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On the Cover

Mike Brown shot this image of *Fling*, a 1964 Pearson Vanguard hull #239 owned by Cindy and John Weber, during the 2019 Good Old Boat Regatta off Annapolis in October. Brown, owner of Gallery 564 in Severna Park, Maryland, was racing in his Pearson Vanguard hull #244 *Seawolf* when he got the shot. Brown and *Seawolf* weren't behind *Fling* for long; they went on to win the Vanguard class in the regatta.

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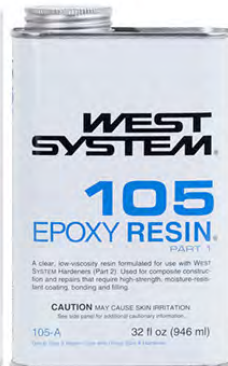
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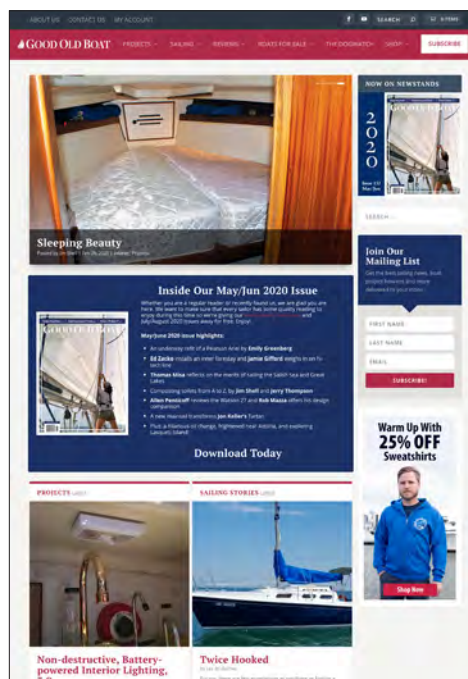
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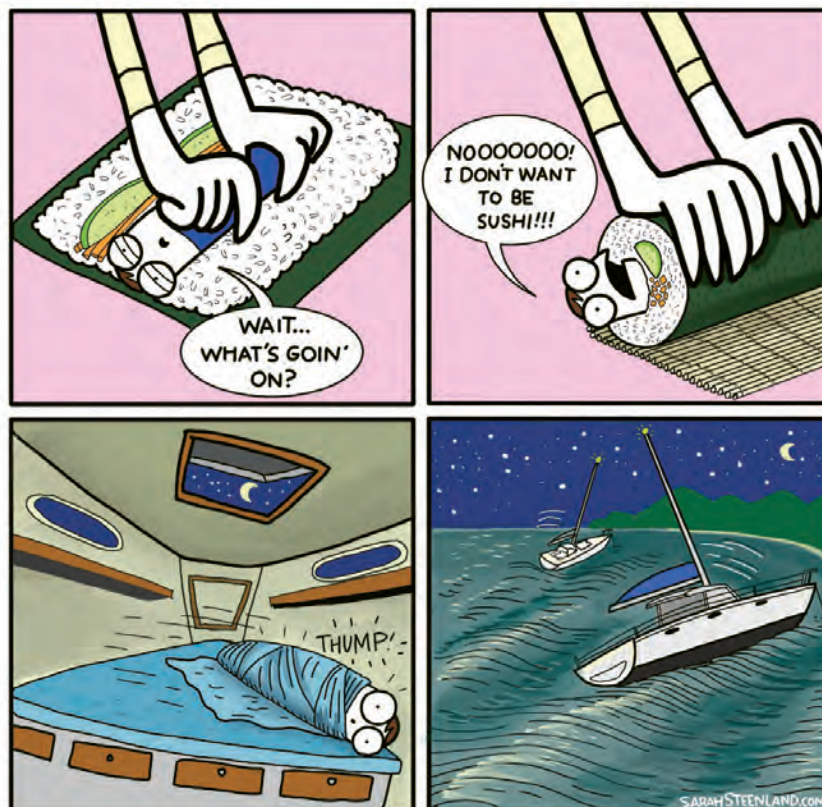
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Wisdom in the Time of COVID-19

BY CHRISTOPHER BOLTON

This issue, Christopher Bolton is our guest writer in this column, sharing how the pandemic has affected his refit. Christopher sails out of Toronto Island, Lake Ontario.

In the introduction to their book *Sensible Cruising: The Thoreau Approach*, Don Casey and Lew Hackler suggest that, “The applicability of the philosophy of Thoreau to the activity of cruising is surely one of the most perfect imaginable.” I think Thoreau’s philosophy can also be applied to these pandemic times. We are jammed into this spot at the moment, not our choice, but ours to deal with. Self-reliance and a life lived wide and observed seem key.

Two years ago, I was growing uncomfortable in the city and decided on a path prioritizing expedition, nature, the water, and my kids. I bought a 1981 Cheoy Lee Perry 35. My youngest son fell hard for life aboard and I promised him a season in the Caribbean. We were to leave Lake Ontario for the Atlantic Ocean via the Hudson River this coming October.

Except two years ago, I fell in love with the boat before the deal was done. I “saved money” by trusting the owner, no survey needed. (*I know.*) She has beautiful lines, solid bones, and everything under the surface needs renovating.

I got serious about learning what a refit was and how to pull one off. I bought or borrowed Calder, Casey, and back issues of *Good Old Boat*. I watched YouTube. When I replaced the prop shaft last spring, half the marina rooted for us, half waited for us to fail. But the experience left me knowing I could get to where we needed to go.

My focus the first winter was a spanky new electrical system, from the shorepower cord to the tip of the mast. I removed the headliner and cabin sole from bow to stern and traced and identified every 1980s-era wire, bus, and

terminal. Then I ripped it all out.

I drew up a healthy daily-use budget, drew arty schematics, and put our shopping list into a Google spreadsheet. I sent my list to the chandler; the manager returned it with prices that were full of goodwill and just enough rope to hang myself. But we would have bells, whistles, and refrigeration. If I stayed on track, I could shoot for a new Beta 25 install the following winter.

The following winter came, I was still working on electrics, and then the pandemic swept the world and closed its doors. Our marina was no exception. We decided not to wonder too far into the future.

Unable to work on the boat, I retreated to the books that got me jazzed about sailing in the first place: *A World of My Own*, *First You Have to Row a Little Boat*, and *How to Build a Wooden Boat*. At night, when I cued up videos on OffCenterHarbor.com, they weren’t from the boatbuilding and maintenance categories; the sailing films had my attention now. We baked bread, perfected the art of weekly shopping, wrote in our journals, and watched “Tiger King.” The wintering birds, eiders and pintails, left for the Arctic just as the herons, cormorants, and swallows returned from the south to build their summer homes. We were reminded of how we like to live; we had stillness, connection, routine, and nature’s grand theater before us.

After a windy Sunday, I got a text from the yard; my boat’s cover had blown a seam. I was happy for a sanctioned excuse to visit my boat. After fixing the cover, I sat



below for a while. Thumbing through my copy of *Sensible Cruising*, I stopped at the chapter on electrical. A quote from *Walden* opens, “...for a man is rich in the number of things he can afford to let alone.”

It reminded me of something I had heard Alvah Simon say on Andy Schell’s podcast a few weeks earlier, that a sailor must go simply and go now if they are to go at all. He was echoing Thoreau and others. I was becoming undone by the details. Unlike the soft-spoken Simon, Thoreau seems to scream his antidote: *Simplify! Simplify!*

And that had been my go-to on most things in life. For whatever reason, I’d approached my boat refit the wrong way. Why had I designed for every want as opposed to distilling to needs?

That night I had a good think about the tight spot I was in. I had a beautiful boat, a pair of partners in the undertaking that makes sweat equity fun, and not a lot of money. Over a second beer, I took an axe to the electrical budget, design, and shopping list while making another list of what I had kicking around or could salvage. I saved myself half the cost of that new Beta. But more than that, I remembered who I want to be as a sailor and as a human being. It just took the tight spot of a pandemic and a few sage reminders to show me the way. 🌊

Lonely in Lockdown, and Finding the Light(s)

Herb McCormick Gets It

I own an old boat, a 1979 Albin Vega, and I strongly considered ending my *Good Old Boat* subscription. An article or two about good ideas are great, but many of us who own good old boats already know what works, we are dreamers. Please add more stories about sailors who are doing great voyages on old boats, not replacing ball valves. I'm done fixing, let's go sailing! I also subscribe to *Cruising World*; Herb McCormick gets it! Look at what they are doing, publish great stories, then I and many others will stay with *Good Old Boat*. I will give you one more year.

—Manning J. Harvey III, *Viking*, 1979
Albin Vega

Michael Robertson responds:

Thank you for the feedback, Manning. Sadly, we may indeed not be the magazine for you. We are also huge fans of Herb McCormick, and we agree he gets it (and then some), but we're not Cruising World, and we're not trying to be. We remain the sailing magazine for the rest of us, inspiring hands-on sailors with a mix of articles in every issue that balances the joy of using a boat with the need to repair, maintain, and upgrade that boat. That is who we are. And our voyaging stories are indeed great—great stories of inshore voyages in North American waters, that's our beat.

Hard Luck

Thank you! We appreciate your gift of extra issues. We are hoping to be able to work on our boat to get ready for launch and we wonder how the shelter-in-place will affect our ability to keep our boat on the dock and get out on the lake. We are locked out of Canada (where we usually keep our boat on a mooring for the summer), but we are fortunate as we keep her on the hard in the U.S. for the winter, and we were able to rent a dock in the Buffalo Harbor. Many western New York boaters keep their boats in Canada, and

as of now they cannot cross the border to check on their boats. If we miss a year of sailing, it will hurt, but we won't complain if staying at home saves lives and ends the pandemic.

—Leslie & Bill Hughes, *Respite*, Pearson
30, Buffalo, New York

Uncommissioned

I have to say that going through back issues and more current issues of *Good Old Boat* eases the distress of not being able to commission our 1973 Contest sloop this spring. Unfortunately, she is 250 miles away on the Maine coast and not in our

backyard here in New Hampshire on the Connecticut River, a place where we could work on her during this time. Maybe by summer we will be able to get to the coast, but in the meantime, we appreciate the extension of our subscription.

—Kim Rheinlander, Lebanon, New
Hampshire

Michael Robertson responds:

Leslie and Bill and Kim, we are pleased we were able to extend everyone's subscription at this time. As most of our revenue comes from subscriptions, we know on what side our bread is buttered and we are glad our offer has been

Reader Christopher Bolton shot this photo of a buoy at the entrance to Toronto Harbor on Lake Ontario. At the time, he was dealing with panic attacks and sailing was a space where he could work on them. *Meant to Be*, his C&C 25, was his laboratory. Christopher wrote, "I thought about this photograph this morning, after listening to 'On the Wind,' Andy Schell's sailing podcast, in which he talked about what COVID-19 means for his business. I've never felt more connected to people—by hardship, science, and community—than I do at the moment. I think that if we squint, we can see a way through all this. The photograph is called 'Buoy.' I think it has meaning in the present global storm."

Do you have an interesting photo of an aid to navigation? (The more unusual the better!) Send it to Michael_r@goodoldboat.com and if we use it here, we'll send you a *Good Old Boat* hat or shirt.





Chris Jones sails *Cat-a-list*, his Nonsuch 22, on Lake Powell, out of Wahweap Marina in Page, Arizona. His friend, Will Toms, was aboard to capture this shot of Chris sailing towards Lone Rock. In fact, beyond Lake Powell—the pandemic notwithstanding—sailing is alive and well in the desert state of Arizona. The Arizona Yacht Club has been around since 1958 and Phoenix members are active, sailing on giant Lake Pleasant. The Lake Pleasant Sailing Club is on the same body of water. Further south, members of the Tucson Sailing Club cross the border to cast off from San Carlos into Mexico's Sea of Cortez.



generally occurs in the flue, and no significant increase in heat transfer is possible. In part, this is because the 1-inch flue pipe limits the maximum firing rate. The heater, as designed, is very efficient. However, if the heater was used on a propane stove with a large burner and a high firing rate (up to 8,500 BTU), painting the pot black, using a larger pot, and increasing the flue size to 1¼ inches would be beneficial.

Warm and Dry

I want to thank Drew Frye for his article ("Hot Stuff," March/April 2020). For several years I have been wondering how to heat my boat when I am away from electric power. I think I headed for the Goodwill store for a stainless pot before I read all the article. I knew that was what I was going to do from the first picture. A couple of weeks later I had one ready to

go. I find his idea to be one of those simple and effective things you don't see very often. I set a spring to secure the pot to

so well received; we have heard from many subscribers. We have also heard from many sailors, on both coasts, who are kept from their boats (and the sailing season) by the closure of the U.S.-Canadian border. We've also heard from many (including our own Drew Frye, who lives in Virginia but sails out of Maryland) who are able to get to their boat but restricted from sailing. We've heard from many marine businesses that had to temporarily shut their doors—some of whom we know are anxious that the effects will result in permanent closings down the road. The pandemic has not been kind, and as we type this in the first week of May, we're frustrated by our inability to see what the near future brings, such as late June when this issue lands in your mailbox. A big, warm thank you to Good Old Boat readers. You are the only reason we're here.

Twice Happy

I was impressed with Jim Shell's re-engineering of his non-working Datamarine depth sounder to accommodate his new Faria unit ("Hole In One," March/April 2020). But I want to make sure that owners of old Datamarine instruments know that they have wonderful support to this day. Steve at DMI Marine recently rebuilt my Datamarine S400DL depth instrument and my S100KL speed/distance

instrument. Removing the electronics of the Datamarine units requires merely unscrewing the switch nut on the face and then popping out the retaining spring at the back of the instrument. I shipped both off to Steve and I was soon back in business. No new wiring, no new transducer, and the instruments look like new! I'm a twice-happy customer! Steve can be reached at dmimarine.com

—Dave and Susanne Kupiec, 1984
Tartan 28 hull #23, Atlanta, Georgia

Black is Better

Interesting heater described by Drew Frye ("Hot Stuff," March/April 2020). Yet, shiny surfaces are poor radiators of heat. Spraying the surface with matte-black stovepipe paint will significantly increase the heat output to the cabin.

—Joe Osborne, Tacoma, Washington

Drew Frye responds:

Thank you for this, Joe. You are correct that black surfaces are better infrared radiators than shiny surfaces. However, this advantage is moot in my case. My practical observation of this heater in use, when used on an alcohol stove (about 5,000 BTU), is that the flue temperature is always below 100°F before exiting the cabin, considerable condensation



continued on page 52

We Want to Hear from You

Send your letters to michael_r@goodoldboat.com. If we can't run your letter in this space, we'll try and get it into *The Dogwatch*. Speaking of which, are you getting *The Dogwatch* in your email inbox? It's free and the content is original. If you're missing it, email brenda@goodoldboat.com.



CREALOCK 37/PACIFICS



An Inspired, Tough, Seakindly Cruiser

BY GREGG NESTOR

In the mid-1970s, naval architect William “Bill” Ion Belton Crealock entered a sailboat magazine’s boat design contest. Though already a successful designer, he said the contest was, “the only chance I’ve ever had to design a boat that didn’t have to please anyone else but me.”

The 37-footer Bill drew leaned on his bluewater experience gained cruising the Atlantic Ocean in a 40-foot gaff-rigged cutter in his 20s. Aesthetically sophisticated and classically proportioned, it featured modest overhangs, a classic sheer, low freeboard, and an elegant deckhouse.

He paid special attention beneath the waterline, drawing a hull with a large moderate aspect fin keel and a rudder hung on a skeg. Bill honed his boat’s entry for windward performance and gave her an attractive canoe stern that theoretically helps to part a following sea—what designer Robert Perry humorously calls the “Moses Effect.”

“The 37 is an attempt to provide the cruiser with a boat which will travel fast between ports under complete control, and which will yet remind him that the passage itself should be one of the pleasures of the cruise,” Bill said. He didn’t win the contest. “The boat that

won was a very modern design for the time, actually a rather hideous boat, I thought. It quickly disappeared.”

History

At the time, Bill was working with a California company called Clipper Marine, which was producing a series of Crealock-designed trailer-sailers. The company began tooling for Bill’s new 37-foot keelboat, to be called the Crealock 37. Then Clipper Marine went belly-up without building a single hull. With hardly a pause, Cruising Consultants (CC) of Newport Beach, California, acquired the molds and between 1977 and 1979 produced 16 Crealock 37s. Then they went out of business.

Fortunately, Pacific Seacraft (PS), then in California also, in 1980 purchased the rights and molds. Working with Bill, Pacific Seacraft made some significant changes, and after about 15 years, in the mid-1990s changed the name from Crealock 37 to Pacific Seacraft 37, to be consistent with the names of other boats in their model line. To date, Pacific Seacraft has built several hundred examples.

In 2002, the boat Bill designed for himself was inducted into the American Sailboat Hall of Fame in Newport, Rhode Island, characterized as a boat

The Bill Crealock-designed Pacific Seacraft 37 is known for its bluewater prowess. Credit: Bill Kund

that has “made boat ownership a love affair” for those lucky enough to sail one.

Martin Nelick and Sally Gardiner-Smith are among the lucky sailors. The couple own hull #7, a Cruising Consultants-built Crealock 37 named *Shibumi*. Sally and Martin are accomplished singlehanded sailors who have fairly aggressive sailing plans. After selling their respective singlehanded

boats, they began searching for that “perfect” cruising boat. For them, their 1977 Crealock 37 is the one.

Design

Bill Crealock was born 100 years ago next month and grew up sailing in waters near his home in the United Kingdom. He was educated at Scotland’s Glasgow University, authored several books chronicling his sailing adventures, and produced designs for several successful boatbuilders including Cabo Rico, Westsail, Columbia, and Pacific Seacraft.

The Crealock 37 is traditional with an abundance of character. The cruising fin keel offers quick tacking and responsive handling in tight quarters, and coupled with the

generous rudder skeg provides excellent directional stability compared to a narrower fin keel. This configuration also reduces the tendency of the rudder to stall at extreme angles of heel.

The boat has a moderately heavy displacement-to-waterline length ratio of 341, but because its LWL is relatively short for its overall length, the ratio, and boat speed, will increase as the boat heels and the waterline lengthens.

Rod Rowan of Crusader Yacht Sales in Annapolis, Maryland, which has been a Pacific Seacraft dealer since 1986, knows nearly all modifications made to the design through the several changes in ownership, including the company’s move from California to Washington,

North Carolina, about a dozen years ago. He says that while the design drafts of the two keels offered were listed as 4 feet 5 inches and 5 feet 6 inches, actual measurements taken on delivered boats were closer to 4 feet 8 inches and 5 feet 10 inches as reflected in the current specifications. (Sailboatdata.com lists the boat’s draft at 5 feet 3 inches.) Rowan adds that the shoal-draft keel is a Scheel keel, designed and patented at one time by Henry Scheel with a shaped bulb at the bottom to improve lift.

Construction

While the Crealock 37 and Pacific Seacraft 37 are essentially the same design,

Newer boats have wheel steering, but tiller steering was common in the Crealock 37 and in older Pacific Seacraft models, as in this 1989 version, below.

The cockpit sole can be unfastened and lifted to provide access to drivetrain, engine, batteries, and other systems, below right. Photo credits: Tom Bossenger/California Yacht Sales



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they are not the same boat. Construction of both is conservative and strong, with hulls and decks of hand-laid fiberglass. The hulls are solid, and the decks were sandwich-cored with marine-grade plywood through the mid-1990s. Then builders switched core material to end-grain balsa with plywood inserts at deck hardware. Beginning in the late 1980s, Pacific Seacraft adopted vinylester resin, which is less hydroscopic than polyester, providing better protection against blisters.

The CC hull-to-deck joint incorporates a molded bulwark forming a flanged box that's sealed with an elastomeric-type compound, through bolted, and then glassed over. Strong and dry, the resulting joint is finished with a 4-inch-wide teak cap rail. Rowan says most current boats are fastened with 1/4-inch x 20 stainless steel screws, 4 inches on center, plus 3M 5200 adhesive, with no leaks that he's ever heard reported.

The differences in the two boats is most apparent in the interior. The CC interiors are stick-built, featuring teak-trimmed mahogany ceilings and an oak overhead. The sole is narrow oak planking with ebony polysulfide in the seams. Pacific Seacraft introduced molded fiberglass structural interior modules that retained most of the interior teak joinery while also brightening the spaces considerably. They use a longitudinal and transverse framing system, including mahogany-veneered plywood bulkheads tabbed with fiberglass to the hull and deck. For added stiffness, the main bulkheads are also attached via 5/16-inch through bolts using an ingenious teak beam system.

The keels of both CC and PS versions are solid-lead castings external to the hull and fastened with stainless steel

bolts. Rowan says the original CC keel was scrapped in favor of the two current Scheel and standard keel options. The CC boats feature a Volvo sail-drive unit forward of the skeg, whereas the PS boats have an aperture for the propeller.

Over the years, incremental changes were made to the PS boats, such as offering optional chrome-plated bronze portlights and hardware instead of bare bronze, and several different treatments for the inside walls of the coachroof—teak veneer and an off-white Formica. All interior teak was oiled until '96 or '97, after which a varnished option became available.

On Deck

With only 16 Crealock 37s built, there's scant information as to what was standard and what was optional. It also appears that a few of the final hulls were sold bare and owner-finished. Consequently, most of the CC Crealock 37 information in this review is based on what I found aboard *Shibumi*.

The cabintop is a bit cluttered. Notable features include a pair of 19 x 19-inch teak-trimmed bronze hatches, one over the V-berth and the other over the saloon. Four Dorade vents provide additional ventilation into the head, saloon, galley, and navigation station. Also on the cabintop, just forward of the sea hood and mainsheet traveler, are a pair of 39-inch-long tracks and cars to handle the staysail sheets.

On the PS-built boats, engine access via the cockpit floor was modified and made smaller, about 2 x 2 feet.

Below Deck

The surprisingly roomy forward cabin is home to a V-berth that measures just over 7 feet 6 inches long at its head

Crealock 37	
Designer	William Crealock
LOA	36'11"
LWL	27'9"
Beam	10'10"
Draft	5'3"
Displacement	16,300 lb
Ballast	6,300 lb
Sail Area (sloop)	621 sq. ft.
Sail Area (yaw)	666 sq. ft.
Displ./LOA	341
SA/Displ.	15.4

LINE DRAWING BY ROB MAZZA, INTERIOR BY RICK BEDDOE

and narrows to 3 feet at its foot. On PS boats it's offset to starboard. Besides an unusual overhead drawer, stowage for larger, bulkier items is available beneath the berth. Also beneath the V-berth is a 40-gallon aluminum potable water tank (an additional 60-gallon fiberglass tank is beneath the saloon sole).

Aft and to port of the V-berth is a hanging locker with bureau top. Three opening portlights and the overhead hatch provide this compartment with excellent illumination and ventilation.

Access to the head is directly across from the hanging locker. On *Shibumi*, the owners replaced the original marine toilet with an Air Head composting toilet in part to elim-

inate the need for a holding tank. In addition to hot-and-cold pressurized potable water, there's also a saltwater hand pump. A solid mahogany door swings to close off the head as well as add privacy and a small changing area to the forward cabin.

The saloon is well ventilated with one opening portlight, two large fixed portlights, a single Dorade vent, and an overhead hatch. A pair of overhead grabrails makes for safe fore-and-aft maneuvering. Headroom is over 6 feet.

The L-shaped galley is immediately aft of the starboard settee. A series of drawers, a half-dozen cane-fronted lockers, and a clever dish stowage unit provide storage.

Under sail in Florida, *Shibumi* shows the classic profile of a Crealock 37 yawl configuration. Photo credit: Gregg Nestor.



Rig

Shibumi is a yawl with double headsails. All spars are aluminum extrusions painted white with polyurethane. The mainmast and the mizzen are deck-stepped. Aluminum compression posts below support both; the mainmast post is incorporated into the main bulkhead, which in turn is glassed and bolted into place.

Mainmast rigging is a single set of spreaders, forestay, split backstay, a pair of cap shrouds, and double lower shrouds. Rigged with a staysail, *Shibumi* also has a pair of running backstays. The mizzenmast is supported by cap shrouds, intermediates, and lowers.

All standing rigging is stainless steel wire with bronze turnbuckles (stainless steel on PS boats). The stainless steel

In this 1989 Pacific Seacraft 37, the galley near the companionway has all the attributes needed for a secure, efficient cooking space. Photo credit: Tom Bossenger/California Yacht Sales

chainplates are outboard and bolted to the hull. When in port, the main boom rests on boom gallows. Both main and mizzen are sheeted mid-boom, the main to a traveler on the coachroof and the mizzen to a traveler mounted on the stern pulpit.

Headsail sheets lead aft through cars and tracks mounted on the caprails. These sheets terminate at Lewmar 27 self-tailing winches mounted on the cockpit coamings. Aft on the coachroof is a pair of Lewmar 10s to handle the staysail sheets and a #18 to service



the mainsheet.

Initially, PS offered the 37 as a sloop, cutter, and yawl, though the latter was seldom ordered, and today most are sold as cutters and some sloops.

Underway

With a long sailing history and an excellent reputation for handling heavy weather, the Crealock 37 and Pacific Seacraft 37 are well balanced

and easily managed by a short-handed crew.

With a bit of wind, the boat heels quickly to around 15 degrees. Once there, it's rock solid. Rolling in the headsail a bit before tacking precludes it from hanging up on the staysail. With fairly quick acceleration and a responsive helm, the boat's best point of sail appears to be a broad or beam reach.

While the boat is a bit narrow and heels early (less

Comments from Owners

Comments from an owner of the CC-built Crealock 37

The Cruising Consultants version has larger windows, more light, and a nice, wide V-berth. Also, the yawl rig and external chainplates give it a swash-buckling appeal. The entire cockpit sole comes out for great engine access. Our 1978 Crealock 37 was converted from saildrive to direct drive, a plus I think. There is plenty of room in the cockpit as the tiller folds up; and, as there is no sub-cockpit steering binnacle apparatus, space remains below for water heater and watermaker. The lead keel is a major plus. It has a battle-ax stainless steel double bow roller.

Panels rather than vinyl in the ceiling make it easy to run wire and add LED lighting—a major improvement. A large propane locker fits three 5-gallon tanks. The deck glass is thick so it does not perceptibly flex even when coring was removed during repair. No major leaks.

It ghosts along in a light breeze but performs in 12-22 knots. With a 12- to 14-knot breeze on the beam I have put the tiller down and it tracks on its own. The mizzen staysail is a fun and easy sail that

really does move the boat under the right conditions. When it gets to 28-30, I can put up just a working jib on the Solent stay and mizzen, and it moves along nicely under control.

The Dorade vent holes were not sealed—so I had to dig out soaked balsa, dry, and repair. The aluminum backing plates for the pulpit bars were corroding and compressing, so I replaced with G10. Original backing plates for the traveler were pieces of thick leather—replaced with G10. The gooseneck was secured to mast by one 3/8-inch bolt that had worked and loosened and been re-tapped repeatedly over the years. The fixed table takes up too much space, so I will be building a fold-away.

—Tim Lamarre, San Francisco, California

Comments from owners of the Pacific Seacraft-built Crealock 37

This 1989 boat sails nicely in light winds, but as I have aged I find myself motor sailing if I can't get at least 4 knots of speed on wind alone. This is a relatively narrow boat so sails can really be pulled in and sailed close to the wind. You are almost always going to have a heeling motion, and

it sails best that way. It sails confidently in rougher weather, is easily reefed, and handles waves better than most boats. Some say it hobbyhorses more than other cruisers, but I don't think it does. With its canoe stern you can sure tell the difference sailing with the wind behind you; it is so easy to control, and the waves don't grab the stern and push it around so much.

—Tom Eisele, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina

After a 2019 passage aboard a 1993 model from Bodega Bay, California, to Brisbane, Australia, I can comment about these things: With a crew of two or singlehanded, she is in her groove at 12-25 knots wind speed. Above 25 knots, when singlehanded, I have wished that I had a third reef available for the mainsail. During the harshest of weather systems, while using the trysail as the main and the staysail as the storm jib, the 37 sailed rock solid and on course through the tossed seas, allowing me to get rest below.

—Mark Tolbert, Redwood Valley, California



The roomy and practical galley aboard this 1977 Crealock 37, *Coaster*, occupies the saloon's starboard side while still providing a secure place to cook in rough weather. Some early Crealocks were owner-finished, so interior layouts vary. Photo credit: Tom Bossenger/California Yacht Sales

Gregg Nestor is a contributing editor with Good Old Boat. He has authored four books on sailing: Twenty Affordable Sailboats to Take You Anywhere, Twenty Comfortable Sailboats to Take You Cruising, The Trailer Sailer Owner's Manual, and All Hands on Deck. He became a snowbird a few years back, after relocating his boat from the Great Lakes to Florida.

form stability, excellent ultimate stability), its seakindly nature makes long passages comfortable. The split rig adds versatility and easily adapts to self-steering. Under the right conditions and properly trimmed, the boat can eat up the miles. Over the years in the Singlehanded Transpac Race, two Crealock 37s, *Coaster* and *Intrepid*, have recorded corrected times that put them

among the fastest 10 percent of all finishers.

Conclusions

This design is a Hall of Fame beauty. The boat is strongly built, well rigged, and has a documented reputation for sailing comfortably and fast. It has an abundance of stowage and is a good choice for a small crew. While a new 2020 Pacific Seacraft 37 will cost

nearly \$500,000, many clean examples from the 1980s and 1990s are available in a range of five-digit asking prices. ⚓

The CC-built Crealock 37s had a stick-built interior built of teak-trimmed mahogany ceilings, which could make the boats a bit dark down below. This is a 1977 boat named *Coaster*, which sailed well in the 1996 Singlehanded Transpac Race, below. Photo credit: Tom Bossenger/California Yacht Sales

This 1998 model by Pacific Seacraft shows the teak finish that was initially oiled and later offered as varnish option for a more lustrous look. Unlike the CC-built boats, which were all wood, one can see the fiberglass settee modules employed by Pacific Seacraft. Also, the compression post was reconfigured from the early Crealock 37s, at bottom. Photo credit: Rod Rowan



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Crealock 37/Pacific Seacraft 37

... and Two More Performance-Influenced Cruisers

STORY AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROB MAZZA

In the late 1960s and early '70s, boats designated as "cruising yachts" tended to follow the Colin Archer/William Atkin model of heavy-displacement, full-keel, yawl-rigged double-enders. Bill Crealock certainly observed this history early in his designing career.

But by the mid 1970s, cruising designs started to incorporate features that were proving successful in offshore racing, most specifically a separated keel and rudder and lighter displacement. These newer boats usually abandoned the yawl rig in favor of a two-head-sail cutter rig or sloop rig with a large furling headsail. Sailors with a racing background were realizing that cruising boats didn't have to be slow, sluggish, and rooted in the 19th century.

This new breed became known as performance cruisers, and by 1979, Bill Crealock was incorporating a number of these features in the Crealock 37. So, let's pick two other performance cruisers from this period to compare to the Crealock 37. Note that for the sake of a cleaner comparison I have chosen the cutter-rigged option of the Crealock and used the engine configuration employed by Pacific Seacraft.

I chose the Dickerson 37 as the first comparison boat not only because she fits our criteria, but because my old C&C compatriot George Hazen designed her. George pioneered velocity prediction programs during his student days at MIT and brought that

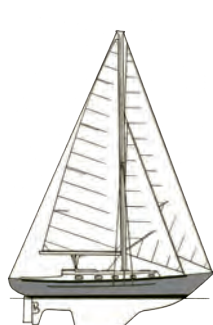
knowledge and a background in computer design to the C&C Design Group in the 1970s. This is one of his independent designs initiated after he left C&C.

Bob Perry pioneered the whole concept of performance cruisers with the Valiant 40

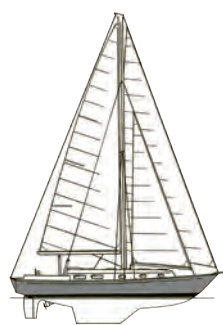
in 1973, so it is interesting to look at his 1980s approach to the subject embodied in the Passport 37 as our second comparison boat. Note that the Crealock and the Dickerson are true cutters with a fixed intermediate staysail stay and

smaller headsails generally. The Passport sports an unencumbered foretriangle with a large overlapping genoa. I have seen photos of the Passport with a staysail stay, but that seems to be an aftermarket addition.

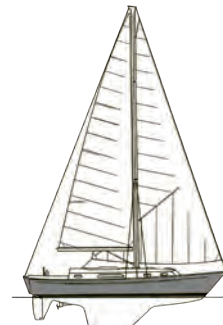
Each has separate keel and



**Crealock 37/
Pacific Seacraft 37**



Dickerson 37



Passport 37

	Crealock 37/ Pacific Seacraft 37	Dickerson 37	Passport 37
LOA	36'11"	37'0"	37'0"
LWL	27'9"	28'10"	29'7"
Beam	10'10"	11'6"	11'11"
Draft	5'3"	4'6"	5'10"
Displacement	16,300	15,950	17,360
Ballast	6,300	6,000	6,500
LOA/LWL	1.33	1.28	1.25
Beam/LWL	.39	.40	.40
Displ./LWL	341	297	298
Bal./Displ.	39%	38%	37%
Sail Area (100%)	621	556	673
SA/Displ.	15.4	14	16
Capsize No.	1.7	1.8	1.8
Comfort Ratio	34.6	30	31
Year Introduced	1979	1980	1984
Designer	William Crealock	George Hazen	Robert Perry
Builder	Cruising Consultants/Pacific Seacraft	Dickerson Boatbuilders	Passport Yachts

rudder, and each employs a fixed skeg in front of the rudder for impact protection and improved directional stability (at a small cost in maneuverability) and a more controlled rudder stall. The Crealock is the only one that completely protects the propeller by housing it in an aperture in the skeg, a vestige of the days of full keels. The Crealock and the Dickerson have a softer and rounder spoon bow compared to the sharper IOR-type knuckle of the Passport that is combined with an almost straight stem.

Although these three boats are all within 1 inch of 37 feet in overall length, there is almost 2 feet of difference in waterline length. The Crealock is the shortest at 27 feet 9 inches due to her longer overhangs not only at the bow, but also with

the canoe stern extending the aft overhang, compared with the transom sterns on the Dickerson and the Passport. The Crealock's stretched overhangs, evidenced by the shorter waterline length, are also discernible in her 1-foot narrower beam. The Passport has the longest waterline length at 29 feet 7 inches, and the Dickerson is right in the middle at 28 feet 10 inches.

Displacements are much closer—only about 1,000 pounds' difference among the three—with the Dickerson lightest and the Passport heaviest. That shorter waterline on the medium displacement of the Crealock results in the highest displacement/length waterline ratio of a conservative 341, while the Dickerson and the Passport are almost

equal at a more competitive, but still not light, 297 and 298.

In terms of sail area, the Dickerson has the least at 556 square feet, the Crealock the next highest at 621 square feet, and the Passport with a generous 673 square feet. These wide variations in sail area on smaller variations in displacements result in sail area/displacement ratios that follow the distribution of sail areas through the three boats. The smaller sail area of the Dickerson yields the lowest ratio of a somewhat sluggish 14, the median sail area of the Crealock yielding 15.4, and the larger area of the Passport resulting in a respectable 16. Combined with the Passport's displacement/length waterline ratio of 298, the larger sail area leads to better light-air performance.

As befitting boats designed for offshore cruising, all the capsizes numbers are under the capsizes threshold of 2, and all exhibit comfort ratios in the 30s.

This was an interesting period in the history of yacht design, when racing boats' design attributes were beginning to influence offshore cruising boats. Fortunately, designers stuck to borrowing only these racers' attributes, not the detriments of low stability and excessive beam. 🚢

Rob Mazza is a Good Old Boat contributing editor. He set out on his career as a naval architect in the late 1960s, when he began working for Cuthbertson & Casian. He's been familiar with good old boats from the time they were new and had a hand in designing a good many of them.



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Growing Up Vanguard

At the 20th annual Good Old Boat Regatta in Annapolis, three Pearson Vikings shine on.

BY WENDY MITMAN CLARKE

There is an inside joke that some members of my husband's family will race raindrops down a windowpane. So, you can imagine the letdown when my sister-in-law, Cindy Weber, announced in August that *Fling*, her 1964 Pearson Vanguard, was the only boat of its type entered in the 2019 Good Old Boat Regatta.

My husband, Johnny Clarke, was to skipper for this race, and Cindy, her husband, John Weber, and I were crew. Then, a week before the regatta, Cindy got word: two more Vikings had registered in the full-keel class. The prospect of a real race lit the competitive fires in *Fling's* crew.

And a real race it was—a great one—among three closely matched Pearson Vikings sailed with verve and skill by people who, as it turns out, have remarkably similar stories about how these boats

“The big clubs stopped inviting older boats to their races, so this was a rebellion.”

have played pivotal roles in their sailing lives.

Of course, we weren't the only ones out there for the 20th annual Good Old Boat Regatta sponsored by the Shearwater Sailing Club. Lining up at the start off Hacketts Point just north of Annapolis on an early October Saturday were a half-dozen Cal 25s and an assortment of other fin-keel boats, including a Valiant 37, a Tartan 34C, and a Ranger One-Ton.

“It all started off with a friend of mine, he had a Triton and I had a Cal 25,” says Charlie Husar, the race's organizer, who also scores for all the cruising one-design classes in the Chesapeake Bay Yacht Racing Association. “The big clubs in town stopped inviting older boats to their races, so this was kind of a rebellion. I just wanted to keep the fleets alive.”

After gaining permission and support from *Good Old Boat* to name the regatta,

Cindy Weber preps her father's stopwatch at the start of the race, opposite page.

within five years as many as 90 boats hit the starting line. Participation has been dropping off steadily, though, and Charlie is hoping that younger sailors who are finding and fixing up good old boats will learn about the regatta and turn out for it (and the party afterward), which always takes place the same weekend as the U.S. Sailboat Show. "The only requirement," Charlie says, "is that the first hull of a competing boat's type has to be at least 30 years old."

All the other good old boats notwithstanding, it was the *Vanguards* we were eyeballing as we milled about in the light air before the start. There was *Seawolf*, hull #244, owned by Mike Brown, sailing with his friend Kristen White. Mike's father had bought the boat in 1969, and she was passed down to Mike, who had grown up sailing on her.

There was *Scamp Too*, hull #227, owned by Phil Beierl, who was sailing with his two sons, Daniel and Alex, his daughter, Katie, and his grandson, Liam. The original *Scamp*, hull #21, was the boat that Phil grew up sailing in Annapolis and later in Maine; now in Bucksport, Maine, she remains in the family.



And there was *Fling*, hull #239, which my in-laws had bought new—"It was one of the big new designs," my mother-in-law told me later—and on which my husband and Cindy had grown up racing and sailing.

We all came together before the start, waving happily while sizing each other up. When the gun sounded, we were off under full mains, genoas, a

swollen full-moon tide rolling down the Bay hard enough to tug crabpot floats under; and a zephyr of southerly that was supposed to max out during the day at maybe 8 knots.

Almost right away, *Scamp Too* committed to the right side of the course, while we and *Seawolf* worked the left. Our hopeful strategy was that the current in deeper water near the shipping channel would help lift us to the sole turning mark on the windward-lee-

ward course, a red channel marker over by Kent Island.

Aboard *Fling*, we settled into a

(top to bottom) Taking wind readings on the race committee boat for the Good Old Boat Regatta.

Cindy Weber, *Fling's* owner, holds up her father's stopwatch that he used for racing back in the day.

Seawolf rounds the weather mark in third among the *Vanguards*. She would go on to beat her two sisterships across the finish.



Seawolf and Scamp Too exchange greetings before the race, at left.

*(L to R) Cindy Weber, John Weber, and Johnny Clarke discussing strategy before the start on *Fling*.*



quiet intensity, watching the race unfold and worrying that our slightly smaller genoa would hamstring us in the light air. Similar to *Seawolf's* story, *Fling* stayed in the family when Cindy took over the boat after her father died. She turned to Johnny to upgrade the boat, as he'd made a career in the boat service and repair industry.

They added a roller furling headsail and self-tailing winches to make the boat easy for her to daysail. They repowered, replacing the original Atomic 4 with a new 30-horsepower Universal M4-30. They Awlgripp'd the topsides and deck, refurbished the interior, added and replaced hatches, and upgraded the galley and hull interior coverings.

Though she used to carry the family around the Bay nearly every available weekend, these days *Fling* lives in quiet, well-loved retirement still on her home creek in Annapolis. Cindy and John take her for occasional daysails, especially when the wind is whipping up the Severn River, conditions the boat revels in. This was her first time in the Good Old Boat Regatta.

For Cindy, *Fling* clearly is a character and personality unto herself. "It would be fun," she said in her email inviting us to race, "and *Fling* would love it."

But as we closed with the turning mark, it was clear that we were in a horse race. *Seawolf* had led us just slightly tack-for-tack, and now, coming in literally from right field, *Scamp Too* was reaching for the mark while we sailed upwind, quietly cursing the current, which had not provided a boost as powerful as we'd anticipated.

Within a few boat lengths of each other we rounded, *Scamp Too* first and *Fling* sliding in next, just ahead of *Seawolf*. After rounding the mark and beginning the long trip back across the Bay to the starting line, the three boats were overlapped for a few moments, until *Scamp Too* took a deeper, dead-downwind angle toward the finish. On *Fling* we headed higher to compensate for our smaller headsail, while *Seawolf* took the middle road.

"These boats go better in heavier air obviously, but the lighter air makes for



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John Weber, who owns *Fling* with his wife, Cindy, finishes raising the main.

interesting sailing,” Phil said later. “I’m impressed we were so close despite splitting the fleet a couple of times. It certainly kept us on our toes.”

Phil grew up sailing the original *Scamp*, which his father bought in 1968, “back when having six berths was the definition of a cruising boat...We had a family with six kids, and we used to sail out of Lake Ogleton across the Bay.”

Eventually the family moved to Maine, and so did the boat. Years later, Phil returned to Annapolis and one day glanced at the classifieds and saw a Pearson Vanguard for sale.

“I wasn’t looking, I wasn’t even thinking it, it just sort of popped into my life,” he said. He went and saw the boat that same afternoon; the woman who owned it had suffered a serious injury in a motorcycle accident and was hurrying to unload it. It had sunk up to its cabin berths at the dock, but otherwise it was in decent shape, and he knew it had good bones.

He called Don Moyer at Moyer Marine—the Atomic 4 oracle and guru—and with his advice, consult, and parts, Phil rebuilt the engine. He replaced the fuel and

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water tanks, all mechanicals and electricals, and much as Cindy and John did with *Fling*, he upgraded and revamped the interior as well as the sail-handing gear to make it easy for him to singlehand. It took him three years of hard work. It was worth it.

"I've had a blast with it," he says. "Maybe there's a niggling dream of sailing farther afield, but what we're using it for is sailing around the Chesapeake Bay, and I've kept it pretty simple. It's great for my wife and I cruising or the kids and the grandkids, and there's also enough room to take a crowd out for a daysail or a swim."

He especially enjoys watching his grandkids live his own best memories, dragging their feet in the water from the leeward rail when she's heeling hard in a nice breeze.

This was not the case, though, on the Chesapeake that day. There was a bit

We all came together before the start, waving happily while sizing each other up.

more breeze than we'd even hoped for, but even so, it was a nail-biting, slow-motion downwind leg. Two-thirds of the way to the finish, after jibing to avoid the enormous windbreak of an anchored car carrier in the middle of the course, we were by far the highest off the rhumb line to the finish but making good speed.

There was no way to be sure how it would play out. We watched as *Scamp Too* held her wing-and-wing strategy nearly all the way, looking for a while like it would pay for the win. But as we closed with the finish, it was clear that *Seawolf*, last around the windward mark, was going to be first

across the finish. *Fling* crossed 54 seconds after her, and *Scamp Too* about a minute-and-a-half later.

"It was neat to see us all come together at the finish line," Phil says. "That's an indication we were all sailing well."

"I don't race the boat a lot, hardly ever," Mike said later. "It's really just used as a Bay cruiser. I set up the boat for singlehanding. I mainly sail it myself."

Although he has spent a lot of time, sweat, and money upgrading *Seawolf*, including adding a new Moyer Marine-built Atomic 4, Awlgripping the topsides, adding a tiller pilot, beefing up the mainsail

After rounding the weather mark third, Mike Brown and his crew, Kristen White, are happy after making it first across the finish in *Seawolf*.



traveler, and adding a six-to-one mainsheet block system for ease of handling, Mike, like the others, doesn't try to justify the time and expense as a rational thing.

Like Cindy, Johnny, and Phil, he remembers well what it was like growing up Vanguard. And that long-term relationship and the memories the boats carry are as indelible as their classic Phil Rhodes lines.

"One of the things I really love about the boat is that it was my father's, and when I was 14 or 15 years old, I was taking the boat out with my friends. I was sailing the boat before I had my driver's license. I have great memories of sailing with my dad," Mike says. "A lot of times sailing on the boat, I have these conversations with him."

All agree the boat's bulletproof construction, pragmatic and quite commodious interior, seakindliness, and easy handling—and on the used market, affordability—continue to make the Vanguard a great boat for young couples or families. But when you've been committed to a boat over two and three generations, there's more to it than even all of those qualities.

"It's a pretty boat. We just love the lines," Phil says. "Scamp is a haze grey color, and she just looks like a seagull sitting in the water. I can't keep from looking back and taking one last glance at the boat. Compared to modern boats, it's what makes my heart go pitter-pat." 🍃

This year's Good Old Boat Regatta will be held October 10, the same weekend as the U.S. Sailboat Show, starting just off Annapolis. You don't have to be a Shearwater Sailing Club member to race, you just have to want to sail a good old boat along with others who love the same thing. For information, contact Charlie Husar at husarc3@gmail.com.

Wendy Mitman Clarke is senior editor at Good Old Boat. A lifelong sailor, she's also a science writer at Maryland Sea Grant College, and a published poet and novelist.

(top to bottom) Seawolf maneuvers in the light air before the start while eyeing one of her Pearson Vanguard competitors, Scamp Too.

Johnny Clarke, the author's husband, at the tiller of Fling, the boat he grew up sailing on.

Phil Beierl and Scamp Too sail past before the start.



A Stand-Up Draftsman

Yacht designer Ted Brewer gazes back over a storied career.

BY FIONA MCGLYNN

Ted and Betty Brewer's living room is warm and inviting. Two harpoons hang on teak-colored walls, and a model boxcar sits on the shelf alongside other artifacts marking a life well-lived. A picture window overlooks a baseball diamond across a quiet street in Agassiz, British Columbia. With its neat buildings and carefully trimmed yards, the town feels bricked with charm and mortared with apple pie. But just outside the window, above the baseball diamond, the craggy, glaciated peak of Mount Cheam towers, a reminder of the wild Coast Mountains and North Cascades ranges that embrace the community.

"I've never been a sit-down draftsman. I've always been standing up at the drafting board," says Edward "Ted" Brewer, the world-renown yacht designer who worked on two America's Cup contenders and designed 260 boats including yachts built by Aloha, Morgan, Nimble, Union, and Whitby.

"For many years it was standing up at the drafting board with a cigarette," says Betty.

"Yeah, too many years with a cigarette," Ted agrees, leaning back in a sage-green armchair with extra foam padding. "No more cigarettes."

At 87, Ted no longer designs or smokes, but he tells stories with his whole being, arms thrown up in amazement, voice soaring high with incredulity, mouth crinkling with infectious laughter. A mischievous twinkle



Ted Brewer works at his drafting desk in the early 1960s while at Bill Luders' firm. Photo courtesy of Ted Brewer

in his eyes reveals a certain boyish quality that belies his grey hair. On his left forearm, a weathered tattoo takes him back to his youth, roaming the Navy docks in Hamilton, Ontario, learning to sail from his father's veteran friends.

"By the time I was 15, I was proficient at rigging, rowing, and sailing, and I was allowed free run of the Navy's 14-foot dinghies and 26-foot whaleboats. I could go down to the Navy base in Hamilton and

sign out a 27-foot sailboat on my own account. My girlfriend, her girlfriends, and my buddies would all be there. We'd get the boat rigged and ready and out we would go."

When he was about 15, Ted and a friend bought their first boat.

"We coughed up 55 dollars for *Quest*, a 16-foot ship's gig that someone had put a long wood fin on and an overly heavy, gaffy rig." A year of scraping, painting, and

replacing rotted planks, and *Quest* was ready for her maiden voyage. After ballasting her with 400 pounds of sandbags, they cast off into afternoon squalls. They were soon knocked down, and panic rose as water came over the lee hull. The two boys managed to fling the sandbags over the side and eventually right her. Upon being towed in, a photographer appeared on the scene, and much to Ted's chagrin a photo of their woeful yacht made the paper the next day.

It wasn't long after that he got the tattoo: an anchor with *Quest* stenciled beneath it.

Downstairs in Ted's studio, half-models and photos of some of his hundreds of designs cover the wood-paneled walls. Two drafting boards hold metal weights or "whales" (aka ducks), a handful of pens and pencils, articulating table lamps, cardboard blueprint tubes. These are the tools of a traditionalist; Ted has always preferred drawing by hand to using CAD software.

Even as a child, he liked to draw. He would doodle Navy boats in the margins of his school papers where, despite being the youngest in his class, he earned top grades, at least until high school, when boredom set in.

"I really goofed off...I quit school to get a job as a Class 4 electrician at the steel company in Hamilton."

During one night shift, Ted read a military recruiting advertisement in *Liberty* magazine.



Sitting at his drafting desk, Ted Brewer is surrounded by the traditional tools of the trade.

The next morning, he went to the armory and signed up.

"I didn't get home until almost 10 a.m. When mum met me at the door she asked if I had to work overtime again. I said, 'No, I just joined the

Army,' and I caught her before she hit the floor!"

Ted survived the grueling Army boot camps, and by 1957 he'd made lieutenant. But he remained restless, and one day, his company commander

finally suggested that he pursue his passion for boating. "He knew I loved boats. I resigned my commission and got a job in Toronto as a yacht broker with George Cuthbertson."

Cuthbertson, who would go on to become the first "C" in C&C Yachts, at the time was building *Inishfree*, a 54-foot wooden ocean racing yawl. Not long after joining the firm, Ted asked if he could accompany Dick Telford, the yacht brokerage firm's boatbuilder,

to see *Inishfree* under construction. When he saw the yard and spoke with the builders, Ted was struck with yearning.

"I thought, 'Oh god, this is what I want. I want to design boats and build boats.'" Encouraged by Telford, Ted enrolled in a yacht design course at Westlawn Institute of Marine Technology. He'd almost completed it when he heard that Alfred Edward "Bill" Luders Jr. in Stamford, Connecticut, was looking for a design assistant.

"With Dick's blessing, I applied for the job."

"He doesn't stand for very long," Betty says, gently ushering Ted over to an office chair. Seated, Ted reaches for the computer mouse, one of few visible concessions to modern technology. Above the desk is a black-and-white photo of Bill Luders' 40-foot *Storm* flying a spinnaker. Tucked into a corner of the frame is a photo of Luders himself, in a pullover and collared shirt.

In 1960, at the age of 27, Ted started working as Luders' assistant, basically a second-in-command in



Whether racing or cruising, Ted has never been far from the helm of a boat throughout his career. Photo courtesy of Ted Brewer

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the shipyard. He'd visit each department daily to see what was happening, problem-solve, and then head for the drafting room, where Luders would give him sketches to turn into a working drawing. At the end of the workday, Luders and Ted would sit in the office, smoking, and mull over designs and construction work. Often Ted would ask for Luders' advice on his own designs. "He didn't look at me as competition," Ted says.

Ted designed some 260 boats, but the Whitby 42, shown here, is the one he credits for establishing him as a production boat designer. Photo credit: Brian Glaessner/All Coast Yacht Sales

(L to R) Bob Wallstrom, Bill Luders, and Ted Brewer met up for a Luders Marine reunion held at Bill's home in the mid-1990s. It was the last time Ted saw Bill, a man he revered. Photo courtesy of Ted Brewer

While at Luders, Ted worked on two America's Cup boats. *Weatherly*, a Phil Rhodes design, which they modified, went on to win the 1962 regatta, and Luders earned the commission to design, and build a 1964 contender, *American Eagle*. Though *American Eagle* was initially the "bird to beat," winning 20 out of 21 races in the June and July trials, by the end of summer *Constellation*, designed by Olin Stephens, had pulled ahead and



won the right to defend the 19th America's Cup.

By 1968, the shipyard business was foundering, and Luders closed Luders Marine Construction Co., 60 years after his father had founded it. Ted and Luders remained close until Luders' death in 1999.

"Bill Luders was my boss, my teacher, and my great friend," Ted says. "He was like a second father to me. I truly loved the man."

After Luders closed the yard in 1968, Ted moved to Brooklin, Maine, to hang out his shingle. He bought an old hotel from the





Betty and Ted Brewer met when Ted chased after Betty's father to learn more about his BMW motorcycle.

1870s, “a weird place. It had eight or nine bedrooms, and only one bathroom. My first office was in the hotel dining room.”

There, he developed a design for a client who sailed on Lake Champlain and wanted a boat that would go well to weather. The boat was eventually named *Black Velvet*, and at the boat show in Annapolis, Kurt Hansen of Whitby Boat Works saw a photo of it and said, “I want a boat just like that.”

But as Ted began working with Whitby Boat Works, he discovered Hansen had some ideas of his own. Though *Black Velvet* was a fin keel, Hansen insisted on a full keel. “I wanted to at least cut it away and make the rudder separate. But no, it had to be full keel.”

At a time when full keels were the gold standard for cruisers, Ted often found himself attempting to sway owners to incorporate a fin keel’s windward sailing advantages.

“I felt the ideal was a fin keel with a skeg hung rudder behind it...If a client wanted a full keel boat, I’d cut away as much of the keel as I could...When he complained, I’d have to add a bit back.” This “Brewer Bite” would become one of Ted’s signature design features.

The Whitby 42 became an enormously popular design, selling over 230 hulls, and according to Ted, “was what established me as a production boat builder, designer.”

In 1976, Morgan Yachts approached Ted to work with Jack Corey, head of Morgan’s design staff, on a 36- to 38-foot fast cruiser. Ted recalls taking the Morgan 382 on its first sea trial. What started as a great day for a sail quickly descended into inky black skies and a lightning storm, with strikes as close as 50 yards from the boat. Though frightful, the boat emerged unscathed, perhaps the beginning of a lucky streak that would see 400 Morgan 382s built between 1977 and 1981.

Ted rests a forearm on the desk and gazes up. Centered above the desk is a large-format color photograph of a ketch flying two rainbow spinnakers over turquoise water. This was *Mystic*, which he designed for Marvyn Carton, who became a lifelong best friend. Built of aluminum, *Mystic* was launched and sailed through the Great Lakes to Europe. Ted sailed the boat with Carton in a Transpac that started slow and became a wild ride.

“We’d be going down waves doing 17 knots. Almost everybody on board was seasick. We roared through for about six or seven days of this storm. All the time Marv’s listening to the radio, and we’re hearing about crews that are out with sickness, broken this and broken that, and boats turning back. But we were on a big custom cruiser.” Not only did they finish second in class, Carton celebrated by serving

the crew a 55-gallon-drum of Mai Tais and flying all their wives and sweethearts to Hawaii to join the party.

One day in 1988, Ted, living in Anacortes at the time, was driving home when he spotted a man on a BMW motorcycle.

“I owned a BMW, brand new, and so I followed him home, my big black dog on the seat beside me, and pulled into his driveway. He came out very suspicious.” Once Ted had introduced himself, the two men bonded over motorcycles, and pretty soon, the fellow introduced Ted to his daughter, Betty.

“She had just had a divorce, and I was winding up a rather disastrous marriage, so I asked her for a date to go sailing. I had rather a fancy little yawl, one that I’d designed, a Nimble 30,” Ted says. Betty, who at that point had sworn off men, was taken with Ted.

“I was definitely swept off my feet,” she says. After marrying in 1988, Ted and Betty eventually moved to Gabriola Island in 1999, where Ted designed custom yachts, sold plans, and wrote for magazines, including *Good Old Boat*. From 1998 to 2003, Ted was a contributing editor at *Good Old Boat*. He wrote humorous stories in “Fireside chats with Ted Brewer,” divulged lessons on cruising etiquette, and shared his love and knowledge of boat design.



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Though he often wrote highly technical articles, Ted liked to have fun with his topics. In the July/August 1999 issue, in an article called “Brewer by the Numbers,” Ted discussed different ratios and terms used by yacht designers. Amid LODs, LOAs, LWLs, CBs, and CEs, Ted introduced a new ratio, the Comfort Ratio (CR), a formula that indicates the speed of the upward/downward motion of a boat in waves and swell. The lower the ratio, the more uncomfortable the ride.

“People were coming up with all of these sail area displacement ratios and this and that ratio. I thought, well there’s one ratio that nobody’s ever thought of, a comfort ratio. I’ll work one out,” he says. “So, I diddled around and came up with this crazy comfort ratio, and it was a joke and I published it, and it took off like a rocket. It does have

a basis in fact, but I thought it was a joke.” The CR ratio remains in use to this day.

In addition to writing articles, Ted also authored three books, *Understanding Boat Design*, *Cruising Yacht Design*, and *Ted Brewer Explains Sailboat Design*.

These days, Ted no longer draws, but he still sells boat design plans to boatbuilders around the world at TedBrewer.com.

“His babies are everywhere,” says Betty. “When we were sailing, he would pick up the binoculars and he would look and look and say, ‘That’s one of my babies!’”

Some of Ted’s boats have also retired. No longer racing, *Weatherly* and *American Eagle* are in the America’s Cup Charters fleet in Newport, Rhode Island, where sailors can experience the golden age of America’s Cup racing.

Other boats have had less dignified endings. Ted points to a model boat in a glass case and says, “I’ll tell you where that is right now. That’s 200 feet underwater off the coast of Machias, Maine, with a cargo of marijuana.”

Some people find time heavy on their hands when they retire, but Ted has always pursued interests including folk music, American Civil War books, and model trains. Nor are these always half-measure hobbies; at one point he had a couple hundred feet of railroad in the backyard, and to this day he sells plans for model railroad buildings and bridges online at BrewerPlans.com.

Recently, he has become an avid stock investor. He wakes up at 5 a.m. and with a coffee in hand, he checks the stock markets before going downstairs to his computer to “make any buys, sells, and trims” and answer email inquiries about his boat designs.

Retiring is in some ways like crossing a finish line, a time to reflect on achievements and legacies. Ted’s career has been extraordinary, and it’s clear that he relished every

tack, jibe, and sail change. But most important to him, it seems, are the people who mentored and influenced him: George Cuthbertson, Bill Luders, Marvyn Carton, and Dick Telford among others. You need only look around his studio, where seemingly every square inch of wall space is dedicated to a boat or a photo of a loved one.

As Ted works at his computer, cane propped against one knee, *Storm* and Bill Luders watch down from their frame.

“The last race we ever sailed together was in 1967,” Ted says. “Bill had been at the helm two hours and said, ‘Boys I need a rest, I’m just getting weary here, somebody take over.’ Everybody volunteered and he said, ‘No, we need the best at the helm, come on, Ted.’ I drove her to within a half mile of the finish line and I said, ‘Here, Bill, take over now.’ He took her across the finish line. We won. We were not only first in our class, we were first overall. The boat was that good.” 🚤

Fiona McGlynn, a Good Old Boat contributing editor, cruised from Canada to Australia on a 35-foot boat with her husband, Robin. Fiona lives north of 59 degrees and runs WaterborneMag.com, a site dedicated to millennial sailing culture.

A professional photo of Ted taken for one of his three books on boat design. Photo courtesy of Ted Brewer



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Autocorrect

*It was time for a stronger autopilot,
but the install presented interesting challenges.*

BY PATRICK DAVIN

It was a June day, and a gale was blowing. I remember because I spent 18 hours hand-steering *Violet Hour*, our C&C Landfall 38, in big, breaking, following seas across British Columbia's Hecate Strait. It was the day I learned that our wheel-mounted autopilot was not up to the task of steering our 19,000-pound boat in those conditions. It was the day I added "autopilot replacement" to the to-do list.

And that June day was not atypical. High-latitude coastal sailing in the Pacific Northwest often includes challenging waters on the outside and inside of Vancouver Island, running downwind in 25 knots with closely spaced, tidal-current-influenced waves. I needed a powerful

autopilot I could have confidence in. And I knew that meant leaving the wheel and going below decks.

Installing a belowdecks autopilot means starting with considering where the autopilot push rod will connect to the boat's steering system, and how it will connect. Next is deciding where the mechanical linear drive (the unit that includes the mounting foot, the motor, and the push rod) gets mounted. From there, wiring, electronics, and sensors follow.

Installing the Mechanicals

The primary mechanical considerations are attaching the autopilot drive's push rod and mounting the drive unit. On my boat, both required thoughtful planning and precise fabrication.

On many belowdecks autopilot installations, the mechanical linear drive push rod is connected directly to a boat's steering quadrant or radial drive. (A quadrant and radial drive serve the same function but are shaped differently. Because our boat's steering system uses a radial drive, I'll use that term in this article.)

Where possible, Edson strongly recommends attaching the autopilot push rod to the rudder stock, via a tiller arm. This is because many steering system radial drives are not designed for the strong

forces an autopilot push rod can exert (650 pounds of peak thrust from the Raymarine Evolution autopilot that we bought).

Another advantage of mounting the autopilot push rod to the rudder stock via a tiller arm is redundancy. If that connection fails, I can still hand steer. And if the radial drive explodes, I can still steer using the autopilot. But if I attach the autopilot directly to the radial drive and the radial drive explodes, I have a serious, potentially life-threatening problem.

A typical tiller arm is cast bronze, about 10 inches long. It clamps around the rudder stock, above or below the radial drive. Our C&C has a pinched stern and very limited space around our Edson radial drive; attaching a tiller arm to our rudder stock would not be easy.

Making a difficult job more challenging was the fact that our Edson radial drive was already using nearly all of the exposed vertical space on our rudder stock, about $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches of the available $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches. This left me about $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches of exposed stock, and standard tiller arms are at least $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches tall.

I briefly considered drastic options, such as whether I could move the radial drive up or down to make more space (I couldn't), and whether I could flip the radial drive or buy a new one with a

(left to right) The shelf for mounting the mechanical linear drive had to be as low as possible to accommodate the mounting height to align the drive and tiller arm. That left only a very narrow space between the shelf and the hull for attaching the through-bolt nuts.

The first shelf Patrick built to mount the linear drive unit failed fairly soon. It was back to the drawing board to redesign and replace it with a stronger shelf.

Patrick encased the second shelf in fiberglass and bonded it to the hull, overlapping 6 to 8 inches. It took 2 hours and over 16 small batches of epoxy, which was kicking quickly due to unusually hot May weather.



Shelf 2.0—PD

The first shelf I built to mount the linear drive unit failed pretty quickly during a couple of weeks of sea testing. A small crack appeared in the plywood, then I saw that under load it was flexing slightly, and the fiberglass was starting to delaminate from the hull. I knew the right decision was to start over and build a stronger design.

I reached out to the sailing community through online forums and I realized several mistakes I had made:

- My shelf support leg was oriented transverse to the direction of thrust, rather than in the same direction. This likely promoted flexing at that joint.
- My boat's hull interior is painted, and epoxying to a painted or gelcoated surface is a recipe for poor adhesion. It's important to sand or grind down to fiberglass first, even though this step makes a terrible mess and takes time, especially in a cramped space.
- It wasn't enough to screw together a sturdy shelf and then attach that to the hull with fiberglass tabbing. I needed to encase the entire shelf structure in fiberglass and make it one with the hull. It's better to think of the plywood as simply a core material.

I built Shelf 2.0 from $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch marine plywood and a much heavier layup of

fiberglass. I also used a better design, supporting it with two legs oriented in the same direction as the thrust. The legs were glued to the platform with West System G/flex and then screwed together. Next I laid a fillet of epoxy thickened with colloidal silica along the inside of the joint (underside of the shelf), as increasing the radius of a joint improves strength. On top of that I layered 6-ounce, flat-weave fiberglass cloth to cover the underside of the shelf.

For bonding to the hull, I spread more West System G/flex along the plywood edges that would contact the hull. G/flex is a strong, flexible, peanut-butter consistency epoxy. I chose G/flex because several people online suggested that my shelf not have hard contact points with the hull, because hull flex could eventually affect the shelf.

Next, I laid up about seven layers of 6-ounce, flat-weave fiberglass cloth of increasing sizes across the shelf. The entire shelf was encased and overlapped onto the hull by 6 to 8 inches.

After leaving the shelf to cure for more than 24 hours, I test-fit the mechanical linear drive again and drilled the four through-bolt holes for the base. After attaching the push-rod end to the tiller arm, I was relieved and elated to find that everything had adequate clearance and proper range of motion.

slimmer profile. Indeed, a slimmer Edson radial drive or a Jefa radial drive with integrated tiller arm might have given me the space I needed. But, such a radial drive swap isn't trivial, as it changes the height of the steering cable track, which would have required re-engineering the idler sheaves to avoid chafe, a substantial project.

My solution was to have local machine shop fabricate a custom tiller arm. I sketched a design based on the idea of an offset tiller arm, which Buck Algonquin manufactures but not in a size that would meet my needs. An offset tiller arm clamps around the rudder post, and then the arm descends about an inch or two to clear the rim of my radial drive.

I found a machine shop that had fabricated tiller arms before. The steel tiller arm we designed features a welded-on arm. The center clamp is bored for a $2\frac{3}{8}$ -inch rudder stock with a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch keyway, and the clamp is secured with $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch bolts in tapped holes. While stainless steel would have been the ideal, the shop used A36 mild steel/structural steel, which it had on hand. To protect it from surface rust, I spray painted it with zinc chromate followed with a top coat of Rust-Oleum.

The keyway position in the new tiller arm must align with the keyway cut on the rudder stock so that the tiller arm meets the linear drive at a 90-degree angle.

Our boat's stern is fairly narrow, and the Raymarine Evolution autopilot mechanical linear drive is a surprisingly large piece of equipment, about 3 feet long at full extension, and with a motor housing that is about 8 inches tall and 9 inches long. After measuring, I could see that there would barely be enough space to fit the mechanical linear drive in a transverse (port-starboard) configuration (which is common) and that doing so would have encroached on some of the storage space of our lazarette. My solution was to install the linear drive oriented fore-and-aft, pointing forward. This meant that the tiller arm had to extend from the stock at a 110-degree position (near perpendicular to the boat's fore-aft line). This information helped me determine exactly where the keyway had to be on the tiller-arm clamp.

Next, two considerations helped me determine exactly how far away from the tiller arm and at what height I had to mount the motor end of the mechanical linear drive unit. First, I knew that the push rod had to align within 5 degrees of a flat



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The new shelf glassed in with the mechanical linear drive mounting foot installed.

plane with the tiller arm and must be the correct distance from the tiller arm to have full range of motion. These considerations meant that I ended up having very close install tolerances, only $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inches in some places!

Next on the mechanicals list was mounting the linear drive unit. The motor

Patrick found a machine shop willing to take on the precise, time-consuming project of fabricating a tiller arm that would fit the limited available space on his boat's rudder stock.



end of the mechanical linear drive must be attached to a strong, secure part of the boat. Ideally, this would mean through-bolting it to an existing bulkhead or structural member. But rarely will there be an existing structural support right where it's needed.

As is common in these installations, I needed to build a shelf, one strong enough to withstand all of the push/pull thrust forces that would be transferred to it. The shelf had to be large enough so that I could

attach the 3 x 4-inch mounting foot of the mechanical linear drive, but also sized to fit in a pretty tight space at the stern.

I first made a cardboard prototype of how the shelf would fit into the hull. This process was fairly painstaking because the hull is a curved surface, and there were tricky angles to work out as well as ensuring proper height, distance, and clearance of the autopilot drive arm. I test-fit the drive arm on the cardboard shelf several times before building a shelf out of $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch plywood and fiberglass cloth. This

Fabrication Considerations —Editors

The keyway cut in Patrick's boat's rudder stock was sufficient enough to use to align the keyway in his fabricated tiller arm. But not all rudder stocks have a keyway that's long enough to do this.

If that's the case, you have to come up with another way to attach the tiller arm to the rudder stock securely enough to withstand the considerable forces generated by the autopilot. It's imperative not to take the easy way out and depend only on the clamping action of the tiller arm to the rudder stock to do this job. It will not be strong enough. Many standard tiller arms come with set screws to help secure the tiller arm to the rudder stock. These often work well on powerboats but can fail when subjected to the loads on a sailboat's steering system in heavy weather.

One way to make this attachment more secure (again, if the keyway is insufficient) is to through bolt the tiller arm through the rudder stock. After aligning the tiller arm to the drive unit, tighten the clamp bolts so the tiller arm will not slip on the rudder stock. Drill a clear hole through both sides of the clamp and the rudder stock. Use a stainless steel through bolt at least $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch diameter and secure it with a locking nut.

A brand-new cobalt bit will make this job easier; a battery-powered hand drill will make this job safer. But this is still a challenging job in what is usually a very tight space, and precision is required.

Regarding the shelf built to hold the linear drive unit, a stronger alternative to the 6-ounce, flat-weave cloth Patrick used would be double bias (DB) cloth. Though more difficult to work with, DB, which comes in 12- and 17-ounce cloth, has a more complex weave that provides more bonding surface area for the epoxy or resin, resulting in a stronger, stiffer laminate assembly.

Patrick spot-welded the fabricated tiller arm to test the fit, at right.

Test fitting the mechanical linear drive to the tiller arm, at bottom right.

shelf wasn't up to the task, and I ended up redesigning it and replacing it with a much stronger version (Sidebar "Shelf 2.0").

Installing the Electricals

With the mechanical part of the autopilot ready to go, four components of the system remained to be installed: the ACU-200, which is the power unit and brains of the system and is about the size of a proper dictionary; the EV-1 sensor pod, which contains the compass, gyro, and accelerometer and reports data from these instruments to the ACU-200; the P70s display head, which is the unit from which I'll control the autopilot and therefore needs to be mounted near the helm for easy access; and the rudder position



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Windvane vs. Electric—PD

I did pause to consider replacing our inadequate autopilot with a windvane. We're a low-electrical-usage boat, and minimizing fancy electronics (which are expensive and prone to eventual breakage) holds appeal. And being purely mechanical, a windvane is easier to repair than electronics, and could potentially be used as a back-up rudder. The price is about the same as a belowdecks autopilot (about 4-5 boat bucks, not including labor costs) and the install time is probably in the ballpark.

But a vane adds a giant appendage to the stern, extends the boat's length (increasing moorage costs at some marinas), and can be tricky to adjust in rapidly changing conditions like we commonly sail in.

Ultimately, I decided a windvane is a great choice for crossing oceans, but that's not what we need self-steering for. We need it for passages of about 12 to 24 hours for periods during which the waves make it too tiring to hand steer for long, or for brief periods when reefing, and for convenience when motoring.

sensor, another piece of hardware that is mounted to the radial drive or tiller arm and which tells the system the rudder angle at any time.

Before choosing locations for each of these parts, I made a sketch of the system in the boat, showing possible locations. All of this hardware needs to be connected, and some of it connects via the included Raymarine SeaTalk[®] cables. But the cables are a fixed length, and they're expensive, and I didn't want to mount things too far apart and wind up having to order new cables. Additionally, the ACU-200 and EV-1 have specific installation requirements to consider.

The ACU-200 power unit had to be oriented vertically and installed close to the house batteries (or distribution point) to minimize voltage loss. Fortunately, I found a good spot only a few feet from the batteries and electrical panel. I mounted the unit and then started wiring the other components up to it once they were installed. To reduce interference that might happen via the ground, I connected a dedicated ground wire to this unit, as recommended.

The sensor pod must be installed on a level plane and pointing forward, but it can be mounted on a vertical or horizontal surface—and even upside down—as long as it is horizontally level. Fortunately, it can be rotated 360 degrees on its mounting case, so the bracket itself doesn't necessarily need to point forward.

Because this pod couldn't be mounted near sources of electromagnetic interference, I had to mount it away from the ship's compass, VHF cables, and SSB wiring. I found a good spot inside our cockpit coaming. It was a difficult place to access, but the provided paper template helped with drilling the pilot holes for the bracket, and I used a bubble level to check that it was in a plane with the water (make sure your boat itself is level before doing this).

I used an existing, unused instrument hole in our cockpit to mount the display head and then only had to connect it with the provided cable. Once the install was complete, I used the display head to calibrate and set up the autopilot. Most of that I could do at the dock, but the compass calibration I had to do underway.

The rudder position sensor had to be installed below, near the mechanical linear drive and the rudder stock. Just as with the mechanical linear drive, the rudder

position sensor's arm needs to be at 90 degrees to the tiller arm, and in a level plane. Additionally, the arm needs to attach at a 5.5-inch radius from the center of the rudder stock. Typically, it's easiest to attach this sensor to a point on the tiller arm, but it could also be attached to the radial drive (the rudder position sensor won't exert significant loads, so the mount strength isn't a big concern).

I built a small plywood shelf and attached it to a bulkhead near the rudder stock using 90-degree elbow brackets. I carefully measured the distance from the shelf-mounted sensor to the tiller arm attachment point (with the rudder centered) and then cut a threaded rod to length.

The Outcome

After a year of testing our new autopilot, including sailing down the west coast of Vancouver Island in ocean waves, we've been thoroughly impressed with its performance. In heavy weather conditions it can steer as well as I can (or better) and provides a nice comfort zone; being able to leave the wheel in rough conditions makes reefing or other operations much easier. On average, it draws about 3 amps—not

insignificant aboard our boat, but not a big electrical price to pay for the job it's doing.

Although this was a time-consuming, difficult project, it was well worth doing it myself. Not only did I save thousands of dollars in installation costs, I know the system intimately and could easily diagnose any issues. Perhaps the only thing I regret is not upgrading our autopilot sooner! 🚢

Patrick Davin is a certified beer judge, cruising the Pacific Northwest with his wife, Natalie, aboard Violet Hour, their 1984 C&C Landfall 38. He writes about their adventures at www.svviolethour.com. His March 31 post about life on the hook during the time of COVID-19 is worth a read.

Resources

- Edson: edsonmarine.com
- Jefa Steering: jefa.com/steering/steering.htm
- Buck Algonquin tiller arms are available through multiple distributors; google "buck algonquin tiller arms."

Autopilot Installation

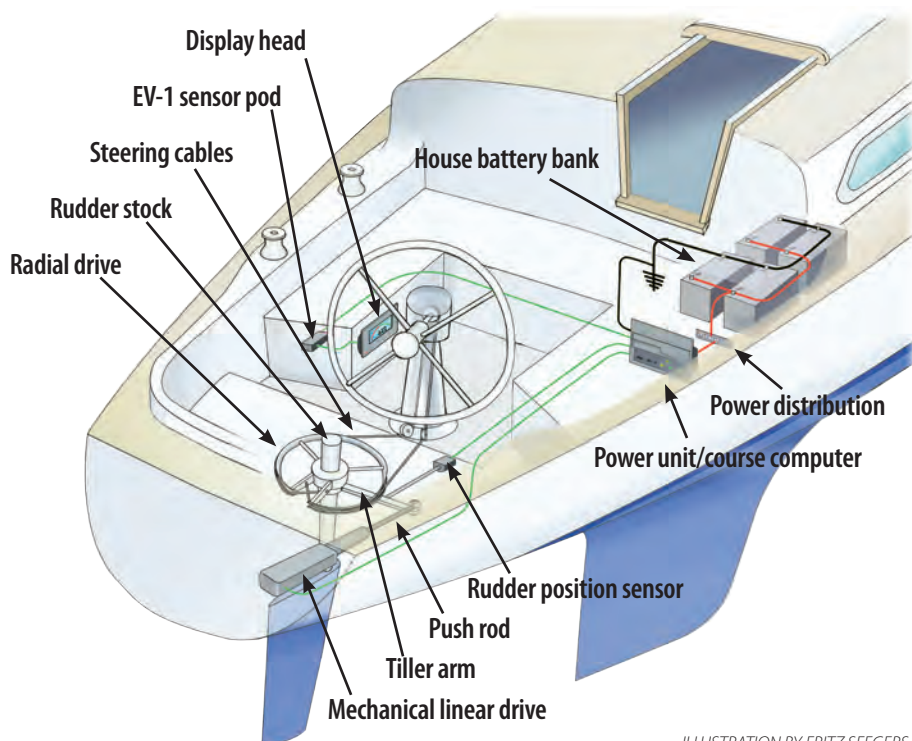


ILLUSTRATION BY FRITZ SEEGER

Puttering Through Nowhere

A trip through Florida's Okeechobee Waterway is a study in small towns and solitude.

BY VICKI MCCASH BRENNAN

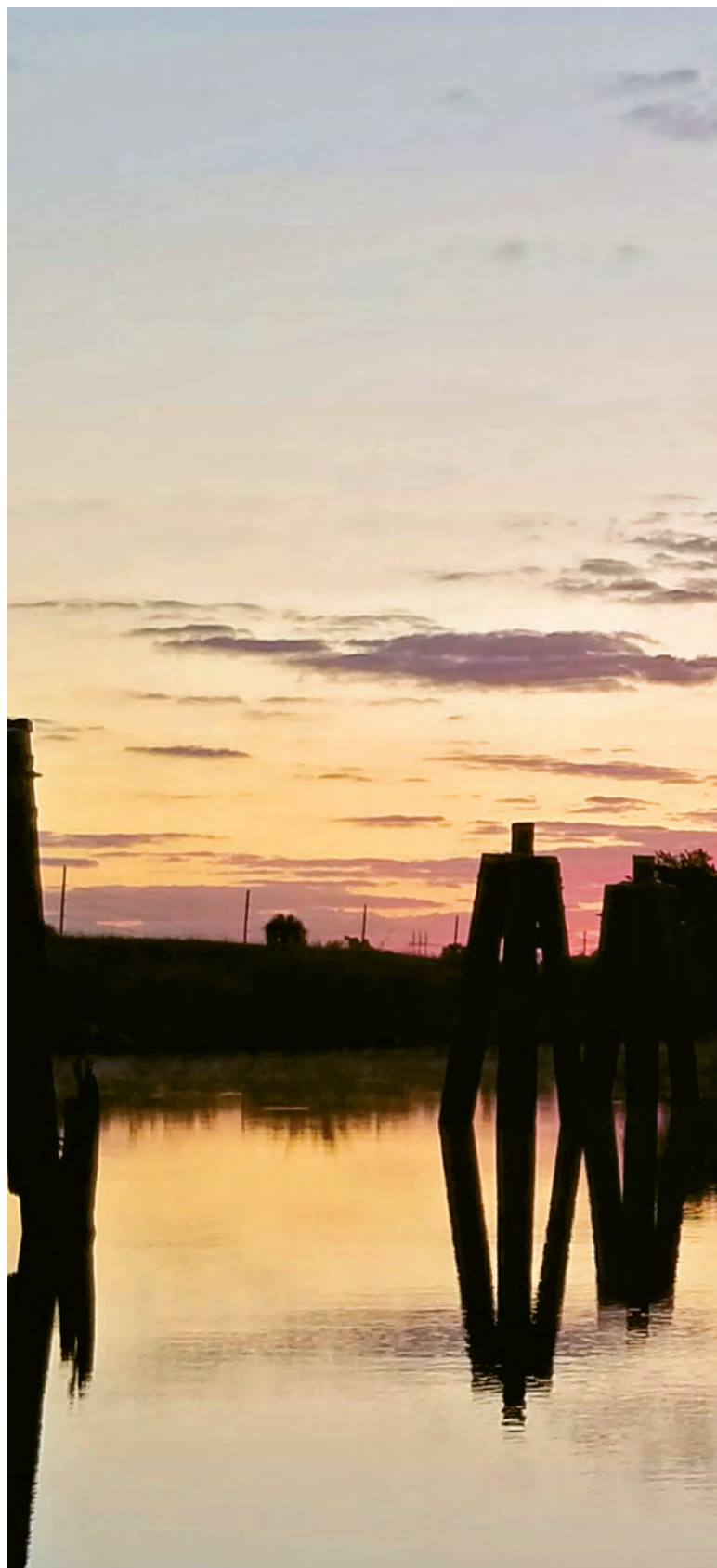
Iuntie *Sonas*, our Catalina 320, from her mooring as the sun brightens the morning sky. We drift lazily westward under motor on Florida's St. Lucie River, heading inland, upstream, away from the Atlantic coast and its mansions, pesky power boats, and congestion. We are making our way into the Okeechobee Waterway, a 154-mile east-west route across the rural middle of the state to our home in St. Petersburg.

We're on the final leg of the 500-mile South Florida Loop, from Fort Myers to Key West, through the Keys, past Miami, and up the coast to Stuart, where the wide St. Lucie River meets the Intracoastal Waterway. I've never voyaged in this rural part of the state, but my husband, Jack, brought our previous boat, a Bristol 30, across from Fort Lauderdale to St. Petersburg when we moved

from one side of Florida to the other several years ago. "It's bucolic," he told me.

Bucolic: "relating to the pleasant aspects of the countryside." This is the word Jack repeated when trying to convince me that motoring a sailboat past cows and gators in the middle of nowhere would be a good time. I'm a city girl, a coastal Floridian. I am suspicious of my state's empty interior.

Before noon, we enter the St. Lucie Lock, the easternmost and deepest of five locks. I'm jittery. I've never been in a lock before, though I've read up on the rules and procedures. We buckle on our PFDs as required. Lock tenders on high concrete walls drop lines to me on the bow and Jack at the stern. The gate closes behind us and the water level begins to rise. We float up 14 feet to the level of the St. Lucie Canal. I tend the line, which is to say, I



Scenes like this—sunrise from the anchorage at Port Mayaca, looking toward the railroad lift bridge—made the trip worth it.



stand there, taking up the slack every foot or so.

As we reach the top, I greet the lock tender with a smile. He says the locks upstream are undergoing “manatee maintenance” and to check the Corps of Engineers website for closing times and dates.

Manatees are Florida’s master navigators. They move at sailboat speed, about 30 miles a day, and use locks and flood gates on both sides of Lake Okeechobee in their search for what they need: sea-grass beds to munch on, fresh water, warm-water havens in winter, and other manatees to mate with in spring. But flood gates and locks caused about 4 percent of manatee deaths from 1974 to 2004. Since then, manatee protection systems have been installed on all locks and most flood gates to keep them from crushing these gentle giants.

I run my eyes over the lock’s water looking for a fat whiskery nose, usually the only part of a comely sea cow you can see in the brown canal. No manatees have joined us today.

This solitude of the St. Lucie Canal is a welcome change after the frenzy of Miami and Fort Lauderdale. We were astonished at the hundreds of boats rollicking Biscayne Bay, where 15 years ago we sailed our first boat, a 25-foot C&C, in what were then much quieter waters.

“This place is insane!” Jack exclaimed, and as much as I love city life, I had to agree. In Miami if your boat’s engine isn’t big enough, just get bigger speakers. The cacophony of salsa, hip-hop, and electronica echoed through the large free anchorage at Virginia Key for hours past sunset. Jet skiers

made a game of running the anchorage like an obstacle course, narrowly missing anchor lines and children on floaties tied to sterns.

Oblivious powerboaters kicked up 5-foot wakes as they roared past us in the Intra-coastal Waterway’s channel. The unbending schedules of the many drawbridges in this section of the waterway meant that we were often left circling

and waiting. We headed north pledging never to take a sailboat into those waters again.

Now on the quiet St. Lucie Canal, I feel my shoulder muscles start to unravel.

About 30 miles inland we come to Indiantown, which began as a Seminole trading post in the late 19th century. In World War I, the Army Corps of Engineers dug the St. Lucie Canal to Lake Okeechobee, and

a commercial marina was established here. During Florida’s land boom of the 1920s, developers laid out a city to benefit from trade at the intersection of the canal and the Seaboard rail line, but a hurricane in 1928 dashed those dreams. Today, Indiantown’s population is about 5,000.

For boaters, the attraction here is Indiantown Marina, which has a DIY boatyard, a



Sonos enters the westernmost lock, W.P. Franklin Lock, the last of her journey across the Okeechobee Waterway.



Hoping for favorable breeze, Vicki and Jack waited until morning to take *Sonars* across Lake Okeechobee, where the wrong weather can make for an uncomfortable slog. Their strategy paid off, and the morning offered perfect weather and wind, at left.

The Fort Denaud swing bridge, one of only a few left in Florida, is operated by hand from the center. Boats pass to starboard, at bottom left.



is toward the southern end, and if the wind comes from the north, the waves resulting from that fetch can make for an extremely unpleasant sail. We decide to sail across in the morning calm.

Jack says we can tie up to the dolphin pilings outside the lock. Each dolphin is comprised of four extra-large telephone poles driven into the bottom and lashed together around a fifth piling in the center with steel cables. The supersized cleats are too high and on the wrong side to be a convenient tie-up for a small sailboat, but with a fair amount of shouting and consternation, I manage to loop a line around one of the poles, to which Jack secures our stern. It takes a few tries to anchor the bow toward the channel. We don't want to drift between the pilings and the bank, where the water is less than 2 feet and the bottom is sticky mud. As it turns out, our maneuvering is unnecessary. Once the locks close at 5 p.m., the waterway is quiet. No boats. No current.

The night here is as still and silent as Miami was loud and raucous. It feels like we're the only life here. I don't see or hear any birds. There are no sounds of frogs or crickets. The cool air keeps mosquitoes away, and even the fish have stopped jumping. I know someone must live close enough to come to work at the lock in the morning, but who would know if they didn't show up? My phone has no service.

marine supply store, transient docks, showers, laundry facilities, and free Wi-Fi. But it's still early in the day and we don't need provisions, so we keep moving.

After Indiantown, civilization disappears. This was once orange country, packed with groves and dotted with farmhouses, until the twin disasters of citrus canker disease and a 50-percent decline in demand for orange juice. I breathe deep, hoping to catch the scent of orange blossoms, but I smell only pungent muck. The land

is vacant. With nothing to see, not even birds to watch, I settle into a novel. Jack kicks back in the cockpit and lets the autopilot drive.

Shortly before we reach the Port Mayaca Lock into Lake Okeechobee, we must pass under a railroad lift bridge. The center section is rated at 49 feet. Our mast is 47.5 feet. The water level is low, but we still hold our breath as we scoot under with several feet to spare.

For many years, a man nearby ran a service of "tipping" sailboats using large barrels

and leverage so that boats with mast heights of 50 feet or more could slide through sideways. But he passed away, taking the tipping business with him. Boats with masts over 49 feet need luck and low water to pass under the bridge.

We consider a late-afternoon sail across Lake Okeechobee to get to a marina and tiki bar on the other side but instead tie up for the night outside Port Mayaca. Lake O is exceptionally shallow with an average depth of 9 feet over its 730 square miles. The main channel

With the brief exception of a few hours' sail on the lake itself, the Okeechobee Waterway was a motorboat trip, which provided Vicki plenty of time on the foredeck reading a book and enjoying the early spring sun.

I wake up several times in the night. Will there be someone there when we hail the lock on the VHF in the morning?

Precisely at 7 a.m., the Port Mayaca Lock opens and we motor through. The locks regulate the water level of Lake Okeechobee, protecting communities around the lake from summer flooding and keeping the lake from going dry in winter. At this time of year, the water level is even with the canal.

The wind gods smile on us, sending a light breeze from the southwest, an excellent angle. We hoist the main and roll out the jib. This is as good as the sailing gets on Lake O. It takes us about three hours to cross.

On our way into Clewiston on the lake's west side, the wind shifts to our nose, ending our sail. We turn into a narrow channel around the edge of the lake near the entrance to Roland Martin Marina, the halfway point on the Okeechobee Waterway. This marina has an outdoor bar, restaurant, swimming pools, camp store, and marine service center. If you wanted to stay a day or two, you could hire a fishing guide to help you catch some Okeechobee bass. We don't stop because it isn't even noon, and due to "manatee maintenance" we must pass through two more locks this day. We keep moving.

The ditch from Clewiston to the next lock is 5 to 6 feet deep, but shallower in spots. We feel our keel helping out with dredging a bit here and there. Alligators line the banks, soaking up the sun. It's a cool April morning, and the gators



are stunned into stillness by the chill. Herons, gulls, and egrets land beside them. Sharp, pointed sawgrass wafts gently along the banks, which spread out toward sugar cane fields sprouting green shoots as far as I can see.

We scoot through the Moore Haven Lock and pass a city marina at Moore Haven, another convenient stopping point on the west side of the lake, with docks lining the canal. The lake and its sugar cane industry fade away and

we are in deep country now, with barely a sighting of a cow, house, or dock. There's nothing to do, nowhere to be. And that's when I realize the reason for this trip: to let go of the outside world, forget its worries, and be in the moment on this boat. I find I'm enjoying puttering through Nowhere, Florida.

It's early afternoon when we enter the Ortona Lock behind a Hatteras yacht called *Gypsy Soul*. The lock lowers us about 6 feet. I watch for

manatees but see none. Spring is mating season, and by now most of the manatees have moved to the coasts to find each other.

There are few docks or marinas and no obvious anchorages between Ortona and the last lock of the trip, which is closed today. The sure stopping point is a small marina called Port LaBelle, where a woman answering the phone cheerfully tells me it's fine to tie up to the fuel dock for the night, but the marina office is open only from

9 a.m. to 1 p.m. This means we can't get ice, and we need it: Our new refrigerator has quit working.

We decide to roll the dice and motor an extra 45 minutes, about 3 nautical miles, in hopes of grabbing a free city dock in downtown LaBelle, where there are restaurants, shops, and an ice cream parlor. Ice cream! But there is no one to call to find out if there is space available. If there is, we'll tie up. If not, we either drop anchor near the shallow banks—a dicey proposition—or we retrace our wake back to Port Labelle.

As we approach downtown Labelle, I belatedly read the fine print on the schedule we downloaded from offshore-blue.com about the one bridge in town, located between us and the city docks. This bridge is closed at what would be rush hour anywhere else, 7-9 a.m. and 4-6 p.m. We reach the bridge at 4:30, not a car in sight. The friendly bridge tender takes a quick walk to get a look at the city docks for us, but when she returns advises us that it looks “pretty tight

in there. You might not get a place.”

I'm for dropping the hook right here and dinghying into town, but Jack says the fuel dock back at Port Labelle is a safer option. So back we go. When we arrive, I get off the boat for a stretch and a short walk, then return, there's really nowhere else to go. I watch a bale of green slider turtles feeding in the marina's lagoon while Jack takes a look at the refrigerator. I hear him cursing, like a sailor.

“Some people say cruising is fixing your boat in exotic places,” he quips, releasing the tension. I wouldn't call this exotic, but I guess remote works too.

“The freezer needed defrosting anyway,” I say. “We'll manage.”

By the time the sun goes down, the locks are closed for the night and the water goes completely still. I feel like I'm sleeping on land.

There is no hurry the next morning, so I make blueberry pancakes using the last of the

frozen, vacuum-sealed wild blueberries. We pass under the LaBelle bridge after 9 a.m. Empty city docks taunt us. If there were boats there last night, they're gone now.

West of Labelle, we encounter the Fort Denaud bridge, one of the few swing bridges left in Florida. A woman in a flannel shirt and jeans wearing a holster for her hand-held VHF operates a big steering wheel from the fulcrum. The bridge groans while rotating 90 degrees, separating the river into two channels. Our tender says pass to starboard. We smile and wave.

In the last of the five locks, W.P. Franklin, we drop another foot or so. We share the lock with a manatee tour boat, but no manatees. From here, houses and docks line the Caloosahatchee River with increasing density. I put down the book I'm reading to gawk at waterfront palaces next to rundown shacks, fancy sport fishing boats docked beside neglected vessels of all types and sizes. I'm back in familiar Florida, the land of people

who are either wildly rich or wildly trying to be. I watch a brown pelican make a deep dive and come up bill flapping. I realize I haven't seen a seabird—not a gull, heron, egret, or pelican—since we left the St. Lucie lock, except for a few that taunted the gators on the western side of Lake O. A great blue heron eyes me from the bank, welcoming me home.

I'm ready for a long shore-side shower, so we stop in the expensive but convenient Fort Myers Yacht Basin for the night and celebrate our voyage with a dinner off the boat.

The trip from Stuart to Fort Myers on our 32-foot sailboat took us two-and-a-half days. I wasn't keen on traversing rural Florida, but now I find myself thinking I'd have enjoyed more time there. Slowing down, we could have stretched our legs at any of the little towns along the way. I'm wistful for the drinks or ice creams we didn't stop to enjoy with locals. When I tell Jack this, he laughs, an I-told-you-so gleam in his eyes.

Except for the three-hour sail on the lake, the Okeechobee Waterway was strictly a motoring trip, but we'll do it again. It's a shortcut from our home on the Gulf Coast to the Atlantic side, a way to avoid the South Florida craziness. It's peaceful, it's easy. As Jack would say, “bu-colic.” 🚤

Vicki McCash Brennan moved to Florida 35 years ago to get out of the cold. When she met her sailing-obsessed husband a few years later, she knew her life would include sailboat ownership. Now that they are both retired from careers as journalists, they sail their third sailboat, a Catalina 320, in Florida whenever the weather is fair. Vicki is a freelance writer and essayist. Follow her at medium.com/@vmbrennan.



Denouement in Design

A variety of factors contributed to the end of yacht design's golden age.

BY ROB MAZZA

I recently finished reading Dick Carter's autobiography, *Dick Carter: Yacht Designer in the Golden Age of Offshore Racing*. Beyond the story of Carter's remarkable career, the book is a reminder that modern yacht designers are no longer familiar names.

The designer names we know are familiar not only because their boats won races or crossed oceans, but because each brought their own personality and design aesthetic to their projects, so that a sailor could identify, even at a distance, a Phil Rhodes or a Carl Alberg design, as well as boats from the boards of Bill Tripp Jr. or Gary Mull. You could easily distinguish a C&C from a Pearson or a Sabre. Boats from specific designers featured

recognizable shear lines, overhangs, and house details; an Aage Nielsen design, for instance, would never be confused with one of Britten Chance's.

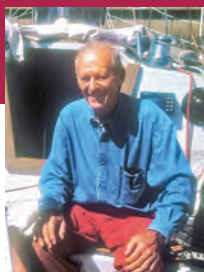
I can't tell you who drew any of the newer production sailboats in my marina, but I can spot a Pacific Seacraft 37 from a mile away and tell you it's from Bill Crealock's drawing board. Some might say I'm a sailor lost in the past who has failed to keep up, but even if there were any truth to the comment, it misses the point. Many things have changed in the boat design world, things will never return to what they once were, and there are fundamental reasons why I can make both of these statements without hesitation (though admittedly perhaps with some nostalgia).

The golden age of yacht design I'm praising didn't rise until the 1960s, and by the 1990s it was pretty well over. Of course, this period coincides with a post-war economic renewal in North American and European economies, a period when people unleashed their pent-up desire for leisure activities such as sailing. The market for sailboats exploded, and the advent of fiberglass meant that builders had the means to produce them quickly and affordably. Lots of sailboats selling and sailboat racing meant lots of work for lots of sailboat designers.

It was an extraordinary period that benefitted established designers and design houses, such as Sparkman & Stephens, Bill Tripp Jr., Phil Rhodes,



MATCH THE SAILBOAT



C. William "Bill" Lapworth



Ted Brewer



Robert Perry



Carl Alberg



Doug Peterson



Bill Shaw

Carl Albergh, George Cuthbertson, Bill Lapworth, and Ted Brewer, while at the same time giving rise to new talents such as Dick Carter, Bob Perry, Chuck Paine, Gary Mull, Rob Johnson, Rod Johnstone, Britten Chance, Bruce Kirby, German Frers, Mark Ellis, Ron Holland, Bruce Farr, and Bruce King. The great in-house designers like Bill Shaw, Rob Ball, Gerry Douglas, Frank Butler, Tim Jackett, and many others were equally busy. But this unprecedented heyday doesn't begin to explain why things are so different today.

Computers and Modeling

The Texas Instruments calculator didn't appear until 1973, so designers determined the calculations for many early boats with only a slide rule, if that. And some of them drew a few early career-launching boats in bedrooms or kitchens, pencil on paper, with only a copy of *Skene's Elements of Yacht Design* as a reference. It's not surprising that many of the designers of this era continued to work by hand even after the development of design software, often turning their hand drawings over to others to digitize.

The introduction of computers in yacht design did more than just ease

the workload and add convenience. Computerized line-drawing programs, solid modeling, and velocity prediction and flow visualization programs disrupted yacht design protocol. In the past, owners and designers had to actually build and competitively sail a new design to evaluate its performance, assuming optimum sails and crew. It would take at least a season to assess a new design while the boat was racing in fleets that included new boats from other designers. In that environment, boats that won races either on actual or corrected time garnered name recognition (and more work) for the respective designers.

Today, through advanced and accurate software, the performance and success of a sailboat design can be determined in a matter of minutes without even building the boat.

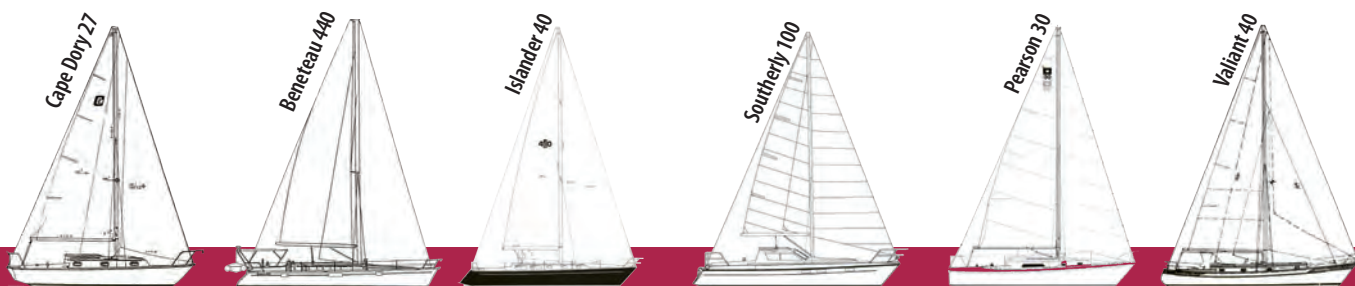
Materials

Many of the well-known yacht designers of yesteryear established their careers with their first designs, such as Carter with *Rabbit*, Doug Peterson with *Gambare*, Bob Perry with the Valiant 40, and Bruce Kirby (he of later Laser fame) with his iterations of the International

14 dinghies. In fact, Carter, Kirby, and Peterson designed their first boats for their own use. This was possible because in the 1960s and '70s it wasn't terribly expensive to build a boat in wood or steel, even as a one-off, costing little more than a production boat built of the same material. Ironically, since then contemporary materials and techniques have widened the price differential between custom and production boats. Composite construction (fiberglass laminates and multiuse molds), with the evolution of lighter-weight, high-stiffness, and high-strength fibers, resins, cores, and more sophisticated and stringent lamination methods, reduced the cost of production boat building while increasing the cost of custom, one-off builds. Today, unless they had significant means, a young new designer looking to make a name for themselves would not be able to design and build a competitive one-off to do so.

Playing by the Rules

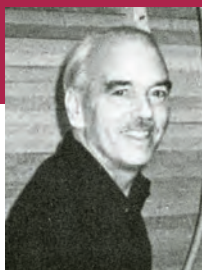
As design software became more common and builders adopted new construction materials, another, perhaps more significant, change took place. Earlier designers benefited from stable handicap and design



WITH THE DESIGNER



Dick Carter



Bill Crealock



Frank Butler



Bruce King



Rob Ball



Bruce Farr

rules that created opportunities for clever designers to “optimize” or exploit loopholes. The more a designer could identify areas in which to capitalize, the more it enhanced his reputation. In fact, it wasn’t the designer’s job to draw the fastest boat possible, but to design the fastest boat within the parameters of a rule—that is, to produce a boat that, according to the rules, should be slow but was indeed relatively fast.

Thus, the goal was a boat with the greatest difference between its rating and its speed, a boat that started the race with a rating edge that allowed it to win on corrected time, not actual time. This era of racing design rules (RORC, CCA, and ultimately IOR), coupled with a sailing population willing to race dual-purpose boats offshore and to buy a new boat every few years, allowed the yacht design profession to flourish in what Carter calls the “Golden Age of Offshore Racing.”

What happened? I would argue, and Carter agrees, that the designers, in league with the owners, sailmakers, and builders, are responsible for ending their Golden Age. To beat the IOR rule, they designed stripped-out, distorted, wide-beam, deep-draft, lightweight boats. None of these design trends were healthy for the sport, as the boats increasingly had limited or no cruising capabilities. Thus, a very narrow used boat market for these boats existed. And when the IOR rating rule was abandoned, the IOR-competitive boats became quickly obsolete, as had the CCA-conforming boats before them.

But this time, rather than a new design rule replacing IOR, racing bodies abandoned design rules altogether and

replaced them with the true handicap rules we use today, rules derived from velocity prediction software. This meant there was no longer a rule for a clever designer to manipulate or beat, no longer a name for oneself to make.

One Design

As a result of all of the above, or simply in addition to everything else, one-design racing became increasingly popular. Today, a fleet of 30 or so one-design boats on a course does not represent the efforts of a dozen or so designers, but only one. No longer are there “design duels” in racing, contests between different boats that are actually proxy contests between their designers. In fact, the majority of yacht racing today happens without regard to any competitive designer influence.

While there are still great designers from this past era practicing today—among them Bob Perry, Jim Taylor, Dave Pedrick, and Bruce Farr—where is the up-and-coming crop of designers? The “young turks” ready to challenge the establishment and fill the shoes of their elders? I can’t name any. The vast majority of sailboats on display at boat shows are increasingly hard to differentiate from one another. Almost all have plum stems, fat back ends, twin wheels (an innovation that Dick Carter takes credit for, by the way), and walk-through transoms. How many of us can put a designer’s name to any of these boats?

Yet, while it’s easy to dismiss these boats’ lack of individuality, it’s also easy to admire the benefits of modern designs, such as the greater amount of space below, on deck, and in the cockpit, the increases

in speed, the ease of sail handling, the lack of deck clutter, and the contemporary amenities. Who hasn’t chartered one of these boats—monohull or catamaran—for a tropical adventure and returned home quite happy without giving a second thought to the name of the person who designed the boat?

So, while we might mourn the lack of young new designers and debate the reasons for their absence, more importantly we should celebrate and honor the designers who have made our good old boats so distinctive and unique. The boats from this golden age of yacht design continue to offer affordable pathways to a life afloat for thousands of people who can choose from the work of a multitude of talented and well-known designers to perfectly match their own requirements. In that regard we are all exceptionally fortunate. Let’s lift a glass in tribute to all the designers of our good old boats. We may never see their like again. 🚤

Rob Mazza’s bio can be found on page 15.

Photo Credits

Bill Shaw: Courtesy Bill Shaw, Jr.
Olin Stephens: Dyke Williams
Rob Ball: Courtesy Rob Mazza
Frank Butler: Courtesy Catalina Yachts
C. William “Bill” Lapworth: Courtesy *Latitude 38*
Ted Brewer: Courtesy Ted Brewer
Robert Perry: Courtesy Robert Perry
Bruce King: Courtesy Bruce King

Match the Sailboat to the Designer Key

Shaw: Pearson 30
 Peterson: Islander 40
 Farr: Beneteau 440
 Ball: C&C 34
 Crealock: Pacific Seacraft 37
 Alberg: Cape Dory 27
 Butler: Catalina 30
 Lapworth: Cal 40
 Brewer: Whitby 42
 Perry: Valiant 40
 Carter: Southerly 100
 King: Ericson 27

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Communication Skills

A backup battery system for a fixed-mount VHF ensures communications in an emergency.

BY JOHN CHURCHILL

Despite the introduction of satellite communications and cell phones over the past couple of decades, the humble, old-school VHF radio remains the primary, most reliable emergency communications tool for inshore sailors. And this means the VHF radio needs to work, especially during emergencies. One area of vulnerability for fixed-mount radios is their power source, the ship's batteries.

My fixed-mount VHF is mounted in a cabinet at the chart table. I have separate positive and negative bus bars for other electronics at this location, each with its own fuse. Because a VHF radio does

not require much current, a backup battery intended to provide emergency power can be small. I selected a UB1270 sealed, maintenance-free, 12-volt, lead acid battery with a 7 amp-hour capacity. It's about the same size as a desktop tape dispenser and has spade connectors. Because this battery is commonly used for emergency exit lighting and electric trailer brake backup systems, it's inexpensive and widely available.

Of course, a battery alone wasn't going to solve my problem. I needed a way to keep the backup battery charged, and a quick and easy way to switch over to backup power as needed. To accomplish both goals I purchased

a single-throw, double-pole switch and a 3-amp diode.

First, I fabricated a mounting bracket for the switch from scrap aluminum. To fix the switch in the normal ship's battery position, I installed a spring-loaded switch guard that keeps a two-position toggle switch safely locked in one position,

Like more familiar battery categories such as group 27 or 8D, the UB1270 is a type and size of battery. It's built by any number of manufacturers and is commonly used for emergency lighting and similar small applications, below.

John built a box specifically to hold the backup battery. He mounted the box to the shelf just behind the fixed-mount VHF, then zip-tied the battery to the box, at bottom.



Another Approach to Redundancy—Editors

John Churchill offers an excellent, practical solution to provide backup power for fixed-mount VHF redundancy. Another approach is a handheld VHF radio, which, if kept charged, operates independent of a ship's battery bank. But a handheld VHF has its own glaring limitation: reduced transmission range. This isn't a product of the radio or its power, but rather a result of the inferior antenna, compared to the masthead antenna the fixed-mount VHF uses. One solution to the handheld VHF transmission problem

is to unscrew the antenna and replace it with a SMA-to-BNC adaptor. This adaptor allows the handheld radio to be connected to the ship's mast-mounted antenna, thus solving the range problem in an emergency. These adaptors are available from most handheld VHF radio manufacturers, including Standard Horizon and ICOM.



as needed. (These are available through McMaster-Carr; where I purchased the switch, but they are a bit pricey. I happened to find one at a car show swap meet for a dollar or two.)

Connecting all of the parts to make the system was straightforward. I disconnected the positive wire connecting the VHF to the house bank's positive bus bar. I reconnected this wire to the center position of the switch. Next I wired the house bank positive and the backup battery positive to opposite ends of the switch.

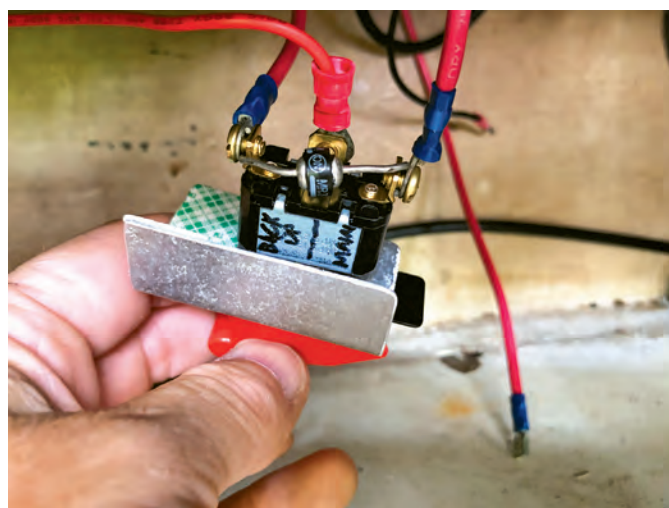
Then I connected the 3-amp diode to bridge these two battery positive wires at the switch. By doing this, I'm ensuring a constant (without

John used scrap aluminum to fabricate a bracket, attached the switch to it, and then wired the switch and the diode connecting the end terminals, at right.

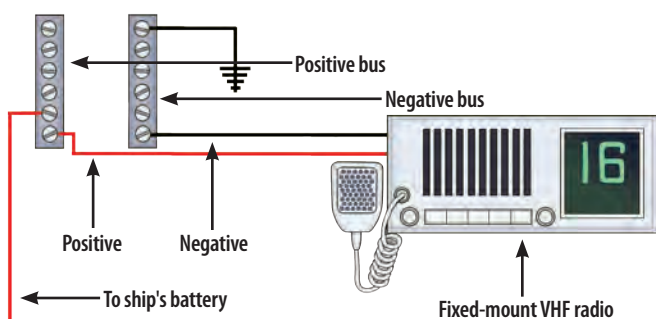
On the bracket's opposite side, John attached a guard to ensure the switch stays fixed in whichever position he chooses, at bottom right.

regard to the switch position) one-way current flow from the house bank to the backup battery to maintain the backup battery charge state. To complete the wiring, I simply connected the backup battery negative to the local negative bus bar. The VHF negative remained unchanged.

After tidying up the wires, I checked to confirm proper operation and was



VHF Powered by Ship's Battery Only



ILLUSTRATIONS BY FRITZ SEEGER

Diodes—David Lynn, Electronics Editor

The primary function of a diode is to restrict the flow of current in a circuit to one direction. Diodes have two terminals, the anode and the cathode. When the voltage on the anode side of the circuit is a few tenths of a volt higher than on the cathode side, then current flows. As soon as the voltage on the cathode side is more positive

than the anode side, the diode blocks further current flow. In John's circuit, the diode keeps the backup battery charged by allowing current to flow from the house battery bank, while preventing the backup battery from discharging back into the house batteries when they are low or, perish the thought, shorted by seawater.

There are two caveats regarding this circuit. First, the diode must be able to handle

the maximum current that will pass through it. The 3-amp diode that John chose will handle most situations, but it would not hurt to go bigger. Should the house batteries get down to 12.2 volts, for example, and John is using the VHF heavily, the backup battery could drop well below 12 volts. If he then started his engine and continued using the VHF, the large charge current from the alternator plus a portion of

the 6 amps or so the radio requires when transmitting would flow through the diode, quite likely smoking it. Second, the battery should be fused. If the switch is set so that the radio is powered by the house battery bank and a short occurs in that circuit, the large current flowing from the house batteries would destroy the switch and possibly melt the wiring.

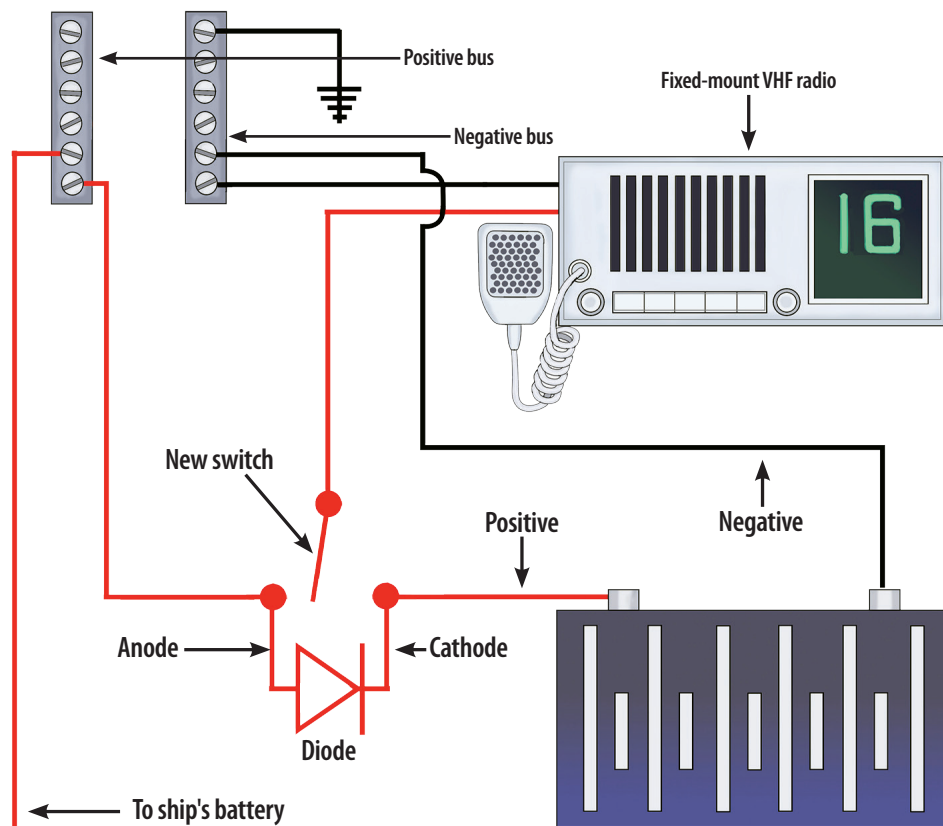
able to broadcast and receive transmissions, regardless of which battery the radio was connected to. Now, come hell or high water, I'll be able to use the VHF to seek help. 🚤

John Churchill grew up a boat-crazy kid in Indiana. He built a raft at age 6, sailed Snipes as a teenager, and worked his way toward saltwater and bigger boats. He has sailed a Cape Dory 26 singlehanded to Bermuda and back and a Bristol Channel Cutter transatlantic with his father. Now in Florida, John sails Nurdle, a Bristol 35.5 (and former repo) that he's rehabbing for extended post-retirement cruising.



The complete installation next to the VHF shows the backup battery in its box and the switch mounted above it.

VHF Powered by Either Ship's Battery or Backup Battery



The Deep End

A problematic first passage provides abundant lessons learned.

BY DAVID CAREY



People often transition from smaller boats to bigger boats, but our jump from a 21-foot trailer-sailer to *Roam*, a 1984 Moody 47 that we hoped would take our family on a remarkable voyage, was a big one.

I remember when my wife, Erin, and I saw *Roam* for the first time in the Caribbean yard after she became ours. I pounded my fist against the 5-ton keel that stood as high as my head and thought, “How on earth are we going to sail this thing?”

When we finally splashed, we were so daunted that we asked a friend to help us pick up our first mooring buoy. After a month or so of practicing motoring, mooring, and anchoring, and with about 15 miles of sailing *Roam* under our belts, our family planned a 40-mile sail to the neighboring island of Carriacou, in the company of a buddy boat sailed by a young couple who had taken us under their wing. This was to be our longest passage ever, on any boat, not a great stretch, although it felt that way to us.

When we got underway at 10 a.m., the weather was fine, and our spirits were high. But as is typical in the Caribbean, leaving the wind shadow of Grenada left us exposed, and 25 knots of wind slammed us on the beam. Under full sail, *Roam* buried her rail, spilling the contents of every windward-side cupboard down below.

I quickly eased the headsail sheet and then used the winch

ILLUSTRATION BY FRITZ SEEGBERS

to bring in some furling line, wrangling in the sail and regaining some control. Then I went forward to the mast where I could use our slab reefing system to shorten the mainsail. With Erin at the helm, relieving pressure on the main, I was able to take in two reefs pretty smoothly. But I was jacked up on adrenaline, and when I returned to the cockpit, my arms were like jelly.

Then, after settling back down, another problem: When we resumed course, we noticed an exclusion zone on the chart, right on our path. We had to avoid it; this was Kick 'em Jenny, an active, underwater volcano well known in this part of the Caribbean. But when we adjusted course to pass safely clear, our angle was poor for sailing, so we added the engine to keep us moving toward our destination.

By this time, large afternoon squalls had formed around us,

investigate the problem.

Besides, I didn't have a lot of experience with this motor yet and wouldn't have known where to start. But I didn't panic. We were a sailboat; we could sail on. Nobody was hurt, no storm was bearing down on us, we would manage.

We radioed our friends to let them know our status. They expressed confidence we could sail *Roam* into the anchorage and drop anchor under sail. With the sun now setting, I figured we had no choice and we resolved to give it a shot.

By the time we reached the entrance to the bay, we were sailing in darkness for the first time aboard a boat we owned and commanded. When everything turned black, the reality set in: Darkness was a game changer. It made us nervous and acutely aware of our experience level. We realized now that our egos had gotten the better of us in the daylight. On our left now,

When everything turned black, reality set in: Darkness was a game changer.

the sun was getting low in the sky, and we were anxious about making the anchorage before dark. The sail hadn't been a success to this point, and we were a bit shaken. Our buddy boat was still ahead of us and we plugged on.

A couple hours after we started it, the engine died. The seas had grown all day, and now we rolled, compounding the mess below and making me think twice about removing the large engine covers to

I could make out rocks, to our right, cliffs.

We sailed on, but it soon became clear that we were out of our league. Our friends, who'd stayed in touch with us on the radio, picked up on our growing trepidation. They finally told us to stay put, that they were pulling up anchor to motor out and tow us in.

Staying put proved difficult. Under just the staysail, Erin held a steady course, headed slowly for the cliffs.

The Takeaway—DC

Our first 40-mile sail wasn't smooth or pleasant, but it's one we completed and one that offered a ton of lessons and opportunities to grow our sailing experience.

Fortunately, we didn't do everything wrong on this passage. We wore PFDs and tethers when we thought they were appropriate. We called for help when we decided that sailing into the anchorage after dark, when we were physically and emotionally drained, was unwise and perhaps beyond our abilities.

Erin and I communicated effectively throughout the passage and worked as a team, supporting each other. We kept our cool when things were stressful so that the kids (safe and happy down below for nearly all of the trip) wouldn't pick up on our fear and make it their own. We noted and avoided the exclusion zone on the chart. This proved wise as we later learned that Kick 'em Jenny, which rises 4,000 feet above the sea floor, regularly spews enough gases to fill the water with so many bubbles that boats lose buoyancy and sink!

Unfortunately, we had a lot still to learn when we cast off that day, beginning with preparation. In terms of general seamanship and judgment, we were ready for this first big sail, and I don't think it was a mistake to cast off. But we didn't heed our own good judgment from the start. We wanted to leave earlier to make sure we could reach the anchorage before dark, allowing plenty of buffer time. But we didn't, instead waiting for our buddy boat, which sailed much faster than we could.

I should have been more familiar with our engine before leaving (including how to safely access the engine underway). It turned out that the engine died because a loose belt was slipping and consequently not turning the freshwater pump, causing the engine to overheat. Checking belt tension and knowing how to access and fix this problem underway is now second nature.

I also should have learned about local weather patterns; we should not have been caught off guard by the sudden increase in wind when we left the island's wind shadow. Likewise, I should have examined the chart more closely to note Kick 'em Jenny's exclusion zone and considered whether it would affect our course.

On this sail, we learned that the cupboard latches down below weren't up to the task and later reinforced them, but we also discovered stowage problems of our own making. I'd secured our spare LPG tank with undersized cordage, and it worked its way loose and banged on the aft deck all day long. I'd also not adequately secured our new inflatable dinghy, and it swung on the davits, resulting in damaging chafe.

This story isn't about what we should have done differently, but what can be learned from what we did do, and what we did learn. I think on that last point, we excelled. We processed these lessons, moved on, and continue to learn from our mistakes—only we're doing something right these days because mistakes no longer seem to come all at once.

When our friends arrived, I clipped a tether on (I was still in my life vest) and went forward to reach out into the darkness, trying to catch the line they threw us. On the first attempt, Erin accidentally turned the bow through the wind and we nearly rammed our buddy boat. Desperate and frazzled, Erin in tears, we made a second attempt.

To this day, I don't know how the captain of our buddy boat threw that tow rope so far, how I managed to catch it and quickly fasten it, or how Erin held us so steady, but we did it. As I caught the line, I remember our friend yelling at me to, "Tie a knot that you can undo under tension!" I shouted back that I knew only one knot, and I nailed the bowline in record time.

Once towed safely into the anchorage, we dropped our Rocna, hoped it would set, and collapsed into a heap of hugs and tears all around.

Sailing can be everything from deliriously fun to horrifically scary. I quickly learned that no matter how much planning, preparation, or praying I do, things happen.

I've learned that when my mindset is one of problem-solving, as opposed to problem-accepting, anything is possible. Only 12 months after this first 40 miles, my young family and I crossed the Atlantic Ocean, a 2,500-mile, 17-day passage. If we had let this setback or the many other mishaps that came our way

dampen our spirits, we never would have accomplished this.

There is nothing to be gained from beating oneself up for mistakes made, but we can learn from the experience, share what we can, and move on to the next challenge. Perhaps the best thing we learned from our experience is that the sailing community is never quick to judge newbies, as everyone has been there before! 🚢

Wiser for the lessons he and Erin learned on this sail, David Carey, his wife, Erin, and their three kids went on to sail their 1984 Moody 47, Roam, throughout the Caribbean's Windward and Leeward islands before they crossed the Atlantic Ocean in 2019 and landed in the Azores.

Under just the stay-sail, Erin held a steady course, headed slowly for the cliffs.

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The Grind

Checking your traveler car shackles for wear can prevent unwanted surprises.

BY DAVE LOCHNER

A week after I happened to watch a young sailor on YouTube repair a Harken traveler car, a fellow Sabre sailor experienced an accidental jibe, and his traveler car exploded in the melee. I'm not normally superstitious, but I figured it was a good time to inspect the 26-year-old Harken traveler car on *Second Star*, my Sabre 362.

It's easy to take the traveler car for granted. So long as it rolls smoothly on the track, all seems to be well. However, lurking beneath the lower mainsheet block on most travelers are two shackles that silently grind away at each other, stainless steel on stainless steel. After years of erosion, the shackles may be worn thin and vulnerable to failure.

The Harken traveler car is a simple design, consisting of a $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch shackle attached to the traveler with an interlocking $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch shackle attached to the lower mainsheet block. Of course, those dimensions are nominal, and when new, the larger shackle measures .315 inches, the smaller shackle .2450 inches.

Inspecting the shackles on my traveler revealed significant wear and an obvious reduction in thickness at the wear points.

Where the wear was concentrated, the larger shackle measured .279 inches, an 11 percent decrease in size and strength. The smaller shackle fared even worse, measuring .180 inches, a decrease of 28 percent in size and strength.

Upon closer inspection, I noticed another weak point. The pin holes in the larger shackle were elongated and the sides were thinning. This is particularly troublesome as the holes are not visible without disassembling the traveler car.

How serious is this wear? Quite serious. Let's do the math.

The small shackle has a working load limit (WLL) of 320 kg or about 700 pounds. A diameter reduction of 25 percent reduces the WLL by 175 pounds, to 525 pounds. Let's assume the design working load for the traveler is 350 pounds. That is half the WLL and thus provides a 100 percent safety margin. But the WLL of the worn shackle is now reduced by 175 pounds, half of the 350-pound margin that existed. This is an accident waiting to happen.

The cause of the wear is obvious: movement of the shackles while sailing and at the dock or mooring. When the boom swings back and forth,

the shackles bear on each other and grind away. Salt, dirt, and grit all compound the problem by adding an abrasive element.

Completely eliminating wear is impossible but stabilizing the boom when the boat is not sailing can help; a simple



(top to bottom) The first thing to come out are the turning blocks.

Removing the turning blocks reveals two set screws that capture a retaining rod.

The retaining rod holds the traveler car shackle in place. Once the set screws holding it are removed, it's easy to slide the rod out and replace the old shackle with new.

setup to secure the boom will reduce motion and consequent wear. Doing the same when motoring or sailing in sloppy conditions will also decrease wear. Adding a sacrificial cover to the shackles might also help (and reduce noise), but given that this is a problem 20 years in the making and that replacing the shackles is simple and

inexpensive, I'm not inclined to fuss with covers.

On my Harken traveler, it's not immediately obvious how to access and remove the traveler car shackle. Initially I was inclined to remove the traveler car from the track; this would have been a mistake, because the old-style Harken traveler cars have loose ball bearings

and require a special tool or a piece of track to remove the car without scattering them across the deck. Since other traveler cars may be similar, explore other options before removing a car from its track.

On the Harken car, the car shackle is held in place by a stainless steel rod captured inside the traveler car. Accessing the rod is deceptively simple. I started by removing the turning blocks to reveal two set screws. These screws prevent the rod from sliding out of the car. Once they were out, I inserted a screwdriver into a hole on the

end of the car and pushed the rod out. This freed the shackle.

Before installing the new shackle, a small modification is necessary. The threaded side of the shackle must be drilled out to remove the threads. The unthreaded side of the shackle is $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch diameter; however, the screw threads reduce the hole's diameter. A drill press makes quick work of this, but you could accomplish the same result by clamping the shackle to a work bench or a substitute



A side-by-side comparison of the original shackles and their replacements clearly shows the thinning and wear on the older gear. Note that the replacement for the larger shackle is slightly longer than the original; the added length makes the shackle and any wear more visible, at left.

The mainsheet traveler is good as new after Dave replaced the shackles, below.



Other Shackles to Watch— Michael Robertson

The shackles that attach a mainsheet block to the traveler are under great loads and grind metal-to-metal, as Dave warns. But on many travelers, these shackles aren't the only ones vulnerable to wear. On a boisterous sail aboard our 1978 Fuji 40 a few years ago, the traveler mounted to the track on our bridge deck suddenly ran to the leeward end of the track and stopped with a bang.

It was quickly apparent that the (very small) shackle that attaches the windward control line block to the car had failed under load. The shackle had worn over time where it attached to the car. We'd never before thought to inspect this critical connection point and realized we didn't have a spare shackle aboard that was small enough to replace this one. Fortunately, we did have a small strop a friend had made from Spectra, and this did the trick for many days' sailing.

Correlating Size and Strength—DL

After I submitted this article, the *Good Old Boat* editor questioned my assertion that a percentage loss in shackle diameter due to erosion was proportionate to that shackle's loss in strength.

"Are you sure about your numbers?" he asked.

I confidently replied, "Of course." Then I dug deeper to be sure I was right.

Years of wear had measurably reduced the diameter of the shackle. The small shackle was nominally a ¼-inch shackle that had worn from .2450 inches to .1750 inches. At its narrowest, my ¼-inch shackle was now a bit smaller than a ⅜-inch shackle.

But what effect does the wear have on minimum breaking loads (MBL)? Is it indeed proportionate, as my back-of-the-napkin calculations indicated?

According to the Hayn Marine Rigging Products website, a standard ⅜-inch D shackle has a MBL of 3,300 pounds, and a ¼-inch shackle has a MBL of 4,290 pounds. Stated another way, the smaller shackle has 77 percent of the strength of the larger shackle, or in the case of wear, a 23 percent loss in strength. The numbers were nearly proportionate; I was covered.

But I wondered if the same relationship would apply to larger shackles. Would a 25 percent reduction in size yield a 25 percent reduction strength? The short answer is, no. The larger the shackle, the greater the reduction in strength for a proportionate size reduction. For example, a ⅝-inch shackle

is 25 percent smaller than a ½-inch shackle, but 36 percent less strong. As shackle size increases, the gap widens.

If I were a materials engineer, I could give a lengthy explanation, but the simple answer is that the strength of the shackle is related to the cross-sectional area, which is, of course, related to its diameter in a nonlinear way. One way to see the relationships between diameter, cross sectional area, and MBL is to compute correlations. The correlation between diameter and MBL is strong at .967; however, the correlation between MBL and cross-sectional area is stronger at a near perfect .991. These figures suggest calculating loss of strength is more accurate using cross-section area; however, changes in the diameter are a good proxy and yield results within a few percentage points. Not to mention, it is easier to calculate.

In addition to metal loss from erosion, other factors can contribute to strength reduction. Stressing metal with heat, excessive loads, bending, and impact can contribute to metal fatigue and failure. The discussion here is relevant to all metal-to-metal bearing surfaces, such as sheave axles, clevis pins, halyard shackles, and anchor chain. Even an apparently small reduction in diameter due to wear can lead to significant reductions in strength.

The takeaway? Do not ignore metal-to-metal bearing surfaces—inspect them regularly!

and using a drill. In a real pinch, a rat tail file could also be used. You're only shaving off a few thousandths of an inch here, and the hole should be enlarged no more than the diameter of the pin.

Changing out the mainsheet block shackle is straightforward: Unscrew the shackle pin and attach the new one. Note the attachment hole on the block will not accommodate captive pin shackles; the slightly larger diameter on the threaded side of a captive pin won't fit through the hole on the fiddle block.

Reassemble the traveler first by inserting the shackle and pin; saltwater sailors in particular might want to apply a bit of LanoCote or Tef-Gel on the retaining rod for added protection here. Reinstall the

set screws and reattach the turning blocks. Applying an anti-seize lubricant to the screw threads also will make future disassembly easier, and if you want extra security you can mouse the larger upper shackle to prevent it working loose.

This traveler is good to go for another 25 years. ⚓

Dave and his wife, Susan, look forward to another season sailing their Sabre 362, Second Star, on Lake Ontario, after COVID-19 delayed their plans for sailing out the St. Lawrence and embarking on a long-awaited cruise south. Optimistically, this means less pressure to complete the seemingly endless to-do list by June. Follow them at sv-secondstar.net.



Visit our YouTube channel for more on this project.



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There and Back Again

For this couple, one dance with a special boat just wasn't quite enough.

BY ANN HOFFNER

It had been a rather sad Christmas; my husband and I had not yet hit on a way to resolve some tensions between us, and the cat peed all over the presents under the tree. One gift survived the piddle attack: Tania Aebi's *Maiden Voyage*, which had just been published.

In the decades since, I've liked to say that Aebi's 1989 book was the impetus for my husband, Tom, and I setting sail soon after; and that's correct. But that story sidesteps what I then knew inside, that we wouldn't survive as a couple unless something came along to jolt us. Why not buy a boat and sail around the world?

Then my aunt died, leaving us enough money to do just that. We were young—I was 36, he was 43—and we could rejoin our careers or pick up something new when the money ran out.

The first item of business, of course, was to find a boat suitable for offshore cruising, and to do that we needed to know what to look for. I'd been inspired by Robin Lee Graham's *Dove* as a child; I followed his story in *National Geographic*, I knew about circumnavigating, and I knew that I wanted a strong sailing boat in the 30- to 35-foot range. We

bought John Rousmaniere's *Desirable and Undesirable Characteristics of Offshore Yachts* and other books popularized by the 1980s cruising boom.

We didn't get very far until we called a yacht broker about a boat in Annapolis. Tom and I drove down in the morning, ate lunch in the parking lot listening to squawking seagulls, and watched a man whom we guessed was our broker eating

I fell in love with the boat when I looked down at her from the dock.

his own lunch. He wore khakis and a blue button-down shirt and boat shoes, and we wrote him off, too slick.

But, he turned out to be a good guy, and once Todd learned about us and our cruising boat needs, he led us to a slip and showed us a boat that looked something like a Westsail 32, but with a squared-off transom. She was a Gale Force 34, and she would soon be ours.

The Gale Force (like the Westsail 32, Alajuela 38, Ingrid 38, and others) is inspired by the double-enders designed by Colin Archer in the late 1900s, deep, heavily ballasted boats with full bows and fine sterns built as rescue vessels for the stormy North Sea (critical considerations when there were no weather forecasts or distress signals for the fishing fleets). But unlike the Westsail, Alajuela, and Ingrid—all designed by William Atkin—the Gale Force 34 is a branch of this lineage.

In the early 1960s, John "Rex" Kaiser, a lawyer in Wilmington, Delaware, collaborated with Thomas Gillmer, a retired Naval Academy instructor and boat designer, on developing the 30-foot Allied Seawind, the first fiberglass sailboat to circumnavigate. The two then went their separate ways and Kaiser started building his own



In 1994, in Caicos Marina & Shipyard, Providenciales, Turks & Caicos, 47-year-old Tom works on replacing the shaft on *Kraken*.

line of boats, all of which have long keels and heavy displacements, but with squared-off transoms instead of canoe sterns.

I fell in love with the boat when I looked down at her from the dock. She sat gently on her springs. Her broad bow platform (much more sensible than a bow sprit) pointed toward me. She looked like an offshore boat, and her classic interior, though dated, could be easily unscrewed in panels or pieces for hull access or repair. She had many of the desirable features that Rousmaniere listed and she wasn't highly personalized, giving us a chance to make her our own.

The sellers, Dick and Anne, were *Kraken's* original owners. They'd watched her being built at a Delaware Bay yard, and they were deeply attached to her. During the sea trial, Anne sat before the mast and cried.

I came to understand why they felt as they did after we bought her and began sailing. *Kraken* thrilled us. She was responsive, maneuverable, comfortable, and seakindly. We had a lot to get used to, as we'd never sailed anything remotely like her. It wasn't long before we were laying down the miles, not exactly circumnavigating, but enjoying cruising Florida, the Bahamas, and the Eastern Caribbean.

Two-and-a-half years after buying *Kraken*, we were cruising the Virgin Islands and running out of money. It was either sell t-shirts to tourists on the beach or join the migration of cruisers who return to the States to fatten up the cruising kitty more efficiently.

We left from Fajardo on Puerto Rico's east coast, sailed west over the top, dropped a penny into the 25,000-foot-deep Puerto Rico Trench, and motored on glassy blue seas under hot summer skies. Then came the clunk under the



Tom and Ann stand next to their new-again-to-them Gale Force 34, *Kraken*, at Morgan Marina in Sayreville, New Jersey.

cockpit sole, the whine from the engine, and silence. *Kraken* slowed to a stop, and Tom climbed down to look.

"Two of the engine mounts are broken and the prop shaft's snapped," he called up.

We looked at each other. We talked. We drifted in our own world; not even the fishing boats that dogged us off the mouths of Puerto Rico's harbors sailed these waters.

When a breeze finally started up at daybreak, we sailed *Kraken* up the passage north of Hispaniola and then across the Caicos Bank. Eventually it blew us into the anchorage at Sapodilla Bay, and heads popped out of companionways, no doubt wondering who the showoffs were.

After fixing the mounts and replacing the prop shaft in Turks and Caicos, we continued to Florida. And, by the time we landed in Cape Canaveral, we were ready to get off the boat. Planning our

cruise had been an intense and complex process that required we cooperate and share an eagerness. The adventure itself, taking place in close quarters and with regular doses of stress, could have torn us further apart. But while we

then what Anne had felt so many years before. Despite reminding each other that *Kraken* was too small, too heavy, and that her 9-foot tiller was awkward, we pined for her. Later, cruising again on a bigger boat, we saw her at anchor in the Bahamas. She was still beautiful.

Last year, more than 20 years after we'd last seen her, Todd, the broker who sold us *Kraken* and who had since become our good friend, sent us a boat listing via email. "Isn't this your boat?" he wrote.

She was. And so we bought her again, this time from Canadian owners. We trucked her to New Jersey where, after a refit, we plan to get her sailing this year.

I've known a lot of sailors who've owned a lot of boats, but I haven't met anyone who bought back their first cruising boat. When we initially bought *Kraken*, we were looking for a second chance, and she delivered. This time, though our cruising goals are less ambitious, we're ready to leave land and get going again. And it feels fitting that *Kraken* is the one who's carrying us, full circle. 🍷

I haven't met anyone who bought back their first cruising boat.

often fussed at each other, the few years of boat ownership and cruising had healed our relationship.

Back in Annapolis, we heeded the pressures of bigger-boat-itis and sold *Kraken*. I was surprised by my reluctance to go on the sea trial and realized

After a winter spent rebuilding the boat's soggy rudder, Ann Hoffner and her husband, photographer Tom Bailey, again launched their Kaiser Gale Force 34, Kraken. Along with freelance journalism, Ann has been a marine product and writing judge.

continued from page 7

the stove, but otherwise saw no need for changes. It takes dampness out of the cabin and it warms the cabin in minutes.

—Fred Salsburg, MacGregor 26X,
Victor, New York

Rule Reminder

Ed Lawler's harrowing account about his squall in the Chesapeake ("A Squall, a Broken Shackle, and Hydrolock," September/October 2019) reminded me of the time my diesel also conked out in a squall on the York River of the Bay. Fortunately, water did not backflow into the engine. Instead, the tank was only half full and the rocking of the sailboat allowed air to get into the fuel line. I had neglected my own rule to keep the tank 80 percent full, thus reducing contamination from condensation and preventing an airlock failure.

—Capt. Bill O'Donovan, Gloucester
Point Virginia

Boxboat Remembrance

When I arrived in Newport, Rhode Island in 1976, I badly wanted to get on the water, in anything that would float. I bought the best boat I could afford, a very used 19-foot daysailer. At the time, obtaining a mooring was just a matter of picking



David Sharp's watercolor remembrance of the boxboat.

a spot you liked in the harbor, dropping your anchor overboard, and then going to the harbormaster's shack, marking an "X" on his chart, and writing your name and phone number in a book.

I chose a spot off "The Point," a Newport neighborhood where there were only a half-dozen other moorings at the time. On the beach was a faded, 18-foot Navy surplus workboat shaped like a rectangular matchbox. We called it the boxboat. It was heavily constructed of fiberglass and someone had added

a comealong and a roller on the bow (or maybe it was the stern, they were indistinguishable) for setting, inspecting, or retrieving moorings. The group of us that had boats moored nearby treated the boxboat as community property.

In those days, mooring anchors consisted of all manner of heavy objects, including radiators, old car engines, blocks of concrete, and even some actual

mushroom anchors. Anchor installation would start with a few of us wrestling the heavy object into shallow water at or near low tide. We'd then nudge the boxboat up to the anchor and lash it to the boat. As the tide rose, the anchor lifted off the bottom and could be floated away (time was less valuable back then). We then positioned the boxboat with its cargo over the owner's chosen spot in the harbor and lowered the anchor. We had no outboard motor, so one of the crew would often be frantically rowing to try to keep the boat positioned against wind and tide as the anchor was slowly lowered.

By the 1980s things were getting crowded in the mooring field, and with every fall storm, a few boats broke loose and went ashore. The city gradually implemented

"It was an unforgettable day!" wrote Wes Bilder. "My wife, Judy, took this photo from the patio of the Nepean Sailing Club in Ottawa, where we'd retreated from the boat for safety." A short while after she snapped this picture that September afternoon, a tornado struck the area. The Bilder's 1988 Hunter 28.5 survived the blow, along with all 500 other club members' boats, but many nearby homes were badly damaged.



rules dictating the size and type of mooring tackle, and a requirement for regular inspections by certified professionals under the harbor master's direction made the humble boxboat obsolete.

The mooring area I knew in 1976 is gone. Today, there are many more boats in the same space, all attached to regulated blue-and-white numbered floats, each connected to something the boxboat never could have placed precisely at its assigned GPS location. More significantly, all along the East Coast there are decades-long waiting lists to get such a mooring. So, while relatively inexpensive fiberglass boats are widely and increasingly available ("Affordable Sailing," in Mail Buoy, March/April 2020), it's unfortunately the scarcity of places to keep them that is a major factor discouraging younger sailors from experiencing hands-on sailing time aboard a boat for which they feel a pride of ownership, as was common to my Boomer generation.

—David Sharp, *Pegasus*, Tartan 34C,
Newport, Rhode Island

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A Man of Few Words

I read Jim Shell's story with sympathetic amusement ("The Light(s) Fantastic," May/June 2020). After buying our new-to-us Freedom 28 cat-ketch, my husband, Scott, and I were on the last leg of our trip to deliver her to our home port of Oxford, Maryland. As dusk descended, we were crossing a very choppy Delaware Bay. After Scott turned on the nav lights, I checked things out. The stern light was bright, but holy moly, the bow lights were dark. I noted this calmly to Scott. Scott assured me they were on. With a little more urgency, I assured him they were not.

"Well, you better do something."

Down below, I grabbed the LED lantern we use for cabin lighting and a handful of bungee cords. But I needed something red and something green. I cut some green shrink wrap off a case of water and some red plastic off some soda cans, duct taped these pieces over the lens, and headed back topsides and forward on the bucking deck. I bungied the heck out of that lantern and turned it on. We were in business.

"Whaddya think?" I proudly asked, once back in the cockpit.

"OK," said Scott. He's a man of few words.

—Judy Shuler, Oxford, Maryland

Watkins Surprise

On a past July 4 weekend, I was asked to help bring a Watkins 27 (much bigger than my 26-foot Pearson Ariel) from Manhattan to Cape May, New Jersey. I was one of a crew of four, and when I asked who the captain was, I learned it was me! So, imagine my delight upon opening my first copy of *Good Old Boat* and seeing both the Watkins and the Ariel featured inside. ("Review Boat: Watkins 27" and "Refit Boat: On the Fly," May/June 2020. Photo from "On the Fly," at top right.) For years I sailed Long Island, the Chesapeake, and the Hudson River, but I'm an armchair sailor now, and this was a fabulous read. Keep them coming!

—Elizabeth Wille, Hershey,
Pennsylvania

Not a Video Game

Regarding your editorial in the May/June issue ("The Case for Paperless"), you missed the point about using paper charts for navigation. I sail because it's fun, it's challenging, and it's satisfying. I navigate using paper charts for the same reasons; I enjoy the process and



reward, and I see it as an integral part of seamanship.

I've sailed the Chesapeake Bay for 40 years at night, in fog, during storms, and on many perfect days, navigating all with paper charts and without a GPS (though I've had a GPS on board the last few of those years). I have bareboat-chartered sailboats on Nantucket Sound, Long Island Sound, the BVI, and in Greece. All those trips were enjoyed using paper charts,

Department of Corrections

Well, not for lack of many sharp-eyed *Good Old Boat* staff poring over the final pages during multiple review cycles, we made a mistake in our May/June 2020 issue. See the interior plan drawing of the Crealock 37 review boat on page 11 of this issue? Look familiar? It should because we mistakenly used the same drawing to erroneously represent the Watkins 27 in the same place in our May/June issue. But not to worry, floggings have commenced, and rations have been cut. Below is the interior layout line drawing of the Watkins 27.

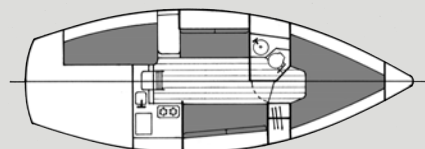


ILLUSTRATION BY RICK BEDDOE

compass, knotmeter, depth sounder, and masthead wind indicator.

Yes, I could navigate just by pressing a few buttons. If my boat was set up thusly, I could also drive and sail her by pressing buttons. But motorized winches and autopilots rob me of the true pleasure I get from hoisting and trimming sails and steering at the helm. I could even stay at home and push buttons on sailing simulator software. Why sail at all?

—Ken Thorn, Carrboro, North Carolina

Michael Robertson responds:

Thanks, Ken, I agree with everything you wrote (though on a 26-day passage, for example, trust me that the helm stops looking so enticing and the autopilot buttons or self-steering windvane become your friends). Regarding navigation, I too get joy from plotting on paper charts, even making log-like notes on them; I've done a lot of both. On longer voyages, I appreciate having a small-scale chart hung on a bulkhead, where I can glance at it from the galley and recall a place name from months earlier. And I especially appreciate the beauty of the NOAA charts—the detail, the colors, and the fine-print soundings speckled all over. My essay was not an indictment of paper-based navigation or charts, but a response to counter a pervasive perspective that choosing to navigate strictly by electronic means—without paper backup—is reckless or irresponsible.

Paperless at 500 Knots

I enjoyed your editorial in the May/June issue (“The Case for Paperless”) and I think you are spot on. I have been an airline pilot for 31 years, logging 18,000 flight hours. In the cockpit of the Boeing 767 I captain, we have not plotted our position on charts for decades, relying on redundant electronic backup navigation systems. Our electronic “plotters” (nav displays and flight management computers in the aviation world), combined with the electronic charts used from our iPads, have made our cockpits paperless and relegated the 50-pound flight bag full of charts and manuals to a bad memory. Of course, the key to our success going all electric is redundancy, and anybody going paperless on their boat should incorporate the same. If a 500,000-pound jet traveling at 500 knots in all weather can be the safest form of transportation, bar none, using only electronic navigation, I think

a chart plotter, up-to-date nav data, and two backup units aboard my Gulfstar 44cc, traveling at 8 knots, is more than adequate.

—Brett Anderson, Latis



Got Me Thinking

Great story, (“Riddles in the Dark,” May/June 2020)! I didn’t note who the author was until I checked after reading; we are all lucky you and your family are still here. All the things you wrote in The Takeaway were thought provoking, and it also got me thinking about how important a good engine—one with some power in reserve—is for getting out of the way! This is a new consideration in my current search for a small bluewater boat, and not easy as I do not want to give up a lot of space to an inboard engine and fuel tanks.

—Jim Beaudin, Sun City Festival, Arizona

Kudos!

We just received the May/June issue of *Good Old Boat* and I want to send props to you and the team on your recent updates. The new tagline is modern, on-point, and consistent with what *Good Old Boat* is about yet has a more sophisticated feel. Same with the visual updates; the magazine is still *Good Old Boat* but has more polish in terms of typography and design. These updates dovetail nicely with the same relevant, interesting, fun, and useful content that’s always been there, “for the hands-on sailor.” Great job!

And thank you for generously providing the magazine free of charge during these non-sailing times. I suspect you will gain subscribers!

—Carolyn Rosner, Norseboat 17.5
Patseota, Bishop, California

Editors respond:

Thank you for the kind words, Carolyn. And we want to take a moment to inform and assure subscribers whom we’ve not been able to reach via email, that the May/June and July/

August issues are “free” for them too, that is we automatically extended everyone’s subscription by two issues.

Storing the Stay, Take 2

The sidebar to Ed Zacko’s article (“Staying Power,” May/June 2020) shows one way to store a too-long inner forestay under tension and out of the way when not in use, to prevent slop or kinks in the rigging wire. Aboard *Nurdle*, my Bristol 35.5, I added an inner forestay made from 7 x 19 wire. It’s flexible, but I ran into the exact problems described in the sidebar, problems that the stowage clip is meant to address. However, while manufactured stowage clips may work, they may not fit (depending on wire diameter), and they are expensive. I took a different route, making my own from a piece of curved 1-inch stainless steel tubing that I salvaged from a destroyed pulpit. I cut a groove along the outside of the curve using an angle grinder with a metal cutting wheel. Unable to cut a straight line freehand, I secured the grinder on the bench and moved the workpiece against it. I flared the openings and filed all edges smooth. I left the ends long, and I cut, trimmed, and hammered each differently. On one end I made a hook that catches the lower forward shroud, on the other I made a flat piece that can be lashed to the aft lower shroud turnbuckle. (This lashing location is not arbitrary, it’s where the bracket fits when I put the inner forestay inside it, reattach the stay aft, and then slide my bracket down the forward lower shroud until the stay is taut.) All the shaping I did to the ends was made easier by my first heating the tubing with a propane torch. It works great; after putting the forestay into the groove I lash the eye to the aft lower shroud.

—John Churchill, *Nurdle*, Ft. Myers, Florida



Product Profiles

Getting Smarter

Wanting to be more self-sufficient and increase my knowledge of the diesel engine aboard my Beneteau 311, I signed up for Boater University's online course Marine Diesel Maintenance and Troubleshooting. The course is comprised of 11 video modules ranging from 8-23 minutes in length. Each module is focused on an engine system or component. For example, the first module is titled, "Alternators: How they work and what to do if they stop working." Other topics include belts, filters, impellers, fuel system bleeding, cooling system, and shaft seals. The last module is titled, "What to Do When Your Engine Won't Start: Simple procedures to get you back underway."



I appreciated being able to progress at my own pace and watch videos as many times as I needed. Production quality is good, and my access to the course doesn't expire. I found the videos interesting and the information I gained very worthwhile. The only drawback I can cite is scope. The course covers small diesel auxiliaries found in sailboats like mine, but also covers massive twin-diesel-engine installations found in large powerboats. Of course, I would have preferred a course that was focused on small diesels in sailboats, but the material was still applicable.

For more information: boatersuniversity.com.

—Jerry Thompson, *Good Old Boat* contributor

The Bright Lights

The LED revolution has seen a million rechargeable lights hit market—many for the marine market. I had one question on my mind when I received this Mantus Snap-On Light for review: Is there anything special about this one? As it turns out, yes, a few things.

I've broken a lot of cheap lights, and this light is neither cheap nor easy to break. Parts are made from PC-ABS thermoplastic and an aluminum alloy, and the light is ruggedly waterproof (rated IPX5). Not only have I kept it on deck for months at a time, I've used it as a work light in the bilge and dropped it in the water too many times to count. It's bright, but not glaring. It's mated to a clamp that perfectly fits the 1-inch stern rail (it can be ordered with clamps for $\frac{7}{8}$ -inch to $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch rail). Clipped to a pulpit rail, it makes an excellent bow work light. For the owner of a smaller boat, this light is probably all the cockpit and deck lighting that's needed. We frequently use this light as a supplemental anchor light. (Our



cockpit is well-lit for security, and the low-level light makes our boat easy to see when rowing back to her at night. In a crowded harbor especially, we've never been comfortable with just a pinprick of light at the masthead, so easily lost in the background of stars and other masthead lights.)

This light can be recharged from dead to full charge in 3.5 hours via a USB port. The light has five settings (high, medium, and low white light, red light, and a flashing SOS setting) and in the brightest 140-lumens, white-light setting, the battery lasts 16 hours. At the low 7-lumen white light setting, the light will shine for 120 hours.

I still need a flashlight and headlamp, but the Mantus Snap-On Light is my go-to light for illuminating the deck or working in the bilge.

For more information: mantusmarine.com

—Drew Frye, *Good Old Boat* contributing editor



We present these profiles as a service, as firsthand accounts from fellow boaters. Neither *Good Old Boat* magazine nor the folks who profiled the products on this page were paid for these profiles. Most products were sent to *Good Old Boat* for review consideration by the manufacturers. We profile only a small percentage of the products that marketers contact us about, choosing only those we're interested in, in the hope you're interested too. A few products we pick up on our own, because we want to share.

Boats for Sale

**Morgan 25**

1967. Vintage! Well maintained fiberglass aft-cockpit sloop, LOA 24'11" Draft 2'9" Honda 4-stroke 9.9 OB. Ready to sail w/new bottom paint, professionally cleaned sails (2 sets), RF jib, boom vang, spinnaker, sail covers, new halyards, head, V-berth, galley, sleeps 4+, new custom companionway doors still in box, 1,900lb lead ballast, dual batteries, upgrades. Charlie Morgan said, "It will sail around the world." Sailed Maine to Miami, so far. Oak Harbor Marina, MD. REDUCED to \$4,000.

Michael Thompson
410-551-3043
thomahawk@verizon.net

**Chrysler 26**

1979. Halsey Herreshoff design, swing keel, tiller, self-bailing cockpit, standing headroom. Mercury 110 elec start OB 9.8hp. Origo stove, sink, pump (all new, needs hook-up) Magma stern grill. Marine radio. 2-axle trailer needs work. Stored inside, only two owners. Moving, must sell. Merrifield, MN. \$5,000.

Dave Steele
218-820-9282
dsteele@brainerd.net

**Mirage 27-2**

1979. Robert Perry design. Length 27'11" Beam 9'3" Draft 4'4" Sail Area 313sqft, Bal. 2,200lb, Displ 5,200lb, 15hp OMC saildrive (Gas).

130 + 150 genoas and yellow/black symmetrical spinnaker w/pole. Imron-painted topsides '96, still exc cond. VC 17m bottom paint. 2 reefs, Unit O Harken furler, Harken main traveler/windward sheeting car/mainsheet blocks. Placed in several Leech Lake regattas, winning divisional trophies. Includes tandem-axle trailer, and Ship Shape Products winter cover. \$10,000.

Mark DeSchane
mvdeschane@paulbunyan.net
218-732-489

**S2 7.9**

1994. 25'11" Great cond, FW, adj draft w/lifting keel + tip-up rudder, tandem trailer. Yanmar 1GM10 diesel w/MaxProp, tiller pilot, B&G instruments, VHF. Harken RF, North Sails. Fixed vang, mast/boom refinished, recent standing/running rigging. Interprotect 2000e epoxy barrier coat + VC17 bottom. Custom stanchions w/ double lifelines, much spare equipment, daysailed. Ashtabula, OH. \$20,000.

Robert Bollman
440-812-5616
rbollman3@outlook.com

**Atkin Schooner 33**

1957. Gaff-rigged. 32'9"x9'8"x4'4" restored 2012-17, new African mahogany plywood/glass deck. Bald cypress deck beams, white oak frames, 3" floor timbers, 7x6" stem, white cedar hood ends, 1/8" carvel planking, both garboards and 3 planks above. Set of 5 sails including gollywobbler. Bullet-proof Sabb-2H, 18hp, new rings and cylinder sleeves '12. 6' standing headroom, sleeps 3+, July '18 survey. Sale incl hurricane mooring in

Colonel Willis Cove, RI. Wishing \$60,000, best offer.

Jim De Reynier
860-305-1582
Jimder40@gmail.com

**Southern Cross 31 Ketch**

1980. LOA 31' Beam 9'5" Draft 4'7" Displ 13,700lb. Full keel. Diesel, Yanmar 2QM 20. Well equipped. Sound. Comfortable for coastal cruising or bluewater passages. Sleeps 4. Owner has downsized. Details/photos at www.rocknaks.com/. Rockport, ME. \$18,500.

Hooper Brooks
914-483-7765 or 207-236-3149
Rocknaks Yacht Sales
hooper.brooks@gmail.com

**Corsair F-27**

1990. Formula trimaran, FW last 20 years. All standard equipment plus full headroom solid doghouse for cruising and Harken 40 elec winch to raise/lower mast/sails. New asym spinnaker, new screecher, new top-down furler (Colligo). Garmin wireless masthead wind instruments, bowsprit, double-spreader mast. Folds to 8.5 ft for trailering. Trailer included. SW MI. Asking \$38,500.

Joe Lindbloom
708-653-7016
joelindbloom@yahoo.com

**Allied Seawind II 32**

1976. Bluewater. All gear for extended cruising. Sail-away ready. Recent refit incl custom elec panel, H/W heater w/cockpit + inside shower, Natures Head composting toilet, 8 S/S+glass opening ports, RF w/130 genoa, Raymarine radar/chart plotter, Standard Marine VHS w/AIS, EPIRB, handheld VHS, AP, AC, RIB w/8hp Yamaha OB, 4 solar panels, MPPT solar controller, wind gen, new battery bank w/over 400 amps. Destin, FL. \$38,000.

Charles Fries
chief@comcast.net
770-331-5860

**Downeast 38**

1975. Cutter rigged. Rebuilt inside/out '08. New bottom, rigging replaced. Interior exc cond. Marine survey '09/'19, new zincs, 3.5KW genset. A/C blows cold, VHF, AP, full instrumentation, GPS. Many pics avail. Ft. Walton Beach, FL. \$99,500.

James DeSimone
850-939-7241
jdesim2015@gmail.com

**Pearson 26**

1971. Sailed out of Warwick, RI for 25yrs. Great sailer, loves her jib! Honda 9.9 4-stroke LS, high-thrust, power-tilt, remote motor control. Foresail RF, teak toe rails, teak sprit anchor roller. Mahogany hatchboards. Dodger, 2-burner Origo alcohol stove, 2 deep-cy-

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cle batteries. Custom trailer, 7' hard dinghy. Northborough MA. \$10,000.

Richard Chouinard
richandveronica@verizon.net
508-393-9559



Watkins 29

1987. Sloop-rigged w/Yanmar 2GM20F. In good cond. 11' x 13' 1/2" on Harkness. Incl. GPS, new VHF, and new Volvo Penta engine. 3 in. water cover system, steel neboygan, WI. \$9,800.

Mark Matthias
920-918-2367
msmatthias@charter.net



Tartan 37 Classic

1969. Original Ted Hood-designed Tartan, fully restored, upgraded, all new systems, plumbing, elec, FWV elec. toilet, etc., incl Westerbeke 35-297hrs. Full keel, redesigned main cabin, RF, new headsail, roll-up inflatable + lightly used Yamaha 2.5. Great sailing/cruising vessel. Classic lines, well maintained. You will not have to do anything on this boat. Wickford, RI. \$24,900. More info/photos: www.breweryacht.com/boat/1969/tartan-yachts/hood-classic/1450/

Gary Deangelis
401-868-7090
gdeangel@holycross.edu



Lancer 28 MkIV

1980. Sloop for singlehanding.

Hoyt jib boom, Garhauer traveler. All teak clad interior, redesigned as elegant daysailer w/2 settees, quarterberths, custom cabinetry, stone countertops, 6'2" headroom. 15hp Mariner elec. start OB. FB mainsail w/MackPack cover. WS. Dodger + bimini. Isotek cockpit surfaces. Custom winter cover, and more. Always freshwater. Shelburne, VT. \$8,000.

Joe Nieters
joefreda1@comcast.net



Nonsuch 30C

1981. Zephyr in good shape, lightly used, FW only. Equipped w/everything necessary to dock and anchor. Lines mostly recent/ all cockpit led. Many new blocks, electric halyard winch, 2 sails, Doyle, spare. Stack-style sail cover. Stock interior recently varnished, oven, HW, legal head. Auxiliary is '81 Volvo w/saildrive; prof maintained. Currently on the hard under custom winter cover. More pics/equipment list avail. Lake Superior, WI. \$29,500.

George Brandt
218-491-4610
brandt548@gmail.com



Cal 2-46

1973. 50' sloop major refit '89. Great liveaboard cruiser w/Cal 40 heritage. Perkins 4-236 diesel. Large queen-berth cabins fore/aft w/encl. heads/showers. Aft setee converts to bunk beds. Great storage/headroom including amidships engine room w/workbench, large salon w/galley/table seating 8. Owner motivated, downsizing. Located in San Carlos, MX, gateway to Sea of Cortez cruising. Reduced to \$34,950.

Ernie Binz
ebinz@earthlink.net



Westerly 22

1968. Good cond. Interior insulated + finished w/wood paneling. Pellet stove for heat. Incl trailer. 3+ sails, fairly good cond. Collapsible Porta-Bote. Head, 2-burner prop stove, sink, built-in ice chest. Volvo Penta diesel. Non-slip deck good cond. 5'10" headroom. 6'6" berths in cabin w/lockers underneath. 6'3" berth in bow. Sleeps 4. Lake Pend Oreille, ID. \$9,250.

Lori Steiner
509-991-3808
hanknlori@gmail.com



Pearson 26 Weekender

1976. Great daysailer, exc PHRF racer, heavy-duty gear, spinnaker-rigged. Lots of accessories. Incl LS OB, car trailer, steel cradle. Plymouth, MN. \$8,000.

Michael Barnes
763-557-2962
granite55446@gmail.com



Chrysler 26

1979. Halsey Herreshoff design, swing keel, tiller, self-bailing cockpit, standing headroom. Mercury 110 elec start OB 9.8hp. Origo stove, sink, pump (all new, needs hook-up) Magma stern grill. Marine radio. 2-axle trailer needs work. Stored inside, only two owners. Moving, must sell. Merrifield, MN. \$5,000.

Dave Steele
218-820-9282
dsteele@brainerd.net



C&C 39

1974. This is a very special boat, combining beauty, speed, and outstanding handling. One of Bob Perry's favorites! Well equipped: AP, radar, full instrumentation. Bottom redone in '19. New Perry-designed rudder. Canvas recently rebuilt. New "base" elec system, incl new alternator, smart regulator, batteries, starter, etc. Well cared for and ready to sail away. Annapolis, MD. \$29,900.

Nikos Singelis
202-374-3288
nsingelis@aol.com



C&C Corvette 31

1969. Classic. Full keel, tiller steering. Atomic 4, alcohol stove top, deep ice box/cabinet for pot/pans. On hard for 3 yrs, some maintenance needed, nothing serious. Selling as is. Marine Survey May '17. Request list of equip. that comes with. Trailer is separate (\$1,400), but not highway-legal, used as a cradle to move boat short distances. Bruce Mines, ON Canada. \$6,500.

Carrie Dunn
705-785-3357
dunn.ibbitson@sympatico.ca



Nimble Yawl 30

1986. K/CB. LOA 31', Beam 9', Draft CB down 5'6", up 39". Ted Brewer design. New Beta Marine 16hp, new furler, like-new sails. Origo kerosene stove/oven. Air Head composting toilet. VHF, AP,

stereo. Elec. windlass. Love this boat but time to downsize! Free spring launch can be arranged. Dorchester, MA. \$17,900.

Mark Whipple
617-429-2561

mark@whipplefamily.com



West sail 32

1975. Turnkey. Orig. owner. 54hp Yanmar diesel, A/C, cockpit backrests, electronics, 9cuft icebox w/icemaker, SS Shipmate stove w/oven, Balmar alternator w/regulator. 2 40gal alum fuel tanks, dripless shaft seal, 70gal water in poly tanks. H/C shower, hull insulated to waterline. Ready to live aboard or go cruising. For complete equip. list and custom upgrades, call or email. Located CT. \$59,000.

Skip Shepherd

727-365-0943

skiptshp@gmail.com



Alberg 30

1966. Well-maintained, Universal diesel, RF jib, all new teak ('09), new hull/deck paint and rigging ('13), new head, sleeps 4. Cockpit seats 6-8. Much loved! Annapolis, MD. \$12,500.

Arthur Chotin

410-849-2352

afpac@yahoo.com



Baba 30

1985. Bob Perry design trad. double-ender w/full keel. Cutter w/ alum. mast, Yanmar 3GM. FW. Meticulously maintained. Teak int./ext. 10.3' Beam, 4.9' Draft. Yankee,

staysail, 130 headsail, mainsail w/2 reef points. Windspeed, depth, knots. 2-burner prop. stove/oven; grill; icebox; double sink. Bimini/dodger. Petit Trinidad bottom paint spring '19. Custom hatch covers. Includes cradle/cover. See *Nightwinds* at wp.babaowners.org/models/baba-30/pictures. Lake City, MN. \$55,000.

Gene Grave

651-764-4620

gsgrave27@gmail.com



Nonsuch 30 Classic

1980. Rare wooden wheel, custom teak cockpit floorboards, holly/teak cabin sole, Volvo Penta sail-drive 1990s installed runs well. Radar, VHF, stereo, anchors and ground tackle, electric windless, H/C pressure water, prop. 3-burner stove/oven, cold plate, gas grill. Branford, CT. \$25,000 OBO.

Kerry Lange

203-605-1929

lange235@yahoo.com



Bristol 34

1976. Newer sails and engine. Cruised by current owners around southern New England past 7 years. Cockpit easily holds 6. Berths for 6. Universal 25hp diesel under 200hrs. Depth, speed, solar-powered vent and roomy head. Portsmouth, RI. \$19,500.

Burt Bryan

508-636-4919

burt.bryano@gmail.com

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BY BOB BRINTNALL

We try to keep her in good shape, but our Catalina 30 is over 40 years old, and as the number of cracks in her gelcoat grows, so do the lengths of the old ones. Up north, the season is short, and maintenance and repairs must be juggled with the fact that we love to sail. This isn't easy, because a day that's nice enough to fix a leaky portlight or repair gelcoat is also a day that's nice enough to get on the water. Priorities.

Thus, we sometimes feel a little sheepish docked beside newer vessels that gleam like wet crystal, sporting canvas free of patches or stretched seems and instruments that match (and work). But these feelings are short-lived because we've found, over the years, that there are advantages to sailing a battered old boat.

Boat Per Dollar

I get a lot of satisfaction knowing that my battered old boat didn't break the bank; I've got a lot of boat per dollar. But the boat-per-dollar factor is a subjective and variable value, difficult to quantify until long after the purchase date. I bought my old girl at an estate auction almost 20 years ago. I was the only bidder on the cradled sailboat in the back yard and bought her for \$6,000, the reserve minimum. It's easy to be blinded by the low cost of an old boat, and the saying is true: There is nothing as expensive as a free boat. So, go in eyes wide open, carefully weighing the advantage of the low cost against any work you may not be able or willing to do on your own.

Less Stress

Chips happen. But one more chip or scratch added to the hundreds already there is far less stressful than a single nick in a new boat's pristine gelcoat. Many of the boat owners in our marina enforce a no-shoes policy on their new-ish vessels. Shoes line the docks in front of them as if they were at a boat show. No, thank you, I hate to think of all the stubbed toes.

There's Always Something to Do

Besides sailing, there's nothing I'd rather do than work on my old boat (heck, if you don't like working on your boat, you shouldn't have an old one). Fortunately, a battered old boat provides no end to the list of things to do, always some reason to spend some quality boat time. And I keep it simple; just because I can't fix everything doesn't mean I don't do a spot here, a chip there, when I can. I learn new skills, and the old boat just likes it when I show her some love. Who doesn't?

Natural Selection Drives Boat Selection

The bad boats don't grow old, and not

every hull is created equal. My Catalina 30 is hull #306 of some 7,000 made. To have survived and sailed regularly for over four decades means she's a winner. So, if your battered old boat is still sailing, you know she's a good one. Those folks down the dock with the new boat? They're still wondering what they have.

Those Looks, and Look-Aways

There are always a few people in the marina who look down their noses at any less-than-pristine vessel. If you sail a battered old boat, you know what I'm talking about, and it can sting a little. But, chin up. You've quickly identified those folks with whom you wouldn't want to interact anyway. And it's OK to feel a bit sorry for them. After all, when they're not at the marina, they're probably working extra hours to make their boat payment.

Love

I've come to realize that this is my last boat. She's big enough and seaworthy enough for who we are and where we sail, and with sweat, blood, and history, I have cemented

a bond with our battered old boat that would be very hard to undo. For almost two decades she's been the core of our summers, and our love is more than gelcoat deep. 🦋

Bob Brintnall is a teacher and writer who sails out of Traverse City, Michigan. Bob and Windancer, his 1976 Catalina 30, have explored the northern waters of Lake Michigan for most of the last 20 years and hope to continue to do so for the next 20.



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