in areas requiring a long drive and a passport and lacking any towns or nearby marinas where we could meet or drop off guests.

People get busy and plans change. The weather will play a role. But I imagine a few of those who have wanted to give "this sailing thing" a try for many years will manage to clear their calendars and spend a day or two aboard.

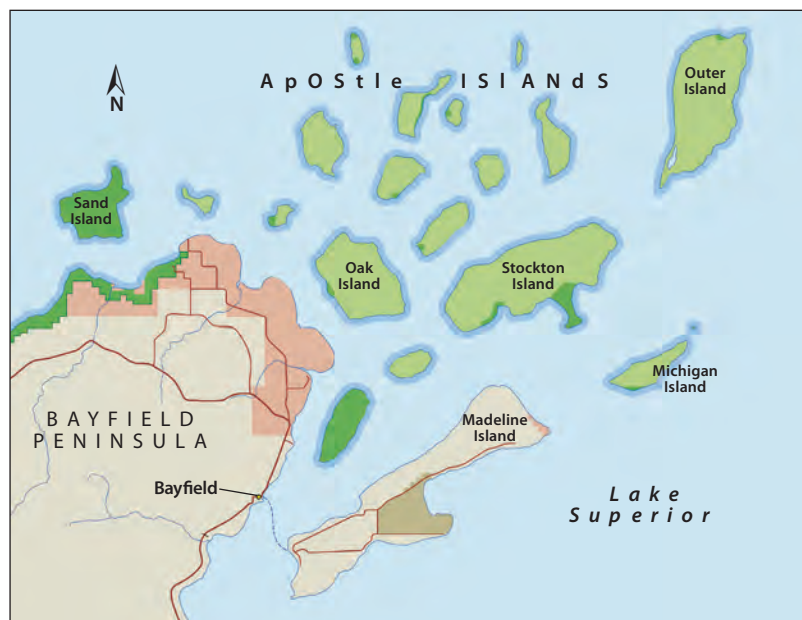
In our wilderness cruising we

often hustled to get to the next anchorage before the next weather pattern socked us in, sometimes leaving behind wonderful social opportunities with the few sailors we met along the way in our rush to the next safe anchorage or marina. So this year we'll, instead, have shorter distances to go, only a few scheduling issues to resolve, and much more time to slow down and enjoy the company of a few special guests and fellow cruisers in the anchorages.

Rather than wilderness cruising, this is our summer for social sailing. I look forward to the slower pace and a chance to view the Apostles and our cruising life through the eyes of those for whom all is new, beautiful, and very special indeed.

To read about our 2010 summer-long cruise of Lake Superior, go to <www.goodoldboat.com/blogs/2010_adventure_blog.php>.

Our blogs from our 2011 and 2012 summer cruises are at <<http://goodoldboat.wordpress.com>>.▲



Keel/centerboards, boats on

Keel/centerboard designs

I enjoyed Rob Mazza's discussion of the rise and fall of the keel/centerboarder, but he skipped some important steppingstones between the 1880s and Carleton Mitchell's *Finisterre*.

In 1932, Philip Rhodes designed the 46-foot *Ayesha*, followed in 1936 by the 57-foot *Alondra*, both very successful shoal-draft keel/centerboarders. Carleton Mitchell bought *Alondra* and renamed her *Caribbee*.

Richard Henderson relates in his book, *Philip L. Rhodes and His Yacht Designs*, that "*Caribbee* was a large part of the inspiration for her owner's next boat, the Sparkman & Stephens-designed keel/centerboarder, *Finisterre*. Mitchell explains that, although he greatly admired the hull designs of Rhodes, he had developed a lot of faith in the rigging expertise and racing know-how of Rod Stephens and primarily for that reason he decided on the design firm of Sparkman & Stephens." So *Finisterre* was essentially a Rhodes keel/centerboarder with an S&S rig.

Needless to say, there was a great deal of sharing and cross-fertilization in sailboat design. Olin Stephens, Bill Tripp, and Mark Ellis all worked in the Rhodes office for a little while. Philip Rhodes' contribution to the keel/centerboarder design should not be overlooked.

—Ben Stavis, Bala Cynwyd, Pa.

Rob's response

Ben makes a valid point with regard to the design legacy of Phil Rhodes. He also wrote a very good article on Phil Rhodes in *Good Old Boat* (January 2006).

If I were to write a complete history of the development of the keel/centerboarder in North American yachting, Phil would play a prominent part in that story. However, my short piece focused primarily on the uniquely American origin of the keel/centerboarder as a compromise between the two warring factions of the British Cutter vs. the American Sloop in the late 19th century.

I then leaped forward to the late 1950s and early '60s to discuss the CCA rule. As a comparison to the Tripp-designed Mercer 44, I included the Nevins 40, a production S&S design in wood that resulted from the success of *Finisterre*, and the early George Cuthbertson-designed *Galatea* that led indirectly to C&C Yachts and my own centerboard Corvette. Production centerboarders from that period in the same size range as the Mercer 44 are few, and I would have included a Phil Rhodes design of the appropriate size had I found one ... his Swiftsure is a little too small.

Phil was a pivotal figure in the development of early fiberglass boatbuilding, most notably with the Bounty II, but these were, unfortunately for the sake of this article, all keelboats, not centerboarders. Phil died in 1970 so, unlike the younger Bill Tripp, Olin Stephens, and George Cuthbertson, he was not present when fiberglass

boatbuilding was at its height. I agree with Ben that any complete history of the keel/centerboarder in North American yachting should certainly include Phil Rhodes.

—Rob Mazza, Hamilton, Ontario

eBay boats

Reading Mike Dunsworth's story of buying a boat on eBay (July 2012) took me back to not one but two boats I bought that way. I found the first, an Alacrity 19, when I was taking a break at work. I turned to a colleague who had never sailed and asked, "Hey, do you want to go halves on a boat?" To my delight (and his wife's disgust) he said, "Yes," and we were partners.

I had that boat for five years (I bought him out after two), and I was perfectly happy with it until I saw a Ranger 26 on eBay for even less money and stuck in a throwaway bid. Needless to say, I bought that one too. Both times, I was pleasantly surprised with their condition and sailing performance. No one can believe what I paid for the Ranger. In a previous life, I traded bonds for 20 years, but I was never happier with a purchase than I was with those two boats.

—George Bollenbacher, Tarrytown, N.Y.



Engine panel protection ... the quest continues

Last year, in response to Mail Buoy letters and requests from our customers, we introduced a PanelVisor to protect engine panels. We were immediately flooded with emails and calls from boat owners wanting them for their panels. A tally of the requests showed that good old boats have more Yanmar engines than any other brand, or at least their owners were more outspoken. So we started manufacturing a PanelVisor for the highest-scoring model, the Yanmar old B-type engine. (Yanmar has four different B-style panels, which is extremely confusing.) Our hats are off to everyone who voted; you showed us which style visor would be most beneficial ... and which ones to build next.

—Paula Biles, Seaworthy Goods, Bradenton, Fla.

Aiming for the Goldilocks zone

Just like Goldilocks, who found that some porridge was too hot, some was too cold, and yet other porridge was just right,

eBay, and aiming to please

we are constantly seeking a balance at *Good Old Boat*. After receiving his renewal notice noting that the coming issue was going to include the Mercer 44 and the Hunter Legend 37 as feature and review boats, Jeffrey Kasnik was quick to point out that the porridge was too hot:

"Thanks for the kind reminder. At this time I am not interested in a 37-foot boat or a 44-foot boat. Have you heard similar responses from your customer base?"

I felt Jeffrey deserved a reply from the porridge mixer:

"Now that you bring that to my attention, I have to admit that was incredibly bad planning on my part (having two large boats in the same issue). I wasn't paying attention and you just woke me up. We usually try for a more middle range (27 to 35 feet) with the occasional small or large boat thrown in. The planets did not align properly for that this time and — what's worse — I didn't notice. You've made a very important point. Point taken."

So naturally we were nonplussed by a note that arrived with the renewal check from Scott Kearney the next day:

"At some point you folks need to recognize that a lot of good old boats are larger than 23 to 25 feet. Ours, at 42 feet, is 26 years old and is a good, fast, bigger old boat and once in a while something relevant would be appreciated."

Note to all subscribers: it sure is difficult to get this brew just the right temperature to suit each individual sailor. Thanks for your ongoing tolerance and for continuing to send your subscription checks even when we don't prepare the exact recipe for your needs. Sometimes we're told that we read minds. Other times we apparently can't even pick up any sort of brain wave. But we'll keep trying!

—Karen Larson, Founding Editor

Non-starter now starts

The timing of the article "No Longer a Non-starter" in the May 2012 issue was very appropriate. This problem has been discussed on the Yanmar Yahoo group a number of times.

My boat already had a new wire from the starter switch bypassing the wiring harness and shortening the run by a number of feet. This past Sunday, I once again had an issue with the starter not engaging. I had the starter rebuilt less than a year ago, so I knew the problem was the wire from the starter switch. I grabbed a length of 12-gauge wire, crimped on two ring terminals, and replaced the wire from switch to starter (again). No success.

To get to the point quickly, on a Yanmar 2GM, either the A or B instrument panel has a separate starter button. The white wire between the key switch and the starter button, originally a 16-gauge wire, needs to be replaced also. I replaced it with the same 12-gauge wire that I used to rewire from

the starter switch to the solenoid, and the starter engaged successfully every time I pushed the button. Now, I just need to go back and replace both with white wire to match the original color scheme.

—Don Shelton, Austin, Texas

Saving flares

I remember an article (now lost, but perhaps from a West Marine catalog) that indicated a flare can remain fully functional long past its expiration date. The suggested strategy was to keep the old flares on board and, if the need arose, to use them first. At the same time, be sure to have a full set of current devices on hand to satisfy the law and in case the old ones fail to work.

Don't dispose of time-expired flares . . . just keep them as extras.

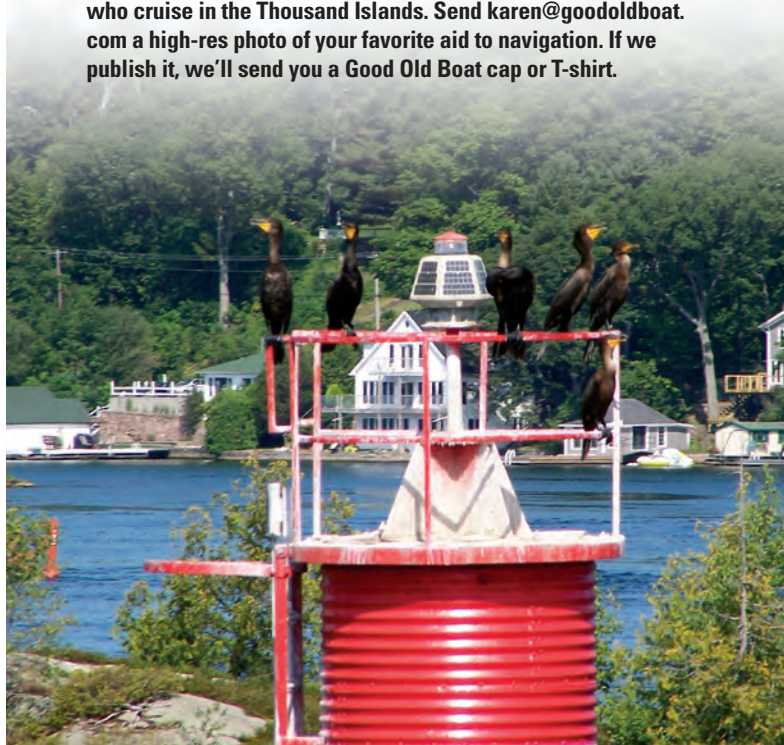
—Tom Schultz, Belle River, Prince Edward Island

Internal transducers

I read with interest Alan Lucas' article on internal depth-sounder transducers (July 2012) because, when I bought my Crown 28 10 years ago, I inherited an old, dysfunctional depth sounder and replaced it with a modern (NavMan) fishfinder/sounder. As Alan suggests, I simply epoxied the

continued on page 64

Mark Boyd sent this aid to navigation and cormorant perch on the St. Lawrence Seaway near Gananoque, Ontario. These marks with their regulation cormorants are a common sight for those who cruise in the Thousand Islands. Send karen@goodoldboat.com a high-res photo of your favorite aid to navigation. If we publish it, we'll send you a Good Old Boat cap or T-shirt.



Dalliance and her owners, Bob and Linda Graebner, have been taking care of each other sailing the Great Lakes for 20 years.

Dalliance, a Pacific Seacraft 34

She has aged gracefully with her original owners

by Bill Jacobs

When I think of a good old boat, my first thought is a “rescue,” similar to what occurs in the world of pets. A new owner adopts a mistreated pet and nurses that animal back to health. Likewise, a neglected vessel with good bones can be brought back by a new owner to live happily ever after through skilled work, replacement parts, new equipment, and tender loving care.

I also visualize prospective owners carefully searching the Internet for a specific type, size, age, or builder that matches their ideal vision of a sailboat. Their goal is to find the best-cared-for used boat of its type in the hope of reducing further investment.

But there is another way to acquire a good old boat. That is to buy a good *new* boat for a long-term relationship. Not many choose that path. I know. I’m an example of the boater whose vision of the right boat changes with the seasons . . . if not of nature, then of life.

Dalliance’s owners fall into the admirable company of those who plan carefully, look beyond today’s whims, and make the right selection in perpetuity. Bob and Linda Graebner still live in the house in Wisconsin they had designed and built almost 30 years ago and in which they raised two daughters, Laura and Melissa. Bob and Linda each held one job for most of their working lives. Bob retired from a successful

practice in neurology and Linda in occupational therapy. *Dalliance* is the Pacific Seacraft 34 they purchased new in 1992. She has since become a good old boat.

A sailing evolution

As a young man, Bob had done some recreational sailing on the small lakes of central Wisconsin. Soon after he and Linda married, they bought a Sunfish for summer sailing. When the kids arrived, they bought a Columbia 23T, one of two trailerable sailboats produced by Columbia Yachts in the mid-1970s. They transported the boat to Door County, Wisconsin, and began sailing on Green Bay. In the summer of

1980, they spent a weekend on a short cruise to Washington Island with their daughters. After a long day and night with all four below in a downpour, they decided to get a larger boat. That fall, they purchased a new Cape Dory 28.

That boat served the family's needs well from 1981 through 1992. During that time, however, "The kids began to lose their enthusiasm for sailing," Bob says, "as they became more interested in their friends and activities than being on a 28-foot boat with Mom and Dad."

Bob and Linda, though not yet near retirement, began thinking about sailing for the long term. They knew they would be sailing alone most of the time and wanted to extend their cruising range within the Great Lakes. Their priorities were safety, quality, comfort, shoal draft, and the ability to sail confidently with good performance over a wide wind range. They attended boat shows and visited a number of dealers, looking at Tartans, Sabres and, finally, the Pacific Seacraft. In addition to being satisfied that the PS 34 met their main requirements, they also were attracted to her classic lines.

A sailboat's evolution

A classic by definition is "judged over a period of time to be of the highest quality and outstanding of its kind."

Over the years Linda and Bob, at right, have owned *Dalliance*, below, they have fitted her out to suit their sailing style. The sail control lines, bottom left, lead to the cockpit; a manual windlass, bottom center, works for them; the helm is well-provided with data displays, bottom right.



This appropriately describes the Pacific Seacraft 34. Its design stems from the Crealock 37, which Bill Crealock designed in the mid-1970s for Clipper Marine after he had already designed a number of trailerable boats for the company. Before building any of the 37-footers, Clipper Marine closed. Cruising Consultants acquired the molds, introduced the Crealock 37 in 1976, and built the first 16 boats before going out of business.

As requested by Clipper Marine, Bill Crealock designed the boat with bluewater intentions. He was particularly interested in good steering and control characteristics in bad weather. In a profile article, Rod Kulbach quotes him as saying, "I've always felt it is a mistake to transfer a racing underbody to a cruising hull. Their purposes are so different. There were some fairly subtle features in the afterbody of the 37 intended to come into play when running at high speed."

Pacific Seacraft acquired the molds to the 37 in 1980 and put the boat into production as the first of a number of cruising designs by Bill Crealock. In one of Pacific Seacraft's early brochures, Bill wrote:

"The 37 is, throughout, aimed at those people who, while wanting a pleasant boat to sail locally, just might want one day a boat able to take them in safety to any part of the world; and this with as much speed and comfort as possible without detracting from seaworthiness. I consider crew fatigue to be a major enemy of seaworthiness,

and this meant an easy motion, dryness, strength, windward ability, a comfortable deep cockpit, a safe interior and, above all, ease of handling and balance with or without steering aids. With a small crew, possibly no longer athletically endowed, these are what make for fast passages."

The Crealock 37 has continued to be successful over the years with close to 400 boats completed. It was inducted into the Sailboat Hall of Fame in 2002, featured by *Fortune* magazine as one of the "100 Best Made Products in the USA," and appeared in both volumes of Ferenc Máté's *World's Best Sailboats*.

Enter the Pacific Seacraft 34

The popularity of the Crealock 37 led to a commission from Pacific Seacraft for Bill Crealock to design a smaller version with the same characteristics. Thus was the protégée, the Pacific Seacraft 34, created in 1984. The boat was perfect for the Graebners, who placed their order in the fall of 1992. The following spring, they christened her *Dalliance*.

The PS 34 was constructed in compliance with ABS certification. The hull is a hand-laid solid laminate using biaxial cloth and isophthalic polyester resin. Below the waterline, the first laminate is made with vinylester resin and the exterior has a three-layer

epoxy barrier coat. A bonded-in-place internal molding incorporates floors and stringers. Primary bulkheads are bonded to the hull and deck and attached with stainless-steel through-bolts to the deck beams. Deck fittings are attached through solid plywood inserts in the balsa-cored deck.

A bulwark is molded into the perimeter of the deck. The bulwark top lands on an inward-turning flange on the hull and is secured to it with stainless-steel bolts to form the hull-to-deck joint, which is covered by a teak caprail.

A sweeping sheerline sets off the slim hull and the canoe stern looks as if it should emerge from a full-keel underbody. However, below the waterline the hull has a long fin keel with bolted-on lead ballast and a substantial full-depth skeg that supports the rudder and shields the prop in a well-protected aperture. The boat was offered with the conventional keel drawing 4 feet 11 inches or a Scheel keel that reduced the draft to 4 feet 1 inch. Bob chose the shallow-draft version, a decision he's glad he made as the lake levels have gone down over the years. The most recent PS 34 hull number is 336, so this design has almost equaled the PS 37 in popularity. A search of Yachtworld.com in late 2011 turned up an equal number, 13, of both the 37 and 34 for sale on the used-boat market. The prices for both

“A sweeping sheerline sets off the slim hull and the canoe stern.”



A full-sized chart table, at left, makes navigating a pleasure, and Linda's reupholstered cushions bring luxury to the V-berth, at right.



The fixed saloon table, at left, provides solid handholds and a home for the ship's wine. Nothing betters the classic cabin layout, above, with its straight settees and nav desk and galley aft.

models were quite similar and generally higher than for other boats of comparable size, a reflection of the inherent quality of the boats.

In 2007, Pacific Seacraft was acquired by its fourth owner. Steve Brodie, currently president of Pacific Seacraft, and his father, Reid, purchased the company and moved production and many key construction personnel to Washington, North Carolina. They continue to market the entire Crealock-designed range from 31 to 44 feet. In addition to building new boats, Steve, in recognition of the initial build quality of Pacific Seacraft yachts, began a refit program. Many owners of older boats have shown interest in this service and the yard crew has completed many projects ranging from a simple reupholstery job to a complete rebuild. The company is also the central source for parts for Pacific Seacraft boats of all vintages.

Diligent maintenance

The Graebners have had no need for anything approaching a total rebuild. Since taking delivery, Bob has kept the boat at the docks and yard of Yachtworks in Sister Bay, Wisconsin. For the past 20 years, Bob has entrusted Yachtworks with the care of *Dalliance*. Each fall, prior to haulout, he meets with the service team at Yachtworks to prepare the winter work order. The boat is hauled, cleaned, and stored in a heated storage facility. This protects the boat from the harsh winter weather of northern Wisconsin and keeps the interior of the boat warm and dry.

All exposed brightwork receives at least two coats of varnish each season. This is a substantial annual financial commitment, but Bob believes traditional brightwork is an essential part of the look of the boat. The hull and topsides are power buffed and waxed. The engine

and all systems are inspected and winterized before storage. Routine replacement of belts and impellers is performed and logged in the boat's service record.

Admittedly, this is an ideal maintenance program. When asked about the cost of such a comprehensive service package, Kent Pahlow, service coordinator at Yachtworks, says, "It varies with the size and type of boat, but if the owner is able to budget about 10 percent of the value of the boat, it should pay for a professional maintenance package." That may seem excessive to many, but this level of maintenance has allowed Bob and Linda to enjoy 20 years of trouble-free sailing on a perfect boat.

The PS 34 was offered with an option of either a bulkhead-mounted folding table or a securely fixed table in the center of the cabin. "We chose the fixed table, as it provides excellent



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handholds for moving fore and aft in heavy weather," Bob says. "Besides, the built-in table storage is ideal for our wine supply."

A galley to port and a dedicated navigation station round out the cabin furnishings. The quality of the joiner-work far surpasses that of most production builders. Annually, Bob oils the generous amount of teak in the boat's cabin and Linda recently reupholstered the cushions in neutral shades of leather. A propane heater in her cozy saloon takes the chill out of late-summer evenings and 12 screened opening ports and hatches let in the summer breeze throughout the accommodations.

To add to the livability of the interior, Bob has designed and had several custom storage and workspace solutions built. He has also modified the original lighting and is gradually adapting it to new LED technology. Over the boat's 20-year lifespan, the electronic navigation equipment has been upgraded twice. The service department at Yachtworks has also carried out other special projects, such as installing electronics, replacing sails, and doing custom woodwork.

Safe and seaworthy

The cockpit in *Dalliance* is comfortable and secure for a crew of two in the heaviest of conditions. All sail-control lines are led aft to the cockpit, providing safety at sea . . . but also creating lots of line to deal with in a tight space. The wheel specified on the boat is well-sized and securely mounted but requires anyone


moving forward or aft in the cockpit to do a lateral limbo.

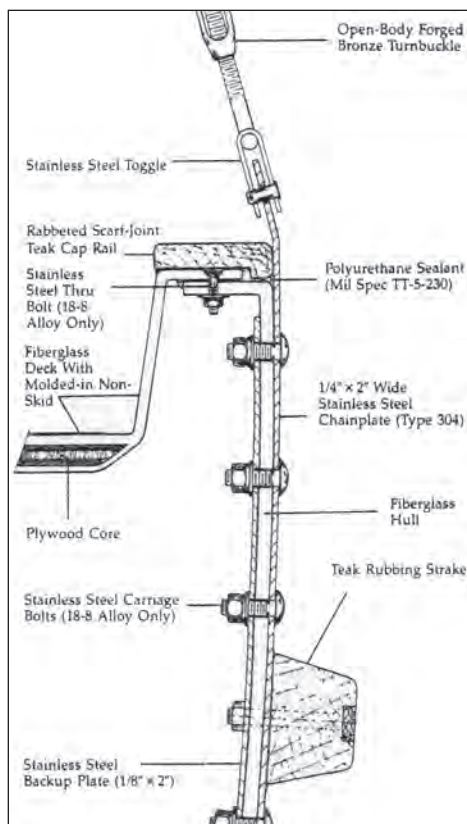
"One of the most requested modifications we have carried out over the past few years has been replacement of the wheel with a tiller," Steve Brodie says. The boat is so well balanced that a tiller is fine for control. This modification opens up the cockpit and is particularly beneficial for those who do a lot of singlehanded sailing, as it greatly

improves access to the sail-control lines at the forward end of the cockpit.

Moving forward from the cockpit to the bow, crew will find the sidedecks are secure with many well-located handholds, although her narrow beam requires deckhands to be agile and observant. The boat is fitted with a double-head rig (both roller furling) and the mainsail has two reefs. For a boat with so many modern conveniences, Bob's choice of a manual anchor windlass is surprising. He feels it is more than adequate, however, and it requires little maintenance.

The Pacific Seacraft 34 appears to meet the goals Bill Crealock had in mind. "She's a dry vessel in rough seas and her balanced helm makes it easy for the Autohelm," Bob says.

Dalliance, after 20 years of use, proves the value of high-quality construction combined with a program of fastidious maintenance. So the choice is there: find a tired used boat and rebuild her, a well-cared-for boat that can be cleaned up, or buy a new one with the intent of sailing her for more than 20 years. In any case, the end product is a good old boat. 



This detail from a Pacific Seacraft 34 brochure illustrates how the hull and deck are joined and the chainplates are fastened.

Bill Jacobs has spent the last 48 years in sailboats and powerboats. His marine photography is displayed in galleries, private collections, and museums and has appeared in boating publications. His articles have been published in boating publications since 2004. Bill winters in Sarasota, Florida, and cruises on a Mainship 34. In the summer he can be found sailing his Cape Dory Typhoon on Lake Michigan off the shores of Door County, Wisconsin.



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The Pacific Seacraft 34 . . .

. . . and canoe-stern contemporaries

by Rob Mazza

This really is a subset of yacht design: canoe-stern fin-keeled cruising boats. I say “canoe stern” rather than “double-ender” because, to me, “double-ender” implies a much sharper stern, often with an outboard rudder, as typified by the Westsail 32 introduced in 1971.

One of the first designers to realize it was possible to increase the performance of cruising boats by incorporating a more modern fin-keel/skeg-rudder underbody beneath this North Sea-inspired design aesthetic was Bob Perry, when he designed the Valiant 40 in 1974. In 1978, Bill Crealock introduced his iteration on this theme with what would become the Pacific Seacraft 37. From a marketing point of view, I look at these fin-keeled canoe-stern boats as a “second generation” of the North Sea breed, with a more modern underbody for better performance but no dramatic alteration to the appearance above the waterline to detract from their globe-girdling aesthetics. However, each style has distinctly different origins (see “Double-enders and Canoe Sterns,” page 16).

The success of the Pacific Seacraft 37 led the company to introduce the smaller 34 in 1984 and the 31 in 1987. Apparently, neither Pacific Seacraft nor Bill Crealock was married to the canoe stern, since the 31 sported a conventional transom.

For comparison to the PS 34, I chose the Valiant 32, since a review of the type would not be complete without a Perry design, and the Thomas Gillmer-designed Southern Cross 35.


As was our feature boat, almost all of these fin-keel boats were available with a shoal-draft option. This complicates the comparison somewhat, since the shoal-draft keel is inevitably heavier than the deep keel to compensate for its higher center of gravity. However, the weight of the shoal-draft ballast is seldom mentioned in the literature, and if it is, the published displacement is seldom increased accordingly. For that reason, the table shows the numbers for the deep-draft Pacific Seacraft 34. Indeed, the whole question of published vs. actual displacement is an aside that would be fruitless to pursue. For instance, due to an error in the hull-laminate schedule,

the Southern Cross 35 ended up with essentially twice the amount of glass specified, increasing the displacement from the published 14,500 pounds to 17,700 pounds!

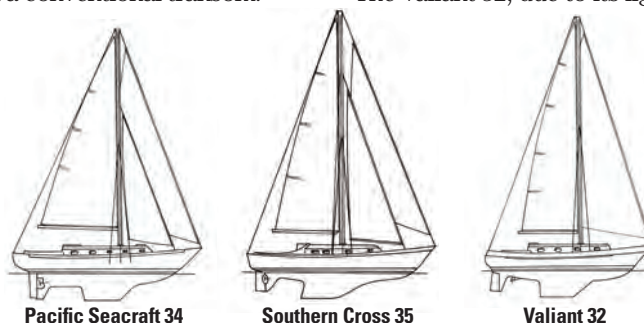
When you look at the numbers, what you see with respect to “modern” standards are heavier, moderately canvased, seakindly boats. Due to its heavier displacement, the shoal-draft feature boat would have a slightly higher D/L (343) and slightly lower SA/D (15.0). Increasing ballast weight to achieve the same sailing stability with shoal draft never helps either of these ratios and always lowers performance, but the opening up of shoal-water cruising grounds is often a worthwhile trade-off.

Comparing these boats around an imaginary racecourse would be misleading, as they were not being sold on racecourse performance but on “bluewater” capability, real or imagined, to owners more drawn to distant horizons than race trophies. With that in mind, the only numbers of real importance are the capsize number and the comfort ratio — safety and comfort. All these boats meet the criteria, with the Pacific Seacraft 34, primarily due to narrow beam, topping out with the lowest capsize number of 1.68 and a comfort ratio almost equal to that of the Southern Cross 35. The Valiant 32, due to its lighter displacement and shorter

overhangs, brings up the rear with 29 and 1.83 respectively, well within tolerable numbers for a cruising boat. Strictly by the numbers, however, that same lighter displacement could give the Valiant 32 the edge in a good old boat regatta.

Whether any of these boats would perform differently or have logged fewer offshore miles in comfort and safety with a well-designed conventional transom is a moot point, since by its very existence and by its well-earned offshore reputation, the canoe or cruiser stern is now closely associated with exactly this type of cruising adventure. 

Rob Mazza is a Good Old Boat contributing editor. A sailor by passion and yacht designer by vocation, he began his long career around sailboats with C&C Yachts back when now good old C&Cs were cutting-edge new.



	Pacific Seacraft 34	Southern Cross 35	Valiant 32
LOA	34' 1"	35' 3"	32' 0"
LWL	26' 3"	28' 0"	26' 0"
Beam	10' 0"	11' 5"	10' 5"
Draft	4' 11"	4' 11"	5' 2"
Displacement	13,500 lb	17,710 lb	11,800 lb
Ballast	4,800 lb	5,750 lb	4,700 lb
LOA/LWL	1.30	1.26	1.23
Beam/LWL	0.38	0.41	0.40
Disp./LWL	333	360	300
Bal/Disp.	.36	.33	.40
Sail area	534 sq ft	632 sq ft	524 sq ft
SA/Disp.	15.0	14.9	16.2
Capsize Number	1.68	1.76	1.83
Comfort ratio	34	35	29
Year introduced	1984	1978	1976
Designer	Bill Crealock	Thomas Gillmer	Robert Perry



When selecting comparison boats for the Pacific Seacraft 34 (see page 15), I differentiated, in my mind at least, between double-enders and boats with the canoe stern. I did this because I believe each has its own and distinct origin.

The double-ender is a Northern European design tradition that traces its past to the Vikings and the ships of England's Cinque Ports. After the stern-hung rudder replaced the steering oar in the early 13th century, these craft evolved into the Hansa Cog. Stern castles were introduced a little later and transoms soon followed, but the double-ender tradition still continued. It is best known in more modern times through the designs of Colin Archer, a Scot transplanted via Australia to Norway where, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, he designed rescue craft and pilot boats. (Colin Archer also designed *Fram*, Roald Amundsen's vessel for his North and South Pole expeditions.) It was through these pilot and rescue vessels that the "classic" Colin Archer double-ender evolved, with wide beam, heavy displacement, stern-hung rudder, short overhangs, and full-length keel.

Several reasons are cited for the advantage of the double-ender configuration in this capacity, including that in really rough conditions, especially in a following sea, "the stern often becomes the bow" (Bill Crealock). The most logical explanation I have heard is that Archer's pilot boats and rescue boats often had to go alongside larger vessels to either drop off pilots or rescue crew. When parting company with these vessels, the coxswain wanted to quickly put the helm up and turn away without the transom making contact with the larger vessel and impeding the turn.

The Westsail 32, above, set a trend for double-ended cruising yachts with outboard rudders that evolved from a hull shape designed by Colin Archer for pilot boats and lifeboats, at right.

Double-enders

They grew from similar philosophies but have roots an ocean apart

by Rob Mazza

The double-ender suited this purpose beautifully. This is one reason that all lifeboats are also double-enders.

However, it was only after William Atkin adapted the Archer form to smaller boats to produce his 32-foot Eric design in the 1920s for William Nutting, his editor at *Motor Boat* magazine, that the concept gained a firm foothold in North America. Atkin's Eric concept was further popularized in the late '60s with Robin Knox-Johnston's voyage in *Suhaili*, an Eric built in India. The production fiberglass Westsail 32, with design input from Bill Crealock, quickly followed and became the model that started the trend to double-ended sailboats designed expressly for cruising.

Canoes for cruising

At about the same time that Colin Archer was designing his Norwegian rescue and pilot boats there emerged, primarily in Britain and later in the U.S., a fascination with canoe yachting. This was yachting for "everyman," the beginning of small-boat cruising. It started in canoes and, later, sailing canoes, and was popularized by the writings of John MacGregor, who in 1865 had built an English version of a North American canoe. He named the boat *Rob Roy* and wrote four very popular books over the next several years describing his many voyages through Britain and Europe in that boat and various other *Rob Roys*.

I said an "English version" of a North American canoe, since these canoes were far removed from their birch-bark ancestors. They quickly evolved into ballasted yawl-rigged sailing vessels but, although they retained their canoe sterns, their rudders were mounted under water on the stern post. (My esteemed predecessor in the Boat Comparison pages, Ted Brewer, designed his own version of the canoe yawl in



and canoe sterns



Designers have drawn many versions of the canoe stern. K. Aage Nielson's *Snow Star*, at left, has tumblehome and a real canoe pinch, while Bill Crealock's Pacific Seacraft 37, below, is closer to the Albert Strange model.

Bob ascribes “marketing” as the primary motive for his introducing this stern shape on the Valiant 40.

Natural extension

Another subset that is also sometimes captured in the double-ender category is the extended aft overhang.

The lines plan for any yacht with a transom is originally drawn with the lines extended past the transom to ensure fairness in the after end. The transom is then drawn in and the lines aft of it are left as dashed lines, indicating that they exist in imagination only. If, however, the designer wished the boat to be built with this non-truncated aft overhang, the result is a special flight of fancy in yacht design. These are seldom seen today, but the heyday of long overhangs, most notably under either the Universal Rule in North America or the International Rule in Europe in the '20s and '30s, produced some fascinating “pintail” sterns, often coming to a pronounced point. L. Francis Herreshoff is associated with a number of these designs. These double-enders were certainly never conceived as globetrotting cruising boats in the modern definition.

I have to say that, in my many years in the profession, I have never been associated with a designer or a builder of any double-ender or canoe-stern sailboat. This concept is now exclusively applied to offshore cruising boats or to boats designed to look like they are capable of offshore cruising. I think the jury is still out, among designers at any rate, whether “pointy ends” really do achieve all they are supposed to, but there is no doubt that people now associate them with long passages on the open ocean. *✍*

Rob Mazza's bio appears on page 15.



the Rob Roy 23 for Marine Concepts in Florida in 1983 (see *Good Old Boat*, May 2003).

The sailing canoe also evolved separately into a purely racing vessel with sliding seats, with which the famous English designer Uffa Fox is most identified. But in the late 19th and early 20th centuries the canoe yawl and the canoe yacht served an important role in opening “yachting” to the middle classes, with the noted American yachting historian W.P. Stephens being an early proponent and builder and a founding member of the American Canoe Association. This “canoe stern” in yachts evolved into a pointed aft overhang, with the rudder mounted under water on the stern post forward of the aft overhang and completely separate from it.

These craft had nothing to do with Norwegian pilot boats. The designer most closely associated with this concept was the Englishman Albert Strange, who popularized the canoe stern on small yachts with yawl rigs before the First World War. Again, the only similarity to the original canoe concept was now the pointed stern. In all other aspects, with their wider beam, deeper draft, and either internal or external ballast on full keels, these were now small yachts designed to be sailed by the owner either singlehanded or with a small crew.

From canoe to cruiser stern

These canoe sterns were relatively fine, providing room only for a lazarette or a place to step the mizzenmast. The cockpit was located forward of the stern post, and steering was almost always accomplished with a tiller. However, in more recent times, as the canoe stern has been adopted by larger designs, the use of wheel steering has allowed the cockpit, with no mizzenmast in the way, to creep aft into what would have been the lazarette. This necessitated the widening or rounding of the canoe stern into a cruiser stern or even a counter stern configuration to gain more width at the back end of the cockpit. Bob Perry, in particular, mastered this concept, and added his own touch by introducing tumblehome into the design. But even

The Gaff-Rigged Sail 101

Antique technology that still finds favor

by Don Launer

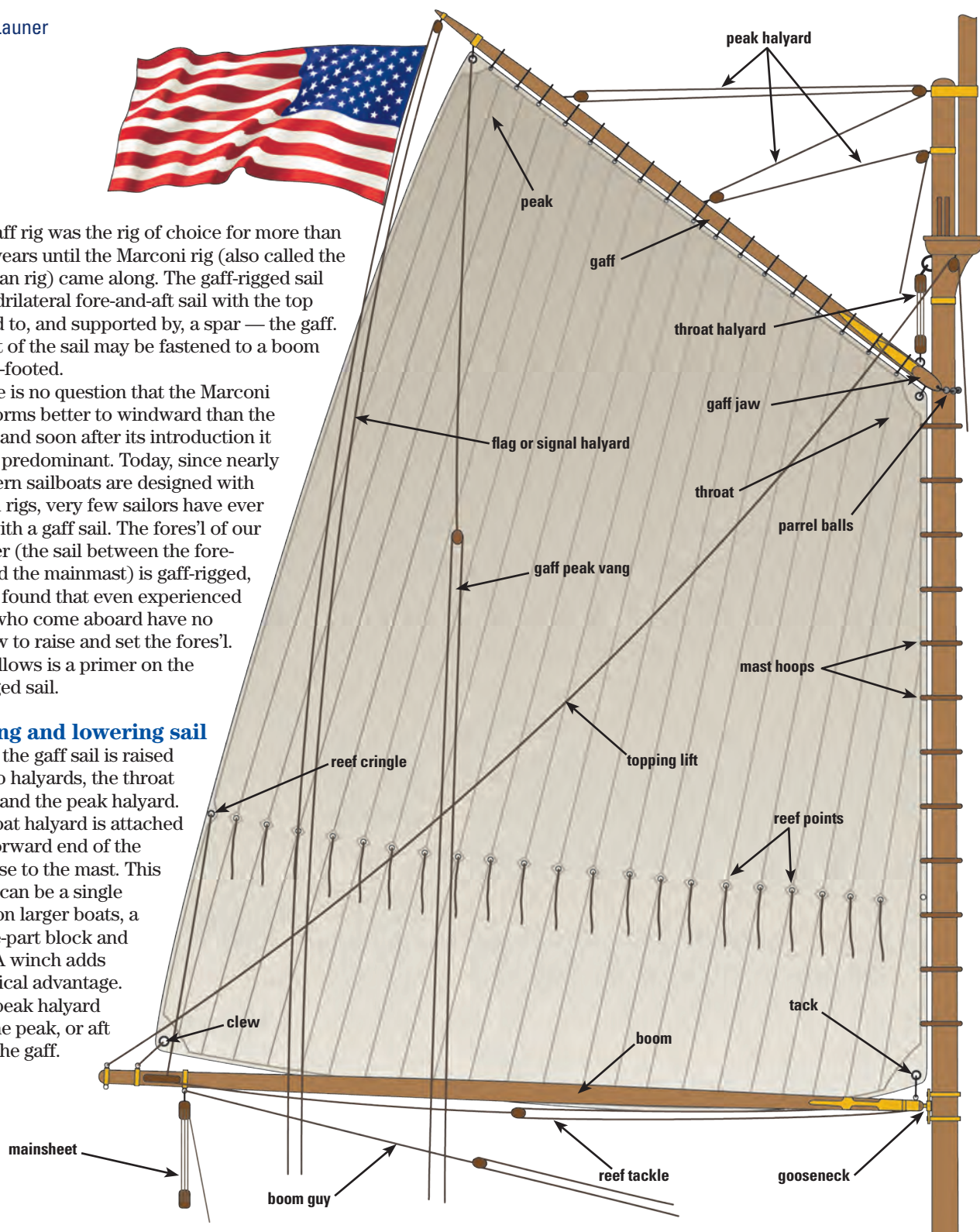
The gaff rig was the rig of choice for more than 250 years until the Marconi rig (also called the Bermudan rig) came along. The gaff-rigged sail is a quadrilateral fore-and-aft sail with the top attached to, and supported by, a spar — the gaff. The foot of the sail may be fastened to a boom or loose-footed.

There is no question that the Marconi rig performs better to windward than the gaff rig, and soon after its introduction it became predominant. Today, since nearly all modern sailboats are designed with Marconi rigs, very few sailors have ever sailed with a gaff sail. The fores'l of our schooner (the sail between the fore-mast and the mainmast) is gaff-rigged, and I've found that even experienced sailors who come aboard have no idea how to raise and set the fores'l. What follows is a primer on the gaff-rigged sail.

Hoisting and lowering sail

Usually, the gaff sail is raised with two halyards, the throat halyard and the peak halyard. The throat halyard is attached to the forward end of the gaff, close to the mast. This halyard can be a single line or, on larger boats, a multiple-part block and tackle. A winch adds mechanical advantage.

The peak halyard raises the peak, or aft end, of the gaff.



This halyard is attached to the gaff with either a gaff bridle or one or more blocks attached to the gaff. When a bridle is used, the peak halyard slides along the bridle as the angle of the gaff changes. This is accomplished with either a small block or a saddle on the bridle. On larger boats with longer and heavier gaffs, there are sometimes several bridles along the gaff.

If multiple-part block and tackles are used to hoist the sail, the throat halyard and the peak halyard must have the same ratio. That is, if the throat halyard is a 2:1 block and tackle, then the peak halyard should also be a 2:1 block and tackle. When the sail is hoisted, the crew work the halyards together as if they were a single halyard.

As the sail is hoisted, the gaff is horizontal. Eventually, the throat halyard comes to a stop as the luff of the sail becomes taut. At that point, the throat halyard is tensioned and cleated off. The gaff is then raised up from horizontal to a more vertical position with the peak halyard until the leech is tight. The peak halyard is then also tensioned and cleated off.

When lowering the sail, the procedure is reversed. After the gaff is lowered to the horizontal position with the peak halyard, the two halyards are used as one to lower the sail the rest of the way.

Lazy-jacks are particularly useful with the gaff sail. They act as a topping lift to support the boom and contain the sail and the gaff, preventing both from dropping on deck.

Trimming sail


Once hoisted, the gaff sail is trimmed the same way as a Marconi sail, using the sheet, traveler, outhaul, Cunningham, and boom vang. One additional piece of running rigging used for trimming is unique to the gaff sail, and that is the gaff vang, or gaff peak vang. The gaff vang attaches to the peak of the gaff, either directly or with a block, and is led down to the windward rail. On a schooner, where there is a mast just aft of the gaff sail, the gaff vang is led back to the mast and then down to deck level. This gaff vang allows the gaff to be adjusted to eliminate sail twist, vastly improving the performance and windward ability of the gaff sail.

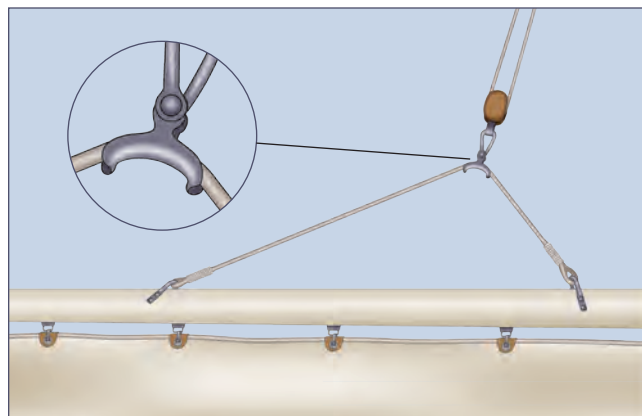
One associated sail-trimming maneuver and term is unknown to today's Marconi-rig sailors: scandalizing. When the peak halyard is released, the peak of the gaff drops down and the sail is almost completely and instantly de-powered. Scandalizing the sail in this way is a very useful tactic when the boat is hit by a sudden squall.

Attaching the sail to the spars

In early gaff rigs, the gaff, and sometimes the boom, rode up and down the mast with "jaws" loosely holding it in place. The luff of the gaff sail was often held in place with wooden hoops that encircled the mast. Usually, the head of the sail was lashed to the gaff and the foot was lashed to the boom.

Some gaff rigs today have replaced these ancient methods with the same technology used in Marconi rigs. The gaff, and sometimes the boom, has a gooseneck fitting that rides up a sail track on the mast. The gaff and boom spars are fitted with sail tracks that take either the sail's bolt rope or track slides, bringing the rig into the 21st century.

So now, when you're crewing aboard our schooner and I ask you to raise the gaff fores'l, you'll know exactly what to do. 



As the gaff is raised into a more vertical position the peak halyard changes its position on the gaff bridle. This is often accomplished by using a gaff bridle saddle.



This peak halyard is attached to the gaff using a single bridle. The mechanical advantage of this halyard is 2:1.



The peak halyard of this heavier gaff is attached using two bridles and has a 4:1 mechanical advantage.



Sometimes, instead of using a bridle, the peak halyard is fastened directly to the gaff. This peak halyard has a 4:1 mechanical advantage.

Don Launer, a Good Old Boat contributing editor, built his two-masted schooner, Delphinus, from a bare hull. He has held a USCG captain's license for more than 38 years and has written five books. All of his 101 articles are now available for downloading as a collection from the Good Old Boat download website, <www.audioseastories.com>. Look under Archive eXtractions.

Catalina 34

A spacious coastal cruiser

by Tom Wells

Bob Barclay, a professional home inspector, and his wife, Cyndi, owned and sailed a Catalina 28 on Missouri's Mark Twain Lake. While they both agreed that the 28 was a nice boat, they wanted more room on board. When a well-cared-for Catalina 34 became available in nearby Illinois, Bob investigated and was sold on the boat's quality. Since then, *Wind Dancer*, Bob and Cyndi's Catalina 34, has become a familiar sight to the sailors on Mark Twain Lake and the Barclays have been enjoying the boat's spacious interior and good sailing qualities.

History

Frank Butler began his design career in 1966 as co-designer of the Coronado 25 and followed that moderate success with his own Coronado 15 and Omega 14 designs. In 1969, he envisioned a small, swing-keel cruiser that would open up recreational sailing to many more people. The Catalina 22 was born and with it a modern success story: Catalina Yachts. Although Frank had only modest expectations for his 22, it proved wildly popular. Within two years he had introduced the Catalina 27 and by 1976 his landmark Catalina 30 was launched. The Catalina 25 followed in 1978 and the Catalina 36 began production in

1982. Each of these designs was a huge success and they catapulted Catalina Yachts into the forefront of recreational sailboat production.

In 1986, the company introduced the Catalina 34. It had spacious accommodations, satisfying performance, and an attractive price tag at around \$45,000. The first boats were produced with a deck-stepped mast, but beginning in 1987 they stepped the mast on the keel. As the design evolved over the years, a sugar-scoop transom that allowed a narrow swim step was introduced and was followed by a walk-through transom in 1989. Engine options also were upgraded. In 1996, the Catalina 34 Mark II was introduced and, while its lines are somewhat different, it retains much of what was learned in the production of the original 34.

Catalina remains one of the most prolific sailboat builders in history and has sold more than 60,000 boats. The company continues to produce a great number of cruising sailboats and currently builds at least 10 models ranging from the Catalina 22 Sport to the Catalina 470. Vice president and partner Gerry Douglas designs most new models these days, but Frank Butler maintains an active role in the company he founded.

Construction

Catalina built the 34 hull using a solid hand layup of fiberglass fabric and polyester resin. Wooden stringers were added and glassed along the bilge to stiffen the hull structure. The fiberglass interior liner runs from bow to stern, with key openings in critical places to provide access below for storage, through-hulls, wiring, and plumbing.

Decks are balsa cored, with plywood core used in higher stress zones, and a low toerail is molded around the perimeter. The hull-to-deck joint is a shoebox arrangement formed by overlapping the downturned deck flange on the mating hull surface with a sealant in between. An aluminum rubrail is fastened with bolts that pass through the deck flange, hull, and liner and are secured with washers and nuts on the inside. Catalina used a trademark tan rubber insert fitted into a slot in the rubrail to cover the bolt heads. A blue cove stripe applied below the rubrail gives the boat the double-stripe look that's a characteristic of Catalinas.

The lead keel is secured with stainless-steel bolts. A fin keel with 5-foot 7-inch draft and a wing keel with 4-foot 3-inch draft were available. The keels were faired with glass and gelcoat. One problem area has been the



The anchor locker, at left, holds a second anchor and rode but makes fitting a windlass difficult. The T-shaped cockpit, at right, allows easy movement around the pedestal. Note the rudder head under the helm seat where it's accessible if there is a need to fit an emergency tiller.



Bob and Cyndi Barclay's *Wind Dancer* is a fine example of the Catalina 34, a handsome boat with pleasing proportions.

bond between this fairing and the underlying lead. Spade rudders were fitted with depths to match the keel configuration. Some owners have reported minor issues with water in the rudder.

Rig

The Catalina 34 rig has single spreaders with single upper shrouds and dual lowers attached to chainplates that penetrate the deck near the cabin trunk. Stainless-steel tie rods attach to the chainplates belowdecks, their lower ends secured through a heavy stringer that runs along the liner-to-hull interface. The tie rods are exposed in the cabin interior. Water leakage at the chainplates and resulting deck core damage is a common issue. Catalina Yachts has made available a redesigned chainplate that provides a much better seal at the deck.

A split backstay connects to chainplates through-bolted at the outboard corners of the transom.

The mainsheet is attached at the midpoint of the aluminum boom and leads to a cabintop traveler mounted over the aft end of the sea hood for the companionway hatch. Maxwell 30 two-speed winches are on either side of the companionway to handle lines run aft. The primary winches are Maxwell 46 two-speed self-tailers. A curved T-track

runs alongside the cabin trunk aft of the chainplates for the genoa-sheet lead, and a second T-track is mounted on the molded toerail for outboard sheeting.

Deck layout

The Catalina molded non-skid surface is fairly aggressive. Together with the wide sidedecks, the inboard chainplate location, and teak grabrails along the whole length of the fairly flat cabintop, this makes the deck areas secure for crew going forward and working at the mast.

Between a hatch over the saloon aft of the mast and large smoked-Lexan fixed portlights in the cabin sides, the saloon receives ample light. Dorade vents located just forward of the traveler on either side of the sea hood and three opening ports forward on each side provide ventilation. A large hatch on the forward slope of the cabin trunk provides light and ventilation for the V-berth.

The foredeck is large and open, and the sizable anchor locker provides stowage space for a Danforth-type anchor as well as the rode and chain for a primary anchor. The primary anchor is stowed on a bow roller that's cleverly integrated into the hull molding. A beefy cleat on a shelf at the aft end of the anchor locker provides a secure attachment point for the rode. There is no apparent provision for mounting a

windlass, and doing so would require modifications to the locker area and the locker cover.

Mooring cleats of ample size are fitted port and starboard, but there are no chocks, and there appears to be little room to mount them. The stainless-steel bow pulpit effectively encloses the area where the anchor is handled.

Double $\frac{3}{16}$ -inch coated lifelines attach at the bow pulpit and run through stainless-steel stanchions. The stanchion nearest the aft end of the cabin trunk is braced and the lifelines between it and the stern pulpit can be dropped for dockside access. The stern pulpit is made in two sections with an opening that's filled by a stainless-steel stern ladder in its raised position. A lifeline section with a pelican hook secures the raised ladder to close the opening when the boat is under way.

The cockpit is wide and roomy with seats to port and starboard providing actual sleeping lengths of more than 6 feet. The 40-inch wheel is mounted to a standard Edson pedestal and the T configuration of the cockpit allows access around the wheel to the helm seat aft. The arched helm seat assures secure seating at the wheel when the boat is heeled.

Wide coamings provide fairly comfortable seatbacks as well as



With an abundance of fixed and opening portlights, the saloon is bright and airy, at left. While compact, the galley has everything one needs: a deep double sink, an icebox, and a two-burner stove with oven, at right. A nice touch is the hinged counter section to provide more workspace.

mounting locations for the primary winches. There are convenient cubbies in the coamings for winch handles and other items. Cockpit lockers are located beneath the port and starboard seats, although the aft cabin limits their depth. There is also a locker beneath the helm seat that contains properly vented secure storage for the onboard propane gas supply.

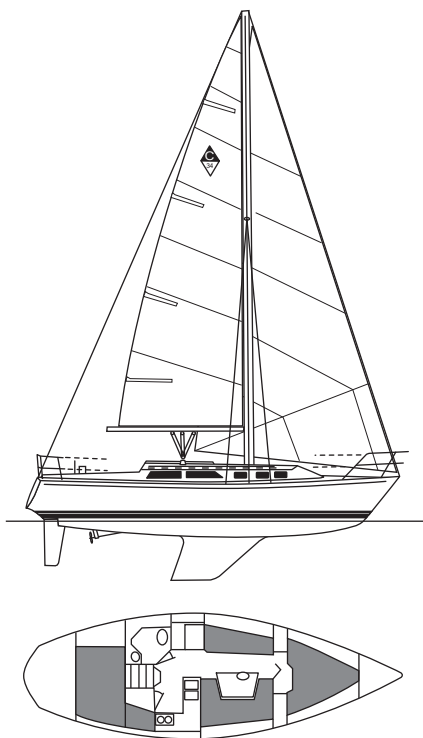
The Catalina 34 has a raised bridge deck at the companionway entrance. In place of the standard dropboards, *Wind Dancer* has custom hinged doors.

Belowdecks

A primary feature of the Catalina 34 is its interior space. Forward, the V-berth is very large and accommodating. With more than 6 feet of length available and with the center insert in place, it's a comfortable berth for two. A hanging locker to starboard, drawers to port, and a wide raised shelf over the foot of the berth provide ample storage.

A teak bulkhead and privacy door separate the V-berth from the saloon, which is open and bright with lots of light from the large fixed ports and overhead hatch. The teak-and-holly sole, teak trim, and teak ceilings on the inner hull surface provide warmth, while exposed white sections beneath the seats and the white headliner prevent it from being overly dark. The keel-stepped mast is at the forward port corner of a teak table that serves a U-shaped settee to starboard. The table drops to convert the settee to a convenient double berth. A straight settee to port provides a single berth.

The navigation station is on the aft end of the port settee, which is also



the nav seat. Storage space is provided under the hinged chart-table top and in a cabinet with a louvered door aft of the nav station. Electric panels and the radio are located above the chart table.

The galley lies to starboard and aft of the U-shaped dining area. The forward portion of the galley has double stainless-steel sinks inboard and counter space over the icebox compartment outboard. Hot and cold pressurized water is drawn from a 25-gallon tank forward under the V-berth and a 45-gallon tank to starboard. A folding shelf along the center aisle can be opened to add counter space to port of the sinks. A two-burner propane stove with an oven is mounted along the hull aft of the icebox, and the space above counter level and along the hull contains storage for utensils and foodstuffs.

A door just inboard of the stove provides access to the aft cabin, which is fitted with a dressing seat along the starboard hull near the door and a queen-sized berth that extends athwartships beneath the cockpit sole and the storage lockers.

The head compartment is aft of the nav station and accessed through a door to port of the companionway. It contains a marine toilet on a fiberglass liner platform, a stainless-steel vanity sink with a combination faucet/showerhead, and a teak shower seat. The sole liner in the head drains to a shower sump with a separate discharge, and the toilet discharges into a 30-gallon holding tank.

Headroom is generally 6 feet 3 inches, but a number of bolts capped with acorn nuts on the headliner bear watching if you are very tall.

Catalina 34

Designer: Frank Butler
LOA: 34 feet 6 inches
LWL: 29 feet 10 inches
Beam: 11 feet 9 inches
Draft (fin): 5 feet 7 inches
Draft (wing): 4 feet 3 inches
Displacement: 11,950 pounds
Ballast: 5,000 pounds
Sail area: 528 square feet
SA/Disp. ratio: 16
Disp./LWL ratio: 201
Headroom: 6 feet 3 inches
Fuel: Diesel, 23 gallons
Water: 70 gallons
Holding: 30 gallons



The nav station, at left, to port utilizes one end of the settee for a seat. A peek into the aft cabin, above, shows a small seat and the portlights into the cockpit footwell. The head, at right, includes a teak seat for seated showers and even a rack for reading material.



The engine is a three-cylinder Universal M-35 diesel located beneath the companionway steps with very good access. With the steps removed, most service points are easy to reach. A side panel in the aft berth provides additional access. The aluminum fuel tank holds 23 gallons.

Under way

Bob, Cyndi, and their son Dylan welcomed my wife and me for a test sail in winds of 10 to 12 knots. As we backed out of the slip we noted moderate prop walk to port, and the Universal diesel propelled the boat nicely and without undue noise or vibration as we motored out of the marina. The large spade rudder provides good directional stability and helm resistance is not excessive.

Under sail, the boat has a very solid feel and feedback through the large wheel is surprisingly good. Tending the mainsail controls requires a second crew because the traveler and sheet cannot be easily reached from the helm position. The primary winches are within the helmsman's reach. When singlehanding in a good breeze, it's best to ease the main to minimize the need to go forward to adjust the traveler. The boat does have a tendency to round up in gusts if the main is trimmed for speed, but a crew adjusting the traveler to meet the gusts can prevent this and keep the boat driving forward.

We put *Wind Dancer* on several points of sail and she performed adequately on each one. The boat will



The Universal diesel is easily serviced from the space just beneath the companionway stairs.

point to around 35 degrees apparent wind before losing drive. On a beam reach with the main and genoa trimmed for speed, the boat romped off at nearly 6 knots under fingertip helm control, and on a run it was well-balanced with very little tendency to roll. While the helm does not have the immediate feedback of a tiller, it's sensitive enough for the helmsman to know what's needed from him. We found the boat fun to sail while it gave us the secure feel of a larger boat.

We did not have conditions that could provide a sense of the boat's seakeeping ability, but the solid feel and construction of the boat indicate she will likely do fine in most seas. A Catalina 34 makes a reliable coastal cruiser. Some owners have made offshore passages, including at least one to Hawaii from California.

Many Catalina 34 owners race their boats in PHRF fleets. From the

US Sailing listings, a fin-keel Catalina 34 with the standard rig carries an average rating of around 150 seconds per mile, with tall-rig boats rating 141. Wing-keel boats with both rigs rate a few points slower. This makes the Catalina 34 a bit slower than a Hunter 34 at 138 and nearly identical in speed to the C&C 34 centerboard model.

Prices and availability

With so many boats produced, a great many Catalina 34s are for sale at any given time. In early 2012, a quick check found at least 58 available at prices ranging from \$29,000 for a 1986 model to \$62,000 for a 1991 model. The average asking price for these boats is around \$44,000. Parts and support are widely available and the Catalina 34 remains a very popular sailboat. *A*

Tom Wells is a contributing editor with Good Old Boat (and his musical contributions at the Annapolis boat show have also earned him the title of Troubadour). He and his wife, Sandy, own and sail a 1979 Tartan 37, Higher Porpoise. They have been sailing together since the 1970s and look forward to cruising upon retirement.

Resources

Catalina Yachts

www.catalinayachts.com

Catalina 34 International Association

www.c34.org

Installing a cabin heater

A diesel fireplace warms boat, body, and soul

by Burry Vanderveer



Burry's diesel fireplace awaits the New York winter, above. The heat shield protects the bulkhead from heat given off by the flue all the way up to the headliner. The damper halfway up is needed for gusty winds. The Charlie Noble, below, screws into a deck plate so it can be removed and the opening closed in summer.



On the Chesapeake in October you find cruisers migrating south toward warmer climes. My wife and I must have taken a wrong turn, as we found ourselves north in New York Harbor, tied up and prepping for our first winter aboard our 41-foot sailboat. Heat production was clearly going to be a big part of that effort. *Seahawk* has a robust heat pump that did yeoman service on Chesapeake Bay, but looking at the weather history and the heat pump's efficiency curve, I quickly realized that once the water temperature dropped below 38°F, there would be little output. Supplemental heat would be in order and, not willing to rely on marina power, we needed a non-shorepower solution.

Before anything else, we had to determine how much heat we needed. This is driven by many factors, including average temperatures, the degree of insulation in the hull and overhead, and the volume of air to be heated. *Seahawk's* saloon would require a minimum of 8,000 BTU per hour, preferably 10,000 or more.

Weighing the choices

Looking at self-contained systems that did not require a generator, I decided we needed a 12-volt system with minimal power draw. This drove us to a combustion solution. Two major systems fit that bill: forced air, in which air

heated by a flame is pushed to vents, and the more traditional fireplace. We chose the fireplace for lower cost, simplicity, and ambiance. We have friends with a forced-air system and, while these systems produce great heat, the maintenance input every fall was not minimal. We also quickly dismissed, due to the carbon monoxide hazard, any portable heat source that does not vent combustion gases to the exterior.

Shipborne fireplaces are available with several fuel options: solid (wood or pellets), liquid (diesel or kerosene), LPG (propane), or CNG (compressed natural gas). The manufacturers we focused on were Sigmar and Dickinson.

We had propane on board for our stove and knew it to be clean-burning. The other advantage of propane is the dual chimney that isolates the burn chamber from the saloon.

The advantage of using diesel fuel is simplicity, and I felt more comfortable not having to run an additional propane line. A major factor was that we carry a lot more diesel than propane, which meant we would have to make fewer trips for refills.

This thought process drove us to a Dickinson diesel fireplace. We chose a bulkhead-mounted unit, since we lacked the real estate on the cabin sole for a standing model. Two weeks later, we picked up two boxes, one with our fireplace and the bigger one with ancillary equipment to complete the installation.

The overall project cost us \$1,050, with the major expense being the fireplace at \$700, but that was after aggressive shopping. I would estimate the retail cost for this project at \$1,300.

Preparation and planning

At first look, the installation process can be daunting, but by diligently following the instructions, making a plan, and breaking the project into manageable stages, I was able to accomplish it in a full weekend (with about eight hours preparation in the evenings the week before). The main stages I used were preparation (designing and building the backing/mounting board), heater installation, chimney installation, and setting up the fuel and electrical connections.

With a diesel heater, the placement and length of the chimney are key to preventing smoke blowdown. Our overall chimney length is just over 4 feet. To prevent poor combustion, we installed a balanced damper 22 inches above the stovetop to ensure the draft remains stable during wind gusts.

We first built a cardboard mockup that gave us a plan for positioning and the placement of mounting points. On a monohull like ours, the most

convenient location for a fireplace is usually on the forward bulkhead in the saloon facing aft. We tried to mount the fireplace as low as possible to reduce the hot-head/cold-feet effect. By placing it so the top was just below and slightly inboard of the air-conditioning vent, we were able to use the fan-only function of the winterized heat pump to distribute the air very effectively. Without good air circulation, a fireplace can become a toasty heat island while leaving the rest of the saloon cold.

Installation

Using pencil ticks on the bulkhead as reference points, I designed the backing/heat shield. A fireplace mounted on or close to a bulkhead will need a heat shield behind the fireplace and along the chimney path. A sheet of stainless steel is often used for this and can be quite attractive, but we opted for a tile shield that blends nicely with our saloon décor. I used $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch backerboard cut to shape, with 4-inch x 4-inch ceramic tiles mortared to it and appropriate grout in the seams. Once it had cured, I drilled the four mounting holes for the fireplace as well as two more for the chimney part of the shield. To mount the fireplace and shield, I used $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch bolts with washers,

to which I added additional nuts and washers to create a 1-inch standoff between the shield and the bulkhead.

Installing the chimney caused me the greatest anxiety, probably from my strong aversion to drilling a 5-inch hole in our cabintop! A straight chimney is best. To ensure the hole was centered, I drilled a pilot hole from below, using a level to maintain the vertical. This gave me a way to position the deck block we needed, as our cabintop is sloped and the top of the deck plate has to be horizontal to properly accept the vertical flue. I drilled a pilot hole in a block of hardwood, then shaped the bottom of the block to fit the contour of the cabintop.

I attached the shaped block to the cabintop using the pilot holes for reference and glassed it in place. Using a hole saw, I drilled the hole for the chimney in two stages. First, I cut a $5\frac{5}{16}$ -inch-diameter hole 2 inches deep to accommodate my large ABI deckplate. I then cut a 5-inch hole the rest of the way through the cabintop and the headliner for the flue. (I have a bi-metal hole-saw kit that does a great job through fiberglass and wood. Moderate speed and gentle pressure helps minimize splintering.) When the cutting was complete, I cleared



Burry installed the fuel pump, at left, in the head compartment on the back side of the bulkhead from the heater. He bolted the fireplace mounting bracket to the heat shield, center, and bolted the heat shield to the bulkhead separately using nuts and washers to create a stand-off between the shield and the bulkhead. The heat shield is $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick ceramic tiles mortared to $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch backer board and adds a touch of color to the cabin. Bartley the Boat Beagle approved of the project and was most grateful for the effort Burry put in on his behalf.

Interior improvements

away the exposed core of the cabintop, backfilled the void with thickened epoxy, and sanded and painted the deck block.

The final stage was to assemble the flues. In my case, this was one 22-inch length of flue, the balanced damper, and another 22-inch length shortened to ensure a snug fit into the deck fitting. Above deck I have a Charlie Noble chimney top on an 18-inch length of threaded pipe that screws into the deck fitting. This cabintop arrangement allows me to remove the stack and replace it with a deck plate, making the cabintop cleaner (no tripping over the chimney during sail changes), and seals the flue against water ingress. I discovered that it's important to have the dress ring installed onto the cabin liner prior to sealing down the deckplate. This is very difficult to do after the chimney is in place!

Hooking up

The fuel and electrical connections were straightforward. Fuel can be supplied either from a gravity tank

“... the glowing fireplace negates the whirling wind and snow outside.”

filled manually or by a transfer pump or low-pressure direct-feed pump. We chose the electric pump as it allows us to use the fuel directly from a tank and we had no convenient place for a gravity tank.

I teed off my forward diesel tank to the stove filter assembly with a fuel shutoff. From the filter, an ABYC-approved fuel line runs to the low-pressure pump that has a maximum head of 3 feet and must be mounted at the same height as the metering valve. Two copper tubes are needed, the first from the pump to the fuel-metering valve and the second an overflow line from the metering valve to a small catch bottle. For power, I ran 12-gauge tinned wire from a spare 5-amp breaker on my DC panel to the pump and then on to the fireplace draft-assist fan. The pump is rated at 4 amps and the fan at 2 amps

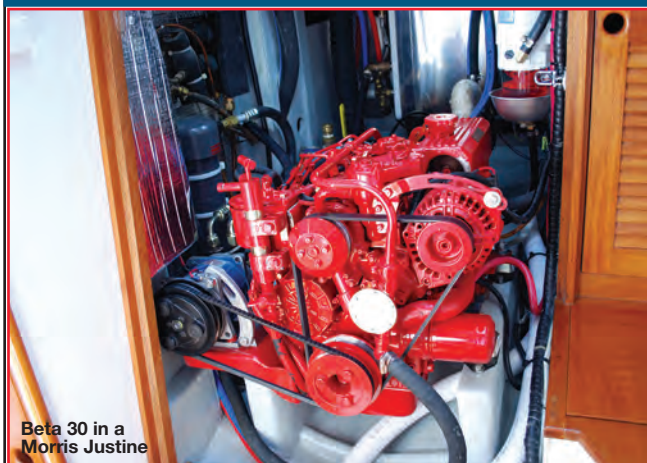
on high, but I have never seen the fireplace draw more than 2 amps.

Once we were done with the installation, the only thing left to do was to light the fireplace and enjoy it. I love lying on the settee of an evening, reading a good book while the glowing fireplace negates the whirling wind and snow outside. The dry heat is very comforting and the glow of the flame warms the soul! *A*

Burry Vanderveer and his wife, Wendy, have lived aboard Seahawk since 2008. When he retired in 2010 after 34 years in the Army, they began cruising in earnest: south from New York City to Florida and the Bahamas. He has done many DIY boat projects from major (repowering) to minor (converting to LED lighting) and has replaced or renewed most of the boat's systems.

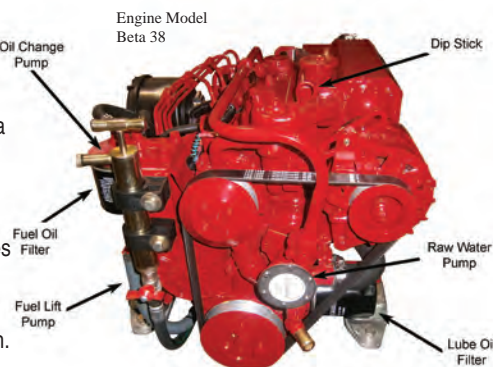
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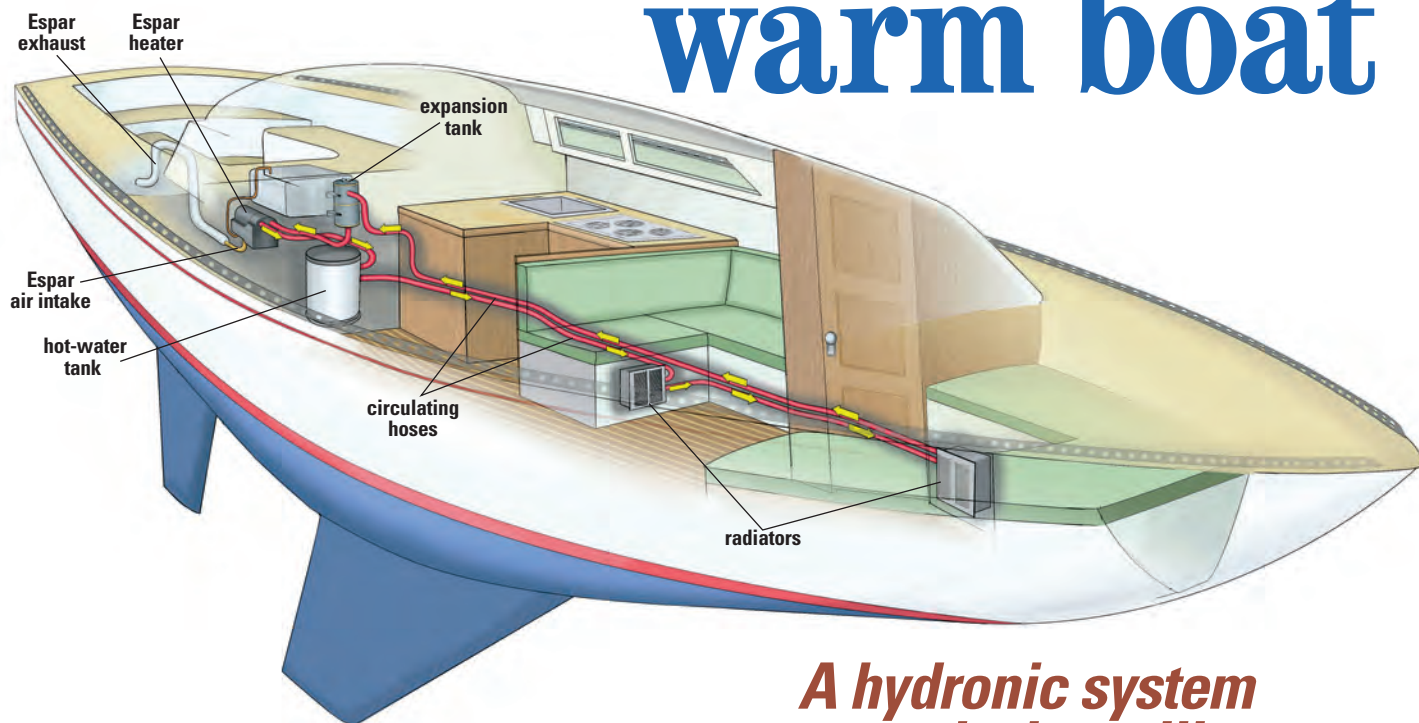
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Some of our installations

Engine Model	Vessel	Engine Model	Vessel
Beta 14 (BZ482)	Albin Vega	Beta 38 (BV1505)	Sabre 38Mk1
	Cape Dory 28		Valiant 37
Beta 16 (BZ602)	Tartan 30		Westail 32
Beta 20 (BD722)	Contessa 32	Beta 43 (BV2003)	Valiant 40
	Island Packet 27	Beta 50 (BV2203)	Bristol 41.1
	Pearson Vanguard		Hinckley B-40
Beta 25 (BD902)	Alberg 35		Morgan 41 OI
	Morgan OI 33		Morgan 45
Beta 28 (BD1005)	Alberg 37	Beta 60 (BV2403)	CSY 44
	Pearson 35		

Hot water, warm boat



A hydronic system extends the sailing (and showering) season

The schematic, above, shows the layout of the various and sundry components of the heating system, below.

by Graham Collins

Our C&C 35, *Secret Plans*, was previously used as a racing boat, so the hot-water system was stripped out at some time before we purchased her. As I'm not a fan of cold showers, this had to be addressed. We also wanted to be able to heat the boat so we could extend our cruising season a bit longer into the spring and fall. We keep the boat on a mooring, so shorepower is not typically available. The available fuel sources were diesel and propane, and we wanted to install only one system.

We considered and rejected an "on-demand" propane-fueled water heater. This would give us hot water for dishwashing but we would need a second system for heating the boat. Furthermore, the "on-demand" systems are not officially marine units, so we might run into trouble with the insurance company. We also considered connecting the heat-exchanger loop of a hot-water tank to the boat's engine's cooling system, but that would mean running the engine to generate hot water — not very efficient — and we'd still need a second system to heat the boat.

Several reputable companies manufacture boat heaters. Investigating Webasto, Hurricane, and Espar led us to a diesel-burning hydronic heater that heats and circulates a mix





The hot-water tank is in the cockpit locker and Graham put a step over it to protect it, at left. The gray tank is the expansion tank. Running 50 feet of heater hose through the boat, above, was labor intensive but worth it.

of water and antifreeze to provide hot water and cabin heat. These heaters are often used in transport trucks to keep the truck cab warm when the engine is shut down and to pre-warm the engine. They are also used in boats.

The system we selected and installed consists of an Espar D5 hydronic heater coupled to a Raritan (wash) water heater, an expansion tank, and a pair of Heatercraft radiators. Note that this heater is not ignition-protected and cannot be used in the engine or fuel areas of a gasoline-powered boat. This was not a concern in our diesel-powered boat.

Installation requirements

The heater needs to be close to where the exhaust will exit the boat (typically the transom), in as protected an area as possible, and lower than the expansion tank. The radiators should be located so the hose run to connect them will be fairly easy. In my case, that put both radiators on the same side of the boat as the water heater to keep the hose runs as short as possible.

Once locations have been chosen for the components, the installation job can be broken down into five tasks: mounting the hardware, wiring, plumbing, connecting the fuel lines, and running the exhaust hose.

Installing the hardware consists of cutting the required holes, fabricating brackets to hold the heater, and fastening everything in place. The brackets are homemade

of stainless-steel strap (1 x 1/8-inch) and require some basic bending and drilling. Because we wanted the exhaust to exit at the transom, the Espar heater had to be at the aft end of the cockpit locker to keep the exhaust short. The intake duct that supplies air to the burner is terminated inside the cockpit locker where there is adequate ventilation since the locker shares venting with the engine.

The new Raritan water-heater tank went where the original had been (we bought the same type and size the boat had originally so it fit without problems). This is up against the bulkhead at the forward end of the cockpit locker. I also made a step that covers the tank top and prevents us from stepping on the water tank.

The expansion tank accommodates the circulating fluid as it expands when heated. It has to be higher than the rest of the system so the fluid won't escape. The expansion tank is at the highest point of the cockpit locker, about 2 feet higher than the heater and directly over the water heater.

We selected radiators that would fit in the available locker space in locations where we wanted heat and where we could run hose. One "gotcha" that almost got me is the barb size on the radiators: 5/8-inch versus 3/4-inch. I almost bought the wrong size hose.

A Heatercraft 5H radiator is located under the settee in the main cabin. It pulls cold air from the companionway side and feeds warm air out under the

settee table. The second radiator, a Heatercraft 2H, is located under the V-berth, forward of the head. This radiator feeds two air ducts: one into the forward cabin and the other into the head. Both radiators use fans to move air, maximizing the heat transfer. I also had to install some grilles to allow for return-air flow into the locker to the radiators.

Wiring and plumbing

The wiring is pretty straightforward and the directions were clear. The heater and fans are wired into the main electrical panel with dedicated circuit breakers. This takes up two circuit-breaker locations, as we wanted to be able to leave the fans turned off when we didn't need cabin heat. It would also be possible to connect everything to one breaker, but good practice says each device needs a fuse. We discarded the supplied Espar inline fuse and used a breaker on our main panel so we also had an easy on/off switch.

The heater comes with a wiring harness that we tied in place and plugged in at the heater. Then we trimmed the harness to the required length and attached the supplied connectors to the wires to mate with the controller and fuel pump. I installed the heater controller in a cutout in the galley bulkhead. The fans are on a separate circuit and I added a switch in the V-berth to allow that fan to be turned off. The hot-water tank was also connected to AC shorepower for the times we are plugged in and



The larger radiator warms the saloon, at left. It's under the aft leg of the U-shaped settee and draws air from the galley. The Espar heater, above, is installed aft under the cockpit. It draws combustion air from the cockpit locker and the exhaust exit is in the transom.

has a dedicated circuit breaker in the AC panel.

The main plumbing job was to run 50 feet of hose through the boat to connect the components. The hose is $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch inside diameter, which translates into a lot of $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch holes drilled through bulkheads and lockers. The hose has to be impervious to heat and antifreeze and reasonably flexible. A local industrial-hose shop set me up with the materials. The hose is routed from the heater outflow to the hot-water-tank heat exchanger, forward to the radiators in the cabin, back aft to the expansion tank, and then it returns to the heater. The only cabin space where the hoses are exposed is under the oven. I made a teak panel to hide and protect them. Otherwise the hose is hidden in lockers.

Fuel and exhaust

I was lucky that our fuel tank had an unused opening available. Once I obtained the correct adapter, I cut the fuel pickup to length and installed it in the tank. The calibrated fuel pump that comes with the Espar unit is better at pushing fuel than pulling it, so the fuel pump has to be within 6 feet of the tank.

The exhaust installation has specific requirements. One key restriction is that the exhaust pipe must be at least 2 inches from any combustible materials, so the pipe is fastened every foot or so with brackets or restrained with seizing wire to keep it in place. I also installed a fiberglass insulating sleeve over it for extra protection.

The pipe runs aft and out the transom, where it has to be at least 12 inches above the waterline and higher is obviously better. You don't want water blocking the exhaust even momentarily.

The exhaust pipe also has to have an upward slope immediately inside the boat so any water entering the transom fitting will run back out. A hump bend works best for this; just inside the transom the pipe goes up as far as possible and then back down. The transom fitting is a double-walled exhaust fitting that reduces the amount of heat transferred to the transom. The Espar marine exhaust pipe is 4 inches larger than the truck exhaust pipe, constructed of double-walled stainless steel, and has a drain to remove any water that may have found its way in or that condenses in the exhaust pipe.

When the installation was complete, I filled the hose system with water and antifreeze. There is a bleed screw on the Espar unit to allow air to escape. When I fired up the system, I added more fluid as air burped out. It's very important to keep the heater from running dry. Since then, I've periodically checked the fluid level, but the system has so far been maintenance-free.

Warm feelings

We have been very happy with this setup as it gives us the heat we want with minimal electrical and fuel requirements and it has worked flawlessly. Running the heater for about 20 minutes will heat the hot-water tank and make the boat nice and toasty warm.

The project cost approximately \$2,200 for the heater, wire, hose, and radiators and another \$600 for the hot-water tank. Installation required a couple of days' work. The hardest part was pulling all the wire and hose through the boat. When I'm washing dishes using hot water or sipping coffee in a warm boat on a cool fall morning, I know it was worth every penny and every minute. *A*

Graham Collins is an obsessive boat modifier, a woodworker, and a manufacturing engineer of military electronics. He sails Secret Plans, a C&C 35-3, on the waters around Halifax, Canada, with son, Sam, and wife, Jill.

Sources for components

The materials were procured over the Internet with the exception of the hose. The radiators and hot-water tank are from Go2Marine (www.go2marine.com) and Defender (www.defender.com), respectively, and the Espar components were sourced via eBay.

The only component that was difficult to locate was the expansion tank, which was sourced from Cool-It in British Columbia (www.cool-it.ca).

Another source is Sure Marine Service in Washington (www.suremarineservice.com).



Jane with the dinghy in its newly completed cover, April 2007, in Queensland, Australia.

RIB wrap

An easy-to-make cover protects an inflatable dinghy

by Jane Lothrop

Take a look at inflatable dinghies clustered around a dock or sitting on the beach in a cruising area. Almost all of them will have a cover and the majority of the covers will have been professionally made by a canvas shop. When we started cruising 13 years ago, I wondered about this. Inflatables are made of expensive Hypalon or PVC and they have warranties, yet many manufacturers do not even offer a cover as an extra. Why then do almost all cruising dinghies have a cover? It didn't take us long to figure that out.

Cruisers really use their dinghies. They are the sport vehicle, the family car, the fishing boat, the "off-road" explorer, and perhaps even the life raft. They are exposed to all sorts of weather 24 hours of the day, every day. All this is hard on human skin, as we know, and the

dinghy does not have the advantage of sloughing off the old skin and constantly growing new, as we do. So, if you want your dinghy to last and if you want to be able to sit on the tubes without burning your bare skin, you need a cover.

Our original dinghy was an Avon RIB. I made a cover for it when we were in the Rio Dulce for hurricane season, but the design and execution were amateurish. Most notably, when we went fast in the dinghy the cover scooped water and deposited it on the driver's backside! Still, it was functional. All it cost us was the material, and that cover and dinghy were still in good shape when we sold them more than five years later.

At that point, we were back and forth between New Zealand and the Pacific Islands and the old Avon with

the motor on it was just too heavy for us to carry up the steep beaches and over the rocks. Lots of people have dinghy wheels, but *Cormorant* is a cutter and we have just enough space between the mast guard and the staysail for a dinghy while allowing enough room to open the foredeck sail lockers. We found the perfect dinghy, an AquaPro aluminum RIB, that fit that spot and was light enough for us to carry with the 3.3-horsepower engine on it. We chose the PVC material because of cost relative to warranty. Now all we needed was a cover.

No avoiding homemade

Because my first cover was so hard to make, and so imperfect, I went to a professional for a price. The quote came back at almost a third the total price of the new dinghy! I was reluctant to try my custom-fabrication skills again, so I decided to go high-tech and try using a UV protectant rather than a cover. I bought the special 303 Aerospace Protectant and carefully followed the instructions about how to apply it and how often to do it.

After a year in the intense sun of the South Pacific, it was evident from the surface of the dinghy that the protectant was not doing the job. The white material had softened enough that it got



The first step in making a pattern is to mark the cutouts. Their initial outlines will only be approximate, since the clear-plastic pattern material is not flat when it is marked.

a little gooey and dirt and mildew became permanent marks.

Luckily, when I finally accepted the fact that I had to make another dinghy cover, we were anchored at Asanvari in Vanuatu, together with Lisa and Marc Labonte on *Nahanni*. I was admiring their cover and trying to figure out how it was done when Lisa said she made it herself and would share the secret.

A pattern makes perfect

A canvasmaker told her to buy a cheap clear shower curtain and use the clear plastic to make a perfect pattern before cutting the Sunbrella fabric. Plastic sheeting does not stretch and is easy to handle, so you can experiment with placing the seams in various places until you get an arrangement that works with your dinghy's shape. I even had to put a couple of darts into my cover, but those were also done with the pattern.

What makes creating a dinghy cover so difficult is getting all the cutouts in the right places and getting the whole thing tight and firmly attached. Using the clear plastic for a template made it easy to mark the openings for the handles, the oarlocks, and the inflation valves. If the first cut was not perfect, I simply cut smaller pieces of the plastic and taped them in place to correct the pattern.

Now that I had a good pattern, I had another challenge. I was thinking all those cutouts had to be trimmed with binding tape or



With rough cutouts made to fit around handles and other fittings, the pattern can be fitted on the dinghy.



Once the pattern has been shaped to the dinghy, the rough cutouts must be smoothed and the extra pieces cut away.



Since the cut edges will not be exact or smooth, extra pieces of plastic are taped as necessary to fine-tune the fit.

hemmed somehow without altering their shape. A good seamstress can probably do this easily, but for me and most other “sewers by need” it’s a nightmare. Then I had an inspiration, and my solution turned out to be easy, looks good, and has lasted without any problems for more than three and a half years.

I cut the openings exactly the finished size. I then measured ½ inch all around each opening and put standard boat “blue tape” on both sides of the Sunbrella. Using a product called Liquid Rope Whipping (also available as Whip-End Dip), I painted the exposed canvas and the cut edge, applying two layers of the white stuff. The tape made a nice straight edge so it looks good and, since the whipping is flexible and made for ropes, it is resistant to salt and sun. Problem solved.

A (non-) sticky situation

I thought the next problem would be easy to solve but, as we all know from experience with Murphy’s Law, it was not. That was the issue of attaching the cover to the dinghy.

I looked at every dinghy I could find. The best-looking and best-fitting covers were all attached with Velcro. I sewed the loop side of the Velcro to the canvas cover, on the inner and outer edges. Lisa told me she sewed her hook Velcro to vinyl before gluing it to the dinghy, since vinyl to vinyl makes a better bond than fabric to vinyl. Based on her insights, I went to a canvas shop, got some vinyl scraps to cut into lengths, and



After the pattern has been transferred to the fabric, at left, the cut edges can be painted with Liquid Rope Whipping to protect them. It takes two coats to look nice and last well. After more than three years of use, the cutout for the handle on the bow of the dinghy still looks tidy, center. The loop Velcro is sewn directly to the fabric cover, while the hook side is first sewn to vinyl and then glued to the dinghy, at right.



In July 2010, floating behind *Cormorant* at anchor in Paros, Greece, the dinghy still looks great.

made long strips of Velcro sewed to vinyl to attach to the dinghy.

My unanticipated problem was that the glue would not hold. One professional told me he used contact cement, so I tried that. But two months later it was coming off. Then I tried an "outdoor camping" glue for tents, and that lasted about two months.

If I had a Hypalon dinghy and had sewed my Velcro to Hypalon scraps, and had the proper glue, it probably would have been easy. But we have a PVC dinghy and we were in Australia, then Indonesia, and then Malaysia looking for the right glue. Finally, in Phuket, Thailand, I went to Chalamark Dinghy Company, where they make dinghies and covers, and bought several little brown bottles of what they said was the proper glue. I put it on in late November 2008 in Malaysia. It is July 2010 as I write this. We are halfway across the Aegean Sea and the Velcro is still firmly attached.

From start to finish the cover project took less than a week and the total cost was only the cost of the fabric, the plastic curtain, about a half bottle of Liquid Rope Whipping, and some glue that also works as dinghy-repair glue. Our investment was less than \$100. Without the cover the dinghy would probably be useless by now. *Δ*

Jane Lothrop and her husband, Harry Hungate, have been liveaboard cruisers since 1997. On December 28, 2011, they completed their leisurely circumnavigation on their Corbin 39 cutter, Cormorant.

Resources

Liquid rope-whipping products

Dip-It Whip-It
www.starbrite.com

Liquid Rope Whipping
West Marine

Whip-End Dip
available from several online retailers

Vinyl adhesive

HH-66 Vinyl Cement
available from Sailrite
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Fuel-polishing system

Clean, reliable diesel for the DIY cruiser

by David Lynn



David's fuel-polishing system, shown at left with the Kia fuel filter and below with the Racor filter, is portable, making it more versatile than a hard-plumbed system.

however, and there are times when the attendant gets a bit cranky when we insist on using it, especially at a busy fuel dock. Usually we can reach a compromise by using the filter for a minute or two, then doing a quick check of the filters to see whether we are getting water or other contaminants. Only once has an attendant flatly refused to allow us to use it.

Even with the best of precautions, however, we still get water in the fuel tanks. I have replaced the O-ring on the fuel cap, thinking this might be the source, but that didn't eliminate the problem. I suspect it comes from condensation forming inside the metal

In our early years of cruising, we learned the hard way about how important clean fuel is. I didn't worry about the fuel as long as the primary fuel filter looked clean. On one offshore passage, however, the seaway was a bit rough, which churned the fuel enough to mix up all the sediment that had been lying benignly in the bottom of the tank. As we motored into a tight marina full of very expensive boats, I discovered how quickly the fuel filters could clog up, starving the engine of fuel. The old adage about aiming for the cheapest boat came to mind, but fortunately we managed to secure a line to a T-dock before damaging anything other than our pride.

We quickly hired a service to clean the tanks and polish the fuel. There was nothing magical about the process. They pumped the fuel out of each tank, processed it through a rather large industrial version of a marine diesel filter, then discharged it into another tank. They cleaned the insides of my tanks with a wand, and pumped the fuel back in ... all for a rather outrageous price.

Since that expensive lesson, we have been a lot more careful about our fuel and do what we can to prevent getting contamination into the tank. Our first line of defense is our old reliable Baja filter. We almost always use it when refueling at a marina or fuel dock. This increases the time needed to refuel,

tanks as the ambient temperature varies. If not removed or treated, the water will allow algae to grow, which in turn will clog the filters. To combat this, I built a small fuel-polishing system and routinely clean the fuel and tanks. While not my favorite chore, it isn't difficult. I do this annually or whenever I see any signs of sediment buildup in the primary filter.

As we travel to more remote areas, fuel docks become rare and "jerry canning" is the usual method of obtaining fuel. A notable instance was in Ushuaia, at the southern tip of Argentina, where fuel was rolled



“When I decant diesel from fuel cans, I usually use the fuel-polishing system to transfer the fuel.”

down to the dock in rusty 55-gallon drums. We were rafted up with four boats between us and the dock. The process was to carry the fuel cans across the other four boats, siphon fuel out of the rusty drums, lug the fuel cans back one at a time to our boat, and decant them. After repeating the process for a total of about 48 trips, I was definitely ready for a beer.

The fuel-polishing fix

When I decant diesel from fuel cans, especially when it is as suspect as that fuel in Ushuaia, I usually use the fuel-polishing system to transfer the fuel. It is a bit slower than the Baja filter but eliminates any chance of spilling fuel and is probably more effective in removing contaminants and water. In addition, the Baja filter must be cleaned after each use. This takes about 15 minutes and is messy, while the fuel-polishing system requires no cleaning after use.

The polishing system is quite straightforward. The intake is via a wand long enough to reach to the lowest point of the fuel tank. I used stainless-steel

tubing for the wand but PVC or aluminum tubing would work just as well.

The intake is connected to a diesel filter. I initially used a spare Racor fuel filter. While in South America, I went through my spare filter cartridges at an alarming rate. They were quite expensive, about \$25 each, when I could find them at all. I went to an auto parts store and asked for an automotive diesel filter that had inexpensive filters. The clerk was happy to spend some time researching options for me and finally found a complete diesel-filter assembly for a Kia at a cost of \$80 and \$6 per filter. The disadvantage of an automotive filter is that you can't see how much sediment or water has built up in the filter. I found that by periodically checking the flow rate I could determine when the filter had become clogged. The filter also came with an electrical connection to monitor the water level inside the filter and a fitting at the bottom to drain off any collected water. By occasionally checking the resistance across the electrical contacts with an ohmmeter, I can determine if too much water has collected inside the filter. If I decide to use it permanently, I think it would be possible to add a resistor and an LED that would light up when water reached an excessive level in the filter.

The outlet of the filter is connected to an electric fuel pump. I found this at an auto parts store by asking for a small universal diesel fuel pump. The least expensive one I found was \$38. This included a mounting bracket and hose fittings. The fuel pump is connected via a switch to 12 volts. I use a standard 12-volt plug for the connection.

I mounted everything on a piece of plywood to make it portable. That way, I can use it for either of the fuel tanks below, take it up on deck to decant fuel from the fuel cans, or even loan it to cruising friends with fuel problems.

To seal the system when it's not in use, I insert a bolt into the discharge hose and clamp it, and cap the intake wand with a short hose plugged in a similar way.

The polishing process

To polish the fuel, I wait until the levels in the fuel tanks are below half full. I remove the inspection hatches from both tanks, insert the wand into one, the discharge hose into the other, and start the pump. To begin with, I position the wand so it's an inch or two higher than the lowest spot in the tank. I monitor the fuel rate and the electrical resistance of the water sensor on the filter and drain the water or change the filter as needed.

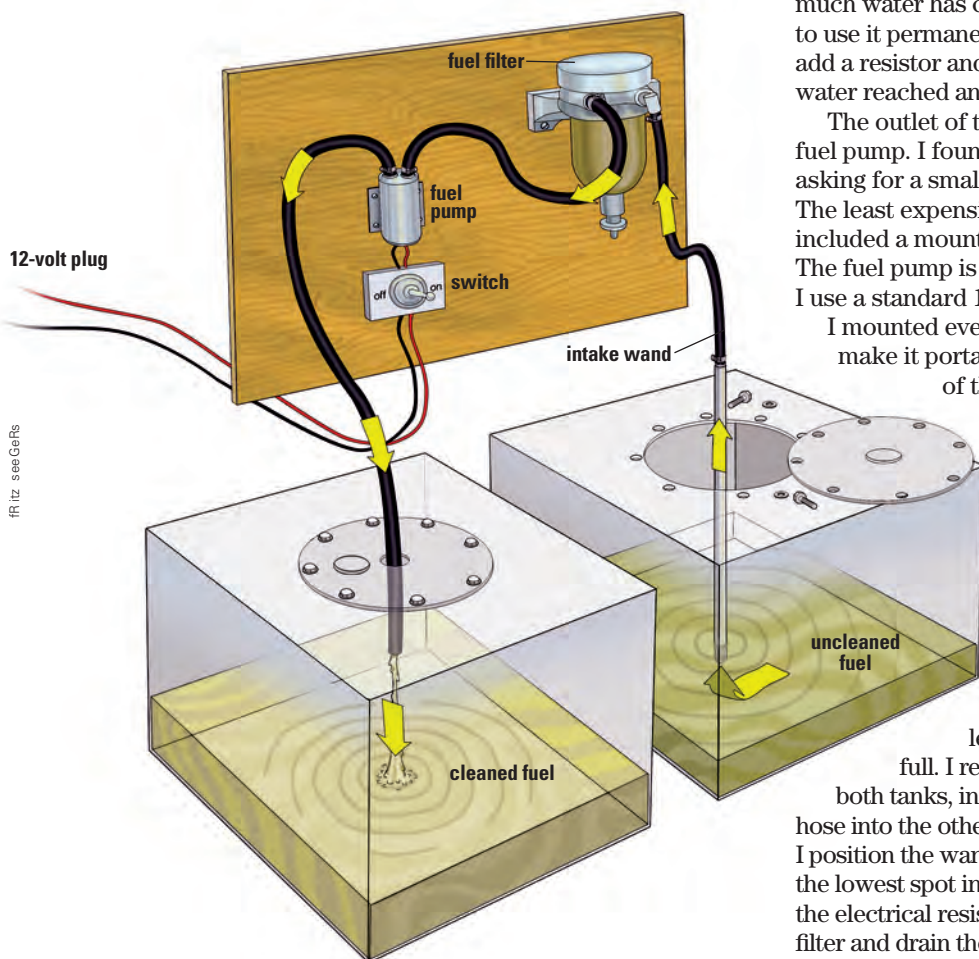


Illustration by Jeff Galt



The Baja filter, above and right, is the cruiser's first line of defense against dirty fuel. David's fuel polisher, on facing page, gives him a second line and replaces the Baja when decanting from fuel cans.

When only an inch or so of liquid remains in the tank, I use a flashlight and take a look at what is left. If it looks relatively clean, I continue pumping the tank as dry as possible, then get a bucket and sponge out whatever remains. If it's mucky or there's a lot of debris or water in that last inch or two, rather than consuming two or three more filters, I sponge out the remaining liquid and residue. Next, I wipe the entire inside of the tank with rags or paper towels. One tank should hold all the fuel. If not, I pump the excess into fuel cans.

I then repeat the process on the second tank, pumping the fuel back into the first tank. Again, I sponge out whatever remains in the bottom of the



tank and wipe the inside of the tank. Lastly, I dispose of the bucket of muck in a responsible manner.

The entire cost of the project was about \$150, and it rarely uses more than one \$6 filter to polish both tanks. This is far less than what it cost us to have our fuel polished by a service. In addition, I use it frequently for decanting diesel from my fuel cans. ▴

David and Marcie Lynn have lived aboard Nine of Cups, their 1986 Liberty 458, since purchasing her in Kemah, Texas, in 2000, and have sailed more than 65,000 nautical miles in their ever-so-slow circumnavigation. Visit their website at <www.nineofcups.com>.



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Just about everyone who has ever owned an old boat for any length of time has had to face a frightening word: refit. This is often the culmination of years of deferred maintenance and poorly thought out “upgrades” that inevitably lead to a bunch of major systems going south at the same time.

When I was faced with the cruel reality that the decks on my 1962 Alberg 35 were as wet and squishy as a peat bog, I knew I had to get the boat home to give her some well-deserved attention. I also needed to get a good shelter over the boat so I could work on her without having to worry about the weather.

My track record with shelters had been pretty spotty over the 20 years I’ve owned boats. Most covers never made it through the winter and the vast majority met an untimely demise. I remember one particularly large ice cube that formed when a cover collapsed and trapped 2 feet of water in the cockpit just before a big freeze. Other highlights of my covering career include tearing stanchions off their bases when the wind broke the cover free and fishing a giant blue tarp out of the marina where the boat was stored. (A 30-foot tarp, half submerged and wrapped around a dock, is



***A Stimson shed
is the ideal cover-up
for a project boat***

by Matt Bowser

an unpleasant thing to deal with in February.) I just wasn’t good at the whole covering thing.

Things didn’t get any better when I had my Alberg hauled to my house in November 2008. I didn’t have much time to get some sort of shelter up before bad weather would make a mess of the boat, so I built a free-standing canopy. I figured the structure wouldn’t interfere with deck work and would keep snow and rain off the boat. I made it with a rough frame of 10-foot 2 x 4 studs with a shrink-wrap roof. Because



boat barn

The curious-looking structure in the New Hampshire woods, top of facing page, contains *Magic*, Matt's Alberg 35. It replaced a less robust canopy that succumbed to snow, bottom left on facing page. The basic component of the Stimson shed is a bow, at right. Longer shed, more bows. Matt built knee walls, bottom right on facing page, to elevate the bows, and erected the frame with assemblies of four bows, bottom right.

I didn't want to pay the extra \$2 each for 12-foot studs for the roof, the unfortunate result was that the canopy didn't have enough pitch and I had to rake the snow off the roof whenever more than 2 inches fell (which happens all too often in central New Hampshire). It wasn't long before the canopy started sagging, and some of the roof strapping snapped when I didn't brush the snow off in time.

Needless to say, the canopy did not hold up well and barely made it through the winter. I had hoped to get started on the decks over the summer of 2009, but life got in the way and my boat sat waiting for me. By late summer, I finally found time to get serious about the boat but knew it would be imperative to get a real shelter over it so I could work on it over the winter months. This time I *had* to get it right.

Discovering the Stimson shed

I spent a lot of time researching possible solutions and found that my options were limited. I didn't want to spend more than \$2,000 and wanted to avoid a building permit if possible. I considered purchasing a shelter from Shelter King (now MDM Products LLC), but the size I wanted would push the budget to the limit. There had to be something else I could build from scratch. I found a few references to bow-roof sheds built from 1 x 3 lumber- yard strapping fashioned into curved I-beams. I finally tracked down a name: the Stimson shed. Once I found the name, I was able to access websites with detailed pictures.



I researched every angle I could think of regarding the Stimson and couldn't find anything wrong . . . other than the time and labor spent building them. Each reference indicated that they were easy to build, cheap, and very strong. I ordered the plans from Stimson Marine for \$18 plus \$2 shipping and handling.

I was immediately impressed with what I saw when the plans showed up a few days later. The booklet that came with it gave me all the details I needed to easily construct the bows for the shed.

Bending bows on a form

If you have a boat to cover, you might find the Stimson shed suits you too. Basically, you decide how wide you want the shed (up to 20 feet) and then, using a table of offsets in the booklet, build a form on which to make the bows. The length doesn't matter; if you want a longer shed, you just make more bows. I planned for a shed that would be 14 feet wide by 37.5 feet long.

The form is very simple and the step-by-step instructions made the setup easy. To build it, you need a flat





area that will accommodate the length of your planned bows. My bows were 14 feet long, and I built the form on my basement floor using a single sheet of cheap particle board and two 2 x 3s cut into blocks. Then it was just a matter of going to the local lumberyard and picking the best 1 x 3 pine strapping I could find (their length depends on the size of the planned bow). I learned to look for the straightest pieces with few knots and give each a good flex before buying it. Unfortunately, the cheap 1 x 3 strapping boards that you find at the big-box lumberyards are not noted for their quality, so expect some of them to snap when you bend them onto the form. (You'll soon become expert at selecting the good ones.)

One of the nice features of the form design is that when you build the form, you are actually building your first bow as well. To build subsequent bows, cut the strapping to length and bend two pieces onto the completed form and insert 2 x 3 blocks between them. Screw them together with 2½-inch decking screws and pop the bow off the form. Repeat.

Building the bows gets pretty monotonous after the first few, so I broke it up over a two-week period, spending about 30 minutes a night building two or three bows. All told, I made 26 bows (each bow is half the roof span) to make 13 full bows on centers just under 3 feet apart to make the 37.5-foot shed length.

One issue I had to contend with was that the boat's deck (where the boat is widest) was about 10 feet off the ground. Because the bows arc inward to the ridge, I had to build a 4-foot knee wall to raise the assembled bows to gain sufficient width that high up.

I sank 12 pressure-treated 8-foot 2 x 4 posts roughly 3 feet into the ground and cut them off to a level 4-foot height (I snapped a reference chalk line and measured from there). I then added a sill along the perimeter of the posts to give the bows a place to sit.



Raising the roof

With the knee wall complete and all the bows built, it was time to put it all together. This was the part I worried about the most (as it turned out, unnecessarily). I began by fastening four bows to a 10-foot 2 x 4 ridge pole with 3-inch decking screws (just under 3 feet on center). Then, to give this subassembly a little rigidity when moving it around, I screwed a few pieces of temporary strapping along the base and midsections of the bows.

At this point, I enlisted the help of my wife and son to help steady things while we hoisted the assembly up onto the sill. I then had my son hand up a bow on the opposite side, where I screwed it to the 2 x 4 ridge pole. I did the same thing to the other end of the assembly so we had four bows on one side of the ridge and one at each end of the assembly on the opposite side. This is actually easier to do than to describe. It's a bit awkward and it does use up all your available hands, so getting some additional help at this stage is a good idea.

For the rest of the bows, I did the same thing and completed it all with three four-bow assemblies and one two-bow assembly. All told, it took about six hours to get everything up, but it was very satisfying to see the frames all up (and I think they look pretty slick).

Resources

Stimson shed

www.by-the-sea.com/stimsonmarine/bowroof.html

MDM Products LLC

Formerly ShelterKing, MDM Products LLC produces a wide variety of portable garages and canopies for RVs, boats, and other applications.
www.mdmsheaters.com



After erecting the bows, on facing page, and before covering the framework with shrink-wrap, at left, Matt added stringers and diagonal braces. Three years later, the shed still sheds snow, at right.

Next came the tedious task of drilling and bolting all the frames to longitudinal stringers and adding a few diagonals to stiffen things up (I don't live in a windy area or I would have added more). For my shed, I had to drill for and fasten 208 4-inch galvanized carriage bolts to the frame. Once complete, though, the structure was very strong. I weigh 225 pounds and was able to hang unsupported from the ridge pole.

The last carpentry bit for the construction phase was to add end walls. I pretty much cobbled those together with wood I already had and framed in a doorway and openings for vents. Some people leave one or both the ends open, but I wanted to be able to run a torpedo heater in the shed to take the chill off our New Hampshire winters.

The final step was putting the cover on. I ordered a 32- x 100-foot roll of 7-mil white shrink-wrap and started with the ends, making sure to overlap onto the top of the shed. I held them in place with temporary battens and then pulled the main cover in place and battened it down on the gable ends and along the bottom (I ripped a few 2 x 6s into 3/4-inch battens). I rolled up the battens in the ends of the shrink-wrap and screwed everything down and then covered the battens with 6-inch shrink-wrap "preservation tape." (Preservation tape seems to be a fancy name for tape with UV protection.) After some recommendations from others who had built Stimsons, I added big 2-foot x 2-foot gable-end vents



to reduce condensation that forms on the inside from the moisture that comes up from the ground.

I am very pleased with the finished product and, after three years, it still doesn't leak a drop and snow just slides off because of the pitch. The final tally for the whole project was about \$750 and 50 hours of my time. Of course, the refit of my Alberg 35 has turned into a total rebuild, but I'm still plugging away and hope to get her back in the water for her second 50 years of sailing. *▲*

Matt Bowser has been sailing since he was a young boy when his father caught the sailing bug and dragged him along. He has owned a number of large and small sailboats and still sails an O'Day Daysailer that he found in a collapsed barn while at a party in college. He bought his Alberg 35, Magic, in 2001. Matt lives with his patient wife, Stephanie, and two children, Jacob and Olivia, in Canterbury, New Hampshire.

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Age and neglect had left their mark on the companionway hatch and trim, above, but a little labor restored both looks and function, at left.

The hatch on my new good old boat, a 1972 Balboa 20, was not in the best of shape. The wooden pieces that enclosed the edges of the sliding hatch were pretty bad. Made of teak and probably original parts, they had not been maintained and were completely dried out. The port-side piece was split forward. The fiberglass sliding hatch itself was broken on the centerline. One of the easy repairs I planned for over the winter was to fix this mess.

I started by looking for some teak. For the guides, I knew I'd need two pieces 4-feet long, about 2-inches wide, and about 1-inch thick. These would need a groove cut into them to overlap the hatch. No problem.

One of the great resources for woodworkers in my area is Owl Hardwood Lumber. Their selection of furniture-quality wood includes the exotic, unusual, and bizarre — pau rosa, purpleheart, bubinga, and zebra wood, along with more mundane hickory, maple, and teak. Prowling the teak aisle at Owl, I looked over the variously sized pieces of rich, oily wood. I found a piece that met my requirements, turned it to read the price crayoned onto the back, and recoiled: "You want *how* much for this?" I knew teak would be expensive . . . but *that* much?

Chastened, I went around the corner and picked out a length of 6-inch-wide $\frac{3}{4}$ white oak for \$11. It might not last quite as long, but I figured I could replace it seven times over for the same cost as the teak.

Next, I needed to cut it to the correct size. I owned a hand-held circular saw that would do the job

after a fashion, but to do it neatly and accurately I really needed a table saw. Luckily, a friend had one. With four quick passes, he cut my oak to the shape required. I applied three coats of spar varnish, sanding between coats, and I had my hatch guides.

I wanted the hatch to slide smoothly, so I bought a sheet of $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch-thick Delrin plastic. I cut this (and it was miserable to cut — I ended up using tin snips) into 2¼-inch-wide strips. I placed these on the cabintop, under the hatch and hatch guides, and used silicone caulk/adhesive to stick them down.

I was loath to drill more holes in the cabintop than were already there, so I transferred one of the screw-hole locations from each of the old slides to the new ones. (This was a mistake — I would have had a better fit if I'd simply positioned the guides close to the hatch, clamped them down, and drilled through from inside the cabin.) With the slides positioned by one screw each, I carefully aligned them parallel, then drilled and installed one additional screw each. With everything aligned, I removed the screws, coated the bottoms of the slides with sealant, filled the screw holes with sealant, and reinserted the screws to clamp everything down. After the sealant had set, I drilled and installed the remaining screws, with a daub of sealant on the shank of each.

Hatchboard guides

For the vertical hatchboard holders, I went back to Owl for more white oak, this time $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick. I cut this into two pieces with my hand-held circular

makeover

by Chas Hague

saw, getting one piece 2 inches wide and another 1½ inches wide. I placed one atop the other and glued them together, ending up with a piece similar in cross section to the hatch guides but created without the table saw. After the glue had dried, I cut this piece into two pieces 14 inches long and varnished them.

Hatch-end mend

Repairing the broken aft end of the hatch had me baffled for a while. My original ideas were to form a wooden piece to fit inside the channel at the aft end of the hatch or to fill the channel with epoxy. Neither idea really appealed, and I eventually decided I could replace the entire back edge of the hatch with wood. So it was back to Owl for another length of ¾ white oak, this time 3 inches wide.

I forced a piece of sandpaper into the channel and rubbed a piece of blue foam insulation against it until I had the profile of the inside. With an abrasive blade in my circular saw, I cut off the back edge of the hatch. Using a little ingenuity and higher mathematics, I calculated what the original curve of the hatch had been and sawed the new white oak piece to match the curve.

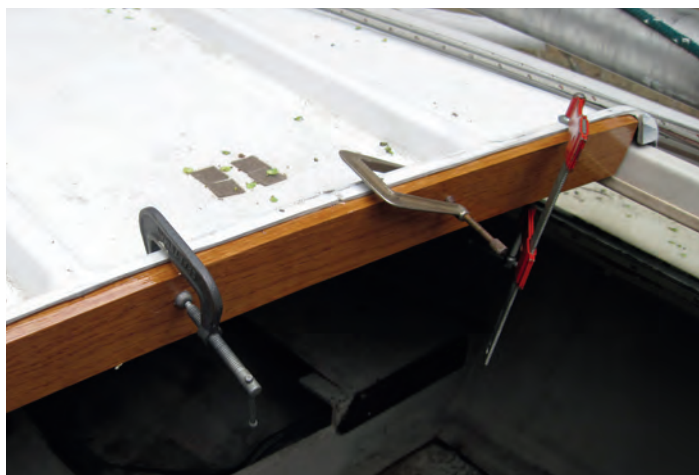
To shape the oak to match the hatch, I first made some shallow saw cuts in the part that was to be removed. Using a wood chisel, I removed the excess wood between the saw cuts in large pieces. (This is a tricky procedure. I tend to make the notches too deep so that marks remain in the finished work, but it's so much faster than planing and sanding.) I made a female template from the male piece of insulating foam and used it to check my progress.

Finally, I had the piece finished. It was slightly curved to match the original hatch curvature, flat on the aftermost face, and rounded on the upper forward face to fit into the remaining portion of the hatch. After varnishing it, I applied a coat of glue and screwed it into place with #6 panhead screws.

Shortly after I completed this part of the project, the mast dropped onto the hatch. The new piece easily withstood the blow.



The hatch guide on the cabintop is made from a single piece of wood. The hatchboard guides are two pieces glued together.



The hatch-end repair required Chas to cut the oak to the curve of the hatch and shape it to fit into the fiberglass rim.

A new lock

The hatch originally had a traditional hasp secured by the obligatory rusty padlock. I wanted something spiffier, so I got a barrel-style lock assembly (made for locking a desk) from my local lock shop. I knew the lock had to be located with as much solid wood around it as possible, for strength, yet also had to be near enough to the edge that the tongue would engage the hatch coaming. After careful measurement, I drilled an undersized ⅞-inch hole in the new wooden hatch piece, then filed it into an oblong hole that was as close a fit to the lock as I could make it. After installing the lock, I marked where the latch

“I eventually decided I could replace the entire back edge of the hatch with wood.”



As a finishing touch, Chas fitted a more elegant lock.

plate struck the hatch coaming, then drilled and gouged a slot in it to clear the latch. When the lock was turned, the latch engaged the slot and secured the hatch from sliding. I added a 1/8-inch x 5/8-inch plate to the coaming edge to strengthen it.

The new varnished woodwork certainly looks much better than the old gray weathered teak did. At \$15 or so for the wood, \$8 for the lock, and a few dollars for stainless-steel screws and glue, the cost was quite low. All in all, it was a worthwhile project. *▲*



With new trim, the hatch is functional and presentable.

Charles "Chas" Hague is an engineer, bridge inspector, proud member of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, and serious user of tools. He sails his 12-foot O'Day on that little lake you see from the plane when landing at O'Hare. Future plans involve taking the 20 footer to bigger water.

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A sailor, a boat, and a quest

*Matt Rutherford's
most excellent vertical circumnavigation*

by Steve Allan



After 309 days at sea, Matt Rutherford sails the weather-beaten *St. Brendan* into Annapolis, Maryland.

The last three weeks were the worst — cold air, boarding seas, and stubborn winds on the nose. He was in a beat-up boat, the engine dead for the last 7,000 miles, and in a battle against 35-knot winds before he could put astern the notorious maritime graveyard that is Cape Hatteras. Then, incredibly, Chesapeake Bay wouldn't let him in, pushing him with a foul current and a strong northerly 16 miles back out to sea.

Finally, Matt Rutherford crossed his outbound track and the voyage, as far as he was concerned, was a success. A few days later, as the band played "It's a Small World After All," in Annapolis, Maryland, on a sunny afternoon in April, 31-year-old Matt stepped off the boat for the first time in 309 days after sailing nonstop for 27,000 miles. He was greeted by a media horde, a crowd of dignitaries, well-wishers, and family. Also present were some of sailing's brightest stars, including Gary Jobson, president of US Sailing, who emceed the welcoming ceremonies near the National Sailing Hall of Fame.

As the media boat drew alongside Matt's *St. Brendan*, several of us commented, "The sails look terrific!" No patches, tears, or even major stains were apparent. The #3 jib looked whiter than the main, suggesting that it had perhaps spent a lot of time furled or stowed. Matt would later say simply that he sailed conservatively. He never equaled his best day's run of 164 miles, helped along by South America's Guiana Current, but he wasn't trying to top that. "I'm not into going fast," he says. "I don't want to break anything."

This is good advice for all of us. A veteran of boat deliveries, Matt is the guy you want looking after old *Serendipity* on her return trip from the Caribbean in the spring. "I'm a defensive sailor," he says. Cruisers are, or should be, defensive sailors. Out of necessity and for self-preservation, Matt Rutherford had to be.

An extraordinary feat

To report that Matt had successfully transited the Northwest Passage on the smallest singlehanded boat to date would be story enough. But he did it in a good old fiberglass production boat, a donated 41-year-old Albin Vega 27. But that's not all. After he was done with the passage and cleared Alaska, Matt kept going back to Annapolis . . . via Cape Horn. One more thing: he did it nonstop. According to the way the rules are written by the U.S. State Department, *St. Brendan* circumnavigated the Americas but never left the jurisdiction of the United States because Matt didn't make port, didn't drop anchor, and didn't clear into any country along the way.



Matt in the cockpit of *St. Brendan* at the Annapolis Spring Sailboat Show.

He did, however, slow down for three critical resupply efforts along the way. The first was off Newfoundland when his watermaker broke. The next was in Alaska's Aleutian Islands, where he received a water purifier, stove fuel, pizza, and beer. The final resupply contact was off the coast of Brazil, where he took on new solar panels, a hand-held VHF, a hand crank for the engine, fuel, water, and grog. For the integrity of the quest, Matt made each contact without dropping anchor, making fast, or letting anyone board *St. Brendan*. Nor did he disembark at any point of the voyage.

If you can forgive modern communications technology, advances in food preservation, and a shore-based support team, Matt Rutherford is a true adventurer of the old-school spirit, who might belong now with Joshua Slocum, Howard Blackburn, and Sir Francis Chichester among singlehanders, and perhaps with Ernest Shackleton and Captain William Bligh among fearless

and gifted sailor-adventurers. Even before this solo around the Americas, Matt had racked up a salty resume that included singlehanded Atlantic crossings, braving the Bay of Biscay, running down the coast of Africa, and a Caribbean shipwreck during a hurricane.

Most important is what motivated him to undertake this voyage in the first place. Through it all, Matt never forgot that his quest wasn't about him. It was about raising money and awareness for Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB), founded in 1991 by Don Backe after he was paralyzed in a devastating car accident. CRAB provides opportunities for the disabled to go sailing, but the organization was experiencing a decline in funding and Don has been trying to keep it afloat. Matt, who had been drawn to CRAB as a volunteer, suggested transiting the Northwest Passage as a way to raise money. The rest, as the saying goes, is history.

A few close calls

To hear him tell it, none of what Matt did seemed particularly extreme. On the other hand, at no point was his voyage a pleasure cruise. Approaching the U.S. coast meant being in the shipping lanes and, with foul weather, too, Matt says he didn't sleep for a week. Neither did he sleep while transiting the Northwest Passage, knowing as he did that ice and fiberglass are not compatible. In spite of his vigilance, he says a huge berg almost got him in Baffin Bay.

Once he was safely through the Northwest Passage, and following his on-the-water resupply contact in Alaska, Cape Horn lay at the end of



Not pretty, but pretty impressive. *St. Brendan's* deck and fittings show the effects of 10 months at sea, at left. Inch-long barnacles and a slimy waterline, at right, are the natural accumulation on *St. Brendan's* hull during her long voyage.



Large deadlights like those in the Vega's cabin trunk, at left, are sometimes vulnerable in bad sea conditions, so Matt and the CRAB crew fitted them with Lexan storm covers. The perpetually damp atmosphere belowdecks caused anything metal to corrode, at right.

the long Pacific leg. It was during this longest of passages that *St. Brendan's* mast finally exacted revenge on the boat's weakest link. The bulkhead shifted, the oak compression arch sank from above, and a splintered warp appeared on the deck just to starboard of the mast step. For the rest of the trip, Matt feared dismasting. Since it wouldn't take much more to bring the rig down, conservative sailing became a necessity for the survival of the boat and the success of the voyage.

Approaching the Horn was nerve-racking, but the passage itself was relatively calm and uneventful. Off French Guyana, a freighter passed so close he could only see its red and green running lights on a collision course. With only a moment to spare, he untied the tiller and threw it hard-a-starboard just in time for the bow wave to smack *St. Brendan* clear before the black hull disappeared unaware into the night. And finally, there was the dirty weather off the Carolinas while beating to windward toward home.

The boat

At the risk of encouraging 16-year-olds to scour the Internet for used Albin Vegas and to then put to sea with caution thrown to the wind, it must be said that Matt had himself a particularly solid little boat in *St. Brendan*. Vegas are cherished by their owners, the more fanatical among them saying they wouldn't trust any other boat at sea. During his voyage, Matt was cheered on by many stalwart fans ashore, but none keener than members of the Vega Association of Great Britain.

Ray Steele, the organization's technical officer, had this to say: "We Vega owners are all thrilled with what Matt has achieved in the class of boat that we love and sail. We are sure he will gain the recognition he deserves and, without detracting from the real star of this event, give the Albin Vega its deserved acceptance as a true classic that will help to inspire confidence to present and future owners."

A seagoing Checker cab

On the face of it, *St. Brendan* isn't much bigger than my sheltered-water Laguna 26 sloop. A foot and a half more on the waterline, 9 more inches of draft, 4 inches less of beam . . . but 1,000 more pounds of displacement. My Laguna is finished nicely with lots of teak trim and standing headroom. But, as when comparing a Chevy Corvair to a Checker cab, that's where the comparison ends.

Albin Vegas are bulletproof, tough little boats built to withstand punishing conditions, and Matt agrees. A Vega wasn't his first choice for the voyage but, once this one fell into the hands of CRAB, it didn't take much to convince him that this boat would, given limited resources and not much time to prepare or raise money, deliver him safely back to Annapolis.

Upgrades

Once Matt and Karl Guerra, CRAB's fleet master, settled on the Vega, they set to work readying the boat for whatever the sea might throw at it. Extensive research brought a couple of known design shortcomings to their attention. They covered the big ports, potentially

dangerous at sea, with Lexan panels that they through-bolted and then cemented for an extra measure of safety. They hoped to remedy the compression-point deficiency by sistering a hefty oak brace to the bulkhead athwartships beneath the mast and through-bolting it, in the hope of absorbing some of the downward thrust of the rig at this critical point where one would normally find a compression post. Curiously, the Vega, for all its salty pedigree, lacks this important design feature.

They beefed up the standing rigging and turnbuckles by one size larger than stock and changed out all the running rigging. They installed an LED bulb in

Albin Vega 27

Builder: Larsson (Sweden)

Designer: Per Brohäll (1964)

LOA: 27 feet 1 inch

LWL: 23 feet 0 inches

Beam: 8 feet 0 inches

Draft: 3 feet 10 inches

Displacement: 5,070 pounds

Ballast: 2,017 pounds

Sail area: 341 square feet

Spars: Aluminum

Auxiliary: Conventional gasoline or diesel with variable-pitch prop.

Designed as: Fast, light, ocean cruiser with berths for 4 adults.

Source: *Twenty Small Sailboats to Take You Anywhere* by John Vigor

John Vigor's article about the Albin Vega is posted at: www.bluemoment.com/boatreviews/vegareview.html.



In the same shirt he wore on his departure, Matt takes questions from the media.

the tricolor masthead light. A new suit of sails included a 150 percent genoa, an asymmetrical spinnaker, a #3 jib, and a full-battened main with two sets of reef points.

In addition, they fastened solar panels to the foredeck and installed a Harken Mk III roller furler. A Monitor windvane and a chartplotter were the only other obvious upgrades. With all this accomplished in about a month, Matt was ready to go. He took on 700 pounds of freeze-dried food and a 200-gallon bladder full of diesel fuel. This combination lowered *St. Brendan's* waterline considerably. The diesel fuel alone added more than 1,400 pounds, but the extra weight was necessary to ensure enough fuel to transit the Northwest Passage should the winds be unfavorable. Casting off with little fanfare in June 2011, *St. Brendan* wallowed heavily out of Annapolis, cleared the Virginia Capes, and headed north to the Arctic.

Ten months later

Easily the gnarliest boat in Annapolis' famed Ego Alley, *St. Brendan* was, I thought, the star of the inaugural Annapolis Spring Sailboat Show. People gawked at her rust-stained deck fittings, her beard of slime at the bow, and a healthy colony of probably the biggest barnacles ever to disgrace a boat show at her stern. Matt, standing in the cockpit that had provided his only standing headroom for 10 months, answered any and all questions thrown his way.

“Aside from compression problems under the mast and the failed starter ... leaks were a constant annoyance.”

But on closer inspection, the adventure became even more awe-inspiring. Taking care not to intrude in what had been Matt's home for 10 months, I was struck by how spare and spartan *St. Brendan* was, even for a 1960s production boat.

What went wrong

Just a week after landfall, the cabin was still dank and smelled of the sea. With no opening ports and a forward hatch dogged shut, airflow had to have been an issue. Matt pointed to the small plates on the deck where ventilators had once stood: “I covered them over,” he said. “Ventilators always leak.” Perhaps, but without ventilation, black mold blanketed everything during his Arctic leg. His books, his clothes . . . nothing escaped the mold. As a result, everything metal rusted, including the stove and his shotgun.

Aside from compression problems under the mast and the failed starter that disabled the engine for the final 7,000 miles, leaks were a constant annoyance. The bolts in the hull-to-deck joint leaked. After a transducer started leaking somewhere along the way, several gallons of seawater accumulated in the bilge every 24 hours. Lesser sailors would have hit alarm buttons with these setbacks, but Matt took it all in stride. He was, by his own admission (and that of people who know him), a determined man on a mission.

What went right

Matt says the hull was fine, the Hyde sails “still crispy,” the Monitor windvane still going strong, and Matt swears by the Harken Mk III furler. Even the Volvo 2002 engine, before the starter packed up, “ran like a champ,” he says. (It wasn't the one with the troublesome variable-pitch prop, so no worries there.) When asked what he might say to designer Per Brohäll (who died in 1989), Matt said he'd buy him a beer.

Once the voyage was completed, Matt didn't confess to having developed a special bond with *St. Brendan*. The Albin Vega did the job and now its

business is done, except as a tangible and now-famous centerpiece for CRAB's ongoing efforts to raise the money to meet Matt's goal of \$250,000. (At press time, about \$175,000 had been raised.) Contact CRAB for further information about donations or to add yours.

Don't try this at home

Few among the rest of us breathe the same air as Matt Rutherford. Most of us shouldn't even think about undertaking such a voyage. Speaking for myself at least, sailing on home waters is excitement enough. Coming across the Chesapeake Bay in a thunderstorm and telling about it is worthy of much satisfaction and back-slapping on the docks. But what do you ask of a sailing legend who has conquered the Northwest Passage and rounded Cape Horn?

“I sail boats. It's what I do,” Matt responded, but upon reflection added that he would possibly venture “back to the Arctic, after I write a book.”

He won't be making his next voyage aboard *St. Brendan*. That boat had one purpose, one mission, one job. It will likely be sold after it is displayed in the Annapolis sailboat show in October. Chances are good, however, that another good old boat will fill the bill for Matt Rutherford's next great adventure. *A*

Steve Allan sails Annie's Rose, a good old Laguna 26 sloop, out of Frog Mortar Creek on the upper Chesapeake Bay. He writes about sailing, culture, and history on the bay and the Great Lakes. A native of Toronto, he lives in Baltimore.

Resources

Matt Rutherford's voyage website
www.solotheamericas.org

Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB)
<http://crabsailing.org>

The Sailing Channel will release a documentary on Matt and his voyage in 2013.
www.thesailingchannel.tv



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About the Author

Author Tom Wells is an engineer, a long-time sailor, and a Contributing Editor and boat reviewer for *Good Old Boat* magazine.

He has a sequel in the works, featuring Paul Findlay and his sailboat in another nautical setting.

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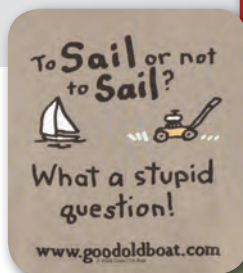
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GOOD OLD BOAT GEAR

Working to share the dream

Partners approach it from different directions

by Carl Hansen

When we mess about in boats, most of us enjoy the company of others. When I sail, my preference is to meander about, exploring the islands, relaxing in the cockpit as the sun goes down, and relishing the experience of the day. On a sailboat, it doesn't take much to make me happy and I'm content to enjoy the experience alone. Therein lies the proverbial rub: this adventure called life is not just about me.

Quite often I am alone at the beginning and the end of the day. A conflict of schedules, other responsibilities, or the weather can render me solo. It's second nature for me to paddle my kayak out to the mooring in Maine's Rockland Harbor, haul it aboard my 1980 Cal 25-II, *Holoholo*, and be sailing within minutes. Try that when you have another person along. The tender gets bigger, there's more stuff to stow, cockpit seating must be assigned (with a tiller that's critical), and the question of lunch arises. *Lunch?* Who stops for lunch when you're locked on to a steady breeze with the sails balanced and the tiller tied off with a bungee cord?

While I love to sail by myself, I have fond memories of exploring the Chesapeake with friends back in the 1970s on a Morgan Out Island 41. The space on deck and the roominess below (read: headroom) remain with me as a reminder of the advantage of size. The spacious cockpit, a wheel instead of a tiller, a proper galley and a usable head — all of these become important when there is more than one person on board. That's especially so when cruising and, ultimately, cruising is my goal.

Marriage makes two

The shelves in my office are full of books that support and refute my idea of the ideal cruising sailboat. What's important in the end is that it fulfill my needs.

But wait a minute! It's not all about me. I have a partner and hope to spend some quality time in the coming years sharing my dream with her. So whose dream is it?

We have all read the books about courageous cruising couples who have challenged every aspect of the cruising life and remained happy. It's in a book, so it must be true. Wannabes are warned of the risks, but then there's the picture of a boat anchored in a remote lagoon with the sun dropping into the azure sea. Who can resist? Challenges can bring people together, but there must have been a starting point that helped them get headed in the right direction. How did they remain friends after being isolated as a couple so much of the time? Where are all the stories of the failures? There must be 10 or more of those stories for every



successful cruising couple. Maybe I have chosen to read about the successes, ignored the rest, and now hope for the best.

Two different worlds

I dream, but so does Nancy, my wife. Call me a romantic; I can't imagine a day without thoughts of cruising into the sunset. Does she have the same thoughts? Not a chance. Nancy owns her own business and has her own distractions to occupy her mind. She's not dreaming about how to attach the staysail on a boat crashing through building seas. She's not imagining the thrill of anchoring in a shifting tide in a strong onshore wind. That's my department.

So I contemplate how to engage a somewhat reticent partner in the process of getting ready to cruise. I'm lucky to have had the promise from her to at least "give it a try." She has spent extended periods of time on the water and they have been mostly positive experiences, but does that mean she's ready to spend months on a boat alone with me or to cross the open ocean?

I believe that most of us dreamers are in the same boat, excuse the pun. Until we actually have the opportunity to try and see if it works, we hope for the best while doing everything we can to appropriately handle the details over which we still have control.

When I ask her which sailboat accommodation details she considers important, Nancy tells me she wants a workstation for her sewing machine, a comfortable bed, a large-enough head with a shower, and a galley that allows for food preparation just like in the real world. I'll admit that the last two were not high on my priority list, which leads us to the word "compromise." I'll compromise on anything that makes her happy as long as it doesn't compromise our safety. Safety at



sea should be the primary goal of every cruiser. Compromise is the primary goal of every partnership.

Another detail has to be considered: what if she has to sail by herself after I've clocked myself on the head? This isn't something she wants to discuss. If the time ever comes, she'll manage. She has taken classes taught by women in order to learn about those possibilities. (It has something to do with my stature as an instructor and wanting to preserve our marriage.)

I find it's hard work visualizing the juncture where our dreams converge onto the same path. It's romantic to think we can choose "the path less traveled," but darn it if there aren't a lot of highways to travel first before we even get there.

I have to face it: women and men are just, for lack of a better word, different. While I'm making plans for our first trip across the Gulf Stream in, say, two years, she's looking at my project boat: a land-

locked bare hull 40 miles from the ocean. She asks, "And how are we going to afford this adventure?" While men are looking at the big picture, women concentrate on the little details.

While she is elbow-deep in dishwater, I try to engage Nancy in a discussion about how big the sink on the boat should be, and she looks at me across the top of her glasses and says, "Oh, this big is good enough." In reality, while the most important thing to me at that moment is that sink, she is thinking about dinner, shopping, tomorrow's appointments, and wondering if I'm ever going to get a haircut. Women can multitask. Men would crumble under the weight of multiple simultaneous thoughts.

Who has the map?

I have spent 30 years learning about our differences the hard way. Remember all those highways? I went down all of them and refused to ask for directions. Nancy had the map. But now we are getting close to our destination. The focus is narrowing and soon we will put our relationship to the ultimate test. It started with a dream and will end with an understanding.

Carl is putting together his cruising boat, *Destiny*, in rural New Hampshire, at top. Building a galley his wife, Nancy, will enjoy, at right, is just one way of including her in living out his dream.

“No matter the outcome of these dreams, the relationship will endure.”

An understanding born out of all of those compromises we have made for each other along the way.

To my benefit, I get credit for including her in the process as I designed our cruising boat's interior and dreamed of tropical anchorages. The process taught me that our dream doesn't depend on me alone. By including her and getting her approval every step of the way, I have tried to keep her intrinsically connected, and perhaps (I continue to wish) she will find herself dreaming along with me. It is one more step toward finding success at the next stage of a lifelong partnership.

No matter the outcome of these dreams, the relationship will endure. In the event Nancy doesn't take to crossing the open ocean and that part of cruising doesn't work out as planned, it won't be for lack of trying. I can still sail the boat by myself. We'll still be together; she'll just fly down to meet me. *▲*

*Carl Hansen spent youthful summers sailing a Penguin dinghy his father built. He graduated to cruising sailboats and now sails his beloved Cal 25-II on Penobscot Bay, Maine. For cruising to new horizons, he is restoring a 1976 custom-built 40-foot center-cockpit sloop, a design attributed to Philip Rhodes. He has worked as a musician, European-car technician, home designer/builder, and cabinetmaker. He also dreamed of writing, and is completing his first novel, *Destiny*. He lives in Sandwich, New Hampshire.*





Jimmie and Mary James sail *Bodacious*, their Santana 27, in the Pacific Northwest, sometimes making forays from Puget Sound into the Pacific Ocean.

Santana 27

A sturdy club racer and coastal cruiser

by Richard Smith

Humphrey Bogart's sleek and much-loved yacht, *Santana* — a contraction of "Santa Ana" — was named for the katabatic winds that blow through the valleys of Southern California. W.D. "Bill" Schock, one of the leading lights of the fledgling West Coast fiberglass boatbuilding industry in the years immediately following World War II, thought it a good name as well, attaching it to no fewer than 16 models his company built: the Santana 21, 22, 23D, 23K, 25, 26, 28, 525, 228, 30, 30/30 PC, 30/30 GP, 30/30 RC, 35, 37, 39, and our review boat, the Santana 27.

Bill Schock grew up in Hollywood and played an important role in making sailing available to the growing middle class. He built a cold-molded International 14 for himself, but before it was finished he sold it and thus launched the W.D. Schock Boat Building business. The year was 1946. He went

on to produce the fiberglass Lehman 10, which was followed by the one-designs Snowbird, Sabot, and Schock 22. But it was the Lido 14, introduced in 1958, that secured the reputation of the company.

Bill met naval architect Gary Mull in 1965 and together they developed the popular Santana 22. Many of the 747 22s built still sail the windy waters of San Francisco Bay. Gary went on to design the Schock 37 and the Santana 27. The latter boat was in production from 1967 to 1974.

Design

Our review boat, *Bodacious*, was built in 1969 and has been owned by Jimmie James of Kingston, Washington, since 1985. Gary Mull's design for the Santana 27 brought together many of the features that marked his work during the later 1960s and early '70s. The design shows none of the

characteristics often associated with the Cruising Club of America (CCA) rule, which was on the wane at the time, and predates the International Offshore Rule (IOR). All in all, the 27 is a wholesome design free of the sometimes unfortunate quirks of boats designed to take advantage of a rating rule.

The sheer has an easy spring in it from the transom to the nicely drawn spoon bow. The boat has a lively, almost sleek, appearance when viewed from the port side. From starboard, however, the offset companionway hatch and sea hood abaft the mast look ungainly.

A club racer/cruiser, it has a fin keel and spade rudder. The displacement/LWL ratio is a moderate 196. A generous sail plan gives a sail area/displacement ratio of 19, suggesting that the boat performs well.

Inboard and outboard models rate around 198 seconds per mile under



PHRF. For comparison, the largest fleets of Catalina 27s, inboard and outboard models, rate 204. A Cal 27-2 inboard rates 198 and the C&C 27 rates between 198 and 210.

Construction

The Santana 27's construction is typical for its class of boat and the time it was built. The standard provisos apply. The hull is laid up of solid fiberglass and the deck consists of laminations of fiberglass separated by a plywood core. It's good, stiff, and solid construction but, when water penetrates the fiberglass, laminated decks are subject to rot, especially near fittings like cleats and chocks. The prudent owner will keep a close watch below the chainplates, a favorite



hiding place for rot. Ditto for the bottoms of bulkheads and low cabinetry.

Not long ago, Jimmie noticed softness underfoot in the deck area above the forward cabin. Following an established procedure, he drilled closely spaced, small-diameter holes into the top skin of the deck and injected Git-Rot epoxy into the affected area. It's not an easy fix but, if the damage isn't extensive, decks can be economically restored to previous stiffness in this manner.

The deck-to-hull joint is formed by the deck edge resting upon the outward-turning flange of the hull. The two moldings are bonded chemically and fastened mechanically with bolts and the inside of the joint is taped with fiberglass. A vinyl rubrail conceals and, to a certain extent, protects the joint. There has been no separation or water leakage at the joint on *Bodacious*.

Owners are advised to check that through-bolted deck hardware is backed up satisfactorily. In spite of the use of fender washers in lieu of backing

plates, there have been no failures in many years of hard use, with one exception: during a day of heavy sailing, the traveler extrusion tore away from the cockpit molding. Jimmie replaced it with a heavier piece of hardware bolted through the reinforced fiberglass molding with heavy backing plates.

By 2001, *Bodacious* was showing blistering on the bottom and a lot of stress cracks. Jimmie decided to grind the gelcoat off the hull, cockpit, topsides, and bottom and recoat everything. It looks fine and there has been no further blistering. He replaced the standing rigging at the same time.

The Santana 27 has three fixed portlights on each side. Leaks are not uncommon but the glass and frame can



On *Bodacious*, a step at the forward end of the cockpit, above left, makes stepping onto the cabintop easier, but even though it folds up, it interferes with sitting against the bulkhead. It's safer anyway to step out onto the deck and climb onto the cabintop at the shrouds. With the tiller pilot steering, owner Jimmie James relaxes against the tall cockpit coamings, above right. Note the companionway offset to starboard. On some boats, this arrangement can make the companionway more vulnerable to flooding when heeled hard over on port tack. Because of the offset companionway, the safer side to stand when furling the mainsail is the port side, at left. Halyards are led aft to the narrow starboard side of the companionway, at right. The steep camber in the sidedecks is also evident.





The table drops to make a double berth, at left. Removing the wooden strips in the overhead provides access to the nuts and bolts that secure deck hardware. The starboard-side galley, above, includes a two-burner stovetop, sink, drawers, lockers down low, and outboard stowage for sundry items. A common upgrade for do-it-yourselfers is a swing-out arm for critical instruments like a depth sounder and GPS.

be readily removed. Jimmie replaced the tempered glass of one of his ports and re-bedded it with little fuss.

The keel is made of cast iron and must be protected against corrosion with quality coatings, preferably epoxy and bottom paint.

On deck

The deck on *Bodacious* is clean and unencumbered by superfluous gear, as befits a small yacht given to leaving the inland sea of Puget Sound to face the strong winds and currents of the Pacific Ocean while circumnavigating Vancouver Island. Jimmie and his wife, Mary, sail their boat hard and, for them, simplicity in all things is a guiding force.

A 22-pound Bruce anchor is kept in a husky bow roller with anchor tackle (15 feet of 1/4-inch chain and 200 feet of 3/8-inch nylon) led through the deck and stored in an improvised box above the foot of the V-berth below. A 14-pound Danforth carried on the stern pulpit serves as a stern anchor.

Main, headsail, and spinnaker halyards, as well as first and second reefing lines, are led aft to clutches mounted on the starboard cabintop and tended by a Bariert #10 winch. Sheets are handled by Harken #32 self-tailing two-speed winches. Jimmie added Schaefer headsail-furling gear in 1998.

The foredeck and sidedecks are markedly cambered and — though providing a little more headroom below and good footing on deck to windward when heeled — they can be hazardous when working on deck at dockside. Chainplates mounted on the cabin



Santana 27

Designer: Gary Mull
LOA: 27 feet 1/2 inch
LWL: 22 feet 6 inches
Beam: 9 feet
Draft: 4 feet 3 inches
Ballast: 2,300 pounds
Displacement: 5,000 pounds
Sail area: 348 square feet
Disp./LWL ratio: 196
SA/Disp. ratio: 19

trunk ease the situation somewhat and provide for better sheeting angles for windward work.

Gary Mull resolved the conflict between the asymmetrical accommodation plan in the cabin and the topside area by offsetting the companionway. This makes for a rather crowded space to the starboard side of the hatch and sea hood.

Cockpit

The cockpit is spacious and provides ample lounging and sleeping space while at anchor. The seats offer good back support with a convenient leg-bracing distance between them. Cockpit stowage is minimal, restricted to the lazarette that contains a couple of 6-gallon cans of gasoline in addition to everything else.

Over the years, Santana 27s were equipped with a variety of inboard engines, including the venerable Atomic 4 and Yanmar 1GM 10, but Jimmie proclaims the Yamaha 9.9 four-stroke outboard motor a perfect match for the boat. It's clean and quiet and has proven sufficiently reliable for his considerable cruising needs. Cruising speed is about 5 knots and tops out at about 6 in quiet water. A deep notch in the transom gets the prop low enough to get a good bite on the water. Cavitation has not been a serious problem. The 10-amp alternator provides enough battery-charging power for lights and judicious use of the Webasto heater over two or three nights at anchor.

The Yamaha is larger and heavier than the old Evinrude two-stroke it replaced and this required strengthening the transom below the cutout. While he

“The boat is finely balanced with just the slightest weather helm in the gusts.”

was at it, Jimmie also added two corner braces to the transom at deck level.

On one occasion Jimmie took green water into the cockpit — about 6 inches — and found the two drains to be wholly inadequate, a common fault of many boats. Santana 27s were built with fiberglass tube “through-hulls” extending between the scuppers and hull. A hose for draining the sink was tied into one of these tubes. Jimmie replaced the tubes with bronze seacocks.

Rig

The Santana 27 is a masthead sloop with a deck-stepped mast. The mainsail is on the small side and carries a very high boom. The idea was that a working jib would provide for leisurely cruising and a large foretriangle would accommodate big genoas and spinnakers for racing. But that was in the days before jib furlers. Today, Jimmie carries a 135 percent genoa. He tucks the first reef in the mainsail in about 18 knots of wind and adds the second when it steadies above 20, still flying the full genoa. On occasion, he reefs the genoa to settle her down.

Standing rigging consists of a forestay, single backstay, upper and lower shrouds attached to chainplates on the main bulkhead, and forward lower shrouds on separate chainplates.

Belowdecks

Owing to the boat's lower freeboard, and the cabin designed in proportion, headroom below is just 5 feet 9 inches, with a bit more under the companionway slide. At 6 feet, however, I found little difficulty moving about the Santana; just a slight nodding attitude seemed to do the trick.

The forward cabin has a wide — if a tad short for me — double berth. Beneath it to port is a 10-gallon holding tank for the marine toilet and to starboard a 15-gallon freshwater tank. A small hanging locker just aft of the berth on the starboard side is now outfitted with shelves for folded clothes. A sliding door separates the forward cabin from the main cabin.

The saloon layout is in the California tradition with a galley to starboard opposite an upholstered dinette with a fold-down table that converts into a double berth. Just abaft the galley is a

seat with an electrical distribution panel below. Good use is made of teak cabinetry and bulkheads and the atmosphere is light and cheerful. Jimmie installed a new overhead lining in 2001.

When they provision carefully, Mary and Jimmie James can cruise *Bodacious* independently for about a week without needing to obtain further supplies of food or water. In keeping with their general goal of simplicity, they cruise without ice, preferring to carry extra food in the icebox rather than blocks of ice. While we talked about the boat, Jimmie and I enjoyed two plenty-cold-enough beers cooled by the near-freezing waters of Puget Sound.

There are two quarter berths — a fairly normal one to starboard and a secondary cubbyhole to port with a tortured entry that only a curious child could discover. This storage area might be more useful if it were accessible through a cockpit seat hatch.

Under way

The Yamaha started on the first pull. Compared with an inboard of similar horsepower, the engine was smooth and quiet without a hint of vibration or scent

of fuel. Backing was certain leaving the slip

and we made for deep water. Jimmie set the Autohelm tiller pilot and hoisted the main, complaining a little about the friction, as the halyards are led aft to the cockpit through turning blocks. I gathered in the fenders and tidied up stray halyards and sheet ends before taking the helm. Jimmie cranked in the sheet to unfurl the genoa and we leaned into a nice 10-knot breeze, quickly making 3.5 knots over the ground.

My first impression was how well the Santana stood up to the occasional gust, accelerating smoothly and shrugging off the wakes of ferries and passing powerboats with the assurance of a larger and heavier boat. A second impression was how close-winded the boat is. The Santana consistently went beyond the point that I thought would cause her to luff up. The boat is finely balanced with just the slightest weather helm in the gusts.

Bodacious is well laid out for singlehanded sailing, most of which can be done from the cockpit. But when coming into the dock, I found the narrow, heavily cambered sidedecks to be particularly hazardous.

Conclusion

The Santana handles as well as any 27-footer can be expected to under sail and when using the outboard engine in a variety of conditions. Well sailed and with a good suit of sails, it's very close-winded and generally well-behaved. Jimmie has found that, when handled conservatively, the Santana 27 can stand up to the rigors of occasional offshore cruises.

Prospective owners would do well to try moving forward and aft on the sidedecks a few times. The cambered decks, the contorted access to the port quarter berth, and the shortage of cockpit-accessible stowage are peculiar to the Santana 27 and should be evaluated carefully. ⚓

Richard Smith, a contributing editor with Good Old Boat, is an architect. He specializes in designing and building very small houses and has built, restored, and maintained a wide variety of boats. He and his wife, Beth, sail their Ericson Cruising 31, Kuma, on the reaches of Puget Sound.



A very, very long storage drawer is fitted under the companionway ladder and cockpit.

On a cold November night in 2010, my husband and I attended a liveaboard brunch at a nearby marina. There the seed of an old dream germinated. Years ago, we'd had the desire to live on a sailboat and cruise, but the momentum of land life swept it aside. A house and two children later, we decided to go for it.

Life, we decided, was too short to wait until we were retired. Tig and I also believed that living simply and within arm's reach of our young children was the greatest gift we could give them in their early years.

As the tides of our will reversed, we found ourselves on a five-year plan to move aboard a boat, and the search began for my husband's new mistress . . . er, boat.

We pored through reviews in books and magazines together. Tig searched for boats online during every spare moment. He checked while our 3-month-old baby napped in his arms. He checked late in the evening. He checked at every pause in our conversations. I was busy researching yacht brokers, marine surveyors, and how to perform boat inspections. I posted questions on forums and tried to digest all the information that was coming at us as if from a fire hose.

After making a rather naïve initial statement of requirements, we went on a whirlwind tour of nine boats in four days during the holidays. With a toddler and baby in tow, it was not fun nor easy, but we fumbled our way through it.

Narrowing the field

After several months spent doing more research and making more boat visits, we found that we were attracted to boats of the European persuasion and of 1980s vintage. In particular, Tig liked the northern European builders, who have good reputations for constructing the sturdy boats needed to stand up to the sailing conditions in the North Sea. Their boats also tended to have more suitable accommodations for our family when compared with other boats of similar length and vintage. Unfortunately, the hard part was finding these boats at prices within our budget.

One day, Tig casually said, "Well, there's a 32-foot Contest in Connecticut."

"Absolutely not," I replied.

Moving aboard

*A family of four
dreams big, goes small*

by Serena Li



In the beginning, we had arbitrarily picked 38 to 42 feet as the ideal size of boat for our family of four. One book we read advised cruising families to get the largest and most comfortable boat they could reasonably afford. In looking at many liveaboard and cruising blogs, we noted that families do tend to have boats starting in the 40-foot range. Other authors pointed out that an extra 10 feet nearly doubles the annual cost of a boat in higher docking fees and haulout costs, insurance, parts, and more.

Both arguments have their points. As we had no experience with either side, we found ourselves getting tangled up with intellectual pros and cons. We pulled the plug on the noise and decided to make the decisions by looking within ourselves.

Our lack of sailing experience and our budget pushed us toward a smaller boat. It was important that we both felt comfortable handling our chosen sailboat. As we stood on the decks of candidates, we listened for a quiet inner voice to say, "This boat is too big. This boat is too small. This boat is just right." With that in mind, we settled on 34 to 36 feet as the size requirement. Squeezing our family into a 32-foot boat seemed improbable.

Small is suitable

Tig ended up convincing me to at least look at the Contest 32, a Dutch-built center-cockpit ketch. One cold February morning, we drove to Stonington, Connecticut. The boat was stashed all the way in the back of the boatyard near the train tracks. She was uncovered and had several inches of snow



Although at 32 feet *Wildest Dream*, facing page, is smaller than they imagined their dream boat would be, Serena, at left, wearing the baby backpack, and Tig, below, showing their 3-year-old the ropes, have found her to be everything they need right now.

The crew expressed interest in delivering the boat as quickly as possible. That meant that our kids — at the time, 2 years old and 8 months — and I shouldn't come on this trip. We wanted their first sailing experience to be a leisurely and positive one. This was not the right introductory voyage for them. The weeks leading up to the trip were abuzz with preparations and last-minute repairs.

In late April, the crew set off. Two days later, *Wildest Dream* was safely docked at our summer marina in Charlestown, Massachusetts. One of the crew described Tig as “a new owner who was the quickest study I've ever sailed with.”

Making the transition

Summer sailing season was soon upon us, so the race was on to move aboard. We started a project list with some “must have” items before moving aboard: a propane line that didn't leak, a working stove, hot water, bilge alarms, and mattresses that didn't stink of mildew and diesel. Tig ripped out the entire propane line and I set to work cutting new foam cushions and sewing covers for them. We worked around the clock on weekends and after the kids went to sleep.

As we approached the deadline, our list got shorter. We crossed off a few important items and discarded the rest one by one. No hot water? No problem, we thought, we'll fix it this winter. As we were moving aboard, Tig promised to install the propane stove that night. Seven months after we attended that fateful marina brunch, we became liveaboards.

Once we moved aboard, we had to tackle another problem: my only sailing experience was through dinghy

on the deck. Ice floated in the bilge and condensation dripped from the overhead. But the deck looked manageable, the interior was well-crafted, her systems were simple, and her electronics minimal. Even better was the aft-cabin arrangement with its two separate berths that would be ideal for our children. We did not experience the love at first sight many boat owners describe. Instead, it was a slow recognition as something clicked. We thought, “This could work.”

Since Contest 32s are not common on this side of the pond, we had to look into Dutch and German reviews with lots of help from Google Translate. We put in an offer, negotiated back and forth a little, and went into a purchase and sale agreement. We had her surveyed, ran a sea trial, and went for a test sail. Our surveyor concluded that she was “a simple little boat” . . . exactly what we were looking for. Aside from a loose Cutless bearing, the engine ran well and the rigging looked good. The test sail went smoothly. One fine day, we drove to Connecticut and climbed aboard as new owners. Only after we closed did we pay attention to her name. Since it seemed fitting for our journey, we kept her name: *Wildest Dream*.

Tig was antsy to get our good old boat up to Boston as soon as possible, so we put out a call for experienced sailors. Luck smiled on us as a sailor wrote to say he had sailed the run from eastern Connecticut many times and offered to be the acting skipper. Momentum gathered and we soon had a full crew.



lessons 10 years before, where I learned the true meaning of "swear like a sailor." Tig liked to joke that a cloud of obscenity still hangs over San Francisco Bay. He had only a bit more experience than I did.

All through the summer, learning to sail was the top priority. We prioritized boat projects based on whether they were necessary to achieve our goal safely. The only major work we did was to upgrade our 6-gallon holding tank so we could handle overnights more comfortably.

Each trip out was a new lesson and brought with it new frustrations. In the beginning, we brought along experienced sailors to teach us. I learned to dock and back into our slip with a baby strapped onto my back. Tig and I tested different configurations of sails in gusty conditions. We learned to anchor under sail and to sail off the anchor. Starting with day sails, we built up to overnights and then

The adventures of Tig and Serena


Read more about how Tig and Serena are living out (and aboard) their *Wildest Dream* at <www.tigandserena.com>.

Their reports about delivering *Wildest Dream* from Connecticut to Boston are at <www.tigandserena.com/2011/04/28/go-team-w> and <www.tigandserena.com/2011/05/02/we-made-it-to-boston>.

weekends. We made sure not to limit our sailing experiences to perfect conditions only.

We made many novice mistakes. We got caught in two squalls and left the genoa on too long as dark skies gathered. In Nahant, we didn't tie things on deck tightly enough at anchor, causing us hours of lost sleep as *Wildest Dream* was tossed around like a beer can on a windy night. We also experienced embarrassing docking fiascos. The ramifications of having two small children aboard amplified my fears and caution.

But there were wonderful moments too. The adrenaline rush of the first time we went sailing by ourselves. Watching the sun set behind Calf Island, my daughter's arm encircling my neck as I told her about the sun putting on its red pajamas and snuggling underneath a Technicolor blanket. Our family serenading a velvet night sky splashed with glitter.

I tuck these tender snapshots into the corners of my mind whenever things get hard, to remind me that we have one wild and precious life in which to chase the stars. 

Serena Li lives with her husband, Tig, and their two young children on their Contest 32CS ketch, Wildest Dream. They spent their first summer aboard sailing around the Boston Harbor Islands. This past summer, they began cruising south along the U.S. East Coast on their way toward the Bahamas.

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Head-turning horseshoe buoy

A spiffy new look for regulation flotation

by Karen Sullivan

They're bright yellow, anonymous, and everywhere. New ones are expensive but they become faded eyesores after a few years in the sun. No one wants scruffy old horseshoe buoys making their good old boats look shabby. But if the flotation core is sound and the cover's not rotted, you can turn the old buoy into a real looker with leftover paint.

Sockdolager's grotty old horseshoe was the perfect candidate for an extreme makeover. As it was covered in boatyard grime with its zipper corroded shut, there was little risk of ruining its looks. Stretching artistic muscles is easier when you can't lose. What's more, we think the results look great; our buoy became the envy of D dock.

After cleaning and drying the buoy, give it a couple of coats of semi-gloss white latex house paint. This alone will look good, but why not go further?

Put a name to it

The next step is to pencil the boat's name on the buoy's uneven surface. Measure and make sure the letters are somewhat evenly spaced, with the middle letter or space at the top. I gave the spacing my best effort and say that the letters were done freehand and "free-spiritedly."

A stencil can help in the creation of the letters. You can make your own stencil by cutting out paper letters with a razor blade and placing them on the buoy to trace around. It's fun to be creative with the typeface; I made up my own font. Once you've got the name penciled on the buoy, stand back to examine it, making sure there are no obvious gaps in the spacing. You can still erase and correct at this stage.

Now find three good-quality artist's brushes, sized from small (about 1/8-inch) to extremely fine (about a millimeter). Although painting with small brushes may take longer, corners are easier and mistakes are simpler to correct. Get a small can of water-based paint in your favorite color from the hardware store and have a small rag handy for dabbing out paint blobs from the wrong places.

Winter therapy

It's fiddly work, but you have nothing to lose. Besides, you have all winter. You can paint over mistakes. You'll



Safety regulations require boats to carry throwable flotation devices but are silent on their color or decoration. Karen used the loophole to artistic advantage.

also learn how steady your hand is. I chose a paint color to match the boat, and later added a bit of outline in a contrasting color. Extra spiffiness came from painting two crossed signal flags (the first letters of our surnames) and a hailing port. When spring arrived, I carried our "new" buoy proudly down the dock and was promptly stopped by admirers. They asked, "Where'd you get that?" When they learned I'd done it, they asked to place an order. I said, "Thanks, but I need to go sailing now." ▴

Karen Sullivan and her partner, Jim Heumann, are sailing their Pacific Seacraft Dana 24, Sockdolager, across the Pacific. They maintain a spirited record of their travels on their blog, <<http://karenandjimsexcellentadventure.blogspot.com>>.

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Two-way door latch

Close it with a cord and a cleat hitch

by Connie McBride

In situations where more-normal people ask, “How can I fix this?” we on board *Eurisko* tend to think, “How can I use string to fix this?” This habit took form years ago after we had struggled for ages to find an appropriate latch for our head door.

The door swings athwartships to provide privacy for the V-berth or it can be used fore and aft to close off the head. In an attempt to economize on space and multipurpose as much as possible, we attached the trash can to the inside of the door and hinged it to be accessible from either side. But as well-planned and beautifully constructed as it is, the door did not have a latch when we bought our 34-foot Creekmore.

The Velcro a previous owner had installed on the bulkhead was sufficient until we sailed her hard, and then the door swung to the beat of the heeling boat. We wanted to latch the door from either inside or outside the head but we couldn’t find a method for securing it without using awkward contraptions that didn’t fit with our simple lifestyle ... until we thought to use string.

We drilled a small hole near the opening edge of the door, big enough to thread through it a 2-foot length of small line (we used starter cord). By tying a stopper knot near each end, we now had a line we could pull most of the way through the door into one side or the other. My husband,

Dave, installed a 2-inch brass horn cleat on either side of the bulkhead that encloses the head. All we have to do is pull the line through the hole and cleat it on either the inside or the outside to secure the door. When we’re offshore, we put a locking turn on the cleat to prevent the line from loosening and the door from banging in big seas.

When we first installed our new “latches,” a friend pointed out that the line chafes on the edge of the door. In spite of her assurance that “that won’t last very long,” it was nearly 10 years before we replaced the original line. She was correct about the chafe, however, and the paint has worn off the door where the line touches. What’s more, I occasionally smack my elbow on the corner of the cleat and swear at the person who thought that was a good idea ... until I remember I have only myself to blame.

Despite the few disadvantages, we would not trade our unusual door closure. Inexpensive, unobtrusive, and simple, our “latch” is yet another problem solved by string. *▲*

Connie McBride and her husband, Dave, faced an empty nest when their third son, David, left home, their 34-foot cutter, Eurisko. Part of their therapy was to buy a Bolger sharpie in which to explore shallow waters where Eurisko couldn’t take them. See Connie’s blog at <<http://simplysailingonline.com>>.



A short cord that passes through a hole in the door has stopper knots on both ends. Pull the cord into the head and close yourself in. When you’re done, pull it out to close the door from the outside.

Easy-store winter frame

A nifty boat-cover support that packs to nothing

by Jim Hildinger

As I drove slowly by this boat, the thought flashed through my mind that it sure would be easy to store this winter-cover framework over the summer! That was enough to inspire me to go home, get the camera, and return to photograph it for future reference.

To my delight, closer inspection confirmed my first observation. This PVC-pipe framework can be easily disassembled and packed in a bundle about 12 feet long and maybe 8 inches in diameter . . . the sort of bundle that could be hung in any garage or attic or even shoved under the porch until it was needed again the following fall.

The bend is controlled by tying the ends into a cleat, rubrail, or anything handy, with plastic wire ties. The curved arch takes the weight off the mast. Tie a tarp over it, or shrinkwrap it if you wish, and the job is done.

A good idea: reusable and cheap too! 

Jim Hildinger has been sailing on Lake Tahoe for 51 years, first in an O'Day Tempest 23, then on his Catalina 27. He was president of the International Catalina 27/270 Association for a few years and remains active in the group.



Jim decided this framework, above, was worth a second look. It's made of inexpensive PVC pipe — easy to erect and easy to store. The bows are connected at their ends by another pipe run through tees, below, and secured to deck fittings with cable ties, inset.



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Anchor float on a rope

Big Bobber marks the spot

by Rob Hoffman

As your boat swings around in a tight or crowded anchorage, it's helpful if you can see where your anchor is lying. An anchor buoy enables you to do that. It is also invaluable for recovering a fouled anchor, as it enables you to pull the flukes out backward from under an obstruction.

We call our anchor buoy our Big Bobber, because we store its 50 feet of polypropylene line on the buoy itself in the same way fishermen carry and store fishing line on small old-fashioned fishing bobbers. If you routinely anchor in deeper water, you might want to carry at least double that length. The polypropylene line floats, so it doesn't sink the buoy it's wrapped around.

The buoy itself is a common swimming-pool marker float with a hole through it to allow a line to pass through. We passed a length of ½-inch PVC pipe through the float and drilled two access holes in the pipe, one each side of the float. We threaded the ¾-inch poly line through one hole and out the other and tied



Polypropylene line, a small float, and a length of PVC pipe make an adjustable-depth anchor marker.



it with a bowline to the rest of the line, locking the float in the center portion of the PVC pipe. To store the line, we wrap it back and forth around the "horns" of the PVC pipe that extend from the float, ending with two overhand loops to secure it.

To use our Big Bobber, we first determine the depth of the water where we will set our anchor. We undo the securing loops and unwrap just enough line to allow the float to remain on the surface above the anchor when it sets. We secure the remaining line on the bobber with a couple of horn-cleat-style overhand loops. We tie the bitter end to the anchor crown in such a way that, when we pull on the line, it will pull the anchor out backward. When we deploy and set the anchor, we lower the bobber with it.

That yellow bobber serves as a visible marker directly above our anchor and is there to help us free it if needed. The bobber and poly line always stay together. We can adjust for a change in water depth just as one might adjust the depth of a baited hook when using an old-fashioned cork fishing bobber.

The cost of the components is less than \$10. Fabrication time is about 15 minutes and requires nothing more than a way to cut PVC pipe and a drill to make the holes in the pipe. ▽

Rob Hoffman began life as a Tennessee river rat who discovered sailing while in the U.S. Navy. A tinkerer, Rob refits boats and "builds stuff." His most recent project was CanCan, a 28-foot aluminum Alubat. His current project is Ladyship, a Westerly Pageant 23.

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For more information contact David Burch at david@starpath.com.



H2Out — keeping the moisture out

If you are a sailor with even a slight tendency toward paranoia, you must sometimes wonder about what's going on in your fuel tank. You usually can't see into the tank, and we all know how moisture condenses from the air and collects at the bottom of the tank. Once there, it provides an environment where microbes go through their life cycle, feeding on the fuel above and floating around to be sucked into the fuel line. So, if you could take the moisture out of the air as it enters your tank through its vent line, wouldn't you want to do it?

H2Out Systems recently introduced a filter to remove the moisture from the air that is drawn into your fuel tank. Installing this drying filter in a tank's vent line will effectively prevent moisture from getting into the fuel via the air. As the filter removes moisture, the blue desiccant beads turn pink, indicating they have absorbed as much moisture as they can. The filter can then be removed and the beads baked on a stovetop or in an oven to drive the moisture out, turning the beads blue again and ready to reuse in the filter.

The MSRP for the fuel-tank air-vent dryer is \$129.95 for fuel tanks up to 60 gallons and \$189.95 for tanks up to 200 gallons.

H2Out makes several versions of these reusable air dryers for other areas of your boat, RV, or home. They range in size and application from a very small one, to absorb moisture that gets into your toolbox, to the largest one, sized to keep a 1,000-cubic-foot space dry. For more information go to www.H2out.com or contact Scott Stenehjerm at scott@h2out.com.

The fuel-vent filter fits into the tank's vent line. A general-purpose desiccator can be used in a toolbox or other enclosure.



To be featured on this page, items must be new products. If you would like to have your product featured here, please send an email to Michael Facius, michael@goodoldboat.com, or call him at 612-605-8319. By the way, readers, if you contact a marine supplier mentioned here or elsewhere in our magazine, please remember to tell the folks there that *Good Old Boat* sent you.

continued from page 9

Bert Vermeer captured this photo of the 115-foot, 1939, British-built schooner, *Eros*, sailing across San Francisco Bay shortly after a major refit. Send your sailboat photos to jstearns@goodoldboat.com and we'll post them on our website. If we publish yours here, we'll send you a Good Old Boat T-shirt or cap.



transducer to the hull. At the time, I was told this would reduce its maximum range (approximately 600 feet) by 50 percent, but since I would only need it in shallower waters, this was not a concern. As it turns out, in practice the range is often a lot better than I expected. In fact, just last week I was out for a sail in Desolation Sound and had depth readings of well over 500 feet!

—**Andy Vine**, Cortes Island, British Columbia

Storing nylon line

Some of us who, in our old age, have graduated to smaller boats, i.e., less than 30 feet, use nylon anchor rodes to avoid the weight and hassle of chain and windlasses. Unlike chain, nylon will not drop neatly into a chain locker of its own accord. It must be handled gently and stored properly to avoid kinks and hockles.

I am a believer in lightweight, efficient anchor gear. My main anchor is an FX16 Fortress. My secondary anchor for Bahamian mooring is a Danforth HT12 with sharpened flukes. It works well in grassy bottoms that cause trouble for more conventional gear. My wife can lift either one, a major concern.

Attached to each anchor is a boat length of $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch chain. The primary rode is $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch Yale 8-strand braid with an alleged breaking strength of 8,300 pounds. Yale Cordage states that this type of line is particularly suitable for anchor rode and has greater elastic stretch than either

twisted or double-braid nylon of the same diameter. They assure me that the line can withstand a repeated strain of 20 percent of breaking load without damage. This works out to about 1,600 pounds, enough to hold my boat in a 60-knot wind. Any more wind and I set multiple anchors or scurry to a sheltered mooring.

Here's how I handle my rat's nest of anchor rodes. For a cruise along the Hudson River or the ICW, where I usually anchor every night, I tie a milk crate to a forward cleat and simply flake the rode into it. Braid flakes neatly without hockles. The short length of chain piled on top keeps everything in its place, and rain, spray, or a bucket of water washes the mud off the line. The rode is 150 feet long, more than adequate for most East Coast anchorages.

Additional rode and other spare lines are coiled up on electrical extension-cord storage reels, available at any well-stocked hardware store. This type of hand-held reel has a grip that allows the reel to rotate and a small handle for winding up the line. The ones I buy, made by Kord Manager, cost about \$5 at Walmart or Home Depot. They store about 100 feet of $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch or 150 feet of $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch nylon line. I splice a shackle to each end of the lines to enable me to connect one to another to get a really long line. These storage reels are a good way to keep moderate lengths of rope or electrical extension cord without messing up a storage locker.

Stop being a slave to chain. Once you hit 80 you have to make life easier. I have a daysailer and a canoe ready for my dotage.

—**Larry Zeitlin**, Cortlandt Manor, N.Y.

Motoring in sailing weather

As Daniel Shea does in his Reflections story ("A Sea Less Sailed," July 2012), I have wondered just the same thing here in Atlantic Canada. I am not opposed to the use of a small engine when schedules and wind direction make it unavoidable, but I am amazed at the number of sailboats that go by under motor despite favorable winds, good weather, and lots of available daylight. Of course, I don't know the specific circumstances

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and don't mean to pass judgment without better information, but the overall tendency seems to favor motoring even when sailing is fully practical. If motoring is the intention, why not buy a powerboat?

Having said that, I have scaled back on insisting real sailors always rely only on the sails. Picking up a mooring or coming up to a dock singlehanded under sail is either a sign of great skill or great stupidity. At least with a mooring you can come around and try again . . . a dock is less forgiving. But the incident that clinched my change in perspective was an effort to sail into Charlottetown Harbour with the wind from ahead. The channel is perhaps 1,000 yards wide, giving plenty of room to tack back and forth, but after about an hour of tacking, it struck me that every tack brought us no farther along the channel: the tide was against us. I admitted defeat and started the motor. In 20 minutes we were anchoring with other boats that had motored in an hour earlier.

—Tom Schultz, Belle River, Prince Edward Island



Bald Eagles in New Jersey

Each spring, our Com-Pac 27, *Windfall*, is re-commissioned at Holz's Boatyard in Marmora, New Jersey. The yard lies approximately 10 miles from her home port of Ocean City, New Jersey. The point-to-point route is only about 3 miles, but the back channel of Great Egg Harbor Bay, which is approximately 10 to 20 feet deep, provides a serpentine route through some very beautiful marshlands. Along the route, numerous nesting trays have been erected in the marsh, about 15 feet above the water and big enough to accommodate families of large birds. Yup, that is a bald eagle! This is the second year we have seen these nests occupied by our National Bird.

—Bill and Jo-Anne Kirn and Gerry and Pat Haughey,
King of Prussia, Pa.

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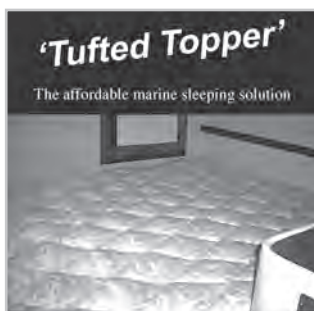
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Back where we belong

Cruisers rediscover sailing on home waters in a small boat

by Bill Gardam



It is a lovely summer day in the Gulf Islands off Canada's west coast as our 25-footer pokes her bow out of the marina. We've owned this boat for several years, yet this is almost her first venture away from the dock. We're not uncertain about what we are about. We have owned lots of little boats and canoes and the last one — a classic 50-foot gaff-rigged schooner — carried us around the Pacific.

Safari kati, as we renamed this fiberglass 1970s Folkboat, has been my long-term building project. I have been rescuing her from neglect and refashioning her into my idea of a proper yacht.

The outboard pushes us into Ganges Harbour, where I hoist the jib and main while my wife, Heather, adjusts to steering with a tiller. She struggles a little after wheel steering for so long, but there's something else as well. After enduring a long rough ride back across the Pacific from Australia in *Shiriri*, she has shown no interest at all, until now, in sailboats and salt water. The wind is light, the sails fill gently, and we waft slowly past the islands in the bay. I so much want this tentative return to sailing to be a good experience for her. The wind dies behind a headland and the outboard pushes us against the tidal current in a channel and then into a deep bay on Portland Island. There's a marine park here where we can go ashore in the inflatable that we've been towing astern. I check the chart for depth and ease the toy-like anchor into the green water. Our slim boat snubs, stretches out her chain, and slips gently forward again. We grin at each other in the silence. We both recognize the familiarity of this anchoring procedure while noting how ridiculously easy it is in so small a ship. It has been several years since we have anchored in this bay and a much longer time since we have sailed in such simplicity.


Once ashore, we pick apples from an abandoned orchard and walk the trail out to a rocky point. The dry smell of summer grasses and the crunch of slippery arbutus leaves underfoot evoke memories of an earlier life: summer camping with our children in these islands, canoe trips, and sailing our open dory in the brisk sea breeze.

From the beacon on the point, we note the calm ocean surface is rippled in patches and these patches are growing. This afternoon's sea breeze is developing and promises a good sail home. We take our time, though, eat

our picnic lunch, and eventually row back to our waiting boat. There we retrieve our anchor and raise the sails. In the shelter of the forested side of the bay, we barely pick up a draft, but as we coast out we gather speed.

Around the point we sail, back through Navy Channel once more and into the white-capped bay. Our boat heels, the sails fill roundly, and we plunge into the waves. A deep-keeled boat, *Safari kati* heels easily, then stiffens and starts to move in a steady rush. We smile once more because our schooner — with her big mains'l, fores'l, forstays'l, and jib all working smoothly together — would find this a pleasant sailing breeze. This, in comparison, is both simple and exciting. We feel every wave we splash through. We feel the tiller alive in our hands.

Down the companionway, I can see the main cabin, unrecognizable now from the decayed ruin it once was, with its smart upholstery, bright white surfaces, and the two curved mahogany mirrors we saved from the schooner. Up here in the breezy cockpit, I feel proud of all my work, a good companion to this unpretentious Folkboat I have spent so many hours working on. I glance at Heather beside me as she concentrates on her steering and see contentment there also.

"Swoosh, ahhh," says our ship as she parts the waves. She too is back in her natural element at last. We are all back where we belong. 

Bill and Heather Gardam sold their big gaff-rigged schooner, Shiriri, after a long Pacific voyage and quickly replaced her with a Folkboat for Bill to work on. They now sail close to home in the Canadian Gulf Islands and enjoy the excitement of a little ship once more. Bill has been a teacher, park ranger, youth counselor, back-to-the-lander, and CUSO volunteer in South America. He writes a blog, Dragongate, at <<http://gardheim.blogspot.com>>.



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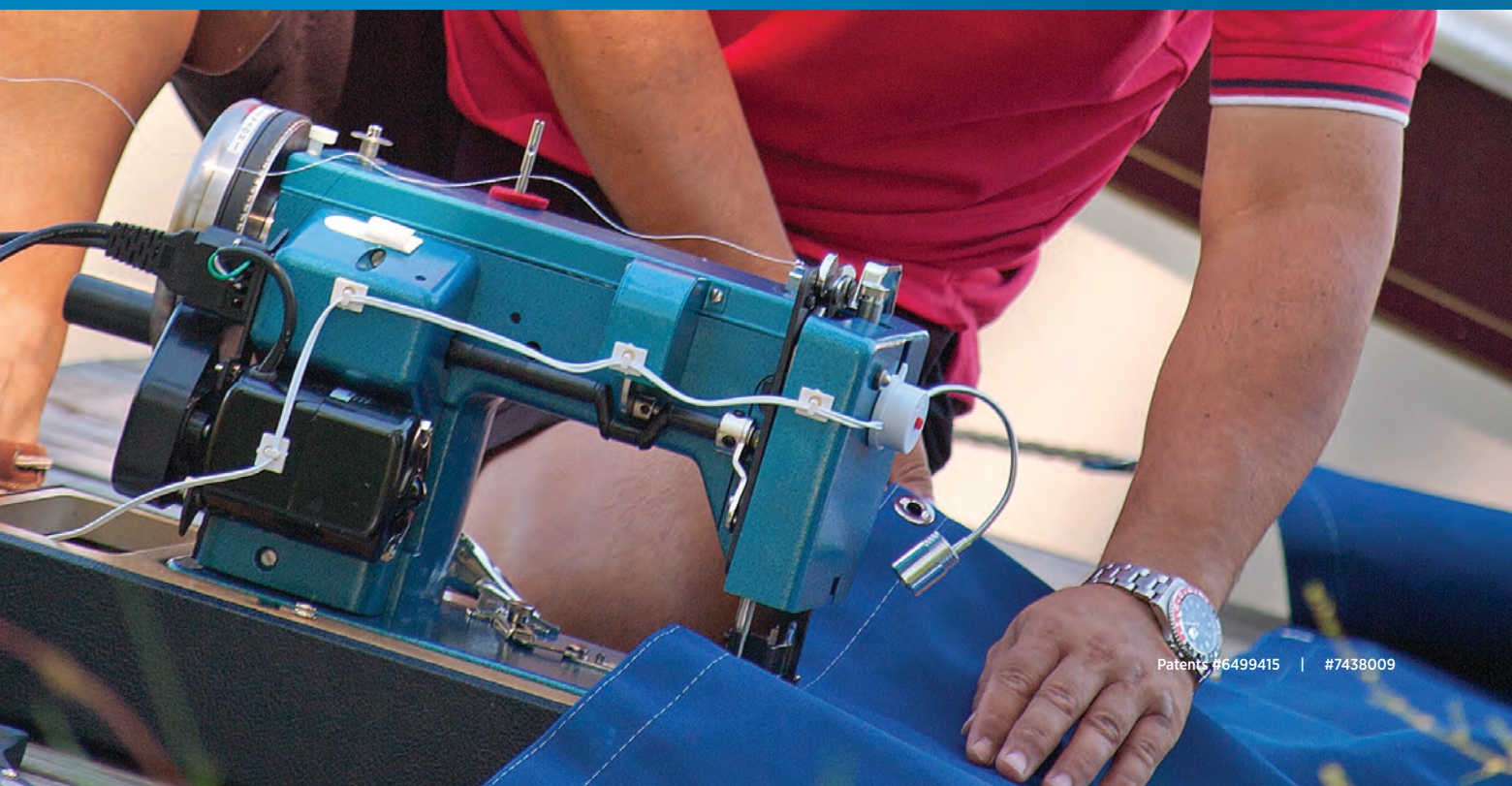
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