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Joseph Conrad, Sailor
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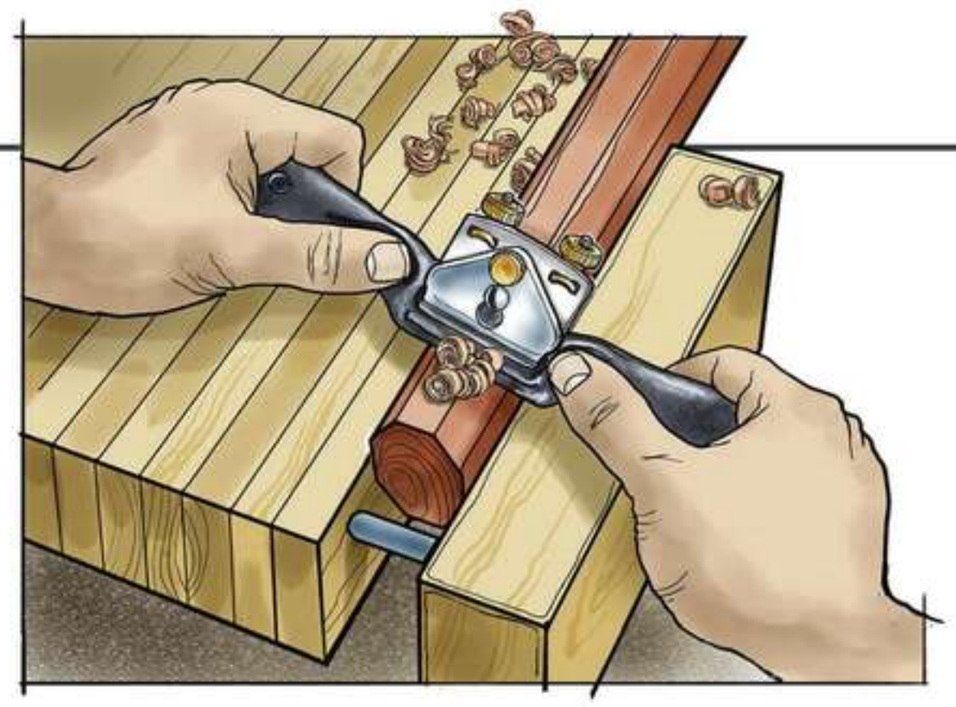

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Page 50

Photograph by John Bildahl

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EDITOR'S PAGE

That's Made Out of Wood?

In the mid-1990s, *WoodenBoat* set up a display at a large sailboat show in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Most of the vendors at that show were manufacturers of boats built of fiberglass. Our display, on the other hand, showcased two small wooden boats: a finished Shellback Dinghy and another one under construction. The completed boat was painted white in a brushed-on gloss topside enamel. The unfinished boat began the weekend as a stack of plywood panels, and by Saturday afternoon it had the shape of a boat—with the usual pre-painting holes in need of filling, glue scars, and plywood appearance. It was shapely, but homely.

The juxtaposition of these two boats was an epiphany for many of the showgoers. Over the course of two days, a steady stream of people filed past our booth, stopped, stared, pointed at each hull, and asked, "That boat is *that* boat?" Or they pointed at the glossy, finished boat and said, "That's made out of wood?" This was a lesson for us. Those of us with some familiarity and affinity for wooden boats know that the possibilities are endless for wood construction—that shapes and finishes span the gamut from traditionally planked and caulked hulls to wood-composite racing and fishing machines. Others who are less familiar with wooden boats, however, might have some preconceived notions about wood as a construction material. The fact is that rugged pilot cutters, converted Chesapeake Bay buy boats (page 74), competitive racing sailboats, fast runabouts (page 99), capacious beach cruisers (page 22), and lightweight nimble kayaks can all be built out of wood.

I was reminded of our Atlantic City experience recently when I brought home a proof of this issue's cover. The hot-pink fishing boat in the image is called TIMID TUNA. She is a Rybovich sportfisherman that was reimagined and rebuilt by Reid Bandy of Annapolis, Maryland. The project included the cold-molding of a tunnel in the boat's bottom to accommodate a shaft angle lower than the original setup. And the alterations included a redesign of the superstructure, which was rebuilt in high-density foam and E-glass panels. This, along with the shaft-angle reduction and repowering, resulted in a more than 5,000-lb reduction in the hull's weight—and a speed increase from 25 knots to 35 knots.

Bandy's motivation for his projects, as quoted by author Joe Evans beginning on page 50, is this: "I'm trying to…prove that these great boats, done right, can be a good value. They are low-maintenance and will perform as well as something brand-new that comes along." With most of the boats I've owned, I've been a die-hard purist, striving to maintain originality. There's something freeing in Bandy's approach of preserving the best qualities of a worn-out boat and amplifying them with today's best practices. It's not the right approach for all projects, but it opens up a world of possibilities with many others.

When I brought home that cover proof, my son Odin asked me incredulously, "That's made out of wood?" I told him the story of the Atlantic City boat show. His question, for me, confirmed the choice of cover, because the boat in that photograph challenged his notion of a what a wooden boat can be, and it showed him what is possible.

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LETTERS

Curved Gaff Jaws

Dear Matt,
I was pleased to see the article in WB No. 303 by professional boatbuilder Greg Rössel on making curved gaff jaws, because it was almost exactly what I, an amateur, had come up with for my own recent build. It's nice to have one's solutions validated. What I did differently was to put tapered flats on the end of the gaff, with inner jaw sides to match, as suggested by Bill Garden in his excellent article on the subject in WB No. 59. I also used Garden's method of sizing the jaws, halyard tongue, and tumbler, which is scalable, with all dimensions related to mast diameter. As is usual with Garden, the resulting proportions are perfect.

Alex Zimmerman
Victoria, British Columbia

Models as Historical Record

Ahoy, Tom,
Regarding your book review in WB No. 303: I did a lot of ship-model *reconditioning* (I prefer Rob Napier's description of that activity, as opposed to "restoration.") While I do not offer myself as an authority whatsoever on vessels or models in the Rogers Collection—or others of that period—here are places where I found identification of the modeled vessel, the modelmaker's name, and date:

- On the bottom of the "baseboard" upon which the model was displayed.
- In the hold, when the model was built plank-on-frame, plank-on-bulkhead, or simply hollowed out.
- Under a hatch that required removal for reconditioning.
- Inside of a deckhouse that required removal.
- And, of course, on any "nameplate" that might have been attached to the baseboard or the exhibit case.

As for the Rogers Collection itself: Many of the models needed repairs to the rigging; sometimes it was partially or completely replaced. Whether the original was sufficiently or faithfully documented, we don't know. The replacements were performed according to the experience and opinion of the person doing the work. To my knowledge, those modern artisans probably did not leave us a record of the sources informing their decisions. Therefore, the models in their altered states have limitations as primary sources. The same is true in archival newspaper accounts by reporters, who might have had limited or virtually no background in things nautical and used whatever experience and opinion they might apply to describe an event or scene.

Randy Biddle
Windship Studios, Star, Idaho

Nice Cover, But…

Dear Editor,
As a fan and a subscriber, I thought I should alert you to the lack of eye protection on both gentlemen in the excellent photograph depicting a scene in the restoration process. Occasionally we should be reminded of shop safety procedures to help prevent injury when performing boat work. The illuminated flying wood debris caused by the chainsaw is a perfect example highlighting what not to do. While we celebrate skill and craftsmanship, let's do it sensibly. A lesson that needs repeating.

Jonathan Lewis
via email

The March/April issue (No. 303) just arrived, and I haven't even opened it yet. I'm just sitting here staring, entranced, at the cover photo. It's a masterpiece.

Lawrence W. Cheek
Whidbey Island, Washington

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ROGER WILLIAMS / AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

***Above*—A 1960s photograph from Tiverton Yacht Club on Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island, shows a fleet of Candy-class boats with LOLLYPOP of 1921, sail No. 1 at left, evidently leading.**

The rejuvenation of the 1921 Candy class

by Charlie Flanagan

In 1921, T. Elton Wood, a sailing enthusiast and expert woodworker who lived in Tiverton, Rhode Island, designed a new racing dinghy. He hoped that the boat, a 13′ catboat meant to be safe and simple to sail, would entice his 10-year-old daughter to discover the joy of sailing at a time when new forms of entertainment were luring kids away from the water. The boat he came up with was similar in concept to the Beetle Cat—the famous round-hulled and gaff-rigged catboat that was coincidentally designed the same year only 15 miles from Wood's home. But Wood gave his catboat a hard-chined hull for easy construction and a marconi rig for easy sail handling.

Wood's design was an instant hit with his neighbors. The first boat was named LOLLYPOP, and each subsequent boat was named after a different type of candy, such as GUMDROP and BUTTERSCOTCH, giving the type its name: the Candy class. By 1922, fleet racing had begun in Tiverton; ultimately 60 boats were built to Wood's design, and the naming convention continued. Teenagers raced them on Narragansett Bay for five decades; not until the 1970s was the fleet superseded.

I grew up near Tiverton, in Somerset, Massachusetts, and at the Tiverton Yacht Club, my older brother sailed a Candy. I found that I was not alone in my interest in the class: A few years ago, I was visiting Gail Martin of Jamestown, Rhode Island, an avid historian of the Candy class, and in our conversation, I was struck by how this history was in danger of being totally forgotten. Meanwhile, a long-ago Candy sailor, David Hart, started a Facebook page that has brought a lot of old sailors together; they even had a reunion last summer. We are determined to preserve this history.

In 2023, I purchased LOLLYPOP from the estate of her most recent owner. Gail rounded up a crew of former Candy sailors (I think we were all over 70), and we met in June 2023 at a garage where the boat had lain for half a century. We uncovered the boat from clutter and bags of trash. Ultimately, Mystic Seaport Museum in Connecticut accepted her as a donation; the museum's restoration heightened the excitement for the class in Rhode Island, and plans to exhibit the boat will open an unexpected next chapter in LOLLYPOP's career.

TIM GUILINI / MYSTIC SEAPORT MUSEUM (LEFT); CHARLIE FLANAGAN (FAR LEFT)

***Above*—When the author bought LOLLYPOP, she had been stored in a barn for about 50 years.**
***Right*—A crew led by Tim Giulini at Mystic Seaport Museum has restored the boat for exhibit in the new Wells Boat Hall, scheduled to open fall 2025.**

Pieter Roos, curator of the museum's new Wells Boat Hall, said LOLLYPOP's ultimate destination will be the planned exhibition of American small watercraft in a former boat storage space currently being reimagined for public exhibits. The hall, in the Rossi Mill Building (see WB No. 237), is expected to open in fall 2025. This new 34,000-sq-ft space will realize the long-term plans of the museum to exhibit, in an area open to the public, a sizable portion of its remarkable collection of about 550 historic small craft. Envisioned for decades, the current plan calls for highlighting 173 boats and their stories—one of them being LOLLYPOP, a representative of a hyperlocal one-design. The museum's research into the boat has been greatly aided by a collaboration with a dedicated group of Narragansett Bay historians regarding the type, its history, and the stories of the people who sailed a great boat about which the public is largely unaware. Their research will also be part of the museum's extensive archives, where it will be accessible to a broader public.

Quentin Snediker, the museum's senior curator for watercraft, said that each of the boats chosen for exhibit requires some degree of preparation—a "refresh." This work can range from simple vacuuming and dusting to actual restoration in a few rare cases. Each boat is evaluated for its structural condition, age and condition of coatings, evidence of wear according to use, and other factors to help guide staff in determining what level of intervention is appropriate. As John Gardner, the historian and author who was also a longtime curator at the museum, wrote in *The Log of Mystic Seaport* in 1988, "I don't believe there is any peculiar historical virtue in dirt and decrepitude. It is legitimate, I think, to repair and refinish items in order to bring them as near as possible to their original condition." While the curators take a conservative approach, in some cases—and LOLLYPOP is one of them—a full restoration is needed.

Tim Giulini, the supervisor of vessel maintenance and a skilled shipwright, is leading the effort with a crew of professionals and skilled volunteers, drawing on Wood's original plans and materials list and information and photos compiled in two books written by Gail Martin about the Candy class. Tim evaluated the boat when she arrived at the museum and found her to be in poor condition. The topside planking was in good shape, but fastenings had failed, and the hull shape had distorted. The boat had been used as a garden planter at some point, but her bottom was replanked with mahogany in the 1960s for a return to sailing. "Several planks were removed from each side to allow for frame repair and the use of clamps and blocking to pull some shape back into the boat," Tim said. "After refastening frames and floors and filling old fastening holes, the mahogany planks were reinstalled. Several of the seams were splined and then caulked," then prime-painted. As of this writing in late February, the boat had been turned upright and the coamings and foredeck were removed so that cracked deckbeams and the mast partner could be replaced with new ones of white pine, as specified in the designer's notes.

As important as the restoration work is, I believe that the story of the Candy class is more than a history. Boats such as LOLLYPOP can still work their magic today, enticing kids to discover the joy of sailing. I hope one day to see the development of a plywood-epoxy kit version of the Candy-class boat suitable for home boatbuilders like me. I believe that individuals or groups could build new Candy boats to teach boatbuilding and then use these "safe and simple" boats to teach sailing skills. And I hope to launch my own new Candy later this year.

Charlie Flanagan is a retired Annapolis, Maryland, history educator and backyard boatbuilder. For further reading, see these books by Gail Martin: The Love, Lure, and Lore of Candy Boats, *Volumes I and II, and* Candy Class Sailboats: The Legacy of Mary Waring, *at www.newenglandmaritimepublications.weebly.com.*

Around the yards

■ The shipyard at **Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum** in St. Michaels, Maryland, is in the midst of a **thorough restoration** of the 1920 **buy boat WINNIE ESTELLE**, which is one of the boats in the museum's own collection.

In 2011, I wrote in Currents (WB No. 220) that a group of enthusiasts had formed to bring the 66′ boat back from Belize, where she had had a varied career, first carrying lumber and later tourists, before being abandoned. She was saved by a boatbuilder named Roberto Smith, who returned her to the tourist trade. In 2008, a descendant of the builder, Noah T. Evans of Smith Island on Maryland's Eastern Shore, tracked her down, and he was among the group that successfully brought her home. In **2014**, she was **anonymously donated** to the **museum**.

The restoration will enhance her role. She has been U.S. Coast Guard–certified for carrying up to 49 passengers on

CHESAPEAKE BAY MARITIME MUSEUM (BOTH)

***Above*—The 1920 buy boat WINNIE ESTELLE is undergoing a thorough restoration at Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels, Maryland. *Left*—WINNIE ESTELLE was brought ashore by crane to the museum shipyard so that its 80-ton marine railway would remain open for work on other vessels.**

day trips on the Bay, a number that Jay Williams, vice president of shipyard and marine operations, hopes will increase "into the mid- to high-50s." **Her mission** will still include **day trips** but also **expanded educational programs**. "Our CEO [Kristen Greenaway] is working with a few of the local oyster hatcheries and hoping to get a situation together where we can take groups over there" for tours.

Jeff Reid, the **shipyard foreman**, said all the elements of the **centerline structure were replaced** using white oak for a 16″ × 16″ keel in two sections scarfed together, plus the horn timber, deadwood, skeg, stem, apron, and cheek pieces. The boat is a typical Chesapeake hard-chined construction, with a cross-planked bottom (see related article, page 74) that also needed renewal. The chine logs, too, were replaced, using 2½″-thick angelique. As of this writing in early March, the bottom replanking was just about to begin, using 2¼″-thick cypress. Topside planking replacement has been relatively minor; the lowermost planks on both sides, which had to be removed for access to the chine logs, was replaced with angelique. Two additional strakes per side were replaced with Atlantic white cedar. Fortunately, only minor work was needed along the sheerline and bulwarks; however, her **round stern**, which has rim timbers built of "lifts," or chunks, **needed substantial reconstruction**.

A John Deere diesel developing 230 hp and meeting "tier three" emission standards is replacing the former Caterpillar diesel. The existing shaft was retained, along with a propeller that was repitched to 21″.

Few changes are planned to the boat's layout, but one exception is the repurposing of space in the after deckhouse that had accommodated a dry-stack exhaust for the previous engine. No longer needed for that purpose, the space is going toward an expansion of an existing head. Adjacent to the head, a former oyster-culling room is being converted into a service area for guests. Plumbing has been upgraded, too, with added holding-tank capacity; pump-out is at the marina facility at the museum. The changes open the possibility of more event outings—such as weddings—aboard the boat, and the deck was restored to an open plan by removing benches for flexibility in the use of space.

With other simultaneous projects, WINNIE ESTELLE should be ready for **relaunching by October 2025**, Williams said—however, that coincides with the end of the season, so the current plan is to have her **back in service in spring 2026**.

The boat was not hauled out on the shipyard's marine railway; instead, it was brought ashore by a commercial boom crane so that the railway would be available for other projects. Like the shipyard at Mystic Seaport Museum, the one at the St. Michaels museum is finding **demand for its skills** among other **organizations with traditional ships that need work**. "We have really begun to market the shipyard's services to the other local and not-so-local nonprofits and museums that have boats," Williams said. "Exhibit A" would be MARYLAND DOVE, a 57′ LOD replacement built at the museum and launched in 2021 for the Historic St. Mary's City Commission to replace a colonial pinnace replica of 1978 (see Launchings, WB No. 288, and Currents, WB No. 273).

As volunteers for other organizations "age out" in an era of few replacements, Williams said, "They're asking us to work on their rigs and hulls and on their boats. But also, the local shipyard owners who used to service this group are starting to age out," and waterfront development, as in many places, is quickly elbowing aside such commercial uses as marine railways, which are rare these days. "We're doing some 'tall ship' work; we have a great rigging team. We are definitely starting to launch that as part of the museum, because, in the wake of building the MARYLAND DOVE, **we have an incredibly functional team here**. And we're looking **to fill that need**." The shipyard's **marine railway** has its greatest in-house hauling capacity, about **80 tons**, plus the

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shipyard has a **hydraulic 35-ton crane** and access to a nearby **25-ton Travelift**. Larger cranes are available; the same boom crane that hauled WINNIE ESTELLE also launched MARYLAND DOVE, which weighed about 40 tons without engines, ballast, or rig. Using cranes for hauling and launching long-term projects **keeps the railway free** for **fast turnarounds** on projects of shorter duration.

Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, 213 N. Talbot St., St. Michaels, MD 21663; 410–745–2916; www.cbmm.org.

■ **New construction** of **wooden boats** these days can present a dizzying array of choices, but in the broadest terms the "continental divide" of direction is the choice between **traditional plank-on-frame** methods and **variations on cold-molding** techniques relying on wood glued-up in layers, typically using epoxy. At the **Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding** in Port Hadlock, Washington, **side-by-side projects** got started in February 2025 to involve students in learning **both techniques**.

The boats are similar in concept: **26′ sloops** with modest accommodations. One, designed by **Jim Franken of Port Townsend**, Washington, is a classic **full-keeled**, **gaff-rigged** yacht that is being built **plank-on-frame**; the **other**, 26′ × 7′6″ × 5′6″, designed by Will Sturdy of Brooklin Boat Yard (BBY) in Maine, closely follows that yard's longstanding tradition of **cold-molded**, **fin-keeled**, performance yachts in the **"spirit of tradition"** mold.

The idea for this cross-pollination emerged from **Sean Koomen**, the Northwest School's lead instructor. He worked at BBY and other yards before becoming a staff instructor at the school, which he graduated from earlier. For the current project, Franken's plans came first, and Koomen was enthusiastic about the prospect of a comparatively large new boat construction for the school. "When I was sailing out in Maine last summer, I kind of ruminated over the idea a bit," as he spoke of it with Sturdy, BBY's lead designer, and Eric Blake, the yard's vice president and head of new construction. "And I said, 'Man, it'd be really cool to do a boat by another designer from another design office for the composite version of it,' and of course they came to mind."

The idea was to **take Franken's design** and have Sturdy use it as an **inspiration for a modernized version**. "We'll have two boats getting built side-by-side that are roughly at least similar in length, but everything else is dramatically different," Koomen said. Fifteen to 18 students will work on the boats, choosing their favored style at the outset but observing, and sometimes participating in, the other to gain experience in both methods.

"At this point," Sturdy said, "we're kind of the guys at the **forefront of composite building worldwide**. There's really no one else who's pushing the bounds of what you can do with wood as much as we're doing here. What we tried to do was make a boat that's relatively small and simple to build but captures as many interesting techniques as we could." CNC-cut molds were made by Turn Point Design in Port Townsend (www.turnpointdesign.com), and the first layer of longitudinal strip planking, of western red cedar, was started in late February. Diagonal planking, also of red cedar, will follow, with two layers vacuum-bagged one side of the hull at a time, followed by a sheathing of fiberglass cloth set in epoxy. The keel and frames are laminations of cedar with some Douglas-fir. Sturdy said internal framing could have been reduced but was retained to give students experience in techniques that would readily transfer to larger boats. The fin keel will be a steel fabrication fitted to the hull with substantial carbon-fiber reinforcement, he said. Her deck will be okoume plywood over numerous laminated deckbeams to keep weight light.

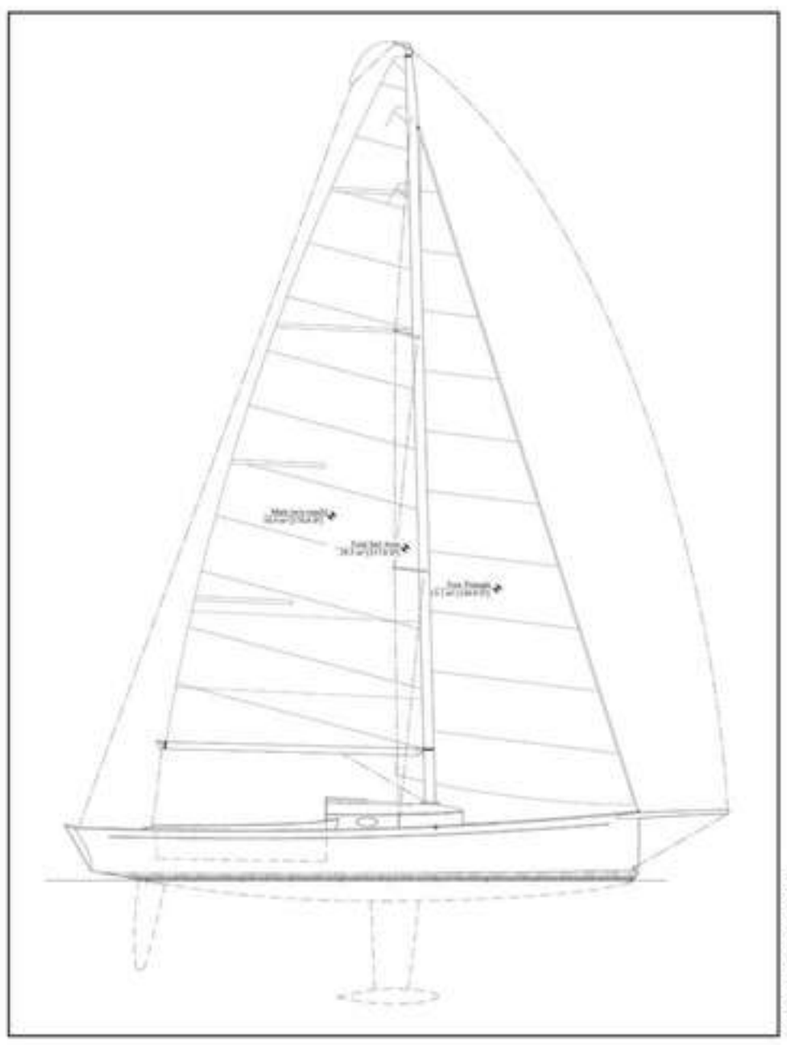
Meanwhile, the Franken yacht was lofted in the traditional manner, and her purpleheart and sapele centerline timbers were shaped at the same time as the cold-molded boat's laminated keel. Her carvel planking of western red cedar will finish to a thickness of ⅞″, and her deck will be 'glass-sheathed plywood over laminated Port Orford cedar deckbeams—and perhaps a teak overlay. She'll have spars of Sitka spruce, compared to the aluminum ones on the modern version, which also has double spreaders on the mast.

Sturdy's plans call for a Torqeedo electric pod drive; the decision hasn't been made for the Franken boat, but Koomen said a likely candidate is a small Beta diesel.

The "light-ship" weight difference is impressive: about **3,100 lbs for the cold-molded boat** and **7,590 lbs for the traditional construction**.

Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding, 42 N. Water St., Port Hadlock, WA 98339; 360–385–4948; www.nwswb.edu.

JIM FRANKEN



WILL STURDY

***Above*—This rendering shows a 26′ full-keeled, plank-on-frame yacht designed by Jim Franken of Port Townsend, Washington, that is now under construction at the Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding.**
***Right*—This sail plan profile shows how Will Sturdy of Brooklin (Maine) Boat Yard reinterpreted Franken's design for cold-molded construction with a modern, fin-keeled underbody. The boats are under construction side-by-side, with students learning both styles of construction.**

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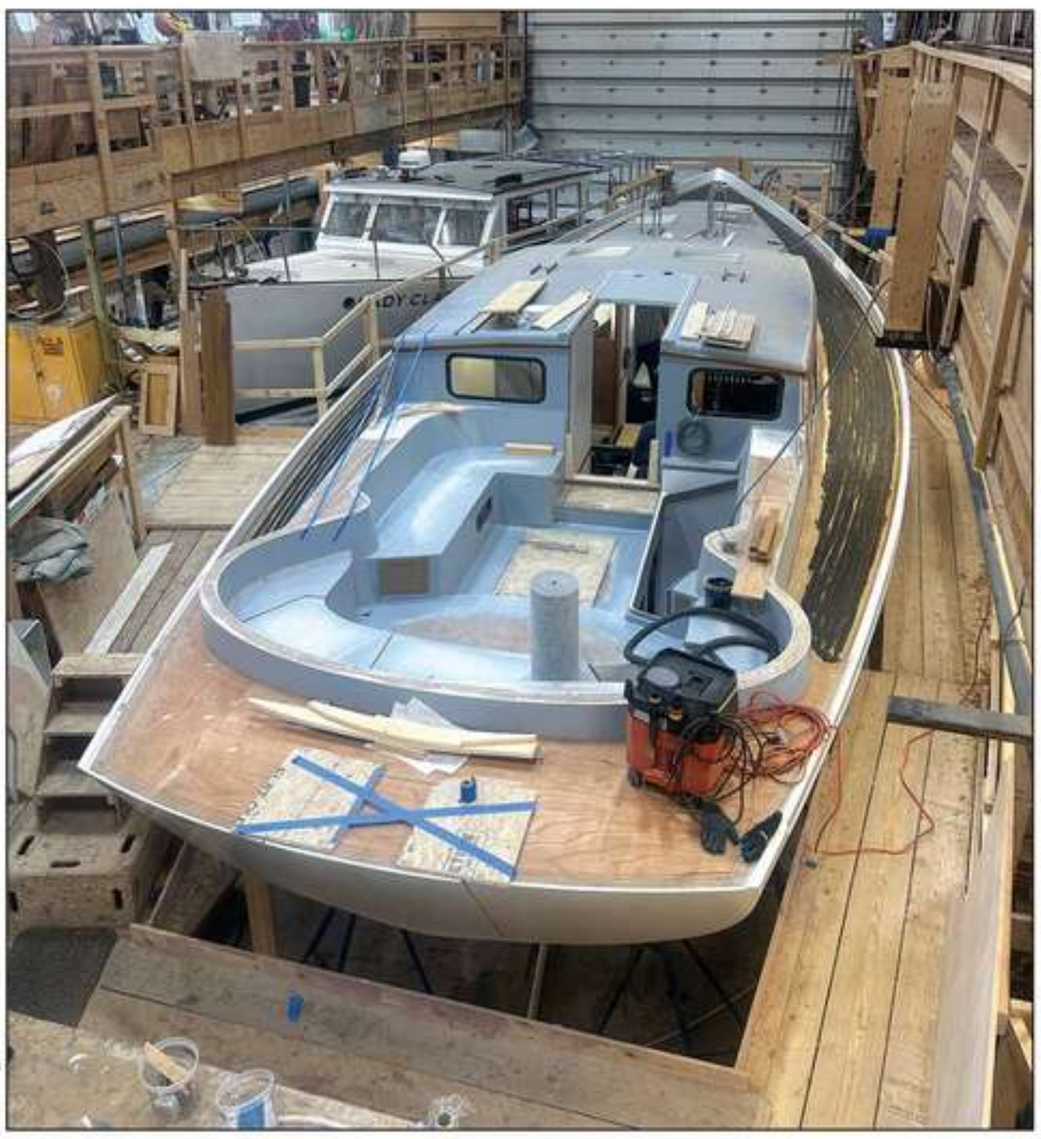

TOM JACKSON

At Brooklin (Maine) Boat Yard, a custom 56′ cold-molded cruising yacht is on track for launching in June, only eight months after her hull molds were set up in September.

■ Meanwhile, in the **main bay at Brooklin Boat Yard**, a **robust cruising yacht** is in the final phases of construction, with a **June launching** expected after **only about eight months in construction**. The yacht, envisioned for **world cruising**, is 56′ LOA, with a beam of 15′9″, draft of 6′10″, and sail area of 1,428 sq ft. With her displacement of 48,578 lbs, she is a far cry from the string of extremely light racing sailboats the yard has built in recent years.

Eric Blake, who is leading the project, said a delay of the construction of a planned second Wheeler 55 power yacht (see Launchings, WB No. 300) opened an opportunity for the sailing yacht to be set up quickly last September, taking advantage of modular construction to build the deckhouse separately while the hull work proceeded. The bright-finished deckhouse sides have large side windows, and the roof is foam-cored. The cockpit, which the designer, Mark Fitzgerald of Thomaston, Maine, specified as a fiberglass fabrication, was mated to the deckhouse and the whole assembly was installed as a unit.

The hull is a conventional cold-molded construction, with a first layer of Douglas-fir strip planking over keelson and frame laminations of the same wood. Two layers of western red cedar on opposing diagonals went on next, followed by a longitudinal layer of sipo and a sheathing of biaxial fiberglass cloth set in epoxy. The deck is plywood with an overlay of teak planking, supported by substantial deckbeams.

The yacht has a large central saloon with a galley to port. The windows admit ample light, and white painted surfaces predominate throughout, with cherry trim. Aft of the saloon, a double-berth guest stateroom nestles to port and a navigation station to starboard. Forward of the saloon bulkhead is an ample head to starboard, opposite two berths, with a shower

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DICK STEEG

At Manos House in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, young men 14 to 20 years old are building small boats, in this case a CLC Eastport Pram, to help their recovery from substance abuse.

room that can be entered independently of the head. Forward of that is the owner's double-berth stateroom.

The cockpit is large, with full-width semielliptical seating aft of the single wheel. A ladder hinges down from the transom to a boarding platform. An enormous locker below the starboard cockpit seats accommodates water-sports gear, and a sizable workroom in the forepeak simplifies equipment maintenance.

The spars will be carbon-fiber, and the boom will be V-sectioned to receive the doused mainsail. The rig is envisioned with shorthanded sailing in mind. The auxiliary power is a Yanmar 185-hp diesel engine, and the yacht has tankage and systems to accommodate long-range sailing. The rudder is unusual: its heel is socketed to a steeply raked skeg that will protect the propeller from fouling on such things as stray fishing gear or kelp.

All of the yard's custom yachts are fun, Blake said, and the engineering fascinates him, especially the loads involved in performance yachts. "But it's nice to build a boat that's just, 'Let's go sailing and feel good about it.' It's just a solid-feeling boat. It's a really great boat for a couple, and easy to handle."

Brooklin Boat Yard, Center Harbor Rd., Brooklin, ME 04616; 207–359–2236; www.brooklinboatyard.com.

Offcuts

■ **Dick Steeg** writes from **south-central Pennsylvania** about a **small-craft boatbuilding program** with a special **purpose**: "For various reasons, my wife and I retired to the rolling-hill farmland of Lancaster from the western shore of Chesapeake Bay, a region we knew well and loved. We both have lifelong interest in boats, so I set out to build a 13′ skiff and then a 17′ dory, both

using stitch-and-glue construction. In our lives, we have always been involved in '**giving back**,' and as an engineer, I recognized in my projects the worthy science, technology, engineering, and math principles inherent in building small boats. We started **researching boatbuilding programs**, with Teaching With Small Boats Alliance as an inspiration.

"We were **on to something**—but it was about to take a twist. We had started planning to establish a nonprofit for boatbuilding with disadvantaged youths, but then a colleague instead suggested **partnering with Manos House**, a residential facility for **young men 14 to 20** years old **recovering from substance abuse** (www.manoshouse.com). We introduced the concept of a **program in building small boats** to Chris Runkle, the organization's executive director, in October 2024. Chris and his staff immediately saw the potential. We all understood that the program would foster attributes of self-worth, self-esteem, personal growth, responsibility, accountability, teamwork, communication, and accomplishment, in addition to hand skills. All of these contribute to successful and enduring recovery.

"No one there had built a boat before, but the organization committed to the program 'sight unseen.' Three likely participants were identified and then a workshop was provided, a kit ordered, and tools and supplies assembled. The flat box containing everything needed for an 8′ glued-lapstrake **Eastport Pram** arrived from **Chesapeake Light Craft**, and it was cracked open on November 2, 2024. The journey began.

"For **10 weeks**, ending January 11, 2025, work proceeded every Saturday and some Sundays. The **participants shared camaraderie** and learning, identified challenges, solved problems, and along the way gained self-worth and self-esteem. They signed their names on the bottom with felt pens before the fiberglass-and-epoxy sheathing went on, making

DAVID KAY

PHYLLIS A, launched in 1925 at the Warner Shipyard of Kennebunkport, Maine, was said to be the oldest fishing boat in the harbor of Gloucester, Massachusetts, before she was broken up in 2023.

PHOTO: ALISON LANGLEY

their sense of ownership permanent. They worked hard and learned it wasn't just about building a small boat. We gave each a well-deserved certificate of accomplishment. They all want to continue messing around with boats.

"A **second Eastport Pram** was scheduled to start in **mid-March**. We are indebted to Manos House for letting us volunteer to make a difference in young men's lives. For our part, we learned that there should be no stigma assigned here: Addiction is a disease and can be treated. These youths are not 'throwaways.' It is up to them to take ownership of their futures, and we know that perhaps not all will. But they are looking to believe in themselves as much as looking for our belief in them. Building a small boat gives them a chance. If a **tangible difference** can be made even for one youth through this program, it will have been well **worth the effort**."

■ Writing about the sardine carrier JACOB PIKE's fate in Currents in WB No. 303 called to mind a recent **letter** from a **reader**, **David Kay** of **Reading, Massachusetts**. He was responding to Nathaniel Howe's account in Currents (WB No. 294) about documenting a historic hull fragment in Everett, Washington, before it was broken up.

"I am a big fan of **Gloucester** (Massachusetts) **Marine Railways** and took special interest in an **old fishing vessel, PHYLLIS A**, for many years. Sufficient funds could not be raised to rebuild her. PHYLLIS A was a 58-footer that for some time was the oldest surviving fishing vessel in Gloucester. She was **launched in 1925** at the Warner Shipyard of Kennebunkport, Maine. I felt a sense of loss when **she was cut up in 2023**. The boat had a lot of history for fishing, boatbuilding, and Gloucester (see www.phyllis-aorg.wordpress.com/about/).

"I read about EQUATOR meeting a similar fate. I am sure many boats are facing similar challenges. I made **several recommendations** to her owners in Gloucester when I learned the amount they were hoping to raise. It might be interesting to begin a dialogue with groups in the same position."

For what it's worth, here they are:

- Resign yourself to the fact that suffering boats should never go back in the water. They need a safe place on dry land.
- Paint and seal them as much as possible.
- Put them in the best structure that can be afforded.
- Install adequate scaffolding for public viewing.
- Budget for audio-visual and historic pictorial displays.
- Hire volunteers and docents to educate visitors.
- Conduct boatbuilding workshops to show woodworking techniques of the past.
- Charge admission for visitors.
- Sell merchandise commemorating the vessel.
- Establish tax-free status and elicit contributions.
- Find a corporation to help foot the bills.
- Combine resources with other ship or historical museums.

■ While **editing** an article by Randall Peffer about **Biloxi luggers** (WB No. 303), I asked him why all the **boat measurements** were reported in **decimal figures**—was that a deliberate showing of tenths of a foot, or some sort of shorthand for feet and inches? Who measures boats in tenths of feet? The boat FRANKA, for example, was initially shown as 56.2′LOA, 17.4′beam, and 4.1′draft. I've been seeing this with increasing frequency lately. So has Randall, and he wasn't sure of the reason, either. I put the question to my friend David Wyman, a naval architect in

Castine, Maine, and he sent an informative reply: "Interesting question. The English system of measurement (feet, inches, and eighths) is cumbersome to use for anything except direct measurement. **The metric system is much better**, but back 30 years ago, we lacked the political will to change. These days, **designers and engineers** working on computers **typically use inches and decimals of inches**. The Coast Guard used to do most of their inspection work at the local level using the old system; in recent years, the local Coast Guard folks refer almost everything requiring a calculation to Washington, which is staffed by engineers who use feet and decimals of feet, thus the reason you are seeing more of those measurements. Trying to calculate anything using feet, inches, and eighths is a nightmare, so we **designers** have gone **partway to a metric system of our own!**" I now have on my desk a 1′ scale showing inches and eighths on one side and tenths of a foot on the other.

Across the bar

■ **Adrian Horridge**, 96, April 30, 2024, Canberra, Australia. A native of England, Mr. Horridge studied natural science and earned a PhD and then a 1969 appointment as a fellow of the Royal Academy in invertebrate neurophysiology, first involving jellyfish, corals, and anemones and later a focus on the vision of bees. His work ultimately took him to the Australian National University in Canberra, where starting in the 1970s his work involved field research in Indonesia. As a sailor, he became enthralled with the sailing canoes and workboats he encountered there, and he turned his considerable research skills toward learning everything about them. His published books on the subject included *Outrigger Canoes of Bali and Madura, Sailing Craft of Indonesia*, and *The Prahu: Traditional Sailing Boat of Indonesia*, plus numerous monographs published in Australia, England, and Hawaii. He left all of his research materials and collections to the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney.

■ **Susan Sanders**, 73, January 2, 2025, Beaufort, North Carolina. Mrs. Sanders earned a master's degree in mathematics at Wake Forest University and worked at Carolina Steel Corporation in Greensboro before starting a string of nautical-themed shops, Harbor Specialties. She and her husband, Len Anderson, who died in 2015, shared an interest in boats. While living in Georgetown, South Carolina, they and others started the Georgetown Wooden Boat Show in 1993. She also became the executive director of the South Carolina Maritime Museum. The National Wooden Boat Building Challenge—a contest to build a 12′ skiff on a four-hour deadline—was a popular part of the first Georgetown show and continued to be in subsequent years. Mrs. Sanders became an enthusiastic supporter; she also brought it to Beaufort after moving there. The annual event has been held many times since then in both towns down to the present.

■ **Thomas Adrian Russell**, 75, April 24, 2024, Sea Level, North Carolina. Tom Russell started a woodworking and cabinetmaking firm, Sea Level Woodworks, after moving to North Carolina from Maryland. The first National Wooden Boat Building Challenge piqued his interest in boats. He became a regular competitor, even traveling to New York and Maine events. He often teamed with high school students and scouts, and later he taught boatbuilding.

Sailing Between the Trees

Four boats were tacking through the fog when I arrived at Arradon, in Brittany, on the northwest coast of France. Four brown sails and one white, all lug-rigged, faded in and out of view as they were swallowed up and then re-emerged out of the haze. It looked mysterious and strangely timeless, as if I'd just stumbled across a bunch of 16th-century smugglers waiting to load their contraband.

"*Monsieur Compton?*" said the skipper of one of the boats, as it came alongside the pontoon. "*C'est Emmanuel. Bienvenue à bord!*"

I lowered my camera bag into the boat and clambered aboard. No sooner had I sat down than we were off, heading south, away from land, in the company of the other three boats. As the fog closed in around us, the port of Arradon disappeared and we found ourselves surrounded by mist. We might have been headed off across the Atlantic for all we could see, though in truth we were very much near the safety of land, sailing "between the trees," as one of the other skippers put it.

This was not what I had in mind when I contacted Emmanuel Conrath the week before on the off chance he might have a boat available for me to test while I was on an impromptu holiday in Brittany with my family. Yes, he said, but I would have to drive down to the Gulf of Morbihan to see it. I had seen photos of the famous Semaine du Golfe, an event that gathers more than 1,000 boats for a weeklong mix of regattas and cruises in the sheltered waters of what is essentially a large, enclosed bay, so I readily agreed. No one said anything about fog.

For the event, Emmanuel gathered not one but four boats: a 15′1″ (4.6m) Silmaril skippered by Denis Le Saicherre, who bought the boat in 2024; a second Silmaril built by Yves Monfort and Emmanuel in 2019 and skippered here by owner Yves; Emmanuel's own 16′7″ (5.06m) Grand Silmaril, a stretched version of the design he built in 2022; and a Goat Island Skiff, built by Pierre Mucherie and Emmanuel in 2020—the third boat they've built together—and skippered by Pierre, who owns it.

Over the next few hours, I had the immense good fortune of trying out the three designs while sailing from island to island across a small section of the Gulf of Morbihan. Not only that, but the fog eventually cleared and we were treated to glorious sunshine, which was much more like the postcard scenes of my imagining.

It felt every bit like a mini-raid, and indeed three of the skippers regularly take part in raids all around France and Holland. I was possibly a little over-excited by this outing with my new friends; for Emmanuel and

A test of four camp-cruisers

Text and photographs
by Nic Compton

the others, it was just another jaunt in the exquisite archipelago that is their backyard. Four wooden boats, a beach, convivial company, a hunk of cheese, and some *vin rouge*…of such things are true happiness made.

Emmanuel came to boatbuilding relatively late in life. After studying computer science and completing a master's degree in business law at Loyola University in Chicago, he worked as an IT consultant for 30 years, including long stints in the United States and the Netherlands. Although the work was lucrative, he found it unfulfilling as he wistfully recalled his childhood messing around on boats in Brittany. His brother, Gilles, had devoted himself to traditional wooden boat building his whole working life, setting up a yard in Paimpol on the north coast of Brittany, and in 2006 Emmanuel took the plunge and joined him for a six-month apprenticeship.

"Having watched Gilles' career develop over 30 years, I knew it would be a pipe dream to try to get into traditional boatbuilding at the age of 50," he says. "But I still wanted to build beautiful boats—and for me that meant wooden boats."

The solution, he decided, was to build epoxy-plywood dinghies. His first project was an 8′ plywood tender that he named ARWEN, after a character in one of his favorite novels, J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Tolkien's elf princess has to choose between remaining immortal or renouncing her immortality in order to marry a human, Aragorn—a predicament Emmanuel could relate to.

"The renunciation of a known, comfortable, but futureless situation in favor of committing toward a magnificent goal loaded with risk and sacrifice, as chosen by Arwen, seems to me a beautiful analogy for my business creation," he wrote on his website. "That is, if one dares to compare the sacrifice of immortality to that of a good job in IT!"

***Below*—Hauled up for a lunchtime break on a beach on the Île d'Arz in France's Gulf of Morbihan are, from left to right: the Michael Storer–designed Goat Island Skiff EPIK, the François Vivier–designed Silmaril TRUK 2, the Grand Silmaril VITAE BREVIS, and the Silmaril KERELEN 4. VITAE BREVIS's builder, Emmanuel Conrath, scaled up the Silmaril design by 10 percent, with Vivier's blessing, to create the Grand Silmaril.**

Emmanuel built the Silmaril prototype in 2013. The starting point for the design was the Whitehall skiff; it was beefed up for coastal cruising.

Emmanuel's first Arwen dinghy sold before it was even finished and, when he displayed it at the Grand Pavois boat show in La Rochelle, he promptly sold it again—this time to a South African couple who wanted to it take home with them right away. He quickly built a second boat for the original buyers.

Emmanuel's plan was to be a boatbuilder, not a boat designer. In order to develop a range of boats, he teamed up with John Harris at Chesapeake Light Craft (CLC) in Annapolis, Maryland—which was by then already the largest manufacturer of kit boats in the world—to become the company's French agent and builder. In 2007, he set up a workshop on the Oise River, 50 miles north of Paris, and so Arwen Marine was born.

Emmanuel's first CLC collaboration was a 15′ Chester Yawl, a classic Whitehall-type rowing dinghy. That was followed by a long line of skiffs, dories, kayaks, prams, and sailing dinghies. Over the past 17 years, he has built about 130 boats—first at his workshop near Paris and since 2023 at his new base in Plougoumelen, near the Gulf of Morbihan. He has averaged about eight boats a year, most of them designed by Harris. His biggest project so far has been a 16′ Gabian, a double-ended Mediterranean fishing boat designed by François Vivier; his smallest is a 3′10″ cradle boat—a scaled-down CLC Eastport Pram mounted on rockers.

For his own use, he built a 15′ Harris-designed Skerry, which appealed to him because it "looks like the designer has simplified the design and taken out every part that is not strictly necessary." He loved that boat so much that in 2012 he decided to build a larger version, scaling up the design by 20 percent to create the 18′ GANDALF (no prizes for guessing where that name came from). The Grand Skerry, as the design was called, was followed in 2019 by a Goat Island Skiff designed by Michael Storer, which Emmanuel spotted online and says he was "stunned by mix of modern hull and traditional rig."

For his most recent boat, Emmanuel went back to his first love: the Whitehall skiff. While he loved the shape of these boats, he knew they were too narrow to sail in the offshore raids that he was increasingly drawn to. Instead, he asked Vivier to draw a boat based on Whitehalls but with some special characteristics.

"I wanted six strakes per side, a flat bottom, water ballast, all plywood to save weight, and 15′ maximum length," he says. "I wanted the boat to still be as narrow as possible, so that it would row well, but sufficiently beamy to sail well too. Because dinghy cruising is the thing to do with these boats. You sail to a nice beach, you pull the boat out of the water, and you sit there a while. That way, you can travel rather far; you just have to find a reasonably sheltered beach every few miles."

Emmanuel built and quickly sold the first Silmaril (named after the three jewels in Tolkien's book *The Silmarillion*) in 2013, but in 2022 he returned to the

Emmanuel at the helm of the Grand Silmaril VITA BREVIS. For steering while sailing singlehanded, the helm has control lines on each side that run forward to the mast.

The Goat Island Skiff EPIK, under construction in November 2020, shows a modified centerboard trunk and wide inwales for hiking out.

design and, inspired by the success of his Skerry magnification, decided to build a bigger version by scaling up the original lines by 20 percent. "If a boat is sufficiently narrow, and not too beamy," Emmanuel explains. "You can enlarge it and you won't have a monster."

Vivier wasn't happy about a 20 percent increase in size but eventually agreed to a compromise of 10 percent. To put that in perspective, a 10 percent increase in length results in a 33 percent increase in volume, while 20 percent more length means 73 percent more volume. No wonder Vivier was nervous.

It was the 16′7″ Grand Silmaril that I stepped into at Arradon, soon to be engulfed by fog. Unlike several previous boats, this one wasn't named after a Tolkien theme but has a more philosophical root: VITA BREVIS, from *Ars longa, vita brevis* (Art is long, life is short), the Latin version of an ancient Greek aphorism, meaning that skills take a long time to acquire and there may not be time to become truly proficient in one lifetime.

VITA BREVIS is a wolf in sheep's clothing, with water ballast and carbon-fiber spars belying her traditional color scheme.

A lightweight gennaker set on a carbon-fiber bowsprit more than doubles EPIK's sail area, compared to a standard Goat Island Skiff.

There was only a light breeze blowing on the Gulf of Morbihan that morning—not enough to really put the boats to the test, but enough to reveal something important about the Silmaril concept. While VITA BREVIS's black hull and tan sails looked traditional enough from a distance, she wasn't (as I momentarily feared) yet another pastiche of "ye olde clinker dinghy," which often give wooden boats a bad name. Quite the opposite. The design's Whitehall origins mean that, with her water ballast tanks empty, she sits daintily on top of the water and responds to the slightest puff—or so it seemed as we sailed quietly across the bay in the gentle morning breeze.

The numbers say it all. The total weight of the Grand Silmaril, including sails, carbon-fiber spars, and oars, comes to 350 lbs. By contrast, a standard Laser 16 weighs over 700 lbs. Fill VITA BREVIS's ballast tanks with 140 liters (37 gallons) of water, which adds an extra 308 lbs, and the boat becomes quite a different beast: steady, yet powerful.

Although the boat is barely three years old, its rig has already been through several incarnations. The original sail plan shows a lug main with a jackyard topsail set above it—in the style of the famous French *bisquines*—giving a very manageable 107 sq ft of sail. But Emmanuel went to the opposite extreme, adding a jib and staysail on a 2.5m-long (8′2½″) bowsprit, plus a mizzen and boomkin, bringing the sail area up to 205 sq ft. By the time I sailed the boat, the bowsprit had been cut back to a mere 2m, or 6′6½″, (though it still looked improbably long to my eyes) and the twin headsails had been replaced by either a small jib or a large gennaker. Even that, Emmanuel told me, was a bit much.

"You gain a lot of speed, but you pay very dearly in complexity," he said. "Since I mostly sail on my own, the boat was much simpler before, and whatever gains I've made are costly in maneuvering time. In future, I will leave the mizzen off and just keep the mainsail, jib, and gennaker."

There are said to be about 40 islands in the Gulf of Morbihan, in an area about 1/100th the size of the Chesapeake Bay, where CLC is based. There are many more rocks that are submerged at high tide, requiring careful navigation. Emmanuel had a tiny handheld GPS, which helped us navigate through the fog, as well as a small compass, though mostly he seemed to use his nose, having sailed these waters dozens of times before. The main hazards are oyster beds, which provide the area's main source of income, and extensive yacht moorings, another important source of income. Most of the islands we passed had lines of oyster beds off them marked out with sticks and flags that would be easy to miss in the fog or the dark.

Yves has fitted a sliding seat in TRUK 2 to facilitate rowing, an important element of the raid concept.

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BLACK WATCH
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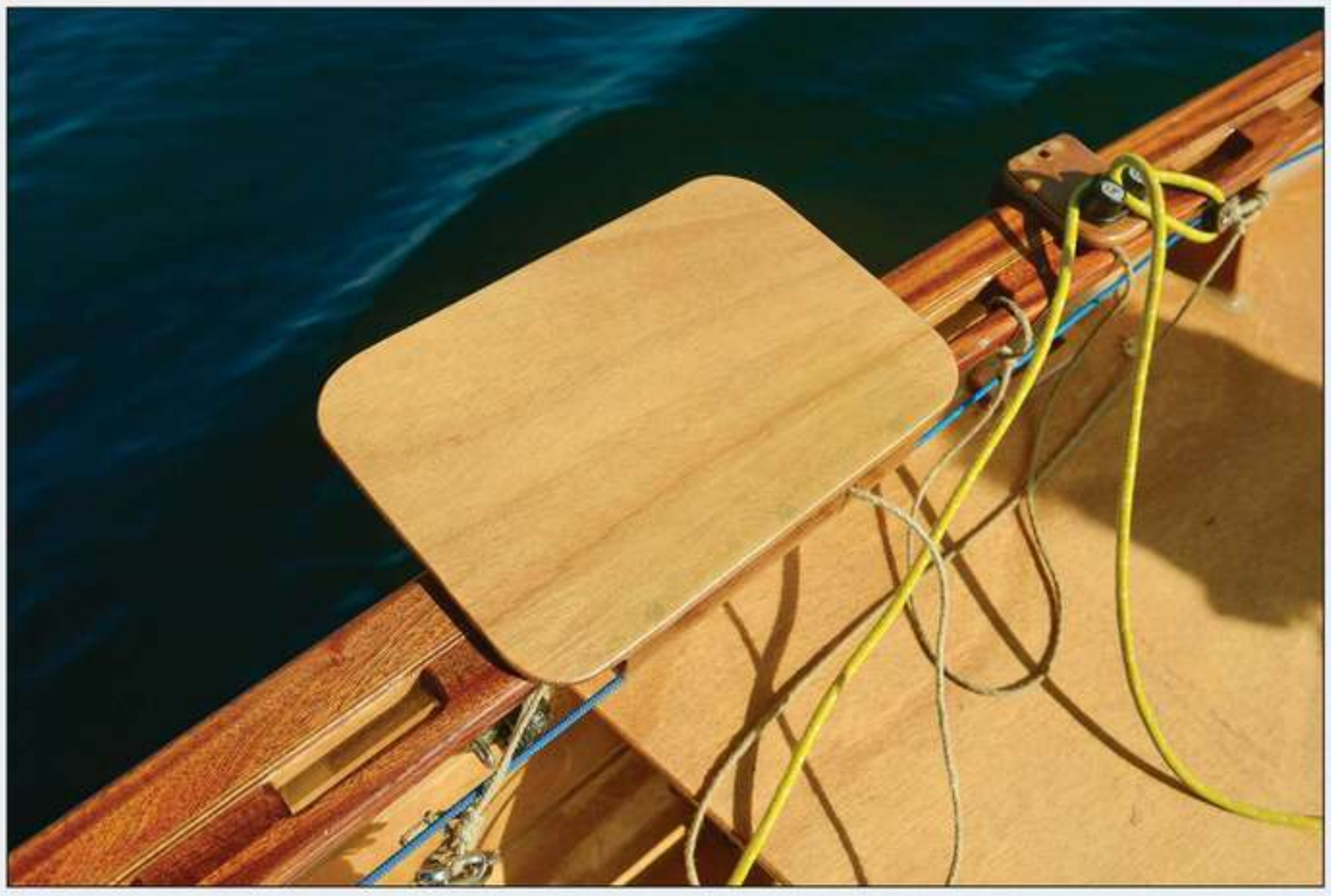

Emmanuel and friends are constantly trying out new things, including the hiking-out seat and a moveable cam cleat shown here.

We had by now lost sight of Pierre on his Goat Island Skiff, EPIK, but a quick call on the hand-held VHF, which all the skippers carry, re-established contact. Watching Pierre sail his boat toward us was like observing a demonstration of man-machine coordination. He was constantly on the move, sitting on the thwarts or the gunwales or standing up, continuously adjusting his body to the angle of heel and the pressure of the wind, as if the boat was an extension of his body. It looked both athletic yet also quite exhausting. Did the boat really require so much attention or was this just Pierre's personal style? There was only one way to find out.

The next time EPIK came near, we drifted alongside and I climbed aboard. I've long admired the Goat Island Skiff (GIS) and been intrigued by its deceptively simple design. It seems incredible that such a basic flat-bottomed hull can perform so well—speeds of over 20 knots are often claimed—and I've often wondered what the downsides might be.

My first impression once aboard was the difference in scale of the two boats. Although only 1′2″ shorter than the Grand Silmaril, the GIS has a very different feel, with nothing like the volume of the French boat. Again, the numbers say it all, with the GIS weighing a mere 128 lbs compared to the Grand Silmaril's 350 lbs. The result is a more easily driven hull but also less protection from the elements. Climbing from VITA BREVIS onto the GIS felt like changing from a jacket to a T-shirt.

"It's a nice boat to play on," says Pierre, a retired Air France pilot. "It's not very stable, but that's why it's fun. Before, I had a Pirmil built by Canotage de France, which was much more traditional," and much heavier, at about 600 lbs. "This one, you always have to take care. I've been sailing it for about 10 years. I like to sail between the trees—by which I mean inland, not out at sea. I like this boat because it's very light and easy to use it. I sail on my own most of the time. It's easy to adjust, and to make everything as you want."

Not that EPIK is a typical GIS. Pierre and Emmanuel couldn't resist adding an outlandishly long bowsprit, from which a huge green gennaker can be set, adding 114 sq ft to the standard 105-sq-ft sail plan—something he made good use of in the light airs on the Gulf of Morbihan during my visit. They also changed the conventional daggerboard to a pivoting centerboard—as devised by François Vivier—which installs just like a daggerboard but can pivot into a centerboard trunk once inserted. Both the builder and skipper felt this was absolutely necessary for sailing in the gulf, where submerged rocks are plentiful

Retired teacher Yves Monfort ghosts along in his Silmaril TRUK 2. Carbon-fiber spars are now standard on all of Emmanuel's boats.

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and hard to spot, and running into them with a daggerboard could cause serious damage.

The wind died soon after I swapped boats, so Pierre was able to demonstrate how well the GIS rows. He has a sliding rowing seat that just sits on top of the thwart when in use; he's rigged lines to hold it in place but finds they are never needed. The GIS's lightweight hull is well-suited to rowing, and Pierre was soon putting the boat through its paces, once again showing the same man-machine synchronicity he displayed under sail. Things went less well when I took over the rowing—possibly because I'm not used to a sliding seat—and the boat stuttered toward the shore.

I was reminded of something Emmanuel had said to me earlier: "A boat's performance is always a combination of boat and skipper. If people say a boat is fast, you have to think about the skipper. If people say a boat is tippy, it's same thing."

The plan had been to go to Ilur Island, the namesake of one of Vivier's better-known designs, thanks to the adventures (and videos) of the British author Roger Barnes, but with the wind dying we decided to pull in at a beach called the Plage de Brouhel at the far end of the Île d'Arz. The beach would have been teeming with tourists in summer, but on a Tuesday morning at the end of October we had the place to ourselves. We didn't see any other boats during the entire day, apart from a couple of ferries right at the end. We were, as Emmanuel put it, *maîtres du monde*—masters of the world—at least for a short while.

With the boats pulled up on the beach, this was a chance for the skippers to examine each other's craft, compare notes, and chat about future plans. The Challenge Naviguer Léger (CNL) is an informal raid initially sponsored by *Le Chasse Marée* magazine; it changes location each year, and was high on the agenda. For years, I've been trying to report on it, but the timing has never been quite right. Now, by pure accident, I found myself sharing a bottle of wine with some of the core participants. Emmanuel has attended all 10 editions of the CNL—once in his Skerry, three times in his Grand Skerry, four times in his Goat Island Skiff, and twice in his Grand Silmaril—and he built five of the dozen boats that took part in 2024. Pierre has also taken part in all editions of the CNL, including four times in EPIK, while Yves has taken part seven times, mostly in TRUK 2.

This active engagement with the raid community means that Emmanuel and friends are constantly looking at ways of improving the boats they use, either by trying out different designs or experimenting with different rigs, as in the case of VITA BREVIS, or inventing new bits of gear, such as moveable sheet blocks or cleats. In the same vein, the gunwale of Pierre's GIS has been widened to allow him to hike out, and he's trying out rolled-up bedding and fenders to make it even more comfortable.

Building boats is much more than just a job for Emmanuel, and the line between "customers" and "friends" can become blurry. As he himself puts it: "I haven't made any money building boats, but I've made nice friends. That's a good tradeoff."

The old and the new: Denis Le Saicherre's 2015 Silmaril KERELEN 4 (right) still has her wooden spars, though he plans to switch to carbon fiber soon.

Emmanuel, Pierre, and Yves sail on their home waters of the Gulf of Morbihan. All three are veterans of France's burgeoning raid scene, including the popular *Challenge Naviguer Léger*.

Emmanuel's next challenge is building an even bigger Silmaril, the full 20 percent increase he originally wanted, which he's provisionally named the Mega Silmaril. François Vivier has given his tacit approval to the idea, and Emmanuel hopes to have it ready in time for the 2025 CNL. Is he biting off more than he can chew? Time will tell.

I joined Denis, a retired high-school teacher, on his "standard" Silmaril for the return journey to Arradon. He is new to this type of sailing, and was modest about his boat's performance, fitted as she was with wooden spars and a small jib. He had come down to the Gulf of Morbihan from his home in northern Brittany to pick up a set of carbon-fiber spars that he hoped would improve the boat's performance. Since 2019, Emmanuel only offers his boat with carbon-fiber spars. The extra expense of this, he says, is worth it for the time he saves gluing, shaping, and varnishing wooden spars, as well as producing a much lighter and stronger product.

Despite his misgivings, and being doublehanded with a smaller rig, Denis's boat seemed to find an invisible zephyr and glided past the other three in its own bubble. It didn't last, of course, and soon the wind dropped completely and it was time to get the oars out for the last mile and a half back to the dock. I transferred to Emmanuel's boat and took up the oars, expecting I might flag after a few strokes. But the Silmaril's Whitehall origins came to the fore and I found her an absolute pleasure to row. Indeed, I could have carried on for much longer had we not been constrained by time and tide.

By now the mist had cleared, and I disembarked at Arradon in glorious sunshine. The other boats were already headed to a nearby slipway to haul out, and after a brief *au revoir*, Emmanuel headed off to join them. With the mainsail lowered, VITA BREVIS was tricky to row, so he took one of the oars, placed it in the notch in the transom, and proceeded to scull expertly. As he headed up the coast, I thought about the remarkable journey he's been on, from an international career in IT to commissioning, building, and navigating his own boat across the Gulf of Morbihan. And he's not finished yet for, as the sayings goes: *Ars longa, vita brevis.*

Nic Compton (below) takes the oars of VITA BREVIS for the final leg of his outing. Nic has reported on three raids: the Blekinge Archipelago Raid in Sweden twice (see WB No. 187) and the Lakeland & Inland Waterways Raid in Ireland (WB No. 230). He was also part of the reconnaissance for a raid in Poland that never happened. Nic is a regular contributor to WoodenBoat.

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JUNE

1–7

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Making Friends with Your Marine Diesel
with Jon Bardo

Introduction to Boatbuilding: Skiffs & Dories
with John Karbott

8–14

Fundamentals of Boatbuilding
with Bob Fuller

Fine Strip-Plank Boat Construction
with Nick Schade

The Art of Shaker Box Making
with Bill Jordan

The Art of Marquetry
with James Macdonald

15–21

Fundamentals of Boatbuilding
with Rick Barkhuff

Build Your Own Annapolis Wherry
with John Staub

Introduction to Woodworking
with James Macdonald

Concepts of Boat Design
with Clint Chase

Coastwise Navigation
with Jane Ahlfeld

Elements of Coastal Kayaking II
with Nick Schade

22–28

Restoring a Herreshoff 12½
with Pat Mahon

Build Your Own Skerry Daysailer
with Dylan Majoros

Introduction to Woodworking for Women
with Larissa Huff

Elements of Sailing I
with Jane Ahlfeld & Annie Nixon

Elements of Coastal Kayaking I
with Rebecca Daugherty

JULY

29–5

Glued Plywood Lapstrake Construction
with Bruce McKenzie

Build Your Own Stitch-and-Glue Kayak
with Eric Schade

Woodcarving
with Reed Hayden

Core Skills: Lofting
with Greg Rössel

Elements of Sailing I
with Jane Ahlfeld & Carrie Baker

Craft of Sail onboard NORA
with Kim Walther

6–12

Building the Ocean Pointer
with Bob Fuller & John Karbott

Core Skills: Paddle Making
with Eric Schade

Woodstrip Canoe Construction
with Alan Mann & Rose Woodyard

Elements of Sailing I
with Sue LaVoie & Kim Walther

Craft of Sail onboard NORA
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Messing About in Boats
with Roger Barnes

13–19

Stitch-and-Glue Construction
with John Harris

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20–26

Core Skills: Sparmaking
with John Harris

Building the
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Building the Naskeag 16
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3–9

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Elements of Boat Design
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with Clint Chase

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with Martin Gardner

10–16

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with Cricket Zarn

Teaching with Small Boats
with Joe Youcha

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with Bill Thomas

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with Kat Logan

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17–23

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with Bob Fuller

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with Bill Thomas

The Maine Coast in Watercolor
with Kat Logan

Elements of Sailing II
with Jeff Evans & Annie Nixon

The Catboat
with Martin Gardner

24–30

Building Small Boats
with Greg Rössel

Build Your Own Northeaster Dory
with John Harris

Build Your Own Plank Constructed Pond Yacht
with Bruce Richter

Building A Ship in a Bottle
with Alex Bellinger

Building a Shelburne Dory
with Graham McKay

Elements of Sailing I
with Tom Conlogue & Martin Gardner

Open Boat Skills
with Andy Nadolny

SEPTEMBER

31–6

Fundamentals of Boatbuilding II
with Bruce McKenzie

Building a Rangeley Lake Boat
with Alan Mann & Rose Woodyard

Build Your Own Annapolis Wherry
with John Staub

Carving Name Boards
with Reed Hayden

Introduction to Building Model Boats
with Alex Bellinger

Sailing the Fleet
with WoodenBoat School Staff

7–13

Canvas Canoe Repair
with Dan Miller

The Art of Woodcuts
with Gene Shaw

Marine & Seascape Photography
with Michael Kahn

Introduction to Canvaswork
with Ann Brayton

14–20

Small Boat Repair
with Joe Connor

Concepts of Wood Composite Construction
with Mike Moros

Essentials of Fine Woodworking
with Mark Whitcomb

21–27

Making Friends with Your Marine Diesel
with Jon Bardo

Introduction to Boatbuilding: Skiffs & Dories
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Text and illustrations by Jan Adkins

The Boathook

We've said it before: Cast off and travel 10′ away from the dock, and you're in another world, with its own rules. Now let's turn that around: When you sail or motor your boat to within 10′ of the dock, you need something to bridge that last gap between a fluid, uncertain medium and shore stability. Unless you have dock-wallopers to seize heaved lines, or a bow thruster, your tool of deliverance is the boathook.

A boathook is adept at retrieving the admiral's hat when it blows overboard, lifting a dockline from a piling (hopefully caught at a convenient height by a bolted cheek stirrup), or drawing your boat the blessed few feet to snug contact with the dock.

It's an ancient, simple tool with plain functions that were necessary for a pharaoh's barge, a Roman bireme, or an admiral's gig. You can make your own boathook better than any you can buy. The basic production requires a tablesaw, a few vintage hand tools, and an evening. *WoodenBoat* covered the subject years ago when our founder, Jon Wilson, lost his own boathook overboard and was gobstopped by a bit of wooden magic: the damned thing floated, grandly enough, and its bronze hook-head ballasted the pole to sit vertically. The handle rose upright a few feet, an easy reach-down and pick-up. Your personally crafted boathook will do the same.

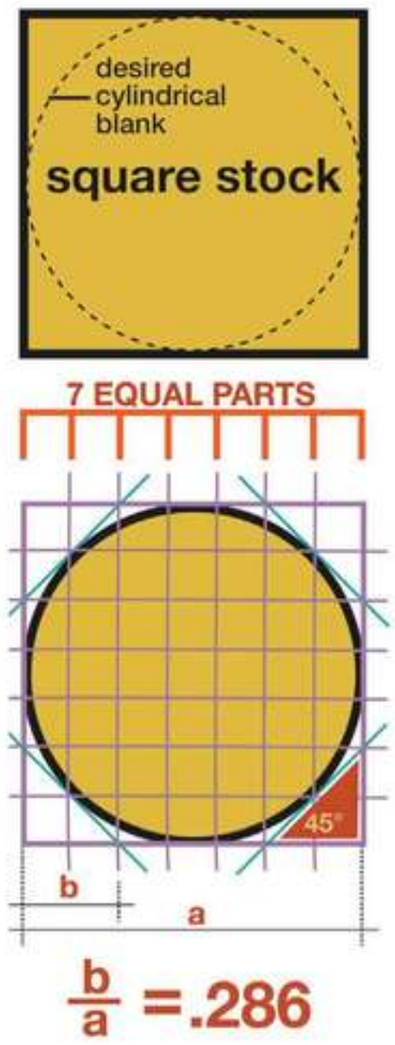
Match your boathook to your vessel. A gloriously varnished 10′-long boathook will be a real hindrance in a 15′boat. You need a 5′boathook or a telescoping hook that will stow away until necessity calls. One answer for small craft is the high-tech Rotate Boathook, a spin-off of military technology. Furled into itself, the Rotate is a little larger than a coffee mug. In 30 seconds, it will unroll into a tough, 7′-long boathook stiff enough to repel boarders. It requires less than a minute to refurl itself and stow.

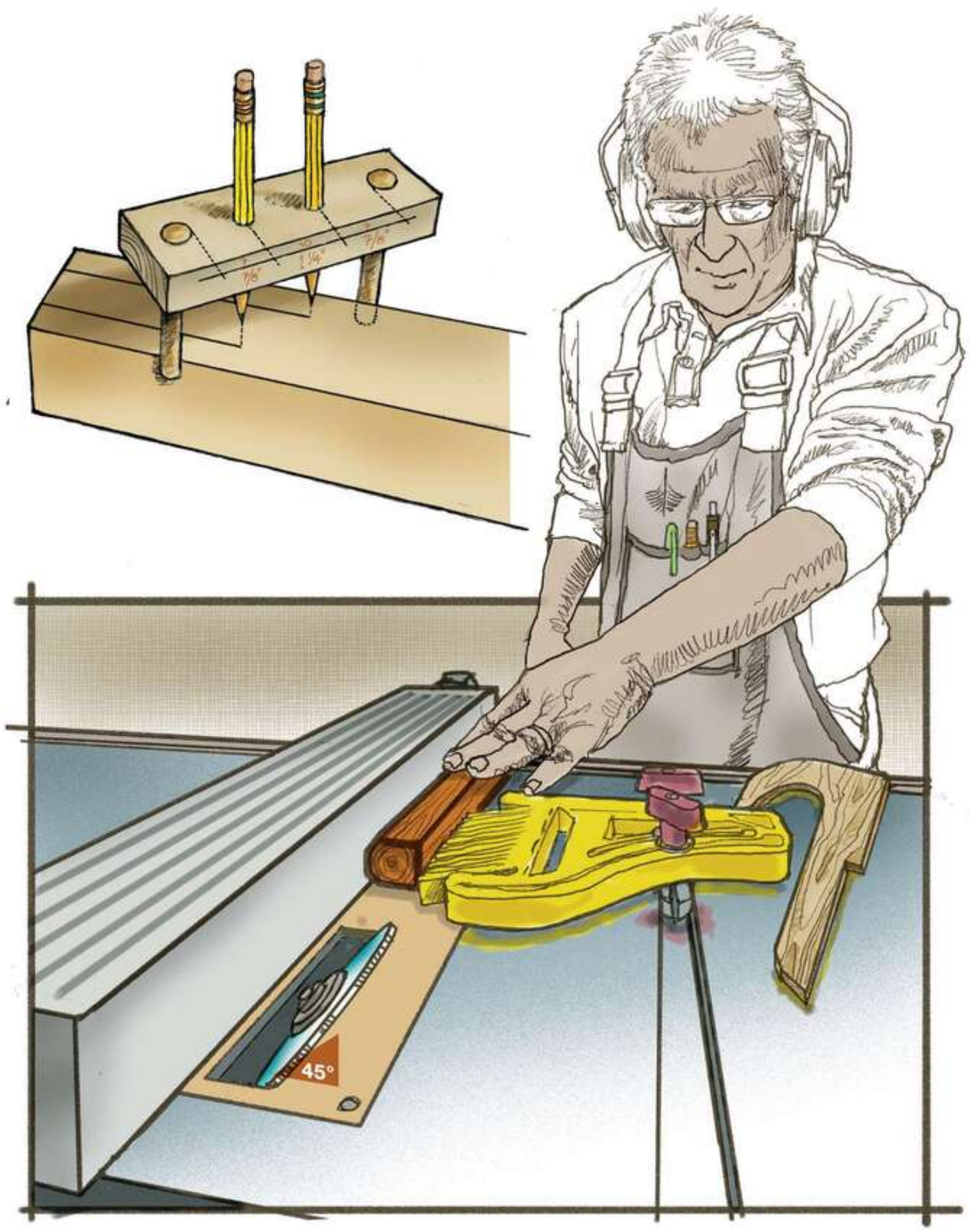
The boathook fitting has a few low-tech details: its extremities can't be sharp but should be unthreatening bulbs to prevent damage to hulls—your own or others'—and to prevent shipmate injuries caused by flailing it about in a wake or a wave. Gaff hooks are bad boathooks; sharp ends are dangerous and can lodge in soft wood at the worst times.

Ancient boathooks were likely sapling poles with a short lower limb as a hook. They must have been dried, stripped of bark, smoothed, and oiled to withstand weather. It's possible that the operative hook could be a reversed section of pole beveled and fastened to the reaching pole with beeswaxed cord.

Fabrication

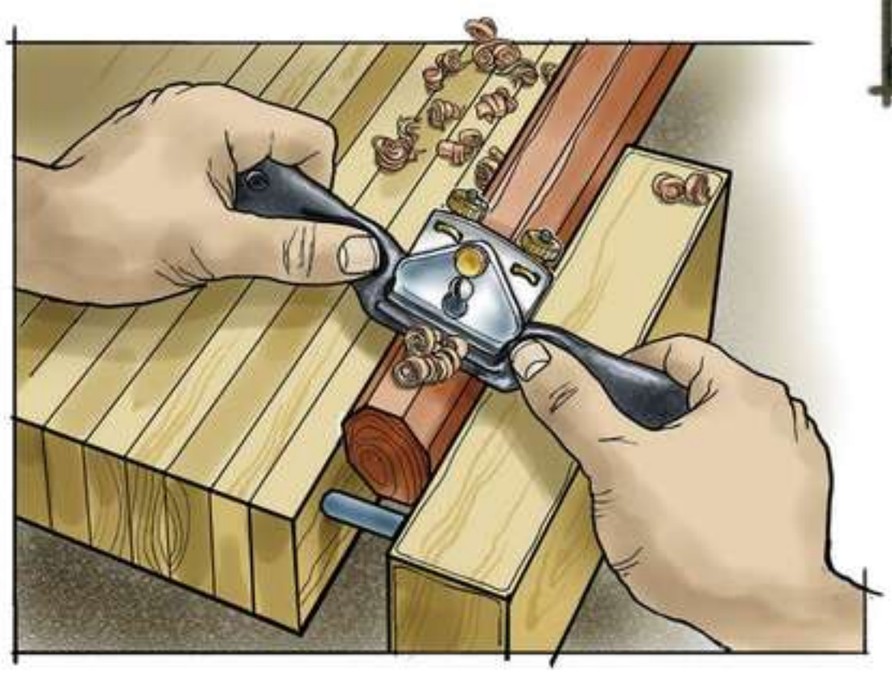
Finding clear stock may be your most difficult task. Locate a clear 7′ to 10′ length of ash, spruce, or any other light, tough wood that speaks to you, and rip it to a square section. We're suggesting 1⅞″ square but it's your boathook, not ours. Determine the dimensions necessary to rip your square stock into octagonal stock that will approximate a cylinder. You can mark the stock for ripping with decimal inches (1″ = 10 parts) or use metric measurements (1⅞″ = 4.75cm). One way of determining the offset of a 45-degree angle to create an octagon is to multiply the width by ²⁄₇ (.29) as a ratio. Thus, 1⅞″ = 1.875″, multiplied by .29 = .54″ (4.75cm × .29 = 1.38cm). Use an edge marker to scribe the lengthwise offset lines.





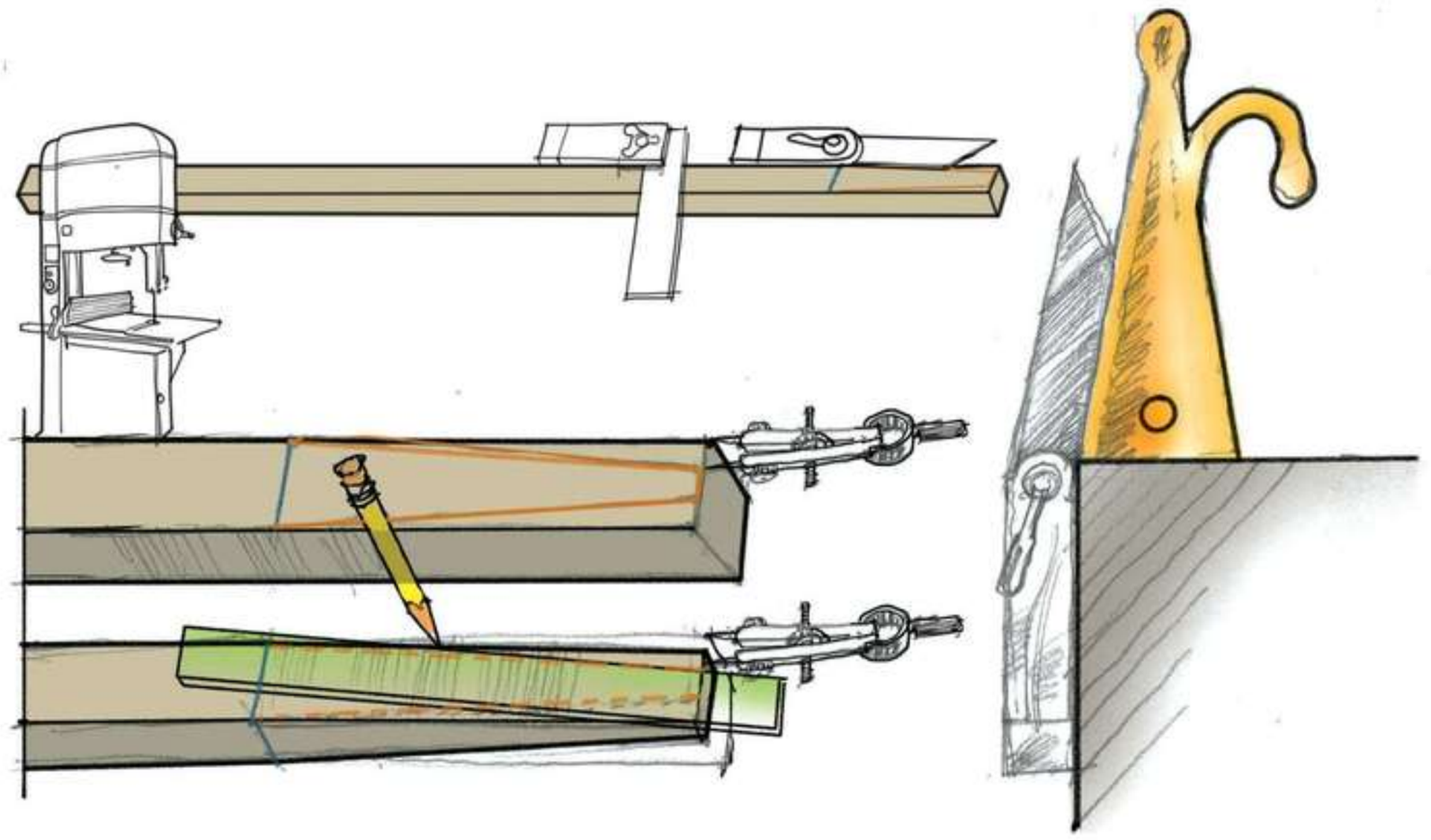
A marking gauge may help you to lay down the offset lines. This is a shop-made tool you may use once a year or 40 times, a block of wood fitted with glued-in dowels or brass rods to run the edges, and two accurately drilled pencil holes centered at the measurements shown. This gauge is calibrated to mark octagonal offsets using 7/24 (.292) rather than ²⁄₇ (.285); the difference might be critical to NASA but not to hand tools.

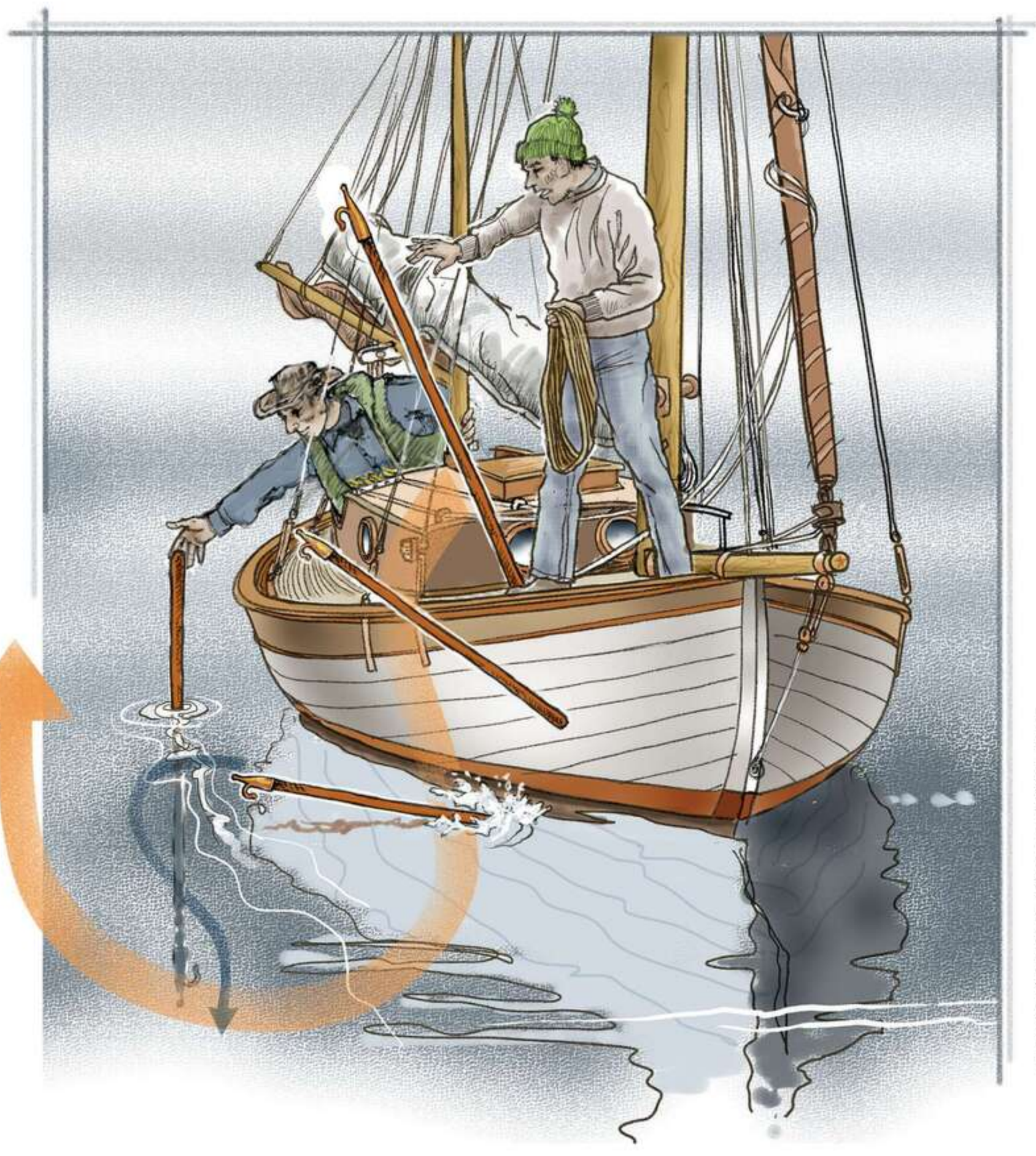
Use a fan-stop and special caution when ripping long stock with your saw blade at 45 degrees. A slim spear of wood hurled at you with the table saw's force can do significant damage. Working with a 45-degree blade is disorienting and unusual; use good pushers and obsessive care.



You'll find a way to clamp your octagonal stock down securely, so that each clamping will give you one or two "corners" to reduce using a spokeshave. You can also reduce these corners with a block plane. You can reduce the corners to approximate a cylinder overall. You can also soften the octagonal corners with sandpaper if you prefer a faceted grip.

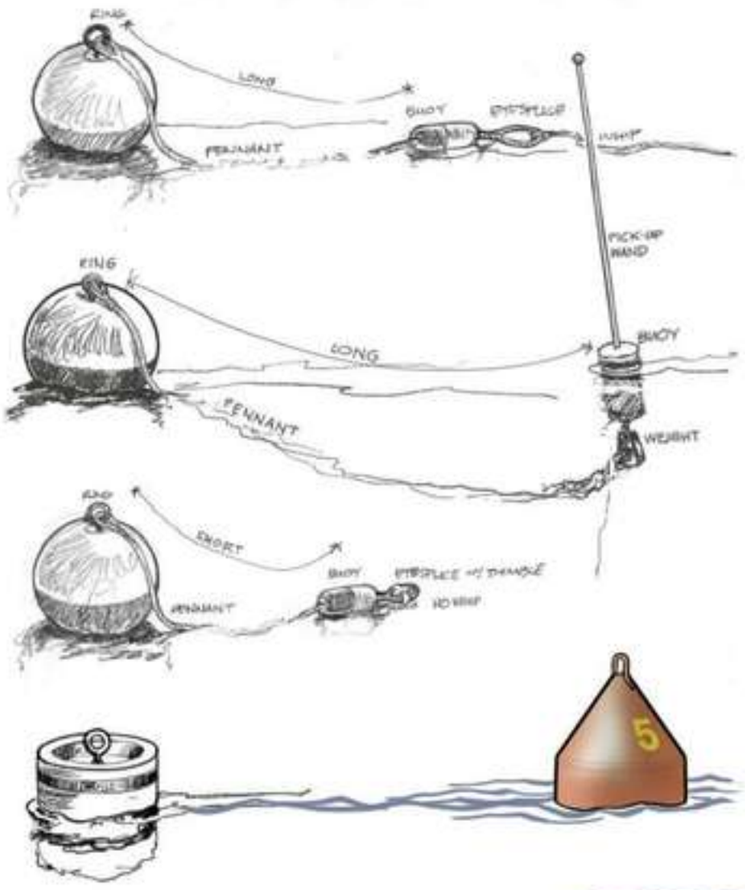
Shaping the plug to match the interior of the bronze or stainless-steel hook fitting is another hand-task. (The WoodenBoat Store sells such a fitting, in bronze; visit www.woodenboatstore.com.) You may wish to use a drawknife to cut back major excess before you begin rounding. Expect trial and error, fitting dozens of times until you mate the pole to the hook's interior. Fill any space between pole and bronze with a reliable bedding compound or thickened epoxy. Finish the pole with oil or varnish. Determine which grandchild shall have your boathook when you're gone; it will last that long.



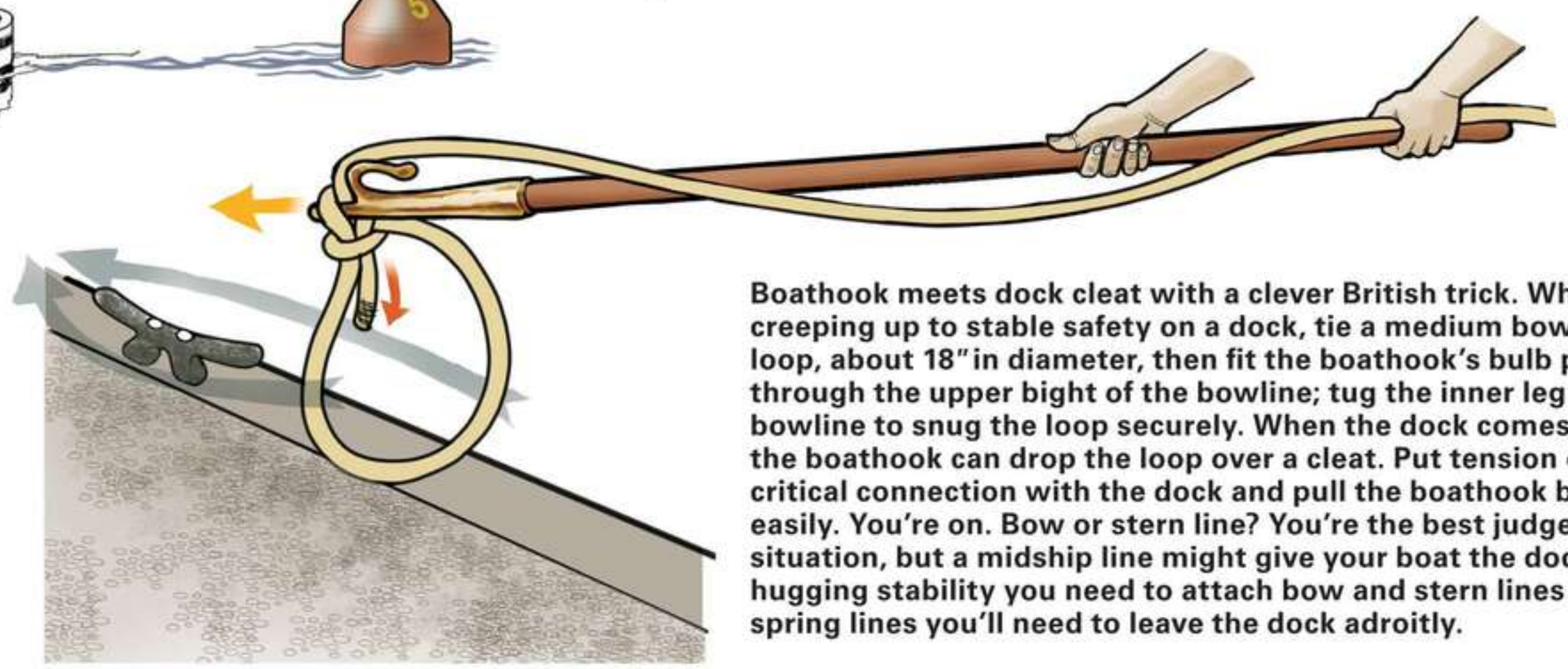


Float trials may be necessary. In the water, does your hook fitting provide enough ballast to float your pole upright? Do you need to add head weight for optimal ballast? Experiment with fishing leads tied to the boathook fitting with a light line. Place the required number of sinkers in a bore hole under the fitting before fastening.

A Boathook Drill

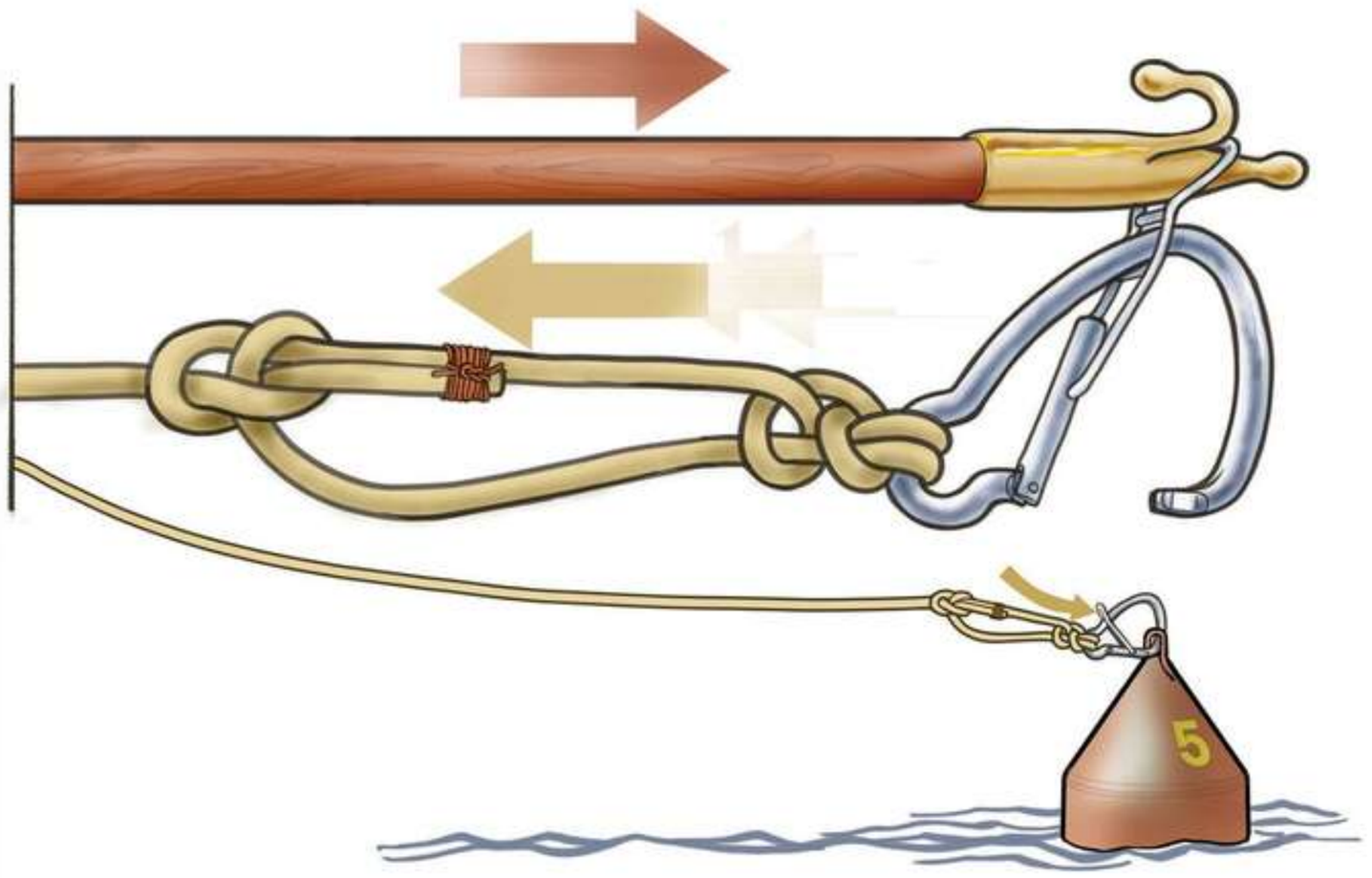


Two old shellbacks made a recent delivery of a 50′ trawler along the Intracoastal Waterway. Drifting up to a mooring buoy at our first sunset, my shipmate said, "What do we call that?" We're old guys; we caught Noah's lines when he came into port, yet we'd never encountered this mooring ball arrangement. Things change. Many new mooring connections have no long pennant to bring on deck, no way to lift up the pennant. Some depend on threading a stout, nylon (shock absorbing) mooring line through a thimble or a ring on the buoy. Our bow stood 10′ above the water; the buoy was inaccessible. A kind shipmate in a passing dinghy saved us embarrassment by passing our line through the buoy's thimble. Over the course of our journey, we encountered a number of situations that required our boathook to snag cleats, retrieve dock lines from tall piers, and save our bacon in low-tech encounters. We determined to out-sly mooring balls and learn new boathook skills.



Boathook meets dock cleat with a clever British trick. When you're creeping up to stable safety on a dock, tie a medium bowline loop, about 18″ in diameter, then fit the boathook's bulb point through the upper bight of the bowline; tug the inner leg of the bowline to snug the loop securely. When the dock comes near, the boathook can drop the loop over a cleat. Put tension on this critical connection with the dock and pull the boathook back easily. You're on. Bow or stern line? You're the best judge of your situation, but a midship line might give your boat the dock-hugging stability you need to attach bow and stern lines and the spring lines you'll need to leave the dock adroitly.

Thread the needle with good design. There are a dozen devices to snag and hold a mooring line. Most are complex; not all can be easily retrieved. The Kong 210 is an intelligent piece of marine technology that uses your boathook as the delivery reach for a marine stainless-steel hook that can seize a thimble or a ring eye simply. Your mooring line is attached to the Kong 210's base (with seamanlike care). Its hook is held open with a bail pushed forward against a bit of tension in the mooring line. When the boathook is pulled back, the hook closes. To disconnect, the boathook's end bulb is pushed into the bail, the line is tensioned, the hook departs. There are other connectors, including the venerable bronze Grabit Boathook, a century-old bronze antique that can cost upwards of $700. Ultimately, simplicity getting on and getting off the dock is paramount.



Want to Learn More?

WoodenBoat's membership site, Mastering Skills, is a treasury of videos, books, and articles dedicated to teaching—and inspiring—students of wooden boat building. To view the trailer for our video on choosing and using boat hooks, scan the QR code above, or visit https://skills.woodenboat.com/videos/an-upstanding-boathook/.

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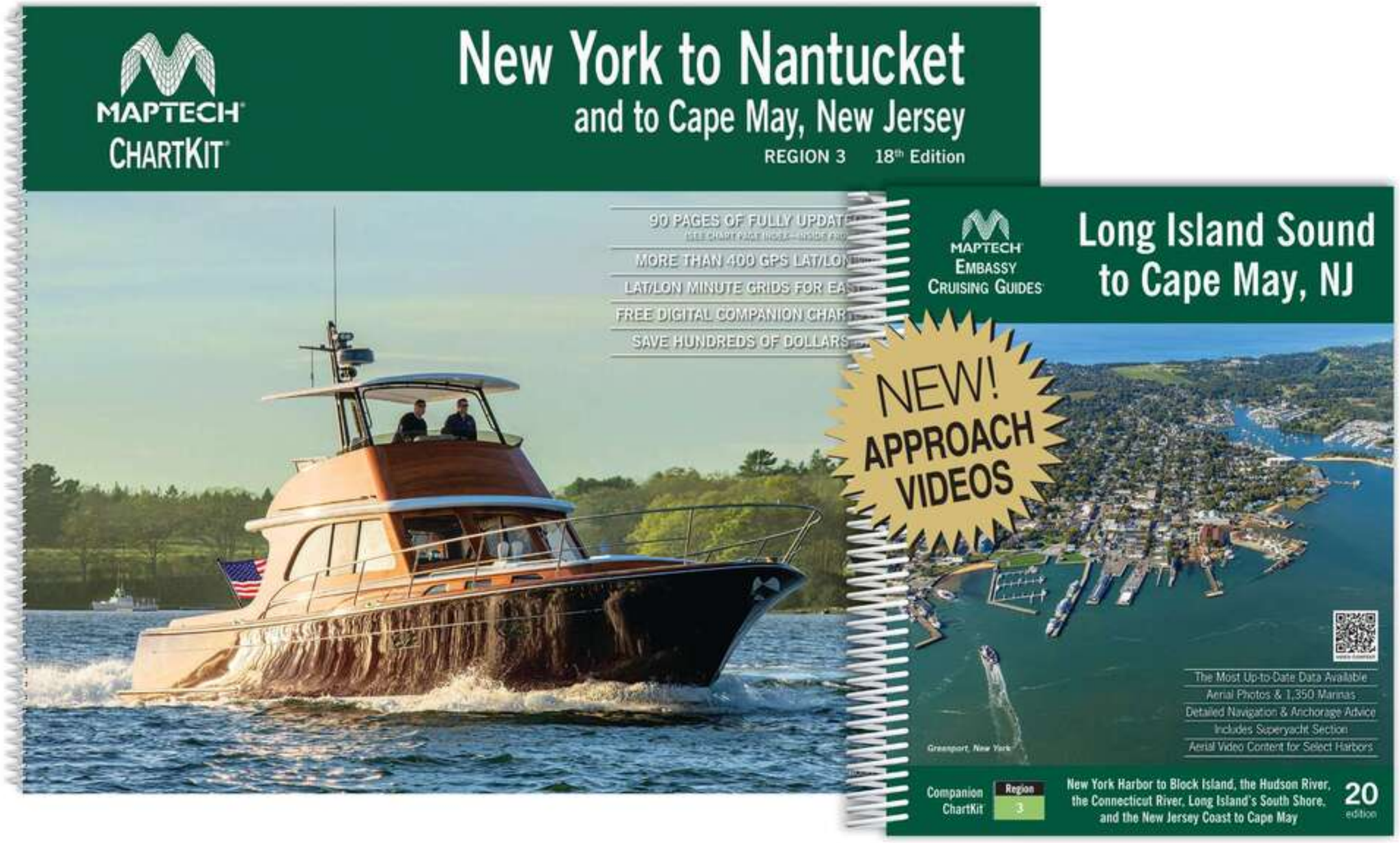

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A Good Day at Michael Rybovich & Sons

The magic continues into a second century

by Randall Peffer

RYBOVICH FAMILY ARCHIVES

It has been shaping up to be just another busy morning at Michael Rybovich & Sons boatyard on the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW) in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida.

But then, what appears to be a stray tiger cat comes racing down the dock, makes a flying leap aboard the spanking new 62′ PERLAMAR, and dashes across the cockpit for the open engineroom companionway.

"Grab that cat!" shouts 37-year-old Dusty Rybovich.

His brother, Alex Gill, age 36, bolts aboard the sportfishing boat in pursuit.

Dusty and Alex are the fourth generation of the Rybovich family's boatbuilding dynasty. The storied designer and builder Michael Rybovich (of generation three) is nearly 70, and he has handed over the day-to-day operations of the family business to his two sons. These days he roams the yard consulting with more than 40 employees working on dozens of projects. Currently, there are no fewer than five custom cold-molded sportfishing yachts under construction, ranging from 42′ to 84′ LOA, and an equal number of repair jobs.

As Rybovich customers, visitors, and that crazy cat could tell you, there's something old-school about Michael Rybovich & Sons. This ain't no factory. It's a family business, pure and complicated. Dusty, a trained naval architect, works on the endless tweaks to design and engineering choices and manages the flow of materials and sub-contractors. Alex oversees the proper installation and operation of the mechanical and electrical systems on the customers' boats.

This winter morning, Dusty and Alex have been focused on PERLAMAR. They have recently launched this state-of-the-art sportfishing yacht and are scheduled in a few weeks to load her aboard a ship bound

***Above*—LADY REBECCA, a 68-footer, is exemplary of the latest generation of sportfishing yachts associated with the legendary Rybovich boatbuilding name. Launched in 2017, she was the third yacht built by Michael Rybovich & Sons, based in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. The yard is currently constructing its hull No. 9, a 70-footer.**

RANDALL PEFFER

RYBOVICH FAMILY ARCHIVES

***Left*—Michael Rybovich, right, and his son Alex Gill, left, relax in the cockpit after the first sea trials of the yard's latest construction, PERLAMAR, a 62-footer launched in November 2024. *Above right*—Dusty Rybovich is the firm's lead yacht designer. He and his brother, Alex, who specializes in mechanical and electrical systems, are leading the family into its fourth generation of boatbuilding and continuing its legacy of cold-molded wood construction.**

for Costa Rica. But the yard still has a few gremlins to shake out before sending her off to her owners. Today, the issue is the autopilot's interface with the navigation system.

"The gerbil hasn't learned to talk to the hamster yet," says Michael, who harbors a healthy skepticism for how technologically complex modern boats have become.

He has instilled in his sons the conviction that delivering the highest-quality vessel possible has been job No. 1 for every Rybovich boat since his grandfather John "Pop" Rybovich set up a boatshop here in the Palm Beach area more than a hundred years ago. A glitchy autopilot would not be a good look for a vessel with such a pedigree. Neither would a stray cat in the engineroom. So, Dusty is trying to call in his A Team of electronic subcontractors today...and Alex is in cat-capturing mode.

Meanwhile, there is a twinkle in Michael's eye. He seems to sense that once again the gods are about to smile on the Rybovich family. Maybe the cat's dash aboard PERLAMAR is an omen. It showed up in the yard shortly after the yard's colorful machinist, Dick "Bobo" Morrison, died. The cat set up camp in the machine shop and has never left. After it started turning up for regular team meetings and making a show of its feisty personality, this cat seemed to the Rybovich crew to be Morrison's re-incarnated soul. They started calling it "Bobo."

"We might get lucky today," Alex says after he has ushered Bobo ashore.

"You want to run?" Dusty asks—and by "run," he means take PERLAMAR for a sea trial.

Alex grins as if to say, "Hell, yeah." A cold front has just blown through South Florida overnight and left in its wake one of those cloudless, crystal days that make you crave casting off the lines and leaving your troubles ashore.

Early in the afternoon, plaintive phone calls have been made, and three marine electronics whisperers are now scrambling over PERLAMAR. Michael is rigging the new anchor and rode. Dusty has downed his usual bowl of cereal for lunch. Alex has had some one-on-one time with Bobo; he and the cat just get each other.

After the electronics gurus believe they have fixed a bad connection in a wiring harness, it's thumbs up for the test run. Someone fires up the twin MTU diesel engines. Dusty takes the helm. Alex and his dad cast off the lines. The electronics guys gather on the flying bridge. There's a lot of happy chatter as Dusty pivots the yacht away from the dock and turns south on the ICW toward Lake Worth.

"Show time," someone says.

The Early Days

Those words—"show time"—have probably been uttered aboard newly launched custom Rybovich boats for more than a century. In 1900, Michael's grandfather, John Rybovich Sr., emigrated at the age of 16 from Austria-Hungary to the United States. He was a carpenter. After clearing through New York's Ellis Island, he heard stories of a place called Florida and its Palm Beach winter playground for the rich and famous. By 1911, Rybovich had chased his dreams to Palm Beach and was dividing his time between building houses and commercial fishing. He and his young bride, born Anna Pollack in Czechoslovakia, bought a house on the shores of Lake Worth, where they began raising five children and keeping milk cows.

As it happened, local fishermen took note of Rybovich's skills at building and maintaining his skiffs. Soon, they began to bring their own boats to him for repairs and modifications. In 1919, John "Pop" Rybovich's boatyard was born.

RYBOVICH FAMILY ARCHIVES

PERLAMAR was in the shop for final touches—in this case, painting the boottop—ahead of her November 2024 sea trials, after which she was immediately bound for Costa Rica on a sportfishing trip.

"Although it had never been his intended vocation," Michael says, "it all seemed to make sense…as if it was meant to be."

For the next 20 years, the business grew despite hurricanes and the Great Depression. Pop's oldest son, John Jr. or "Johnny," began working in the yard alongside his father. It was during those years that Johnny caught his first sailfish.

"The many hours Johnny spent fishing for fun awakened him to the idea that a boat could—and should—be set up specifically for sportfishing," Michael says.

Johnny's interest in the sporting side of fishing led to innovation. Soon a growing number of Palm Beach's wealthy boatowners were coming to the Rybovich yard for outriggers, fighting chairs, gunwale-mounted rod holders, and topside-mounted controls.

By the mid-1930s, Zane Grey and other authors were thrilling their readers with stories about big-game-fishing adventures. Bimini, Cat Cay, and other Bahamian islands across the Gulf Stream from South Florida began hosting game-fishing tournaments. Boats that had been modified by Rybovich were there, often with Pop's three sons—Johnny, Tommy, and Emil—aboard.

During World War II, Pop kept his yard busy converting civilian pleasure craft for military service. He repaired and maintained patrol boats and launches with the help of his daughters, Ethel and Mary Irene.

PERLAMAR Particulars

LOA	62′
Beam	18′6″
Draft	5′6″
Top speed(fully loaded)	42+ knots
Power	Twin MTU 12V2000 M96L–1920 hp
Generators	Twin Northern Lights 25kW
Fuel capacity	2,260 gal
Fresh-water capacity	370 gal
Displacement (loaded)	92,000 lbs
Design and naval architecture	Michael Rybovich & Sons

Meanwhile, the boys went to war. Johnny became an army procurement officer. Tommy flew B-17s in Europe. Emil crewed air-sea rescue boats.

A half hour later, Dusty is clicking PERLAMAR's engines in and out of gear, holding the boat's position as he waits for the bridge tender to open the span over the ICW at PGA Boulevard (named after the Professional Golfers Association to honor another of the area's passions). On the flying bridge, the men have begun to talk in a higher octave and shift their weight from one leg to the other. Anticipation is building for the run that lies ahead, the moment when PERLAMAR breaks out of the ICW channel onto Lake Worth as Dusty opens the throttles and the twin MTUs unleash nearly 2,000 hp apiece. Everyone is anxious about whether the gerbil will talk to the hamster when he snaps on the autopilot as the hull jumps up on plane and starts screaming along at more than 40 knots.

Down in the cockpit, Michael and Alex lounge against the transom rail. They are not talking. Both men seem lost in thought. No doubt, they are letting go of a hundred challenges left behind with Bobo in the boatyard. Maybe they are musing over the twists and turns of the Rybovich family story.

Revolutionary Icons

After World War II ended and Pop's sons returned home from military service, he turned over the operation of the yard, now Rybovich & Sons, to "the boys," just as Michael is doing now with Dusty and Alex.

"Johnny's service taught him business skills and introduced him to the emerging material technology in military hardware," Michael says. "Emil, a self-taught mechanical engineer, was exposed to the engineering and performance standards within the fleet of Army boats for which he was responsible. Tommy was absorbed with aerodynamics, aircraft construction, and the beauty and efficiency of a clean line."

In 1946, opportunity came calling. A big-game fisherman named Charles Johnson wanted something special. He asked the Rybovich boys to build a new boat specifically for tuna fishing. Johnny developed the concept for a 34′ design. Tommy, the most artistic of the three brothers, gave the boat a skin of high-gloss paint and varnished mahogany.

"My father, Emil, installed a pair of eight-cylinder Chryslers with aircraft-style steering, instrumentation, and full dual-station controls," Michael says.

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Launched as MISS CHEVY II in 1947, the new boat was dry, stable, and capable of 20 knots. It carried the world's first set of aluminum outriggers and a fighting chair that is still what Michael calls "the print and pattern for today's chairs." Customers began standing in line to get a crack at owning a tricked-out Rybovich. After fishing MISS CHEVY II for four years, Johnson wanted something new.

Michael remembers how it came to be. "Tommy had been experimenting with an idea he had for eliminating the forward trunk by raising the foredeck to create the headroom needed down below, and in doing so, cleaned up the line of the deckhouse. While Tommy was busy in another part of the yard, Johnny was in the drawing room intrigued by his brother's attempt. He erased the latest version of the sheer and sketched in one with a convex transition similar to what Chris-Craft had done in the late 1940s…. In 1952, MISS CHEVY IV was launched with a 'broken sheer,' an aluminum tuna-tower, and a transom or tuna door for boating big fish without hauling them over the side with a gin-pole. She was the first Rybovich built with Philippine mahogany," which the Rybovich yard, like Chris-Craft, turned to mainly because of its availability and cost. "Once again, the Rybovich boys had delivered a boat that would define the next phase of sportfishing."

Over the years, the brothers began edge-gluing the planking on their hulls with resorcinol glue, without using cotton caulking. The result was a seamless painted finish. Then, during the mid-1950s, they began equipping their boats with engines using diesel instead of gasoline. At the same time, they added a trained naval architect, Jack Hargrave, to their team.

In 1958, a customer ordered a boat from Rybovich under one condition: that his boat be built using epoxy resin instead of resorcinol glue. As the construction progressed, the brothers began to see the possibilities of combining epoxy and wood construction. The use of epoxy was fairly new, but cold-molded construction had been around since the 1940s, when it was first used for aircraft.

Cold-molding began to intrigue Tommy, who took over one corner of the construction shed to build a small, cold-molded hull upside down over a jig. "The boat had no conventional frames to define its form," Michael says. "A series of fore-and-aft stringers ran from stem to stern," supported by a few temporary transverse molds. "Tommy had mahogany planking sliced to ⅜" thick, and it was only after the planking was applied in opposing diagonal layers that the onlookers could determine the hull shape. The planking was glued and held together 'wet' with bronze nails and fastened to the longitudinals. After the hull had been sanded, two layers of fiberglass cloth were applied and saturated in epoxy. The hull was again sanded smooth, at which point the temporary stations were removed, leaving a stiff one-piece wooden hull that was 20 percent lighter, had more room inside, and took less time to build than a conventional hull."

In 1961, Rybovich built the 50′ sportfishing boat BLUE FOX with a cold-molded hull. There was no turning back. By 1968, the yard was using cold-molding

RYBOVICH FAMILY ARCHIVES (BOTH)

***Above left*—The 32′ MISS CHEVY II of 1947 was the first sportfishing yacht built at the boatyard founded in 1919 by John Rybovich Sr. After his sons Johnny and Tommy returned from World War II service, the elder Rybovich turned the yard over to them, and Johnny's avid sportfishing interest took the yard in a new direction. *Above right*—BLUE FOX, a 50-footer launched in 1961, was the first Rybovich yacht to be cold-molded with three layers of Philippine mahogany planking instead of two.**

exclusively for building hulls, at least two decades before the technique became the industry standard for custom sportfishing boats. Since then, the yard has been an industry leader in improving cold-molded hull construction techniques. They always use Philippine mahogany, a marketing term that covers a number of species, principally meranti.

But the Ryboviches were not just innovators in the boatyard. For years, Johnny had been an advocate for catch-and-release fishing for billfish and became a founder of the Master's Angling Tournament, the world's most prestigious tournament of the type. He also introduced the Tournament of Champions, a fishing derby designed to raise money for conservation. Discovering that billfish mortality was much higher when using live bait, Johnny founded the Gold Cup Tournament in 1972 to award more points for fish caught on dead bait.

RYBOVICH FAMILY ARCHIVES (BOTH)

PERLAMAR, like all the other sportfishing yachts bearing the Rybovich name, was built with a cold-molded hull (left) and her cabin, too, was built of wood (right).

Defending wood

In his regular column "Stem to Stern" for *Power & Motoryacht*, Michael Rybovich wrote "A Wooden Soldier's Defense," in support of wooden hull construction:

"Building one-off prototypes out of wood makes it easy to modify the architecture of our hulls. When we want to tweak the hull shape geometry with a new idea, wood is more cooperative than plastic with the tools in the hands of a competent shipwright. It is easy to cut and shape, and it bends in a predictable manner. A cold-molded wood hull is lighter (stop smirking, skeptic, and weigh one against the other!) than solid or composite FRP hulls when built with proven engineering and not over-built because you didn't run the numbers. This allows us to run faster and burn less fuel. Wood is economical, readily available, and easily repairable."

—*RP*

Meanwhile, Tommy and the naval architect Giovanni Cardelli were carving models and towing them behind a Boston Whaler with a scale fitted to a boom to measure resistance and observe the models' trim angles. When they refined a model that satisfied their performance parameters, Tommy would incorporate the lessons learned into his latest hull. After the hull was built, Cardelli took the lines off the new hull and drew the body plan accordingly. The method led to ever-faster and more seakindly hull shapes. And the Rybovich legend grew.

A quarter-hour after clearing the drawbridge, an increase in the MTUs' rpm seems like a call to arms aboard PERLAMAR. Michael and Alex climb the ladder from the cockpit to join Dusty and the electronics guys on the flying bridge. There is only one more span to clear on the ICW channel before it's show time, when this floating piece of furniture will turn into a sea dragon that would have brought a smile to Pop's face.

Big Changes

Pop Rybovich died in 1970. Tommy died in 1972. "When Tommy passed, the soul of the yard was lost," Michael says. By then, Michael was a teenager working at Rybovich & Sons with his father and uncles. "The day-to-day challenges at the yard without Tommy, along with familial and financial concerns, eventually proved too great for the surviving brothers and the yard was sold in 1975," he said.

Michael stayed with the new owners until 1984, long enough to complete the journeyman phase of his boatbuilding career. Then he branched out on his own to build sportfishing yachts as Rybovich International with his father, Emil; his brother, Marty Evans; and a family friend, Ed Bussey. Meanwhile, Rybovich & Sons, with a crew of artisans who had matured under the family business, continued building custom sportfishing yachts in South Florida through four subsequent ownerships.

"By the mid-1990s, we were building a 60′ sportfisherman under the name Ryco Marine," Michael says. Legal action by the latest corporate owners of the former family boatyard had forced him to drop the use of the family name from his business as well as to avoid using Rybovich signature details such as the broken sheer and double handrails on his new boats.

Still, things were going well for Michael's boatbuilding enterprise, until Hurricane Wilma destroyed Ryco Marine in 2005. But, as luck would have it, the Florida businessman Wayne Huizenga Jr. had purchased the original Rybovich yard in 2004. By 2005, he needed a management team for the boatbuilding division, and he invited Michael and Ryco into a merger. The

RYBOVICH FAMILY ARCHIVES

Accommodations for many years have responded to demand for increasingly luxurious appointments, as shown by PERSISTENCE's main saloon.

arrangement, under the name of Rybovich & Sons, brought the family business and the family name back together again after more than 30 years of separation.

For the next four years, the company thrived, delivering five boats between 54′ and 78′ long. But as the recession of 2008 deepened, orders for new boats dried up. In 2010, management shelved new construction altogether to focus on the development of a full-service marina for top-end yachts. Repairwork was three times more profitable than boatbuilding.

"Facing the end of the creative process with Rybovich & Sons, I was forced to rethink the partnership," Michael says. "I made the decision to leave, and to proceed on my own with a new company, Michael Rybovich & Sons. It was a pretty crazy thing to do for a man in his 50s. My wife, Julia, and I threw every cent we owned into the new venture. It was a huge leap of faith."

But for Julia, there was never a question about risking the family nest egg. "I have always trusted Michael's decisions, and it has been a wonderful journey," she says. "He really loves what he does, and it shows."

Dusty has just cleared the final road bridge over the ICW and is steering PERLAMAR toward the open water of Lake Worth, a saltwater lagoon about 21 miles long and a mile wide behind barrier islands, including Palm Beach. On this Thursday afternoon, there is virtually no boat traffic around. The lake is wide open to the Singer Island Bridge, about 6 miles ahead. It is the perfect place and time for a drag race.

Michael and Alex, standing behind Dusty at the helm, reach out to the struts on the aluminum tuna tower to steady themselves.

"Hold on," says Michael to the electronics technicians.

Then Dusty starts nudging the throttles forward. PERLAMAR rises up on a step and goes ballistic. It's so quiet on the bridge, with only the rush of the wind around the side curtains, that it seems as if the boat has broken the sound barrier. No creaking of superstructure or furniture, no hull chatter. The mansions on the shore are just whizzing past.

***Below left*—The cockpit of PERSISTENCE, elegant as it is, still has a central purpose: the pursuit of trophy fish. *Below right*—Her flying bridge is loaded with electronics, including a lower array for engine monitoring and control; a central array of large Garmin multifunction displays, including a fishfinder; and an upper array of a Furuno multifunction display (center) and two VHF radio monitors.**

RYBOVICH FAMILY ARCHIVES

RYBOVICH FAMILY ARCHIVES

PERLAMAR's interior construction follows the Rybovich tradition of showcasing the beauty of wood combined with elegant and purposeful design.

A New Generation

With coastal fisheries in decline, Michael says, tournament competitors and those passionate about sportfishing are traveling farther offshore in search of game fish. Their boats require more capacity for fuel and fresh water, better accommodations, more sophisticated galleys, ample storage, and the elegant interiors formerly reserved for motoryachts. In the past, many of those pursuing game fish went to sea to get away from it all. Today they want to take it all with them: air conditioning, ample refrigeration, laundry facilities, the latest home theater, internet service, watermakers, scuba gear, drones, AIS, and computer-driven weather and navigation systems.

"They want sonar that can spot a game fish at a quarter of a mile," Alex says, "and a gyro stabilizer like a Seakeeper."

All these additions require boats of considerable size. The average length of a Rybovich in the 1950s was about 40′. In the '60s, that number increased to 50′. Today's custom sportfishing yacht is about 70′ LOA, and that number is still increasing.

"And, of course, the boats have gotten lighter and faster," Dusty adds. "We try to build each one better than the one that came before."

Michael says that today the truly competitive tournament boats are all very similar in appearance and performance. The one big thing the Ryboviches have to differentiate their boats from the next guy's is a 105-year-long reputation for uncompromising quality and a long history of building boats with wood.

"We are still building a cold-molded hull with [Philippine] mahogany," Dusty says, "usually with three layers of 5⁄16″ veneers on the bottom and sides. Both the inside and outside of the hull are sealed with 1708 biaxial cloth set in epoxy. The keel and stem are laminated meranti. The main engine stringers are Douglas-fir. Teak is still our go-to for any varnished trim."

But the rest of construction is pretty different. Today, Rybovich uses composites such as Tricel honeycomb panels to reduce weight and Coosa board for exterior applications to avoid rot. The yard subcontracts with fabricators to cut the jig sections and interior furniture with five-axis CNC machines. They have found an Italian glassmaker to provide a wraparound tinted windshield for the saloon, bringing abundant light inside.

Dusty learned computer design for hulls when he studied naval architecture at Webb Institute in Glen Cove, New York. But in his office, "The Perch," which overlooks the Rybovich yard's construction bays, various hull models hang from the ceiling. "You can design something that looks perfect on a computer screen, but nothing beats a model and tank-testing to find those little tweaks," Dusty says.

Alex is also a hands-on, sawdust-on-the-T-shirt kind of guy, like his brother and his father. He studied machinery, engineering, electrical systems, and plumbing systems during his years in community college, but he says his real education came from working alongside professionals in the shop, such as Michael and the late Dick Morrison.

RANDALL PEFFER

Even as PERLAMAR was launching, a 70-footer was nearly ready for hull setup, with bulkheads and molds standing by as keel assembly advanced.

RYBOVICH FAMILY ARCHIVES (BOTH)

***Right*—Like other types, sportfishing yachts have trended larger in recent decades; the yard's longest boat so far is III AMIGOS, a 94-footer launched in 2021. *Bottom*—The first yacht built at the latest iteration of the Rybovich company, Michael Rybovich & Sons, was LIZZY BEE, a 64-footer launched in 2014.**

Both Alex and Dusty are in boatbuilding for the long haul, just like the three generations that came before them, and they have their work cut out for them. PERLAMAR is hull No. 8 for Michael Rybovich & Sons. No. 9, a 70-footer, is coming together in a construction bay, as is No. 10, a 42′ day boat, and No. 11, a 75-footer whose construction started a year ago. The jig sections for No. 12, which will be 84′ overall, are cut and waiting for the yard to set up the jig and start planking.

Michael has just four words of advice for his boys as they take the company reins: "Listen, think, and create." It has been the family mantra for as long as any Rybovich can remember.

Just over an hour after setting out, PERLAMAR has completed a series of perfect S-turns at speed, performed under the control of the navigation system and the autopilot, the men on the yacht's bridge are slapping high-fives and grinning as Dusty directs the autopilot to turn north for the run home. It won't be long before she's ready to chase millions of dollars in tournament prize money. Now she's charging into the chop stirred up by the 25-knot northwest breeze. Even though the Seakeeper gyro has not yet been installed, the yacht holds her course, as straight and true as an arrow.

Finding the Zen

Dusty says the creativity of boatbuilding is his favorite part of the work. He loves the moment when he sees and feels the thing he shaped on a computer finally breathing fire and taking flight.

What Alex likes best about his job is "seeing the look of joy on my dad's face when she gets up and goes like this."

"I'm out here breathing the salt air," Michael shrugs. "It's all good."

He might well add that PERLAMAR is turning out to be one hell of a boat. Sometimes a stray cat knows a thing or two.

Randall Peffer is a regular contributor to WoodenBoat.

Reid Bandy's Ryboviches

Using composites to reimagine vintage yachts

Text by Joe Evans · Photographs by John Bildahl

Reid Bandy was a front-row art-class student in grade school who was captivated by lessons in perspective, scale, form, function, and sketching. He was also obsessed with boats, and his drawings looked like Rybovich sportfishing yachts (see page 40). "I don't think I had ever seen a Rybo in person," he says. "It's just what I thought a cool boat should look like—the broken sheer, trunk cabin, outriggers, and tournament cockpit."

Bandy grew up in a do-it-yourself household under the guidance of his dad, who built their houses and handled the relentless maintenance and upgrades required for the family's Cal 25 sailboat—even designing and making their own racing sails. They won three national championships in the class.

In high school, he developed a passion for sportfishing and would pool odd-job money with his friends to buy blue-water tuna trips out of Ocean City, Maryland. He was also able to wander the docks and board the serious sportfishing machines built by Ocean, Viking, Egg Harbor, North American, Hatteras, and Post—as well as Carolina-style boats. Among this fleet was one in particular: a pink Rybovich, which somehow is at the heart of this story.

"These boats propelled me to get out my sketchbook and see how things would fit together and look good…asking the questions, 'Can you live in this? Can I make it open and airy? Where does everything go?'" he says.

The sketchbook came with him during his engineering studies at Drexel University in Philadelphia. Although he enjoyed the puzzles and the math for a couple of years, he came to realize that he didn't much like the idea of a desk job. Preferring hands-on work, he returned to Maryland and got a job in an auto-body shop, where he learned about work pressure, customer service, production, restoration, sanding, fairing, and paint. In 1981, he opened his own shop. The business grew into two robust locations, allowing him the time and wherewithal to buy a used 40′ Jersey Dawn sportfishing boat and join the Ocean City scene on every spare weekend. Around the docks and on the water, he came to appreciate the elegant dominance of the custom boats coming from the Carolina Outer Banks. "I saw the wisdom of the Carolina evolutions. The boats had lines similar to those of the old Ryboviches, and they performed well. I wanted one," he says. But first, he wanted to learn something about boatbuilding.

***Above*—Reid Bandy is an expert in composite boatbuilding but he retains an admiration for classic wooden-hulled sportfishing boats, especially those carrying the Rybovich name.**

The top speed of TIMID TUNA, a 1955 36-footer, increased from 25 knots to 35 knots after Bandy reimagined her for his own use, greatly reducing the weight of her upper structure but respecting the Rybovich styling.

In 1991, Bandy found a forsaken 40′ Hooper Island drake-tail with a beam of 6′6″, one of the few remaining examples of the skinny boats that in the 1920s brought engine power to Chesapeake Bay commercial fishing, crabbing, and oystering. Her bottom was cross-planked with local loblolly pine and white cedar on oak frames, and the hull wasn't in terrible shape. "It was amazing just how well built she was," he recalls. "I used old-growth wood to replace some planks, refitted her, and painted her—figuring generous coats of Kirby's red lead paint each year might protect her. But, in the long run, nothing could save her from the rusty iron drifts that held the planks together. The project stoked my fascination with wooden boat construction and the realities of time and deterioration. I donated her to the Annapolis Maritime Museum & Park and started learning how to build boats with modern materials that would last," leaning heavily on the wood-epoxy methods that Meade Gougeon described in *The Gougeon Brothers on Boat Construction*, first published in 1979.

In 1996, after 15 White Marlin Open Tournaments and about 1,000 additional hours searching and catching billfish, tuna, and striped bass, he realized his next dream by replacing the Jersey boat with a 53′ Jarret Bay convertible, carvel-planked with juniper, from an Oregon Inlet charter captain. He ran her back to Ocean City, and the next winter he brought her to Annapolis and worked on basic repairs and modifications.

In 1998, Bandy sketched an idea for a 26′ Carolina-style fishing skiff and took it to Mick Price, a designer and CAD software jockey in Bruce Farr's yacht design office, with an idea to build it like a racing sailboat but using strips of DuraKore, a composite of fiberglass and end-grain balsa. Price worked out the weight and laminate details and introduced Bandy to the magic of RHINO 3D modeling software. Together, they arrived at the scantlings to meet Bandy's goal of a Carolina-style boat, but much lighter.

He erected a tent in his yard and began learning about epoxy, fiberglass, DuraKore, and large-scale fairing and sanding. "My car shop experience helped with all that," he says. "It took me about a year to build the boat, then I put a used Evinrude 225 on her and ran it to death." He put more than 2,000 hours on her without any issues and sold her to a customer on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. "He brings it back for basic service every year, and the boat's holding up quite well," he says.

Among Bandy's composite construction experiments was this frameless 24′ fishing skiff of carbon fiber on foam. He adapted experience gained on such projects to aspects of his restorations of wooden-hulled Ryboviches.

For TIMID TUNA, Bandy built a cold-molded tunnel into the hull bottom aft to accommodate the propeller-shaft's angle reduction from 12 degrees to 6 degrees.

That boat led Bandy into the world of lightweight composite construction, venturing into Corecell foam, carbon fiber, and E-glass instead of balsa. He bought a RHINO license and learned the program with tutoring from the folks at AeroHydro, a 3D modeling company based in Southwest Harbor, Maine, which had a Maryland sales and support office at the time. In 2003, he rented shop space in a marina on an open-ended lease, not knowing where all this might go. His first major project was the design and construction of a 35′, 38-knot, 'glass-and-Corecell express fishing boat. He ran her straight to Ocean City to fish and demonstrate how she could go quickly out and back to the Canyons—some 140 miles—on 45 gallons. She turned some heads. He followed that project with other innovative boats, including a 50-knot, open, 27-footer and an experimental 24′ × 6′ frameless carbon-fiber-on-foam fishing skiff.

Boat repairs, antique outboards, and cars filled the shop for a while, but at the same time Bandy rekindled a fascination with the Rybovich legacy and these beautiful boats that defined the Florida sportfishing genre. The tribal nature of social media had become a reality, and Bandy readily joined the classic-boat conversations, especially any posts with the Rybovich keyword. In 2016, he heard about a couple of 36-footers languishing in a shed in Florida, both of them owned by a former Rybo employee and fellow fanatic named Bob Bingham. Bandy calls this "just dumb internet luck." He flew down to have a look and found the partially restored BUTTERBALL of 1954. The other boat, built in 1955, was in sorry shape, with traces of her fading pink paint deep in the grain of her mahogany topsides underneath shrink wrap, which was basically holding her together. She was the very same boat that Bandy had admired as a teenager.

DRIFTER (ex-BUTTERBALL) also had a stern tunnel built into the hull; as seen in this photograph it is sheathed in fiberglass cloth set in epoxy as is the rest of the hull.

"I wasn't interested in BUTTERBALL," Bandy says, "but the pink boat was so far gone that it presented an opportunity to modify and improve with modern materials and concepts—a modern single engine, 'glass-on-foam decks and superstructure, reduced prop-shaft angle, improved weight distribution, and new deck and cabin layouts. My thinking was to rebuild her to modern standards to provide durability and low maintenance while preserving her essential Rybovich look and integrity. This wouldn't be a restoration but a reimagination."

Bandy's boatyard friend, Mark Hall, who has a robust historic home restoration business, took an interest in BUTTERBALL. The two of them negotiated a package deal and brought the boats to Maryland for side-by-side restorations.

Bandy's boat—the pink one—was originally TIMID TUNA, built for an Al Capone associate named Tony Accardo, also known as "Tony the Tuna."

"Her keel was just mush," Bandy says. "The ends were gone, the bottom was shot, jackstands had pushed through in places. There was just enough planking left, glued together with resorcinol, to hold her together." The first steps were to stabilize her and replace the failed 1″ × 3″ oak frames with 2″ × 6″ Douglas-fir, then replace about two-thirds of the topside planking and refasten those that could be saved.

Then both boats needed to be dried out, which Bandy monitored with moisture meters, first outside under a tent to

TIMID TUNA was repowered with a 600-hp Cummins diesel engine, and at the same time a new 215-gallon fuel tank was installed.

bring them down to 11 percent, then moving them indoors to get down to about 8 percent, which, in Bandy's assessment, is about what you would find in wooden household furniture.

While the boats were drying out, Bandy entered their particulars into RHINO to begin the redesign work. "The design phase is critical in ensuring the outcome," he says. "There's a weight study and calculations of center of gravity and center of buoyancy. In two words, it's hydrostatics and weight. That's what allows you to have faith in the outcome. When these boats were built, they weighed 18,000 lbs dry. In the water they would soak up to become 20,000 to 22,000 lbs. Our plan was to dry them out, replace what needed to go, seal them inside and out by laminating epoxy and E-glass, replace the twin drive trains and gas engines with single 600-hp Cummins diesels, install new bottoms with cold-molded prop pockets to reduce the shaft angles from 12 degrees to 6, and build lower engine placements forward to account for the changes in buoyancy due to the new prop pockets—and launch them into new careers." BUTTERBALL would be renamed DRIFTER and would retain her previously replaced decks, but her cockpit sole, bridge, house, and furnishings would be rebuilt with Corecell, fiberglass, and epoxy. "But in TIMID TUNA, I replaced everything other than the structure of the wooden hull, frames, and stringers with high-density foam and E-glass panels to save weight and ensure strength and low maintenance while preserving the classic Rybovich look and details. The composite stuff weighs about half that of wood," he says.

After four years of sawing, sanding, fairing, laminating, painting, sweating, angst, and money, they launched the boats. And Bandy said, "I'll never do another project like this again."

When the work was done and the boats were relaunched, BUTTERBALL weighed 14,500 lbs; TIMID TUNA is 12,500 lbs. "The net horsepower is about the same as the originals, but the boats are faster and more efficient. TIMID TUNA's

***Above left*—For TIMID TUNA, a new deckhouse and flying bridge assembly was fabricated of Corecell to reduce weight.**
***Above right*—The distinctive shape of a Rybovich handrail was built with foam and E-glass instead of wood.**

top speed increased from 25 to 35 knots. Plus, they are essentially sealed and their coatings have been maintenance-free for four years now," Bandy says.

Meanwhile, Bandy continued to sketch boats and collect projects to satisfy his compulsion to create and restore things—including a 32′ carbon-on-foam yacht weighing 4,100 lbs fully loaded and capable of a top speed of 40 knots and cruising in the mid-20-knot range burning about 6 gallons per hour with a single 300-hp outboard engine.

Ten months ago, I visited Bandy's shop to see what kind of madness was brewing. He always has a seemingly endless collection of projects waiting for attention, or not. He says, "I look for the most complete old thing with a good story." Previous visits showed collectibles such as a 1957 Flying Dutchman one-design sailboat that someone dropped off there instead of the landfill; a 1926, 40′ long-deck motor launch by Hutchinson Brothers of Alexandria Bay, New York; an 18′ power canoe built in 1910 by B.N. Morris of

***Above left*—DRIFTER retains her outboard appearance and original paint scheme, and her new and lighter composite house follows the original 1954 styling. *Above right*—Building Corecell cabins and superstructures reduced the boats' dry weight from the original 18,000 lbs to 14,500 lbs for DRIFTER and even less, 12,500 lbs, for TIMID TUNA.**

Veazie, Maine; a couple of vintage hydroplanes once owned by national racing champion Tiger Petrini; a 1905, 35′ cedar-strip and mahogany Leyare Gold Cup Racer; a 1958 Volkswagen Bug; various collectible motorcycles—and, now taking up most of the indoor space, two more Rybovich classics in rough shape: LUCAYAN, a 1962 31-footer; and MYKONOS (ex-BANGEE), a 1956 42-footer. I reminded him of his vow to never do this again. He said, "I don't know. I don't go looking for these projects. They just find me."

MYKONOS had popped up on Bandy's eBay radar in 2019. Bob Bingham had her for sale, and he agreed to a trade—a 42′ Rybo in exchange for a single-owner 1967 Camaro SS, fully restored and freshly painted. MYKONOS was not in great shape—just what Bandy likes.

Then, in 2022, another Rybo fanatic told him about a boat stuck inside a private airplane hangar in Florida, part of an estate sale. Bandy went to have a look, worked out a deal, then hauled her back to Maryland. "I wasn't planning on doing anything, but I didn't want these boats to get chopped up and thrown away," he says.

LUCAYAN was built as a long-range resort taxi to run gambling parties from Palm Beach to Grand Bahama without refueling. Rybovich had installed a large fuel tank to feed a pair of gas engines on the round-trip and glued and screwed

After the TIMID TUNA and DRIFTER projects, Bandy turned to yet another project involving a Rybovich—the 1962, 31′ LUCAYAN. The work started with stripping out the hull and excavating rotten wood.

a 4″-thick, wedge-shaped mahogany fairing plank on the bottom to counteract the extra weight and correct the trim. This was the first thing that would have to go. Bandy knew that he would be installing a more efficient single diesel engine in place of the old gas engines, and it would go farther forward and lower to allow a reduced propeller shaft angle into a prop-pocket, as with the earlier projects. All this would be worked out in RHINO.

He chose a marinized 570-hp Fiat Performance Technology engine, "the highest horsepower-to-weight engine in its class," he says. He designed the prop-pocket and established the new buoyancy and running characteristics. As he recalls, "Since the boat was going to be faster, the hull bottom would need to be stronger to take the pounding. I increased the size of the frames and glued down a layer of 9mm okoume plywood over the existing bottom to secure stiffness and create a substantial substrate." This also allowed him to use shorter and wider stringers to keep everything low and tight in the new engine space. He ordered a 165-gallon fuel tank based on an estimated 10 hours of consumption at cruising speed. "This was one of the earliest cold-molded Rybos. The original bottom is two layers of solid ⅜″ mahogany veneer. It's badass. The topsides are planked mahogany—just beautiful," he says.

He laminated the interior with 17-oz biaxial E-glass set in epoxy and then painted it with snow-white Awlgrip linear polyurethane, the same color as the original. Then he rolled her over. For the bottom planking, "Getting her upside down was critical to orienting the laminates longitudinally to avoid any chances of hydraulic delamination underway at high speed. I have 40-knot expectations, so delamination has to be taken seriously."

REID BANDY

***Right*—LUCAYAN's hull has been rejuvenated with a structural restoration and a cold-molded overlay; her superstructure will be reconstructed to the original shape using Corecell to save weight. *Facing page*—DRIFTER of 1954, at left, and TIMID TUNA of 1955 were bought simultaneously from a single owner in Florida and restored side by side in Bandy's boatshop. Their home waters are now on Chesapeake Bay.**

He applied three layers of 17-oz fabric on the topsides and four layers on her bottom, overlapped like shingles along her chines and keel to have as many as eight layers where needed. He then brought in a coating, fairing, and painting team, which used Awlfair LW fairing compound followed by Awlquick and Ultrabuild high-build primers before spraying on antifouling bottom paint. With the bottom work completed, he rolled her back upright for the topside and interior finish work.

He completed the interior wood repairs using E-glass on Corecell foam. Using epoxy, he sealed and 'glassed the coaming, side decks, cockpit, house, trunk, and the trim around the windshield.

He is not planning significant changes to her interior layout or appointments, but her cockpit will be an open fishing area instead of the long-distance water taxi accommodations she once had. Bandy hopes to have her in the water by summer, and then he'll start thinking about MYKONOS.

I asked Bandy a question: What is the end game?

"I see classic boats languishing at the docks and marinas to a point where recovery is not feasible. It's kind of crazy, but what I'm trying to achieve is a test to prove that these great boats, done right, can be a good value. They are low-maintenance and will perform as well as something brand new that comes along."

But now he has three Ryboviches, one finished, one nearly done, and one waiting for attention in the shop among other interesting projects. "I enjoy having them and seeing how they perform and last. TIMID TUNA has been in the water and running well for more than four years with no issues. I would hope to find sensible custodians for them, of course. Someone who appreciates the legacy of the boats, which now

includes what I've done to preserve and improve them. My goal is to make the boats robust enough to withstand generations of ownership, requiring the minimum maintenance of modern composite boats and having contemporary performance characteristics. I know I can't keep them forever…I'm just expressing what the Lord gave me."

Joe Evans was a sail designer at North Sails before building and repairing performance boats, including designs by Bruce Farr, German Frers, and Rob Humphreys. He subsequently produced films and articles for National Geographic, *CuriosityStream, HBO Max, and various sporting magazines. He also served as editor-in-chief of* Chesapeake Bay Magazine.

Joseph Conrad, Sailor

…and the origins of the yawl NELLIE

by Stan Grayson · Illustrations by Scott Kennedy

It is among the most evocative first lines in literature: "The NELLIE, a cruising yawl, swung to her anchor without a flutter of the sails, and was at rest." Thus, the scene is set and, as a windless twilight descends upon the lower reaches of the River Thames, a seaman named Marlow spins a yarn for his shipmates. It is the 1890s, just before the coming of small, gasoline engines suitable for yachts, and NELLIE's captain and crew adapt to nature's dictates, the ebbing and flooding of the tide, as sailors must.

"The flood had made, the wind was nearly calm, and being bound down the river, the only thing for it was to come to and wait for the turn of the tide…the tanned sails of the barges drifting up with the tide seemed to stand still in red clusters of canvas sharply peaked, with gleams of varnished sprits."

Joseph Conrad is painting with words. Only a writer who was also a thorough sailor could have composed such lines or imagined the cockpit of a 33′ yawl as just the place for his characters to relax while their shipmate relates his adventure as skipper of a small steamboat on the Congo River. Like Conrad himself, the fictional Marlow had once been in the employ of a Belgian trading firm exploiting native tribes in its quest for ivory. There was, however, a price to be paid for such endeavors. Conrad explored that price in his 1899 novella, *Heart of Darkness*, which opened with those lines about NELLIE.

The story behind this story raises questions to which readers, particularly those fascinated by sailing craft, would relish answers. Why did Conrad, always precise in detail, specifically set the stage aboard a yawl, not a cutter, or a schooner? Was NELLIE a real yacht owned by Conrad or a fictional creation? If real, what was she? Are the characters aboard NELLIE besides Marlow—the "Director of Companies," the "Lawyer," and the "Accountant"—also based on real people?

The simple answer to all these questions is that Conrad based his writing on personal experience with ships and people he knew during the 19 years of his seafaring career. In his story *Youth*, for example, Conrad adapted his voyage aboard a worn-out bark named PALESTINE to the fictional voyage of an ill-fated ship he named JUDEA. In fact, the two vessels may as well have been the same, because Conrad understood that PALESTINE and JUDEA were Roman names for the same place, today's Israel. Just as PALESTINE caught fire and sank when her coal cargo began to smolder for a time before bursting into flame, the same thing happens in *Youth* aboard JUDEA. Fortunately for Conrad, his open-boat voyage to safety lasted 13 hours. JUDEA's crew endured "nights and days" before reaching port.

Born in 1857 in Ukraine, which had long been part of the Kingdom of Poland, Jozef Teodore Konrad Korzeniowski unaccountably found that he possessed what he called "a great passion for the sea." He first shipped out in 1875 when he was 18 years old, signing aboard the square-rigger SAINT-ANTOINE as an apprentice on a voyage from Marseilles to the Caribbean. He was so focused on pursuing his career as a merchant seaman that he later wrote, "Beyond the line of the sea horizon, the world did not exist for me…." Conrad passed his second-mate's exam in 1880 in England. Six years later, in 1886, he earned his master's certificate on his second try, and also became a British subject.

Conrad's career at sea began too late for him to find berths exclusively in the sailing ships he loved for their beauty and the challenges they posed to the skill and judgment of captain and crew. Instead, he was forced to also voyage in steamships, although they, too, would provide fodder for his writer's imagination, most notably in the amazingly conceived novella *Typhoon*. It was during an interlude in his deep-sea voyaging that Conrad was hired to skipper a little stern-wheel steamboat with the grandiose name ROI DES BELGES (*King of the Belgians*) on the Congo River. This boat, which Conrad would later refer to as a "tin-pot steamer" became the model for the decrepit sternwheeler in *Heart of Darkness*. Conrad lasted six months in the brutal heat, humidity, and rampant disease of the Belgian Congo. He arrived on June 1, 1890, and returned to England in January 1891 suffering from dysentery and malaria. The latter remained an affliction throughout his life.

In 1894, after a planned merchant voyage was canceled, Conrad devoted himself full-time to writing. But the transition to life ashore was difficult, and he entered what he called a "dark time." This did not mean, however, that he remained entirely shorebound. He occasionally went sailing with pals, including his closest English friend, whom he had met in 1880 in the office of a shipping agent. The friend's name was George Fontaine Weaver Hope (G.F.W. Hope), a well-to-do businessman with interests in South African mining ventures who became the "Director of Companies"

The opening scene of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is set aboard the 33′ cruising yawl NELLIE anchored in the lower River Thames. The four characters in that scene—and the yawl itself—are based on Conrad's personal experiences.

and "captain" of NELLIE in *Heart of Darkness*. In fact, NELLIE was a real yacht owned by Hope.

Another shipmate aboard NELLIE was the "Accountant," the one "who had brought out already a box of dominoes." This was William Keen, a real-life accountant and Conrad's financial adviser, who also played dominoes with the writer's children and grandchildren and whose name appears in some of Conrad's correspondence in 1904 and 1905. Unfortunately, Keen's papers were lost during World War II in the Blitz.

The identity of the "Lawyer—the best of old fellows"—who appropriated NELLIE's only deck cushion, remains unknown.

As for Marlow, who narrates *Heart of Darkness* while sitting with his back against NELLIE's mizzenmast: he is clearly modeled on Conrad. He is a "seaman" and a "wanderer" whose "sunken cheeks [and] yellow complexion" likely reflected the writer's appearance during bouts of malaria.

Joseph Conrad was born Józef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski in Ukraine in 1857.

Conrad's nonfiction *Mirror of the Sea*, published in 1906, may be the most comprehensive offering of his thoughts on handling both square-rigged ships and fore-and-aft-rigged yachts. He noted: "The fore-and-aft rig, in its simplicity and beauty of its aspect under every angle of vision is, I believe, unapproachable." Conrad listed the virtues of the three principal fore-and-aft rigs known to English yachtsmen: "For racing a cutter: for a long pleasure voyage, a schooner: for cruising in home waters, the yawl, and the handling of all of them is indeed a fine art."

Of course, Conrad had his priorities straight. Big, narrow cutters dominated 19th-cenutry English yacht racing and several made vain attempts to win the AMERICA's Cup. Schooners were a staple of both cruising and racing sailors. But for smaller yachts, particularly in that time before auxiliary power, the yawl with its sails of manageable size, and with a mizzen to aid maneuverability, was a clear choice. "The yawl," Conrad wrote, "one comes to love. It is, I should think, the easiest of all to manage…. For racing I don't care at all. That's why I prefer the yawl rig."

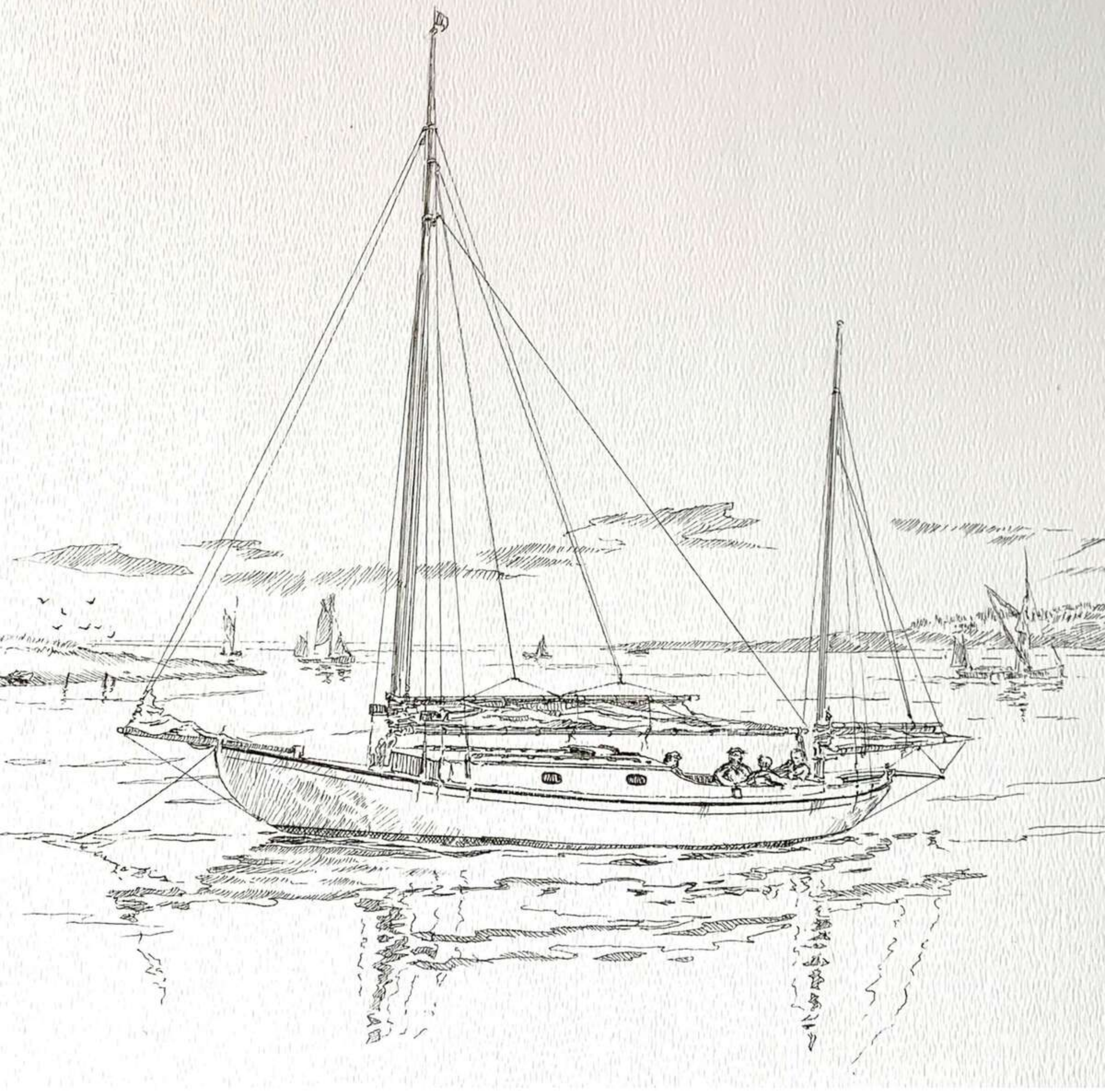
The yawl NELLIE was built in England in 1869 by the Plymouth-based boatbuilder John Glanville Hicks in his boatyard located close by the Tamar River at 19–20 Cremyll Street in a section of town known as Stonehouse. There is still a boatyard there, but specializing in moorings and service. NELLIE appeared in *Lloyd's Register of Yachts* of 1889–90 and was listed at 9 tons Thames Measurement, a figure derived from a formula based on length and beam. The Thames Measurement Rule was conceived in 1855 to calculate port dues and, later, racing handicaps. Unfortunately, referring to a yacht according to tons is not a good way of describing the boat's real proportions (at least to today's reader), yet the unhelpful tendency of citing a vessel this way rather than according to her actual displacement and dimensions continues in all-too-many articles and books.

However, we might conjecture that, as NELLIE's particulars were 33′5″ length from stem to stern, 8′ beam, and 6′ draft, her displacement was probably similar to L. Francis Herreshoff's 33′ × 8′6″ × 5′ ARAMINTA ketch, around 5,950 lbs. So, NELLIE was of a practical size, a boat that offered adequate but certainly not luxurious comfort levels expected by small-boat sailors of that time or, for that matter, an unpretentious, practical sailor of any time. Nor would she have required excessive muscle power when raising, trimming, or furling the sails, or in her general handling and steering.

NELLIE was a canoe yawl. These double-enders had found popularity in England from the Victorian period up to World War I. Initially developed from workboat types, such craft ranged in size from what were essentially sailing canoes of 14′ or so up to bigger boats such as NELLIE. But, whatever the size, the double-ended hull was favored as offering a well-balanced, seaworthy shape.

"These 'Canoe yachts,' as they came to be called," wrote Rick Powell in *The Canoe Yawl* (Lodestar Books, London, 2016) "were mostly small, around 25 feet overall, but there were much larger versions designed and built. They were all of similar hull form and came in centerboard, fixed and fin bulb keel versions."

Among the best-known designers of such craft in England were George Holmes, whose 21′ EEL proved especially noteworthy, and Albert Strange. Both men were capable of producing evocative illustrations of their boats as well. Strange was a fine artist and his paintings and elegant yachts were so impactful that the



"The NELLIE, a cruising yawl, swung to her anchor without a flutter of the sails, and was at rest."

Albert Strange Society (www.albertstrange.org) was established in 1978 to maintain his legacy.

Whether the hull had a deep keel or a centerboard, the rounded stern and handiness of the rig were the canoe yawl's most distinctive features. The only known contemporaneous image of NELLIE is an illustration provided by a G.F.W. Hope descendant to Conrad biographer Norman Sherry, author of *Conrad and his World* (Thames and Hudson, London, 1972). The illustration shows a typical canoe yawl sailing in rough seas with a deeply reefed gaff mainsail, working jib, and furled mizzen.

Not only is the mizzen a benefit for leaving one's mooring on the desired tack, but the yawl rig offers the advantage of reasonably sized, easy-to-handle sails that can be lowered or reefed depending on wind strength while still maintaining a nicely balanced helm. These are all very good reasons for the type to have been popular in Conrad's day. Such inherent advantages also account for some renewed popularity these days thanks in part to preservationists in England and also to more-recent yacht designers such as William Garden in the Pacific Northwest, who developed his own version of Holmes's EEL, and Iain Oughtred in Scotland.

The output of NELLIE's builder, John Hicks, does not seem to have been prolific. Besides his boatbuilding, Hicks spent some of his time as a member of the Stonehouse Urban Sanitary Authority. He built several cutters, the largest a 35-footer, and converted a 25′ cutter into a 27′ yawl for his own use. He also built or modified seven smaller yawls and cutters before his death in 1889 at age 52.

Although details of Conrad's yachting activities are sparse, what little exists indicates he enjoyed sailing. Georges Jean-Aubry, a French music critic who lived for years in London and was a friend of Conrad, edited *Joseph Conrad: Life and Letters* (1927). In one letter, Conrad wrote: "I have done some [yachting] with a friend in a 12-ton yawl, and an 18-ton cutter before I wrote a line for print." Conrad recalled that he edited the proofs of his first novel, *Almayer's Folly* (1892), which marked the first use of his anglicized name, while aboard a friend's 40′6″ cutter, named ILDEGONDA after a popular Italian opera.

Jean-Aubry himself noted that "Together with his friend G.F.W. Hope, he [Conrad] indulged in the pleasures of yachting.... It may be that Conrad actually told the story of his African experiences on this yacht [NELLIE] more or less as he makes Marlow tell his." This means that Conrad would have been recalling a story he first conceived between 1889 and 1892, for that appears to be the period when Hope had NELLIE. *Heart of Darkness* was first published in 1899 in London in *Blackwood's Magazine* and has been the subject of diverse criticism and an inspiration for academics, writers, television shows, and film creators ever since.

In 1893, Hope acquired a new boat, the 30′4″ × 6′6″ × 3′ VELELLA. It may be that Hope ordered this yacht himself, because NELLIE would have been 24 years old by then. VELELLA was designed by Linton Hope (no known relation to G.F.W. Hope), who won a gold medal in yachting for England at the 1900 Olympics in France and went on to create the Fairy One Design for the North of Ireland Yacht Club among many other intriguing boats (see WB Nos. 296 and 299).

VELELLA was built by the Stone Brothers at their yard in Erith (pronounced ear-reth), then a small,

Thames-side town about 17 miles southeast of London. She is described in *Lloyds' Register* only as being sliding-gunter rigged. However, sliding-gunter rigs were not unusual on canoe yawls; given VELELLA's shallow draft, it's likely she was such a boat. With half the draft of NELLIE, VELELLA may well have been a more useful yacht for exploring the lower reaches of the Thames with its adjacent creeks and the sandflats and mudflats that had for centuries posed dangers for vessels leaving or entering the great river.

In fact, Conrad invokes those dangers in both a literal and symbolic way in *Heart of Darkness*. Thus, we learn that NELLIE is anchored in a spot with a good view of the Chapman lighthouse—"a three-legged thing erect on a mud-flat." This red-painted structure, built in 1851, would have been well-known to Conrad and any mariner navigating the Thames until it was demolished in 1958. As Marlow sets the scene for his story, he recalls a time 1,900 years before when the Romans came to England, to them a place of darkness, in their triremes, "a kind of ship," Conrad thoughtfully imagines "about as rigid as a concertina."

Yet with the arrival of the Romans, gradually, what became England began to become a place of light. "Light came out of this river since," Marlow says in *Heart of Darkness*. Then, as the green, red, and white navigation lights of river traffic pass by the anchored NELLIE, Marlow tells his compelling tale.

The captain of NELLIE, G.F.W. Hope, died at age 76 in 1930. In *Heart of Darkness*, Conrad took care to note that "Like any watchful skipper," the captain made sure he was "satisfied the anchor had good hold" before he made his way aft to NELLIE's cockpit and sat down to await Marlow's narrative. What records exist suggest NELLIE was broken up by her subsequent owner in 1896.

Conrad, suffering from rheumatism and heart disease, not to mention his recurrent malaria and depression, died at age 67 at his home in the English village of Bishopsbourne on August 3, 1924. By then, Conrad's stories and novels—with key themes that explored man's struggles with nature, colonialism and racial prejudice; hypocrisy and ambition; and the search for enlightenment amidst darker forces—had made him a world-renowned novelist.

"We live in the flicker," Marlow tells his shipmates aboard NELLIE, "may it last as long as the old earth keeps rolling!"

The author thanks Richard Temple, archivist at the University of London, and Professor Robert Hampson of the Joseph Conrad Society (UK), www.josephconradsociety.org, for assistance with research.

Stan Grayson is a regular contributor to WoodenBoat. *His most recent book,* Boat Crazy, the collected WoodenBoat stories of Stan Grayson, *is available from The WoodenBoat Store.*

TYLER FIELDS

SWEET REMAINS

Building a classic inboard launch

Text and photographs by Bob Fuller

In 2017, Alexander "Sandy" Brown was given a copy of *Wooden Boats: In Pursuit of the Perfect Craft at an American Boatyard*, Michael Ruhlman's book about the construction of the schooner REBECCA at Gannon & Benjamin Marine Railway on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. In the book's step-by-step descriptions and photographs, Sandy was inspired about boatbuilding, and his thoughts turned to the small craft he had known in the harbor at another Massachusetts island, Cuttyhunk, where he grew up in the 1940s and '50s.

The boats that especially made an impression on him were used in the quest for striped bass; two world-record-setting fish have been caught off Cuttyhunk. A picture on the wall of his home, hiding in plain sight, brought it all back: the photo showed Capt. Louis Ramos, an islander who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his role in saving the crew of the whaleship WANDERER when it ran aground on Cuttyhunk in 1924. But now, what drew Sandy's eye was the open launch in which Ramos was shown at the tiller. He was determined to build a boat of similar design.

The photograph is the only one known to exist of Ramos's boat. No plans were available. For Sandy, it was the beginning of a seven-year journey to find a design for a similar open launch and build it himself for use in the waters around Cuttyhunk Island and the Westport River. He envisioned an inboard engine, a full keel, shallow draft, and an outboard rudder. After much searching, he was drawn to the elegant sheer of BARBARA ANNE, a design by Robert Steward published in his book *Boatbuilding Manual* (International Marine, fourth edition, 1994). She was an 18′7″ carvel-planked launch that was designed to be powered by a

COURTESY OF SANDY BROWN

***Above*—Alexander "Sandy" Brown had built biplanes before, but his 18′7″ open launch built to plans by Robert Steward was his first boat. He used traditional carvel plank-on-frame construction and chose a design that reminded him of his youth on Cuttyhunk Island, just across from his current home in Westport, Massachusetts. *Right*—A 1924 photo showing Louis Ramos at the helm of an open launch on Cuttyhunk inspired Sandy Brown's construction of a similar boat designed by Robert Steward.**

small inboard diesel, with full plans available from The WoodenBoat Store.

Sandy is an engineer, machinist, and accomplished woodworker who previously built wooden biplanes. But he was new to boatbuilding. To get started, he and his wife, Jean, attended the two-week class in traditional boatbuilding that I taught at WoodenBoat School in Brooklin, Maine. During lunch one day, Sandy unrolled the set of plans for what would become SWEET REMAINS. The design had the look of the launches of the 1920s, with a full keel and an inboard engine, and he intended to build it with traditional plank-on-frame construction.

It would not be an easy project for a first-time boatbuilder, but Sandy was determined. He lofted the hull in an out-of-town airplane hangar before building his shop in Westport, which is north of Cuttyhunk on the mainland, just west of New Bedford. Westport is a tight-knit coastal community, and it wasn't long before neighbors heard of his project and started dropping by to check on his progress. One curiosity that many noticed right away was the wooden airplane propeller hanging on a wall as a testament to Sandy's past in aviation. I also followed the construction, as the following photos from setup to launching show.

1. After completing the WoodenBoat School class, which focused on a carvel-planked powerboat, Sandy lofted and faired the hull lines full-size on ¼″-thick plywood painted white. Then he made station molds of pine to match templates taken off the lofting. He mounted the plywood-gusseted molds on a building jig, then dry-fitted the keel and stem. Sandy followed the methods that Steward laid out in his book and closely followed details noted in the plans. Choosing to be faithful to traditional construction methods, he decided to build a three-piece stem instead of using epoxy to make a lamination. Building the stem in segments results in less grain run-out than would otherwise be present with longer pieces, which can be weaker and prone to rot. The heavy oak pieces were fastened together using bronze carriage bolts, with bedding compound applied to the mating, or faying, surfaces.

2. Assembling and boring the 2¾″-wide, two-piece white-oak skeg that serves as the shaftlog required a lot of thought. The layout had to be perfect. The 1⅛″-diameter hole had to be bored dead straight over its length of almost 4′—any deviation could hit the splines that aligned the pieces of oak outboard of the bore or the bronze keelbolts that held them together. Sandy followed a method that was described in Royal Lowell's book *Boatbuilding Downeast*: Small slots were cut on the centerline along the mating surfaces of both the upper and lower skeg pieces to guide a boring bar (see WB No. 220). He found a boring bar at Jeff Pearson's Swan Lake Tool Barn in Searsport, Maine, and used it in portable electric hand drill, which he said worked perfectly.

3. The hull design required using a low-profile bronze stuffing box, which was fitted to the top surface of the plank keel, as shown. Sandy decided to use a traditional gland-style stuffing box for reliability and ease of adjustment. Note the close spacing of the keelbolts, which also required very accurate boring for the ⅞″-diameter stainless-steel propeller shaft. Sandy used chainfalls to lower the completed backbone assembly, which he estimated to weigh between 500 and 600 lbs, into place onto the building jig. The rabbets had already been cut, ready to receive the garboard planks.

4. The molds were notched to accept the ribbands, and once they and the transom mold were installed, the shape of the hull became evident.

5. A local sawmill supplied green white-oak stock for the ⅝″-thick × 1″-wide steam-bent frames. While fresh from the steambox, the frames were clamped over the ribbands and held in place with wire.

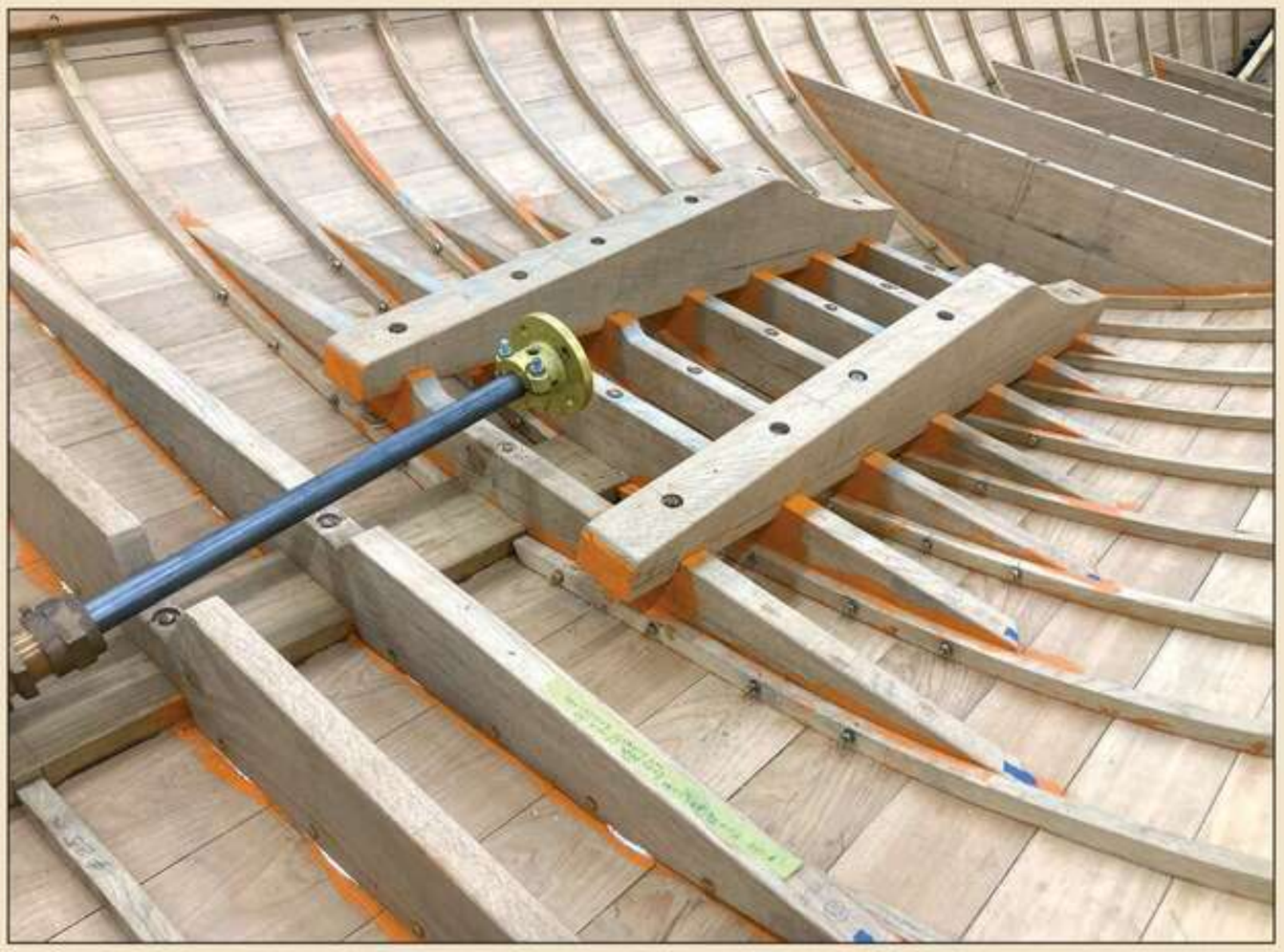
6. With all the framing done, planking could begin, using 7/16″-thick Atlantic white cedar. Sandy lined off the hull, then started by spiling, shaping, and installing the garboards and sheerstrakes on both sides. It is important to balance the stresses that occur when bending the planks in place by planking both the port and starboard sides at the same pace.

7. Once the planking was completed, it was time to fair and sand the hull. One advantage of planking the hull upside down was that, as tedious as fairing is, it is easier to do working down. It is also easier to see the hull's surface with direct light. After chalking high and low spots along individual planks, Sandy used a scrub plane to shave high spots and then smoothed the surface with a sanding longboard, continuing with both tools judiciously until the hull was smooth and fair.

The caulking consisted of a few strands of cotton followed by a coat of primer paint to lock the cotton in place and seal it so it wouldn't draw oils out of the eventual seam compound. The mahogany transom was mounted after the planking was completed.

8. With the exterior work largely finished, it was time to turn the hull right-side up. There are various ways of doing this. Some builders use a chainfall, straps, or a bunch of friends and neighbors to lift and turn the hull. The key to safety is keeping the movement under control. The approach that Sandy used was to build a pair of plywood wheels that were slid over the bow and stern, then braced and padded to protect the hull while it was rolled upright.

9. With the hull upright, Sandy began the interior work. (And it was at this point that I started working with him to see the project through to completion.) With the aid of laser and spirit levels, he established the heights of the floor timbers and made templates for each of them. The shapely hull's ever-changing bevels required a lot of handwork in shaping each floor. They were bolted through the keel, screwed through the planking, and bolted laterally through frames, using silicon-bronze fastenings throughout.



10. The plans as detailed by Steward in 1984 called for a W13 Westerbeke diesel, which is no longer made. After consulting with Craig Gifford, president of F.L. Tripp Boatyard in Westport, Sandy selected a 13½-hp Yanmar 2YM15, which required a modification of the engine bedlogs that Steward had drawn in his plans.

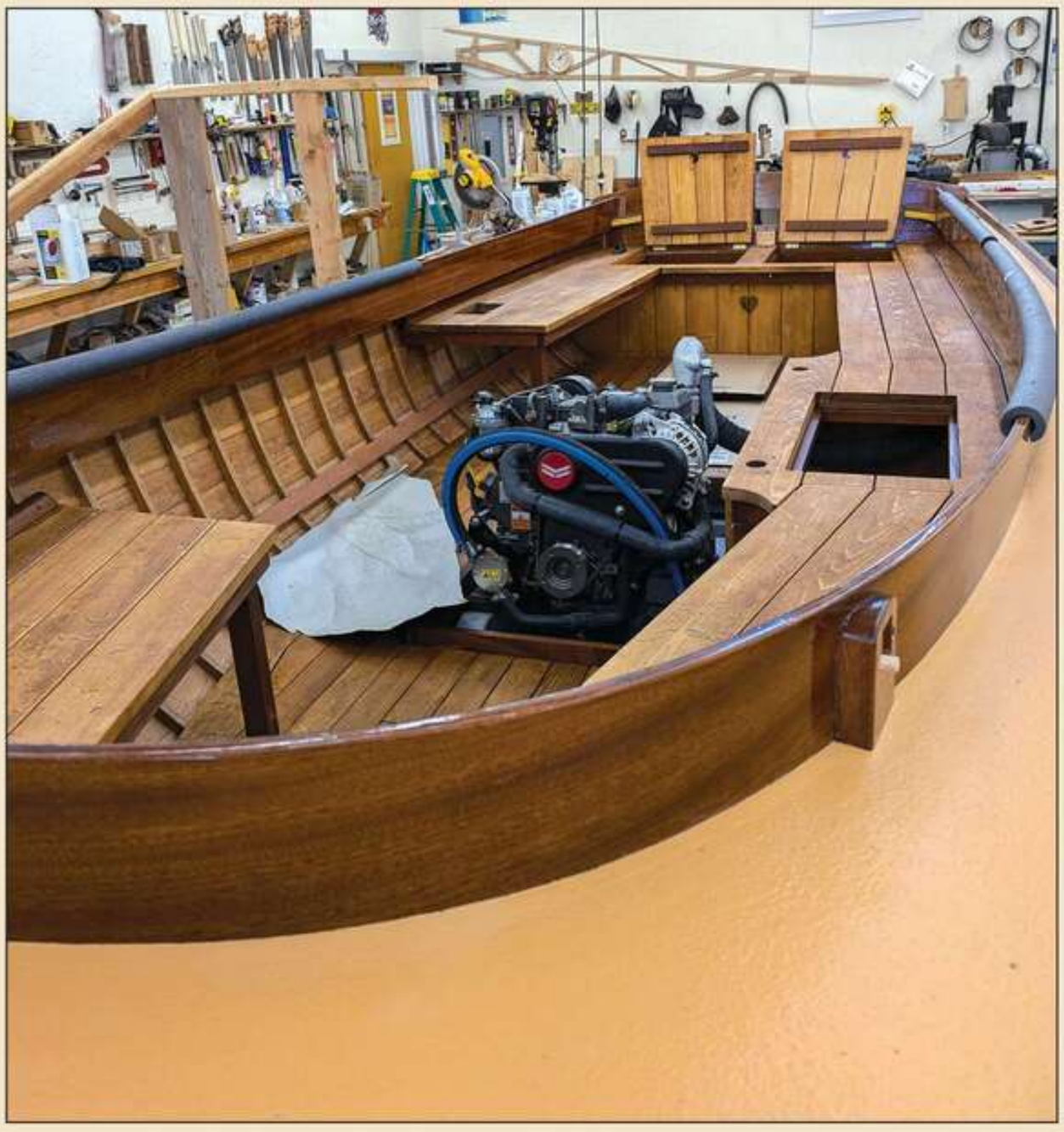
Sandy roughed-out the heavy oak bedlogs on a bandsaw, then notched them to fit tightly over the floor timbers, to which they were secured with bronze drifts.

11. For the cockpit sole, Sandy made a template that facilitated planning for its profile and the bevels required to fit against the hull planking. He planned sections of the sole to be removable to allow access to the bilges for keelbolt adjustment and pump maintenance. Holding with tradition, he built the floor of cedar strakes with athwartships oak cleats on the undersides to act as stiffeners.

12. The Yanmar engine is very compact, but it was important to leave room for routine maintenance. The water pump is easily accessible, as are the dipstick and oil-fill tube. The radiator cap for the freshwater cooling is on the top of the engine. Sole hatches permit quick access to the stuffing box and the seawater valve and strainer.

13. After completing the plywood foredeck and side decks, which are sheathed in Dynel set in epoxy, Sandy laminated his coaming in sections. For the coaming's pronounced curve forward, this involved using three 3/16″-thick layers of 14″-wide sapele, which, with two helpers, he bent and clamped in a glue-up over a curved form, as shown. Two side sections, which scarf into the forward section and extend to the transom, were also laminated. The coaming's overall length was 19′.

14. After the glue had set on the scarfs, the full-length coaming was lowered into place and installed as a unit. The top edge's shape was fine-tuned by using masking tape and sighting it from various angles, and subtle changes were made with a hand plane until it was fair and pleasing to the eye. When the fit was finalized, the coaming was glued and screwed in place.



15. Attention then shifted to designing and building the interior. The Yanmar required a port-side discharge instead of the starboard-side one shown in the plans—so the interior layout had to be essentially flipped, with seating planned to allow access and safe movement around the boat. The seats were framed in sapele, with cedar tops.

The hatch visible here to port alongside the engine covers a compartment that houses the battery and switch. The two aft hatches allow access to storage lockers, one of which houses the bilge pump.

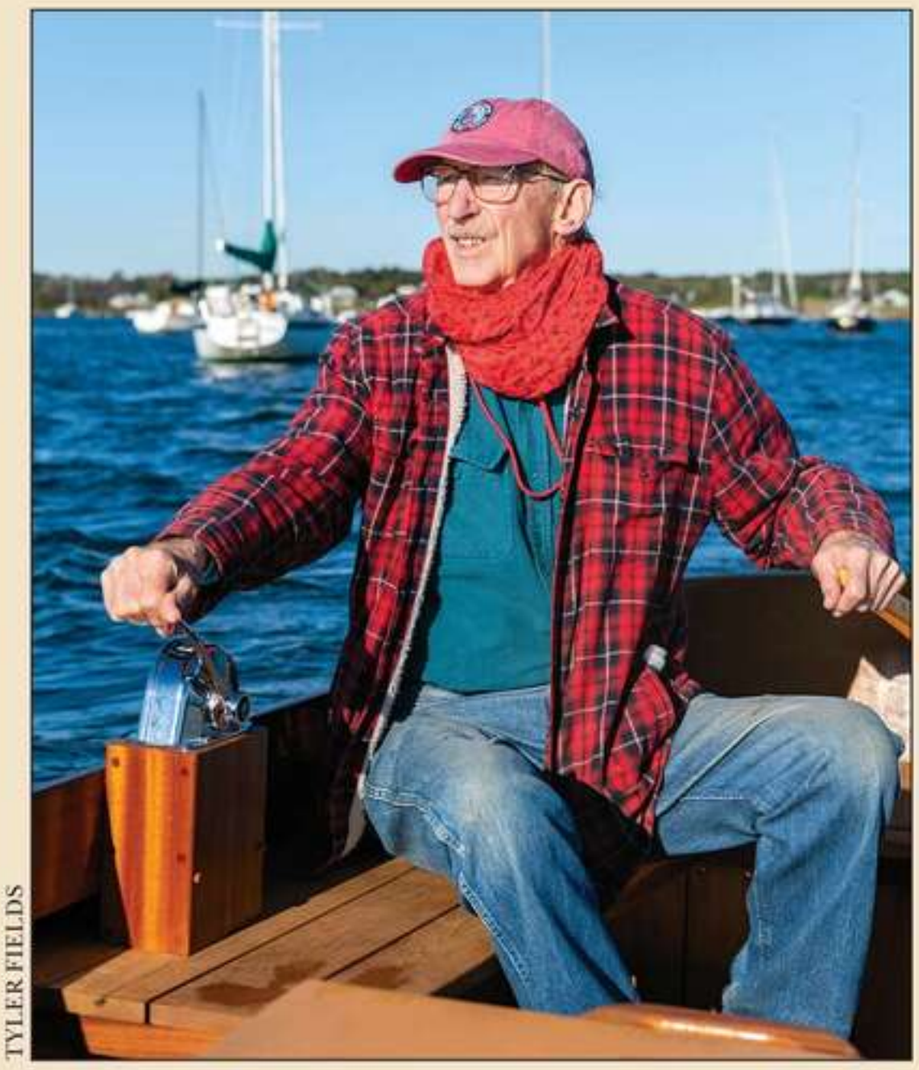
16. Sandy couldn't find high-quality silicon-bronze hardware for the boat. For the pintles and gudgeons, he made patterns and took them to Sher Hertzler at Mystic River Foundry in Connecticut to make the castings. She already knew him, having earlier made castings for his biplanes. Chuck Fuller, my brother, who is a machinist, did the final machining at his shop, Industrial Patterns.

17. The rudder as shown in the plans didn't have much protection, and since Sandy intended to use SWEET REMAINS in the Westport River shallows, he devised a solution by adding a bronze shoe extending aft from the skeg to support and protect the rudder—and also protect the 11″-diameter bronze propeller. The rudder, made of sapele with oak cheeks, was secured with gudgeons riding on a ½″-diameter bronze rod mounted on the transom and connecting with the bronze shoe by a nylon rudder bearing.

TYLER FIELDS

18. A one-of-a-kind symbolic American eagle, hand-carved and gold-leafed by Nick Lonborg of Halifax, Massachusetts, adorns SWEET REMAINS's stemhead. The carving reflects Sandy's heritage: he is a great-great-grandson of U.S. President James Garfield. Lonborg also carved the boat's transom nameboards.

19. At last, Sandy watched the boat that he had been building for seven long years as it was hoisted aloft, for what must have seemed like an eternity. When the boat was finally afloat, she floated perfectly on the load waterline, with no leaks.



TYLER FIELDS

20. Sandy took the helm for the first time to steer his classic launch through the anchorage and mouth of the Westport River, just as he had imagined.

Bob Fuller, is the proprietor of South Shore Boatworks in Carver, Massachusetts (www.southshoreboatworks.com), a maker of traditional ships' wheels. He is also a regular instructor at WoodenBoat School in Brooklin, Maine.

A converted 1928 Chesapeake Bay buy boat

Aboard: COASTAL QUEEN

Text by Laura Zylinski · Photographs by Peter Slack

In 1928, a Chesapeake Bay workboat, 65′ LOA with a beam of 21′ and draft of 5′6″, was launched near Cambridge, Maryland. Named A.G. PRICE, she was a typical boat of the Bay, hard-chined with a cross-planked bottom, and she immediately set to work as a buy boat, gathering oysters from all manner of dredging and tonging boats for delivery to packing houses.

Some 30 years later, her sweet sheerline caught the eye of Slade Dale, an experienced yachtsman and businessman who was looking for a boat well suited for passages between Florida and New Jersey along the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW), a route that was then overlooked by pleasure boaters. He bought the boat and in 1959 had a boatyard in Oxford, Maryland, convert her for pleasure use with the addition of a two-level deckhouse including numerous staterooms. He renamed her COASTAL QUEEN and began running ICW charters, the only boat to do so at that time.

Five years after COASTAL QUEEN's conversion, the writer Anthony Bailey joined her for a northbound passage in 1963; his article about the experience spanned 32 pages in *The New Yorker*'s October 31, 1964, issue. He described the beauty and solitude of the coastline, which was then largely undeveloped, and also wrote about Dale and his crew's pride in COASTAL QUEEN.

In October 2022, a massive rebuilding of COASTAL QUEEN for her new owners, Peter and Cynnie Kellogg, was begun at McMillen Yachts in Portsmouth, Rhode

***Above*—COASTAL QUEEN, originally launched in 1928 as a Chesapeake Bay buy boat, was converted to pleasure use in the 1950s and underwent a thorough restoration and modernization completed in 2024 at McMillen Yachts in Rhode Island.**

Island. Many luminaries of the region's wooden-boat trades were involved in this project: the white oak for her new timbers was felled and milled by Duke Besozzi of New England Naval Timbers (see WB No. 213); her replanking, using double-planking for her cross-planked bottom, was supervised by Clark Poston, the yard's head shipwright; Schell Custom Boatworks of Andover, New Jersey, built new Sitka-spruce spars to replicate the gear originally used for hauling oysters aboard; and de Rouville's Boat Shop of Bayville, New Jersey, built the rig's silicon-bronze hardware.

In the refit, all of her systems were substantially upgraded, including the installation of a Seakeeper gyroscopic anti-roll stabilizer, which necessitated structural reinforcement using stainless-steel floors. But the new technology was hidden wherever possible, and elements of her original systems—for example, her cable steering visible in the main saloon and the afterdeck—were retained.

COASTAL QUEEN was relaunched in May 2024 and returned to cruising the ICW, a reminder of simpler times on a waterway that has changed a great deal since this historic boat's pioneering first charter trips in the late 1950s.

The wheelhouse

The array of curved drop windows allows panoramic views and abundant fresh air in the wheelhouse. The layout, which dates to the 1950s conversion, was inspired by the buy boat's original aft wheelhouse, which had similar windows. New custom joinery was designed to conceal Garmin electronics, including a pair of matching 8612 chart plotters, a Fantom 18× dome radar, three 315 VHF units, an autopilot, and a GMI 20 multifunction display, plus an Airmar WX120 weather station, GPS heading sensors, sonar, and AIS. When not underway, the look of this space is vintage, with only the engine control and compass visible.

Blending the old and the new

The binnacle and engine-order telegraph pay homage to the 1920s but are not original to COASTAL QUEEN. The telegraph no longer signals an engineer belowdeck to change direction or speed; instead, it now houses a potentiometer that is connected to a handle, more efficiently relaying commands to the modern electronically controlled engine.

Stadium seating

The raised, custom built-in seat behind the helm station can't be beat for viewing the landscape. When COASTAL QUEEN frequently traveled the ICW starting in the 1960s, the high seating and helm station allowed charter passengers to see over the foliage and trees that predominantly covered the landscape in that era. At right, a passageway leads to the master stateroom aft, and a companionway leads below.

Built-in seating aft

The custom curved seating on the promenade deck was designed at McMillen Yachts to accommodate large gatherings. It was a tricky design due to the camber and sheer of the deck. The existing scalloped canopy was restored, and overhead lighting was installed. A new built-in refrigeration system forward of the seating accommodates any soiree.

The owner's stateroom

The stateroom is aft of the wheelhouse and has expansive views; it also has access to the seating area aft on the promenade deck. The drop-down shades have three settings: open, diffused light, and blackout. This stateroom originally had two twin beds, and one of them tilted up to reveal a full-sized, brass bathtub—one of Slade Dale's "showpiece" features. Today, it has a full-sized berth and a well-appointed head with a shower. Dale's original lockers, dresser, and writing desk remain in beautiful condition.

Centrally located galley

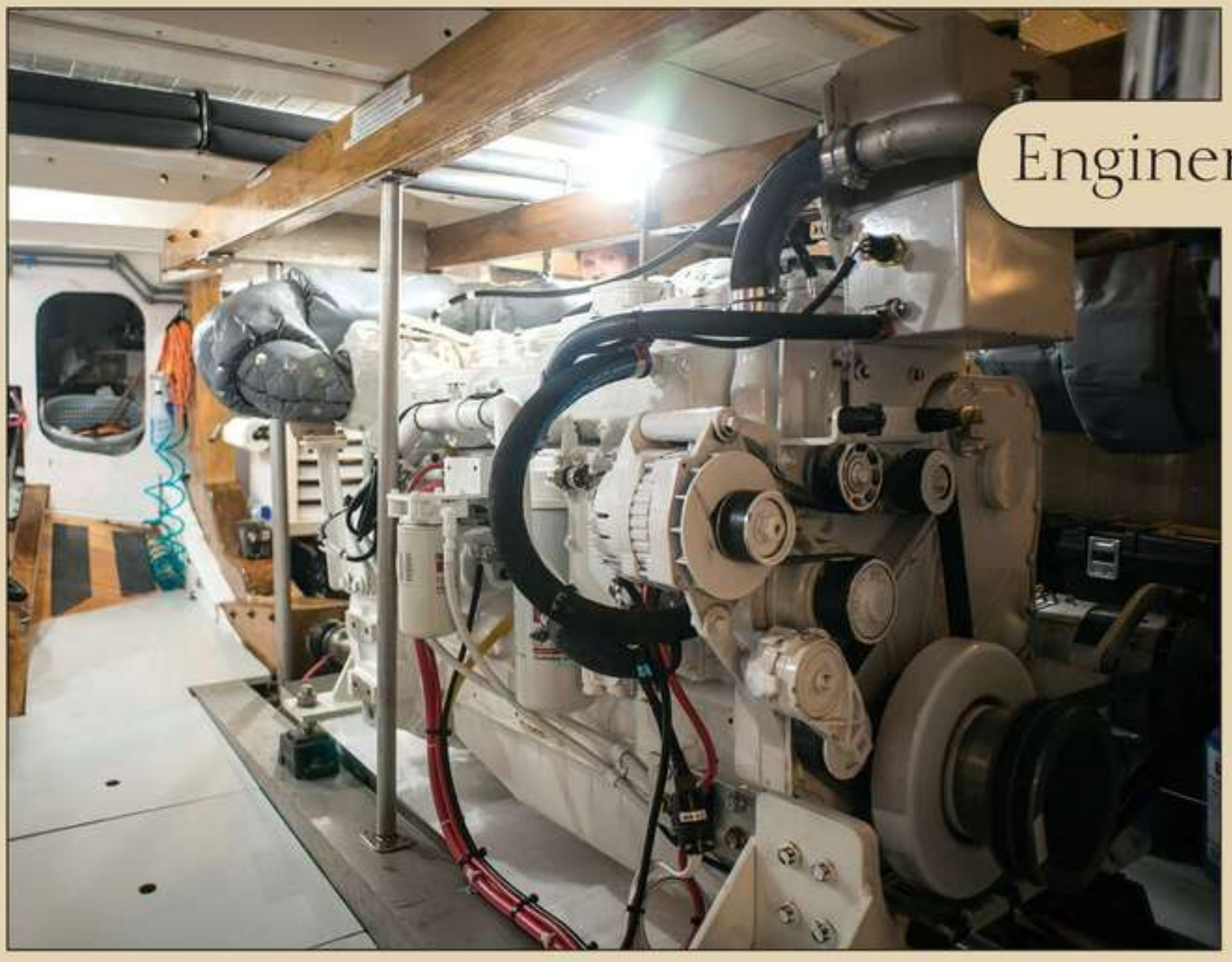
The galley is not a utilitarian space tucked down below or separated from the guest areas; rather, it is on the main deck, right in the middle of the boat. It spans the full width of the deckhouse and communicates directly with the main saloon and dining area forward, like a kitchen in a well-designed modern home. Among the galley's equipment are a separate electric oven and cooktop, refrigeration, dishwasher, stainless-steel countertops, custom lockers, and wine racks. The backsplash displays custom hand-painted tiles with lines drawings of sailboats and motor yachts sentimental to the owners. The traditional cork sole in the galley provides a forgiving surface for standing—and for mishaps with the fine china used for serving.

Multiple heads

Two of the four heads aboard COASTAL QUEEN date back to the 1950s conversion, and two were designed for the latest accommodation. The original ones are ensuite in the VIP stateroom on the main deck and the owner's stateroom on the upper deck. They both were upgraded with new fixtures and plumbing, but the layouts were retained. The new heads serve not only the guests and crew in the multiple cabins forward but also guests or visitors during day outings. For increased capicity, new waste and supply lines were installed, along with a custom stainless-steel holding tank.

A large main saloon

A built-in dinette (above), original to Slade Dale's conversion for ICW cruising, is still a key feature of this sociable space. It has a pass-through to the galley aft, allowing for easy serving. The saloon is adorned with a reproduction of a famous AMERICA's Cup painting. Looking forward (below), a half-round, oversized settee makes for a spacious and comfortable living space for entertaining. The burgee plaques above the windows were handcrafted by Paul White, a Massachusetts woodcarver noted for his American Eagles, and they reflect the owners' history in yachting. The steering cables, which are original to the 1950s conversion and still are used today, are visible overhead.



Engineroom

The new engine, a diesel-fueled 404-hp Cummins QSL9, was lifted by a specialized crane through a forward deckhouse. Wheels were bolted to its mounting points and a track was constructed belowdeck to guide the engine aft into its new home. The old engine was a Detroit Diesel 6-71 that developed about 270 hp. It was one of the most reliable marine diesel engines in history, but parts were proving hard to find, it was very loud by modern yacht standards, and it couldn't match the horsepower or efficiency of the new engine. The Cummins is in the same place as the old engine, but with rebuilt and reinforced hull structure and bedlogs.

Converted hold

The former hold has been transformed to accommodate a guest stateroom (at left) with a private head, a berth for the steward (at right), and an additional head. Throughout, the trim is sapele. The stateroom's berth can be lifted by a hydraulic mechanism to reveal hidden storage, reminiscent of a similar mechanism that once revealed a brass bathtub under the berth in the owner's stateroom.

Captain's quarters

The captain's quarters, while not spacious, are quite comfortable, with a built-in writing desk, a closet, and plenty of outlets and charging stations. COASTAL QUEEN operates with a full-time professional captain and steward.

At home again in the ICW

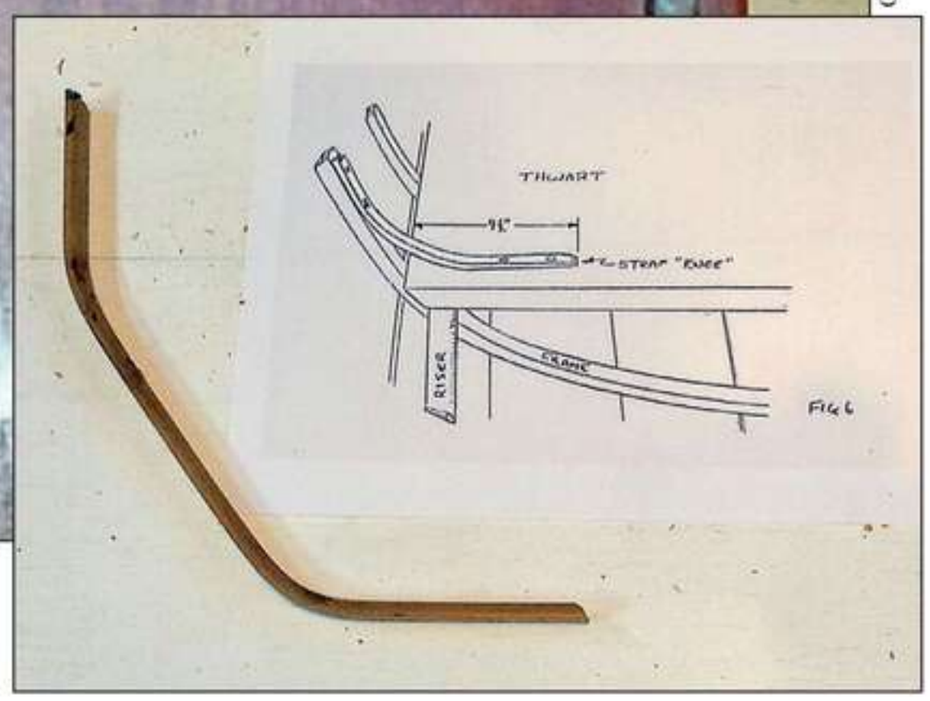
Slade Dale no doubt would be honored that the boat he converted in the 1950s has returned to her roots and that her restoration has been so well executed and her history so well documented—living proof that it takes hard work, homage to tradition, and time to become a beloved queen.

Laura Zylinski is a professional captain whose current post is BARNEGAT, a 50', 1962 motoryacht undergoing seasonal restoration work at de Rouville's Boat Shop in New Jersey.

Peter Slack's 41 videos covering the COASTAL QUEEN restoration can be viewed at his YouTube channel; search his name and the boat's name.

GREG RÖSSEL (BOTH)

Brass Knees and Bronze Braces



By Greg Rössel
Illustrations by Isaac Robbins

When considering structural members for bracing and stiffening a traditional hull, the most popular choice is a wooden knee. Such knees—be they hackmatack, oak, or apple; naturally grown, steam-bent or laminated—are strong, effective, and reliable solutions. Add a touch of varnish, and you really have something. However, for many small boats and performance craft, a wooden knee would have to be overly large and clunky to be effective. In such cases, shop-made hardware fabricated in brass or bronze is a good alternative. Thomas Fleming Day, the founding editor of *The Rudder* magazine, knew practical-yet-elegant hardware when he saw it, and he favored rod-built bracing for some of his small craft. Tasteful and strong for its size, such hardware is just the ticket for space-challenged small craft. Best of all, it's quick and easy to make from either bronze or brass stock.

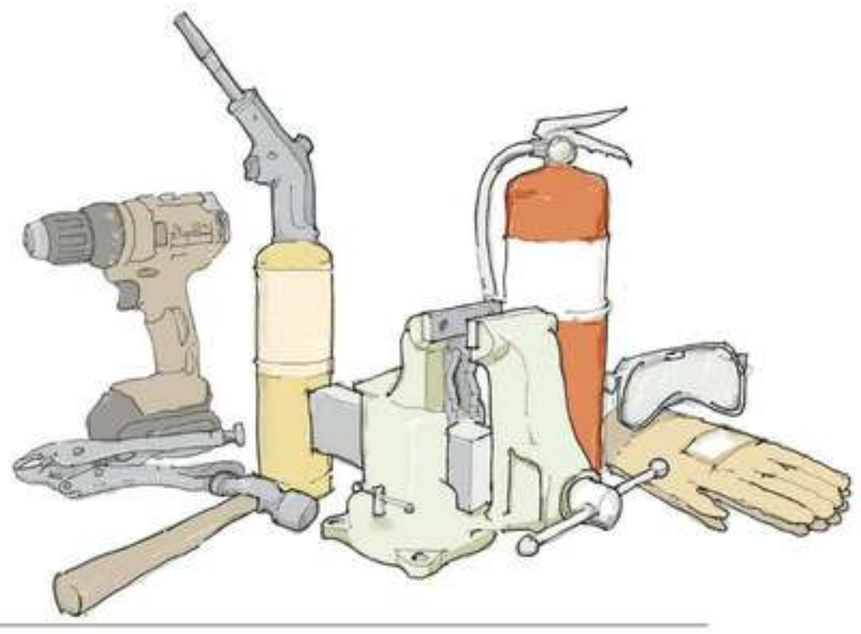
Tools

The few tools required are:

- Hardware-store-quality blowtorch and tank of Mapp gas
- Fire extinguisher
- Bench vise (either a woodworking or machinist's model)
- Locking pliers
- Heavy machinist's ball-peen hammer
- Welder's gloves
- Anvil or chunk of railroad track
- Small bench grinder
- Protective eyewear
- Sharp twist drills—both short ones and long "installer" type
- Variable-speed hand drill
- Thread-cutting die and die stock

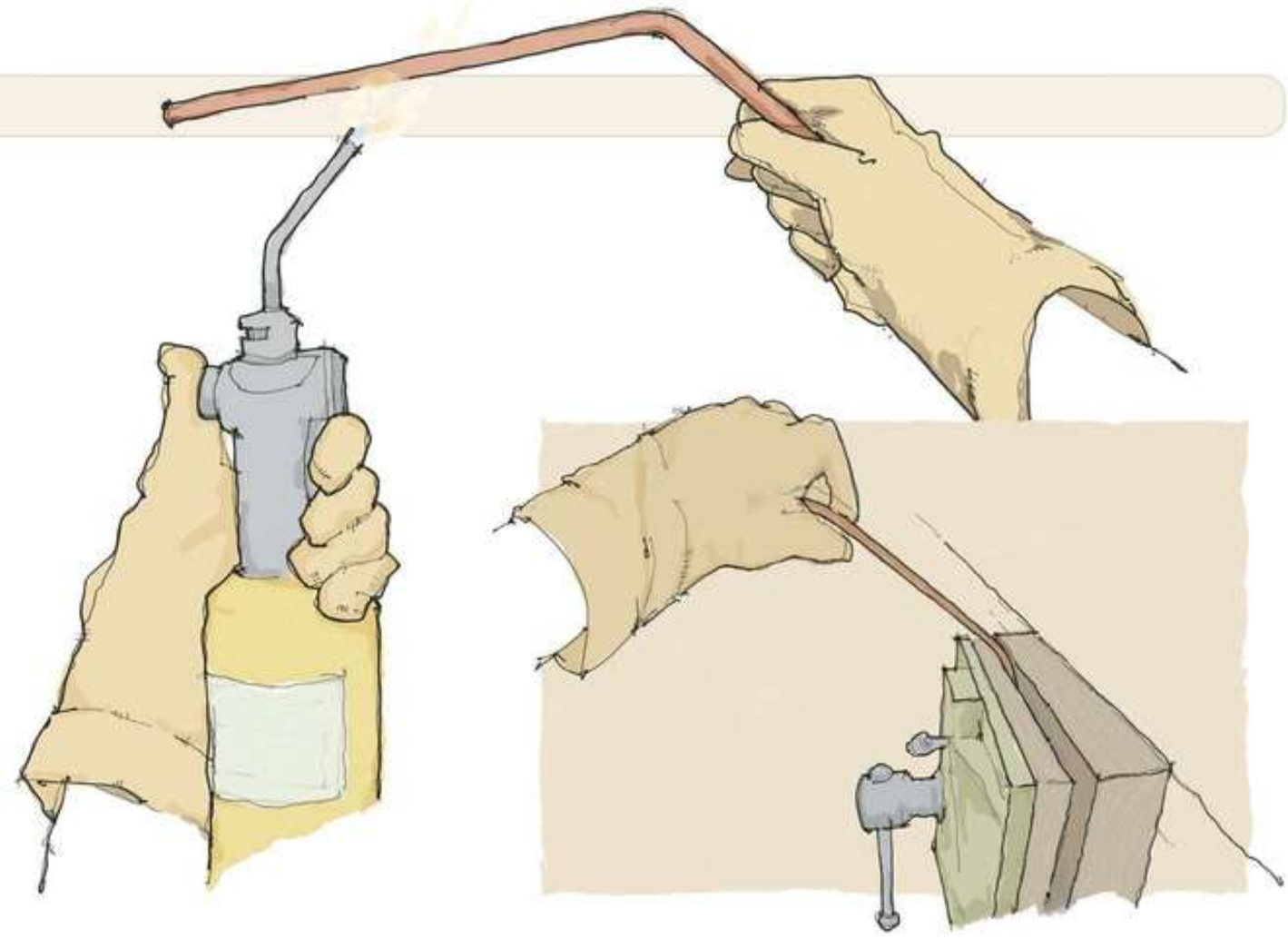
To fine-tune the finished product, have on hand a fine flat and rat-tail file and sandpaper from 120 to 400 grit. For a "story pole" to help determine the length and shape of your project, round up some stiff but malleable wire, such as a coat hanger. You can either bend it to shape on the boat or scale up a drawing to full size from a construction plan or photograph.

To avoid damaging the relatively soft metal, and encourage softer curves while bending brass or bronze, make wooden jaw pads for your machinist's vise, if that's what you're using. If you already have such pads on your woodworking vise, they'll work fine; the wood will just get a bit of localized scorching.



***Top*—Bronze or brass can be easily worked to make low-profile but strong thwart knees for small craft. *Inset*— Metal bracing supplements the boat's structure. *Above right*— The necessary tools, and essential safety gear, are readily available.**

Thwart Knees



Let's begin with the common knees that reinforce the thwart-to-hull connection. Half-round brass stock works well for lightweight construction; for heavier-duty applications, use a larger-caliber half-oval.

A bent-wire pattern captures the length and shape of the matched pair of knees. Once the shape is recorded, the wire can be straightened and used to measure the stock before it is cut to length, with the bend locations indicated with a permanent marker. Use the grinder to shape and bevel the ends of the stock.

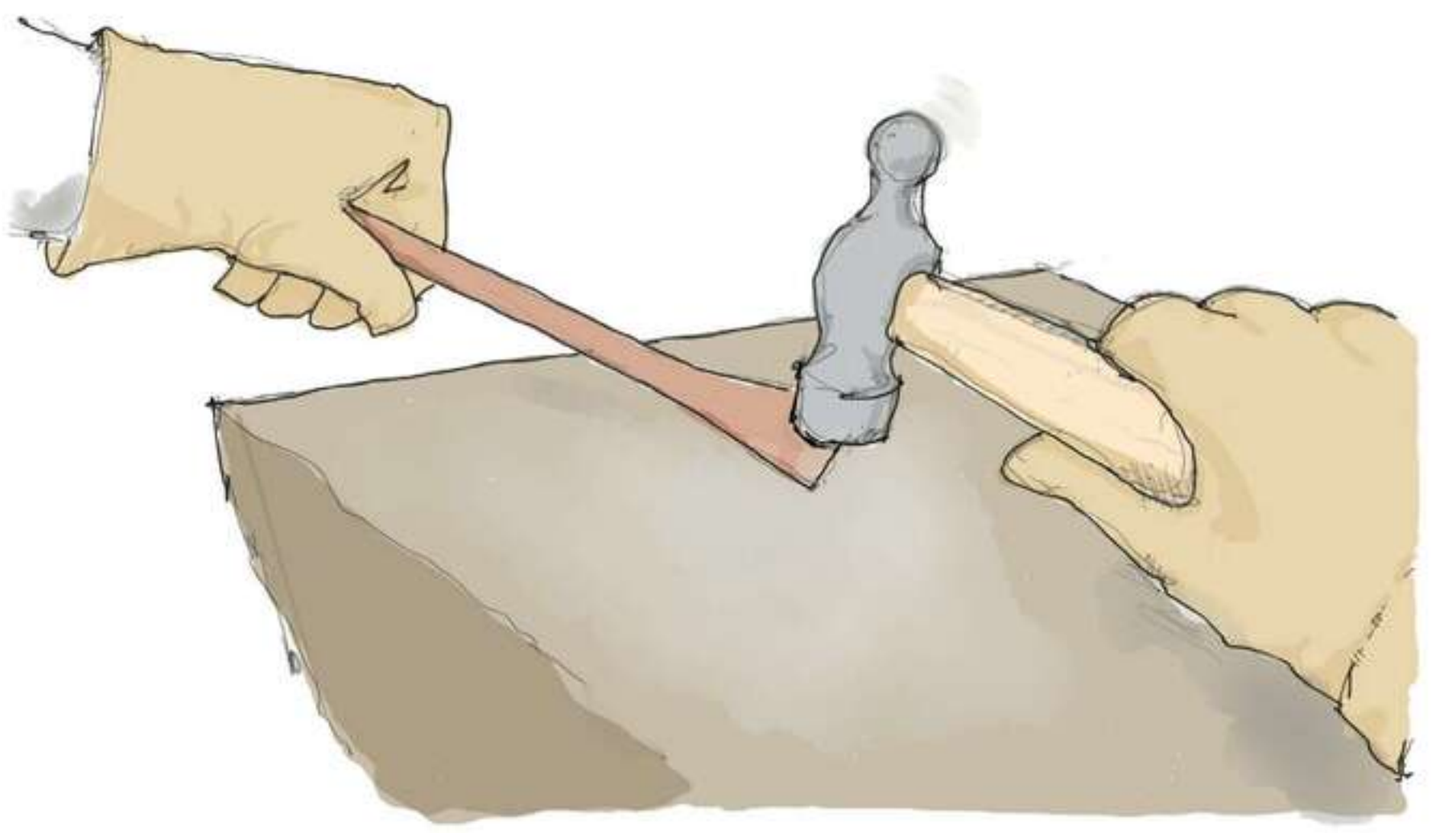
You will likely be working indoors with a hot torch and metal, so be aware of the fire potential. Shield any flammable materials and sweep or vacuum away any dust or shavings. Keep that fire extinguisher handy.

Don your welder's gauntlets and clamp your stock to the bench so it extends out far enough that you can safely play the flame of the torch over the marked bend location. Heat the metal until it begins to change color.

Release the heated stock and insert it into the vise to the marked bend location. Then simply pull a curve into the metal until it matches that of your wire pattern. Let it cool. Repeat the process for the other end of the knee. A boat's forward and after knees will likely need to have a bit of a twist worked into their upper portions to accommodate the shape of the hull.

Countersink the bored holes in the knees for the screw fastenings (see sidebar). Use wet-sanding paper to at least 400-grit to polish the knee and finish to taste.

Deck Braces



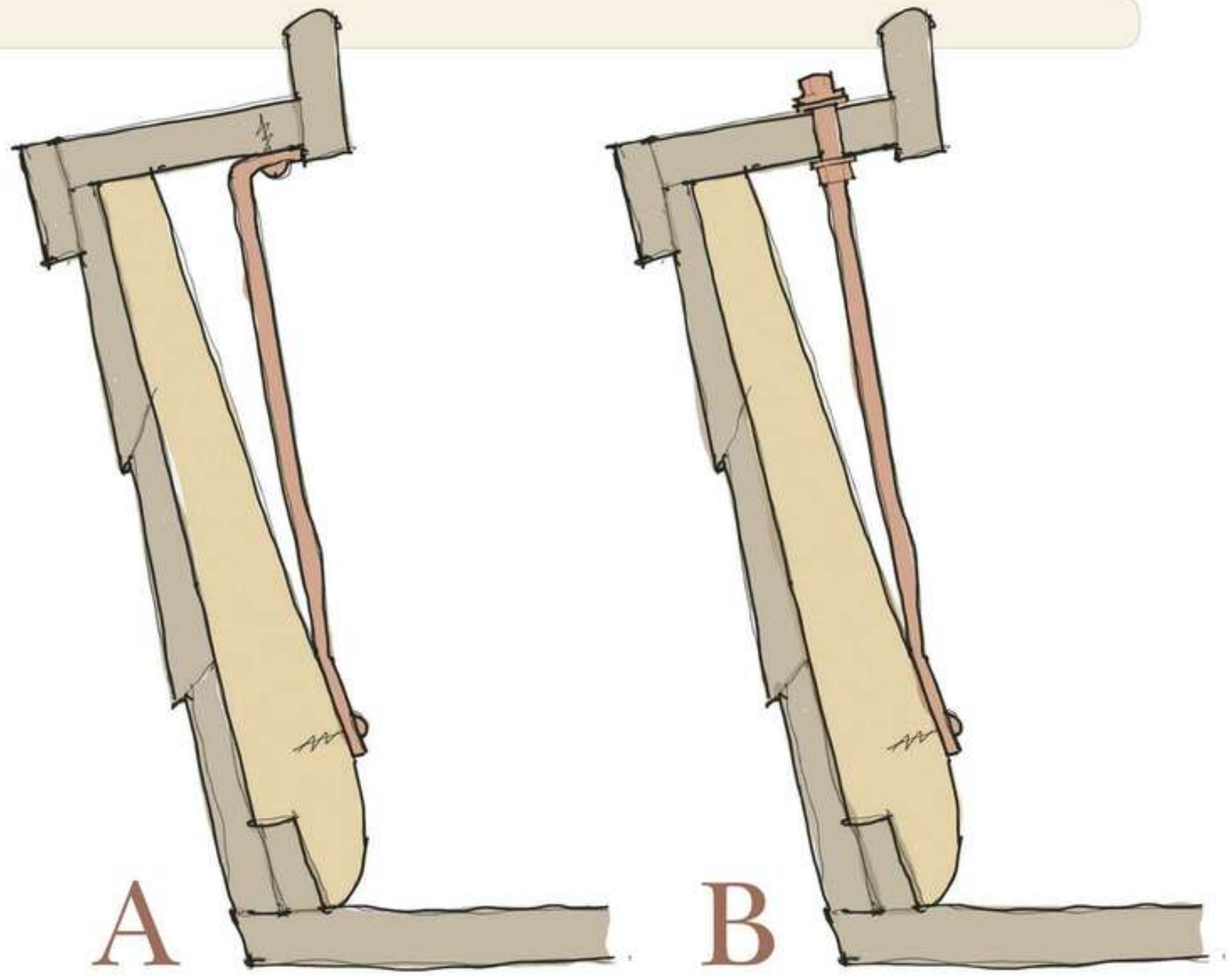
Small craft such as catboats and sharpies often have narrow side decks that should have some sort of reinforcement from below. A good solution is a vertical brace made from bronze rod. The lower end of the brace is anchored to a frame and attached with fastenings through a flattened portion worked into the lower end of the rod. The upper end can either be fastened with screws through a similarly flattened and bent "bracket" (A) or through-fastened with nuts and washers (B).

For this operation you'll need an anvil (a chunk of repurposed railroad track makes a very good one) and a heavy ball-peen hammer. You also need eye protection. We'll be using ⅜" rod. Use the wire template to record the length and shape of the brace. Begin by heating the end of the rod until it glows a dull red. Place it flat on your anvil and begin pounding it with the hammer. Initially, the results are a bit unimpressive. Heat again and resume pounding. Soon it will begin to flatten out and broaden. Repeat heating and pounding until you achieve the desired thickness in the flattened end. It is easy to work a slight bend into the flat to match the angle of the frame. Let the piece cool, then take it to the grinder for shaping. Use a flat file to tune up the shape.

Deck Braces (continued)

To fashion the upper end of the bracket (A), simply repeat the operation performed for the lower end. The "L"-shaped tab is easily bent into shape with reheating and fine hammer blows. Shape the bracket with the grinder and flat file. Bore the holes for the screw fastenings. After one more cleanup with the flat file, sand and polish the piece and install it with round-head screws

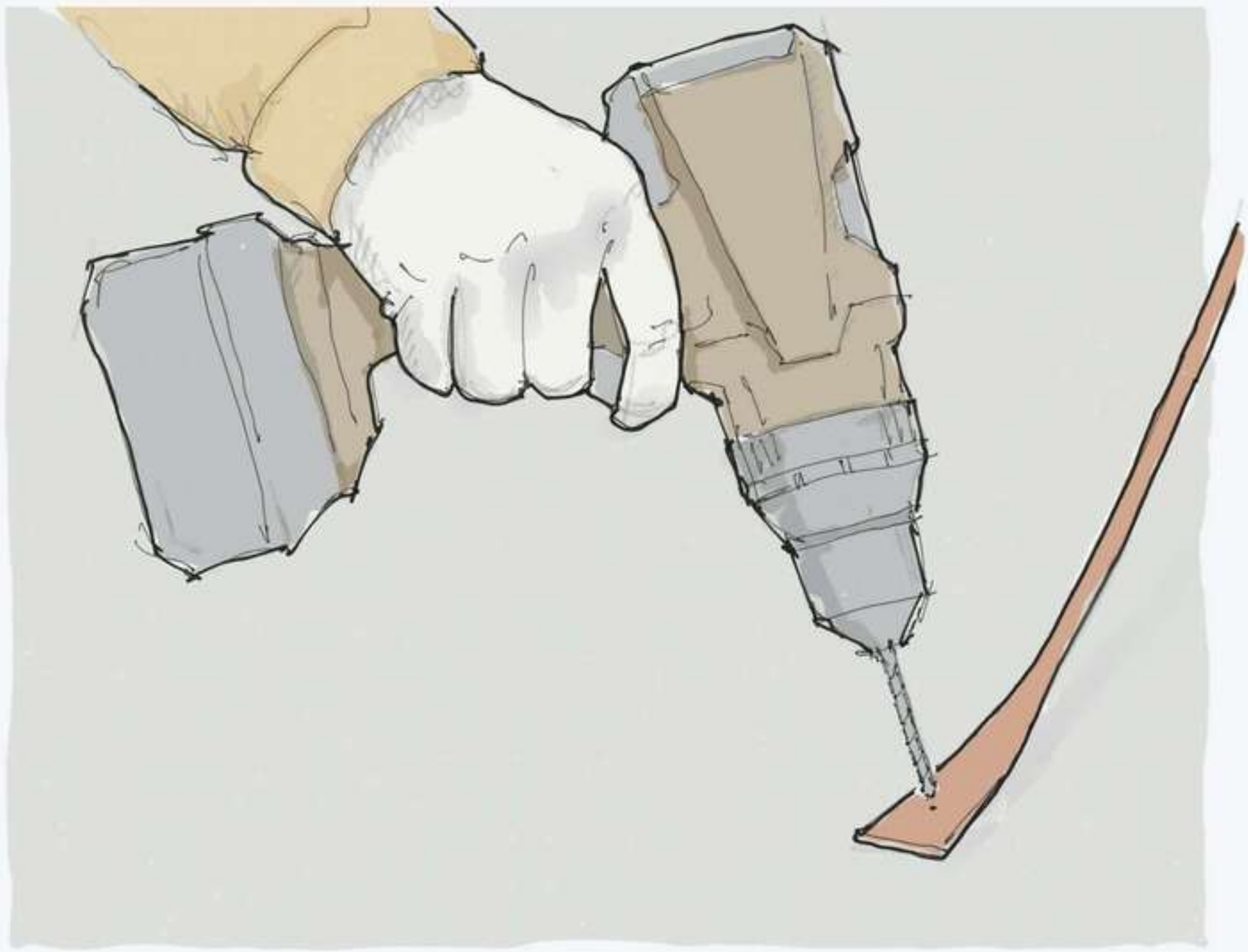
For style (B), instead of fashioning a bracket, we'll cut threads into the upper end of the brace with a die. When installed, the brace will run through the deck with nuts and washers on both the top and bottom faces of the deck. (Depending upon the construction, I like to use a plywood pad to reinforce the bottom side of the deck.) The top can be a standard nut or, if appropriate, a bronze cap nut. Install the top portion first, then fasten the lower tab to the frame.



Notes on drilling and countersinking stock for screws

After your round stock has been cut, bent, twisted and fashioned into shape, it's time to bore it for your screw fastenings. Unlike when boring for screws in softwood planking where the drilled hole just needs to be close to the shank size, in metal it needs to be spot on. Before tackling the project do a test bore in scrap stock to ensure the screw shank fit is correct. Be sure to immobilize the stock with a clamp or vise.

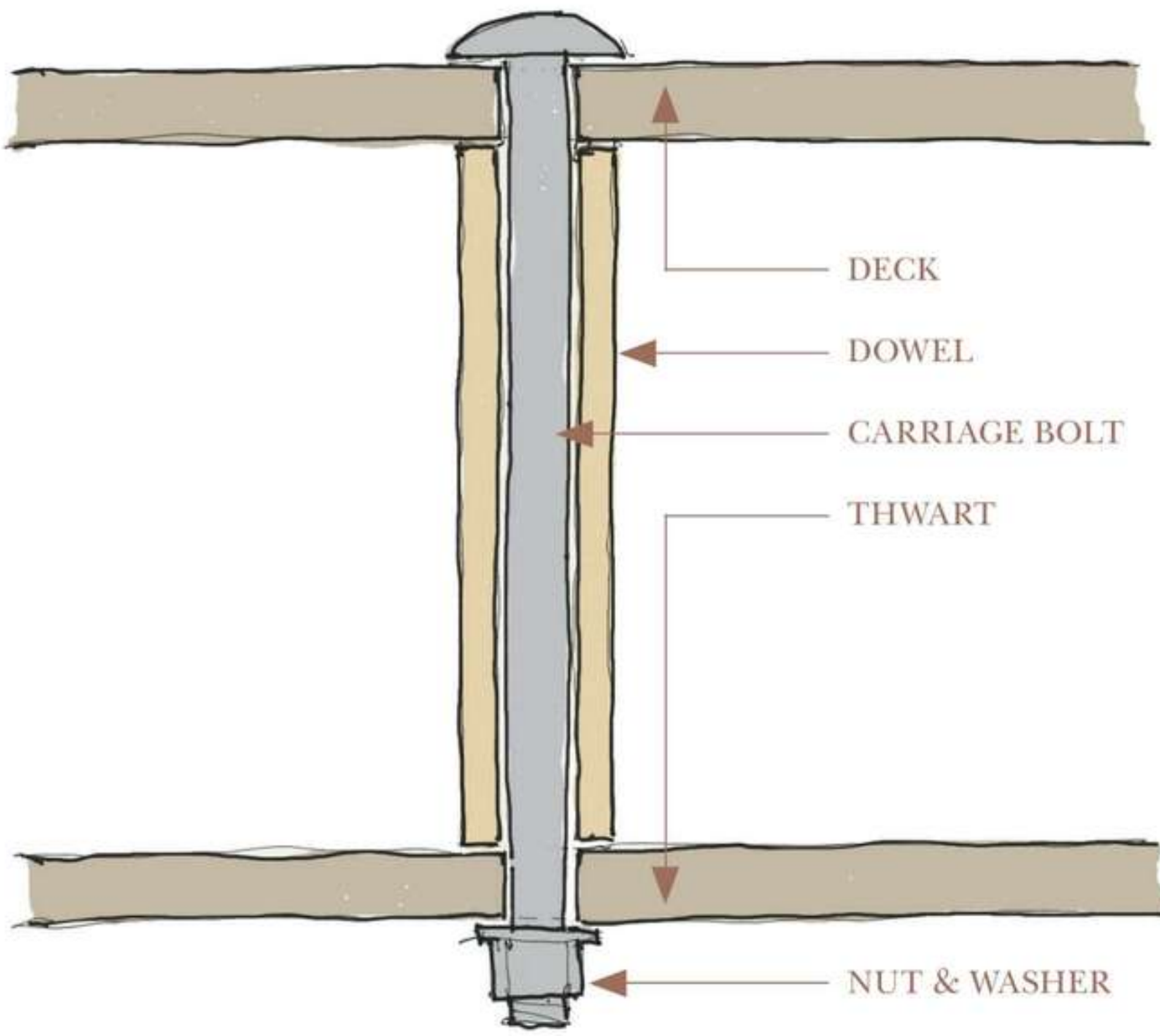
If possible, use a bit designed for cutting brass. Manufacturers recommend titanium-coated high-speed steel or a cobalt-steel alloy with bronze-oxide finish. (A good coating will ensure better wear-resistance). To prevent the bit from skidding around while boring, the location should be marked and "punched" to make a little dent or dimple in the metal; this will help keep the bit on track. Some builders use a bit with at least a 135-degree split point, which tends to be self-centering. This type of tip requires less force than a standard one when boring the metal.



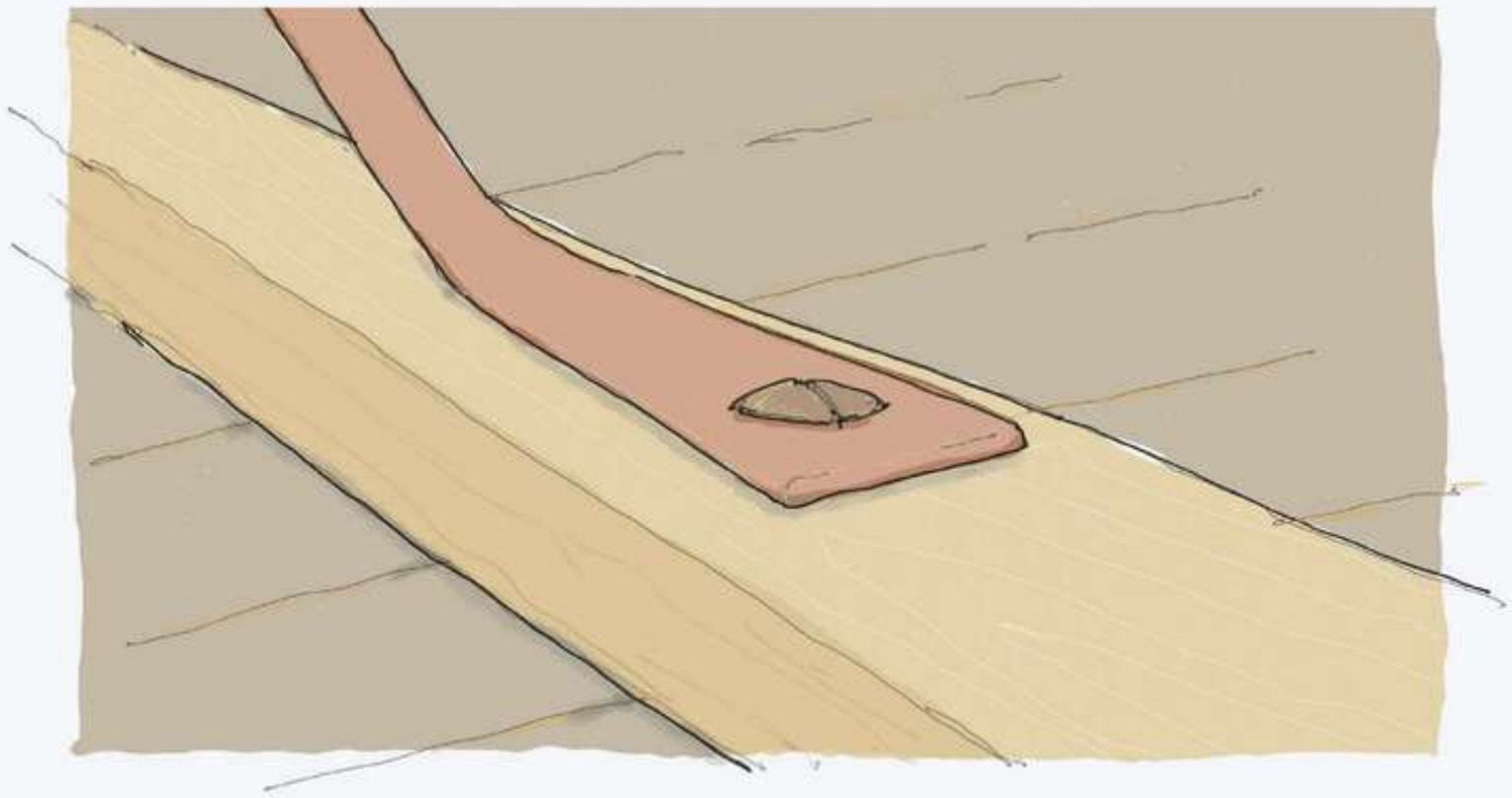
Also, this tip design helps prevent the bit from the dreaded "walking" off the stock.

Brass is kind of a "sticky" metal when boring—i.e. it is easy for a

More Deck Bracing



Aficionados of wood-and-canvas canoes may already be familiar with the system canoe builders use to suspend the after seat: A long carriage bolt goes through the inwale, then down through a bored dowel that acts as a bushing, then through the ash frame of the caned seat. The head of the carriage bolt is on the top of the inwale. A nut and washer are installed on the threads of the bolt under the ash frame and tightened. We can use a similar approach to brace the deck of a small boat—just with a longer drilled dowel. In this case, a hole will be bored through the deck and the thwart below with the wooden spacer sandwiched in between. A long bronze carriage bolt or the classy Herreshoff-style "fin neck" boat (www.fairwindfasteners.com) is installed with the head on the top the deck and the nut and washer under the thwart. This fastening system prevents any up or down motion of the thwart.



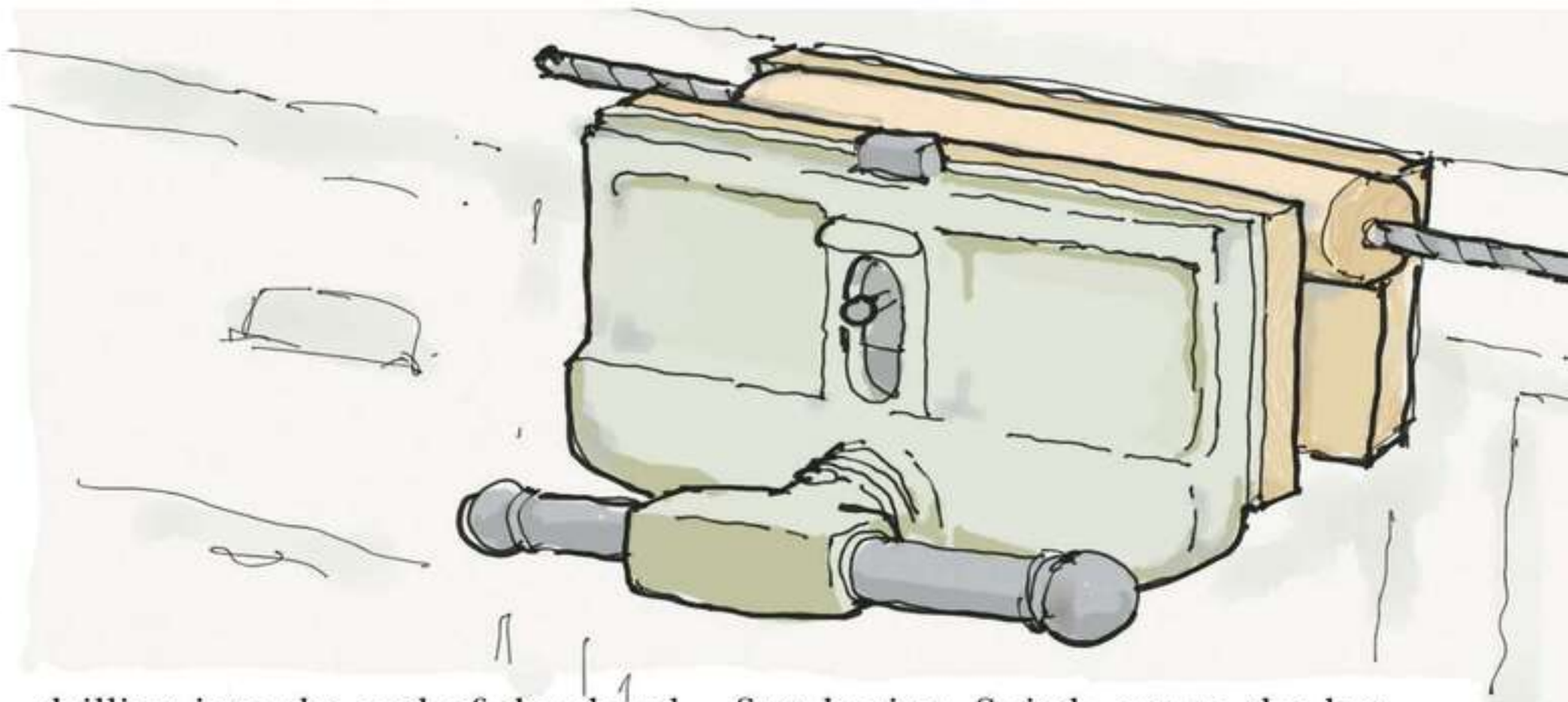
twist bit to snap off (or get sucked into the stock) when the sharp cutting edge jams in the metal. Stock bits come with a positive edge or rake where the bit cuts metal, which is great when cutting steel but problematic for brass. You can easily modify the cutting edge a bit by running it along a sharpening stone a few times. Mineral-oil lubricants are commonly used for drilling soft metals such as aluminum and brass; maintain a consistent drilling speed and pressure for the best results.

Secure the brass piece in a vise or clamp it down to prevent movement during drilling. This will ensure accuracy and prevent accidents.

For your screws to properly land on your knee or brace you will need to use a countersink on your bored hole. Countersinks cut a cone-shaped opening to install screws and rivets flush with a surface. (They can also be used for chamfering and deburring.) An 82-degree countersink angle is compatible with the profile of flat- and oval-head screws.

A handy, but somewhat pricy, alternative is the "high-speed steel drill-point countersink," which employs a small drill point at the tip on its stepped body and lets you use the same tool for drilling and countersinking holes.

A caveat when counter sinking brass stock for a bent stem band: It is tempting to pre-bore and countersink the entire length before bending. If a severe curve is attempted, instead of bending smoothly, there is a better-than-average chance that the brass will crease or may even break at the drilled locations. A safer procedure is to pre-mark your holes, then drill one and fasten, then bend to the next location on the stem band, bore and fasten, bend again and repeat the process until the job is done.

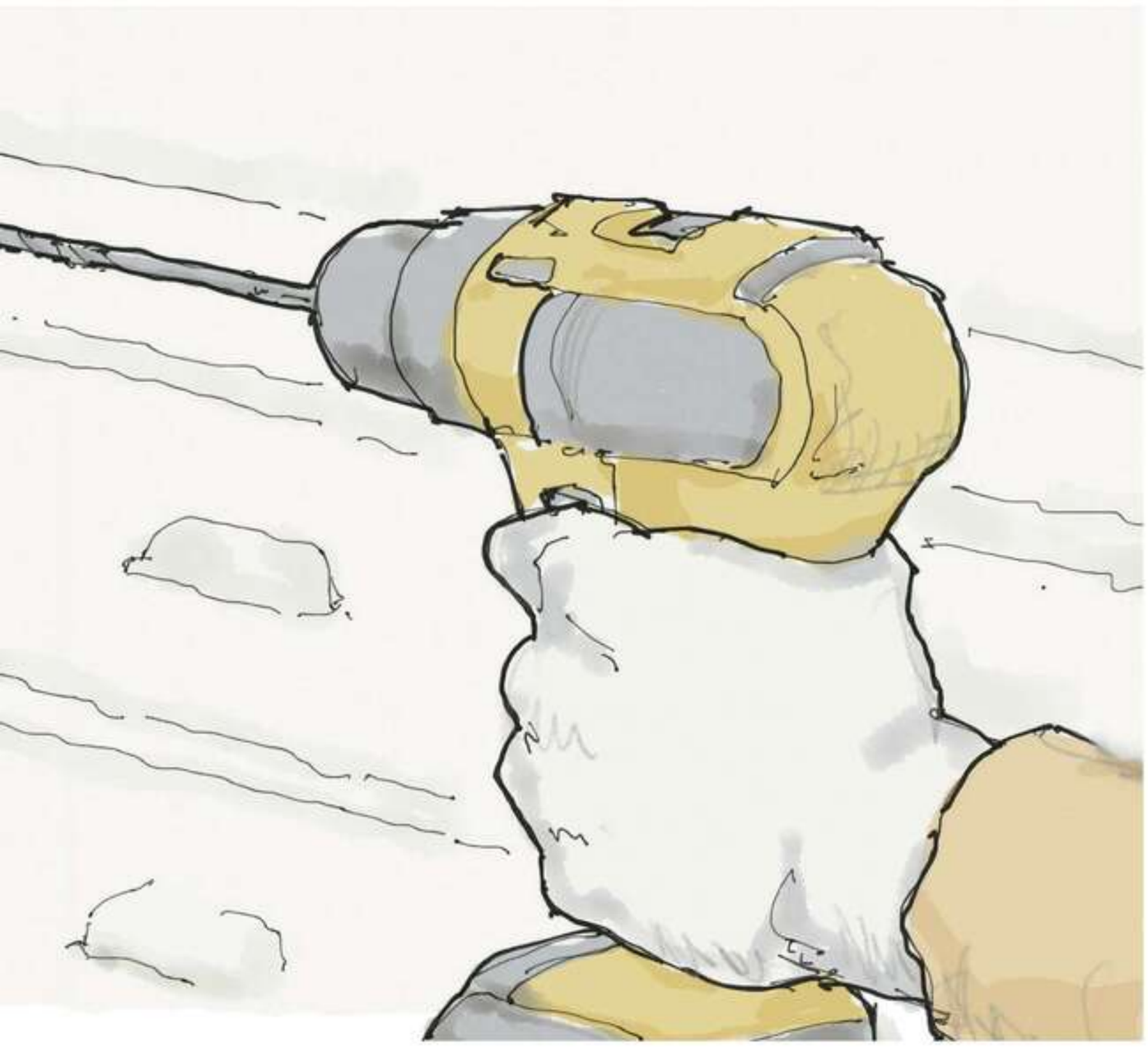


Where does one get such a bored dowel, you ask? You drill it yourself, by eye. Start with a couple of standard hardware-store-quality dowels that have been cut to length. Round up a few long, installer-type twist drills, the largest being the diameter of the carriage bolts you will be using. Clamp the dowel horizontally in your wood vise. Using a punch or nail set, create a starter dimple in the centers of both ends of the dowel. Chuck the smallest-diameter bit in your drill. Wrap a piece of masking tape on the bit at approximately half the length of the dowel. Place another bit along the length of the dowel in the vise letting it extend outward. This will be your sighting guide.

Clamp the dowel-sighting bit in place and bring the hand drill with the narrow bit to the dowel. Place the tip of the bit in the starter dimple and sight along it to ensure it is parallel to the "sighting bit." Slowly start drilling into the end of the dowel. Partway in, withdraw the bit and clear it of shavings, then reinsert and continue boring.

When you get to the masking tape, stop and withdraw the bit. Reverse the dowel in the vise and drill back to the center and meet the previous bore. Repeat the operation with the next size bit, chasing through and reaming out the first boring. Switch out to the last bit that is your bolt size and follow through one more time. With that done, you'll be ready to install your wooden bushing.

Whether you choose the classic brass knee, the spartan bronze-rod brace, or hybrid wood-bronze version, all offer simple, elegant, inexpensive, and easy-to fashion solutions to stiffening the hull.



Hardware sources

Bronze Rod, nuts, washers, carriage bolts, silicon bronze solid rod, brass half round and oval:
Hamilton Marine
155 E. Main St., Searsport, ME 04974
207–548–6302
www.hamiltonmarine.com

Bronze Rod, nuts, cap nuts, washers, carriage and Herreshoff style "fin neck" bolts, solid rod:
Fair Wind Fasteners
11C Bowler Lane, Newport RI 02840
www.fairwindfasteners.com

Greg Rössel is a longtime contributor to WoodenBoat *and an instructor at WoodenBoat School.*

To view our collection of skill-building videos, join our Mastering Skills membership site (skills.woodenboat.com)

A Deep Dive into Bending Wood

WoodenBoat reader Peter Collins Huber recently wrote, "I spend several days a week working as a volunteer in the boatshop of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum here in Ferrisburgh, Vermont. Our work to build and maintain large rowboats (among these are 32′ pilot gigs and 25′ Whitehalls) regularly includes the involvement of teens from local high-school programs. The practical work of the shop also routinely calls for steam-bending white-oak frames and occasionally applying steam to assist the bending of white-pine garboards. To help our students, I try to be knowledgeable about what's going on, including what's up in the steambox. While I have some understanding of the fundamentals, I'd benefit from a deeper examination. My questions form along these lines: In steam-bending, how much of the effect is due to the presence of steam, of moisture, or of heat? If heat alone can be used to bend wood, then why use steam at all? Simply soaking wood in water can promote easier bending, but since that lacks both heat and steam, what's at work here? What is the most effective way to bend wood in boatbuilding applications?"

In the most recent issue (WB No. 303), I touched on the topic of bending thin tropical-pine frames for skin-on-frame boats. The key lesson was to avoid most softwoods when extreme bends are necessary. In other columns, I have discussed particular problems that readers have encountered in bending wood, but Peter Huber's email prompted me to take a deeper dive into the interaction of the multiple factors at play when attempting to bend wood.

We'll begin by examining how differing wood species can be sources of variation. And, in response to Peter's questions, we'll see how water and temperature affect particular chemical components of wood, sometimes in antagonistic ways. The trick in wood-bending is to find the sweet spot of wood moisture content and temperature to optimize wood plasticity. Overshooting the ideal temperature may initiate processes that actually stiffen wood—definitely not what we want.

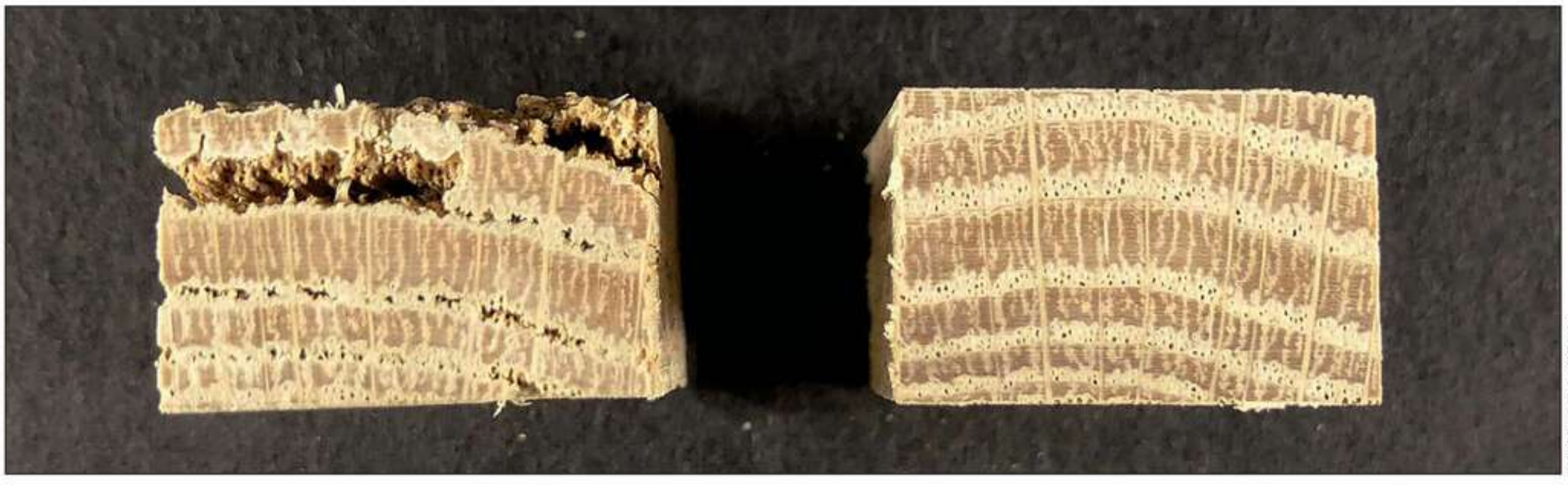
The Right Species

In general, hardwoods are much more amenable to bending than softwood conifers. The precise reason for this difference has not been determined, but it may be partly linked to differing lignin chemistries. Lignin is an amorphous polymer that acts like a glue, bonding cellulose and hemicellulose fibrils, not unlike how polymers in manufactured composites bind with glass or carbon fibers.

Within the conifers, a few very-slow-growing species such as Alaska yellow cedar (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*) and yew (*Taxus spp.*) can be successfully bent; perhaps their lignin content is chemically closer to that of hardwoods. In addition to lignin chemistry differences, hardwoods contain less lignin than softwoods and much more hemicellulose content. These differences appear to play a role in the hydration and heating of wood to be bent.

Ring-porous hardwoods such as oaks, elms, hickories, walnuts, and ashes are particularly adaptable to steam-bending; but moderate-density, diffuse-porous woods such as birch, beech, maple, sweetgum, and mahogany also respond well to steam-bending. Because wood can be compressed as much as 20 to 30 percent but can only be stretched 1 to 2 percent, a metal tension strap constraining the convex surface will reduce failure on the outside of the bend. Another trick to reduce failure on the tension surface is, if possible, to orient the bend so that the radial, or quarter-sawn, surface faces

In these end-on views of two red-oak beams, the one at left shows that steam-bending failure occurred on the upper, tension side, in the weak earlywood pores, compared to an unbent beam (right). Even where failure has not occurred in the unsuccessful bend, the earlywood pores have become weakened and enlarged.



RICHARD JAGELS

the inside and outside of the bend. This is particularly important for ring-porous woods to avoid tension failure along the weak earlywood zone (see photograph). Of course, bending stock should be free of cross-grain and other grain deviations or knots.

Water and Wood

The moisture content in living trees is generally above the fiber-saturation point (25 to 30 percent). Freshly cut green wood can be bent, but often not to the tight curves achieved after steaming somewhat drier wood. Water acts mostly on the cellulose and hemicellulose, helping to weaken bonding between microfibrils. An analogy would be the change that happens if a piece of natural-fiber rope that had become stiffened in a sun-baked desert environment were soaked in water and became limp again.

If living trees lacked lignin, they would collapse like a limp rope. Lignin provides the solidifying binder. Thus, in addition to "softening" cellulose with moisture, we need to get lignin to plasticize and flow—and this can be achieved with heat. But we don't want to start with green wood. The moisture content may be so high the cell lumens will be filled with water rather than air. This can lead to hydrostatic compression failure on the concave surface. A moisture content of 15 to 25 percent is ideal.

Soaking wood in hot water will eventually bring the wood to a temperature somewhere below 100°C (212°F), the boiling point of water. But for thick stock, that may take hours, and if we leave the wood in hot water too long the cells may begin to fill with water and we will again be faced with potential hydrostatic compression failure while bending.

Steam-bending

For the most difficult bends in relatively thick wood, steaming is the best option, because it allows us to raise the wood temperature more rapidly and not add more moisture to the wood. Steam, a vapor, when it fuses into droplets, releases heat (6.01 kJ/mol). This heat of fusion continues to raise the air temperature of a steambox, which in turn, raises the temperature of the wood. Unfortunately, steam-bending comes with its own risk. If steamed for too long, the wood begins to lose moisture and becomes less plastic. But you might ask, how can wood lose moisture in a steambox?

Steamboxes are usually made of wood but sometimes of metal or even plastic tubing. Whatever the material, they are generally not insulated. When wood is first introduced to a steambox, hot steam will condense on the bending stock as well as the box walls. But as the bending stock heats up, it eventually reaches temperatures higher than the box walls, and the steam now condenses only on the cooler steambox walls. At this point, water in the cells close to the surface may vaporize, which would reduce cell-wall moisture content and begin a transfer of moisture from the interior to the surface, gradually drying the interior. If this continues long enough, the loss of moisture as well as other volatile components can lead to case-hardening—a phenomenon that can occur with kiln-drying, where the wood surface is swollen and, therefore, is restrained from shrinking while the interior, being drier, wants to shrink.

This is also the early stage of something called torrefaction, a high-temperature process that drives off water and volatile organic compounds and reduces bending strength by up to 30 percent (see WB No. 215 for more on thermally modified wood). The temperatures reached in the torrefaction process (200–300°C or 390–510°F) can actually cause spontaneous wood combustion if oxygen is present. So, how is any free oxygen in the kiln absorbed? Add steam! Here is demonstrable evidence that wood can be dried to near 0 percent in the presence of steam.

Solution

How do we get to the sweet spot of maximum wood plasticity without tipping over into the realm of increasing stiffness and brittleness, particularly with thick bending stock? To begin, the bending stock should be preconditioned to a uniform moisture content of 20 to 30 percent for thick stock and somewhat less for thin stock. The transfer of heat from surface to interior is much faster in wet wood than dry wood. I might even suggest an overnight soak in warm water. That will ensure high surface moisture, and the wood will be closer to the steambox temperature as a starting point. Get the steambox up to temperature before adding stock, and make sure you will have enough steam generation for the entire conditioning process.

The trickiest part is determining the ideal length of steaming time. The usual recipe is one hour per inch of thickness. But wood density, moisture content, and other factors can affect this rule of thumb. I would recommend some initial testing, erring on the side of less rather than more time in the steambox. Many successful bends can be achieved with 20 to 30 minutes of steaming per inch if the moisture content of the bending stock starts at 20 to 30 percent.

Finally, in WB No. 29, I provided a table of 22 woods with characteristics that can affect bending. A look at that column will provide additional wood features, such as interlocked grain, that may favor successful bending.

Dr. Richard Jagels is an emeritus professor of forest biology at the University of Maine, Orono. Please send correspondence to Dr. Jagels by mail to the care of WoodenBoat, *or via e-mail to Senior Editor Tom Jackson, tom@woodenboat.com.*

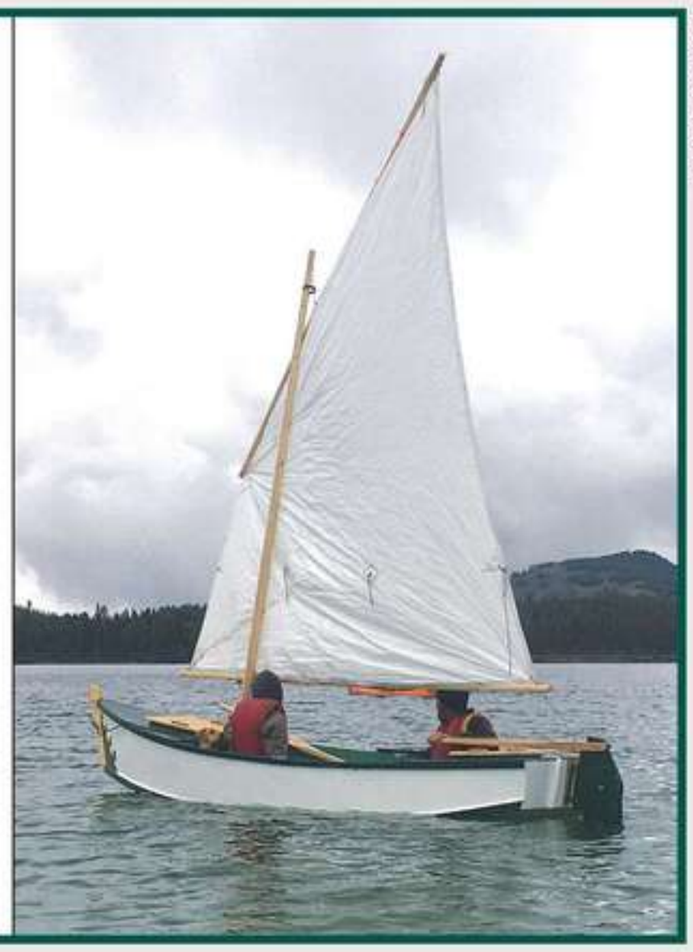
Launchings

Edited by Christopher Cunningham

These pages, along with the Boat Launchings section of www.woodenboat.com, are dedicated to sharing recently launched wooden boats built or restored by our readers. If you've launched a boat within the past year, please email us at launchings@woodenboat.com, or write us at Launchings, WoodenBoat, P.O. Box 78, Brooklin, ME 04616.

Please include the following information: (1) the boat's length and beam; (2) the name of its design class or type; (3) the names of the designer, builder, owner, and photographer; (4) your mailing address along with an email address or phone number; (5) the port or place of intended use; (6) date of launching; and (7) a few sentences describing the construction or restoration. Send no more than five photographs (jpg images at 300 dpi) and enclose a SASE if you want anything returned.

When Ken Briggs was 10, he was fascinated by boats. His grandfather, seeing an opportunity to share skills that would serve Ken for a lifetime, guided him through building a small boat. Two generations later, Ken's grandson, Kippen, had taken an early interest in sailing; when he was 11, he asked Ken if they could build a boat together. With his grandfather on board, Kippen read Jim Michalak's *Boatbuilding for Beginners and Beyond* and decided to build the Mayfly, a flat-bottomed skiff detailed in the book. Starting during the winter of 2023–24, grandfather and grandson worked together in Ken's home workshop in the woods outside of Whitehorse in Yukon Territory, Canada. On Father's Day in June of 2024, they launched EMMA. Kippen had learned valuable lessons about patience and perseverance, and the two had learned a lot about each other.



LIESEL BRIGGS

NATE ROOKS/OFF CENTER HARBOR

Gary Brown is a lifelong boater, and over the past 20 years he has owned several boats and built two of them. Sailing has been his passion, but he began to think that a powerboat would offer a better way to explore the Columbia and Willamette rivers near his home in Aloha, Oregon, and to venture north to Washington's Puget Sound cruising grounds. He settled on building a Sam Devlin–designed Surf Runner 25. He first had Sam draw a transom to accommodate a 200-hp outboard in lieu of a stern drive and later, during the construction, Gary added chine flats and a bow-thruster tunnel to the hull and raised the cuddy cabin roof for more headroom. After 2,300 hours of working on the boat over two and three-quarter years, he launched GET ABOUT on the Columbia River in May 2024.

KEN ELOWE

Grandkids are good reasons to build a boat. The boat may be a gift for the child, but building it has just as much benefit for the grandparent by filling the free time of retirement and creating a long-lasting legacy. Ken Elowe of West Brookfield, Massachusetts, has two granddaughters, ages 7 and 2, and for them he built a Montana Pram designed by Paul Butler. Ken stretched the 9-footer to 11′ to make room for a parent or grandparent to accompany the girls. As one of the purposes for the pram, Butler envisioned "meandering across a backyard pond with the grandkids." For Ken's granddaughters, that's right on target: the girls have a shallow pond adjoining the back yard of their home in eastern Massachusetts. The as-yet-nameless pram was launched in July 2024 on the birthday of Ken's eldest granddaughter.

NICO KRAUSS

Jan Brügge put the crew of his boatyard in Königstein, Germany, to work building WOY, a 26′ daysailer. He paired the innovative design by Martin Menzer of Berckemeyer Yacht Design (www.berckemeyer-yacht.de) with an equally forward-thinking insistence on using locally harvested woods and bio-based products. The spruce and silver-fir veneers are laminated using a vacuum-infusion process, developed in collaboration with the Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development, that minimizes the builders' exposure to the epoxy. The decks are made from Douglas-fir, which is not a local wood but avoids using unsustainable tropical woods. WOY is both a demonstration of environmentally responsible high-tech boatbuilding as well as Jan's personal boat. He'll be sailing her in weekly races on the Schlei, the 20-mile-long inlet that connects Königstein to the Baltic Sea.

CHARLIE FLANAGAN

After a lifetime of boating and more than four decades working in the marine supply industry, Bill Griffin of Annapolis, Maryland, set his sights on building a boat, but he lacked woodworking experience, tools, and a workshop large enough for the project. What he did have was a good neighbor, Charlie Flanagan. Charlie had space, tools, experience, and a willingness to help. Bill ordered a Chesapeake Light Craft kit for the Nymph, a strip-built double-paddle canoe designed by Nick Schade. Bill and Charlie went to work and spent four months applying walnut and red- and yellow-cedar strips. They finished the canoe in December 2023 but didn't launch it until April 2024—so beautiful was the work that the canoe spent the winter in an art gallery. Bill now paddles the Nymph in the creeks that flow into the South River.

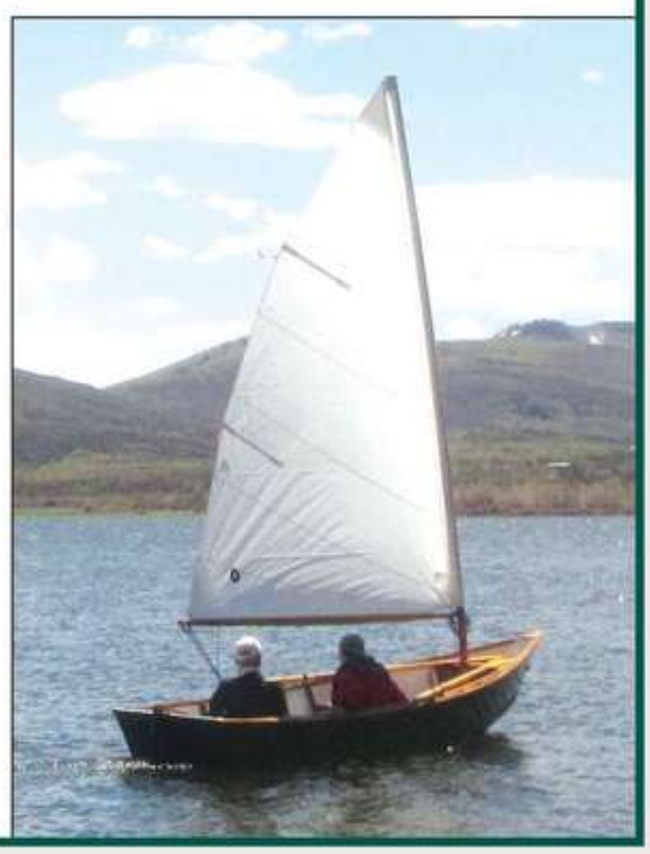
When Steve Denette of Granby, Massachusetts, needed a tender for ARABELLA, the Atkin-designed ketch he built and made famous on his *Acorn to ARABELLA* YouTube channel, he asked Bob Emser to build it. Emser, who has his own YouTube channel, *The Art of Boat Building*, took inspiration from two Atkin dinghies to design a 9′ sailing tender that would fit on the ketch's housetop. The lumber for the tender was salvaged from the remains of VICTORIA, an Atkin ketch built in the 1920s. Bob strip-built the tender to keep it light and easy to maintain. For sailing, he designed a sprit rig and an ingenious rudder that kicks up with a pull of the tiller. The tender was launched at Mattapoisett, Massachusetts, in June 2023 and christened VICTORIA after her namesake, which provided not only her lumber but also the brass letters that spell out the name on the tender's freshly varnished transom.

BOB EMSER (LEFT); BEN FUNDIS (RIGHT)

LAUNCHINGS

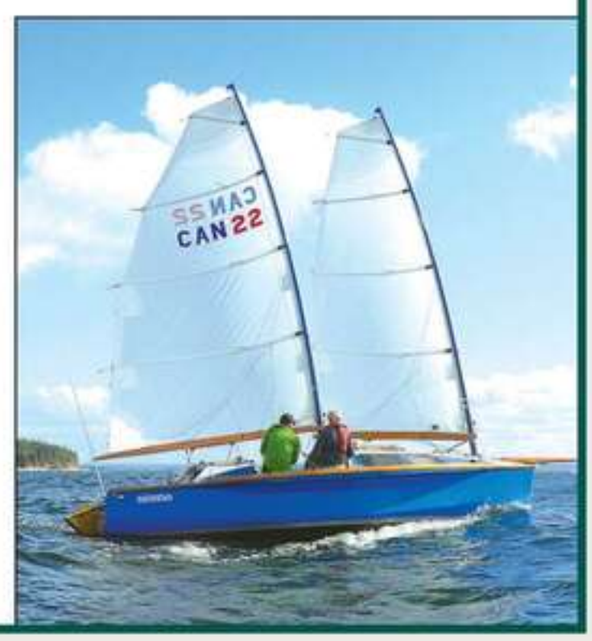
STEVE WENGER (TOP); JEANNE WENGER (BOTTOM)

Steve Wenger lives landlocked in Glade Park, Colorado, where the nearest water is at the bottom of local household wells, some 500′ deep. It's a 70-mile drive to Vega Reservoir, the nearest surface water wide enough—barely—for sailing. That hasn't stopped Steve from building boats, five of them. His latest is built to Tracy O'Brien's Nemah design. The 15′ sharpie for sail and oar is built in stitch-and-glue plywood and trimmed with mahogany. Christened RUBY LEE, she was launched in May 2024 at Vega. Her maiden sail was cut short by gusty winds, a common occurrence for the reservoir nestled between mountains at an elevation of 8,000′. The sharpie performs well with oars and with an electric trolling motor, and Steve anticipates RUBY LEE will become his favorite fishing boat. He'll try his luck at Trout Lake, a 150-mile drive from home and at a breathless elevation of 9,700′.



LESLEY TULLOCH

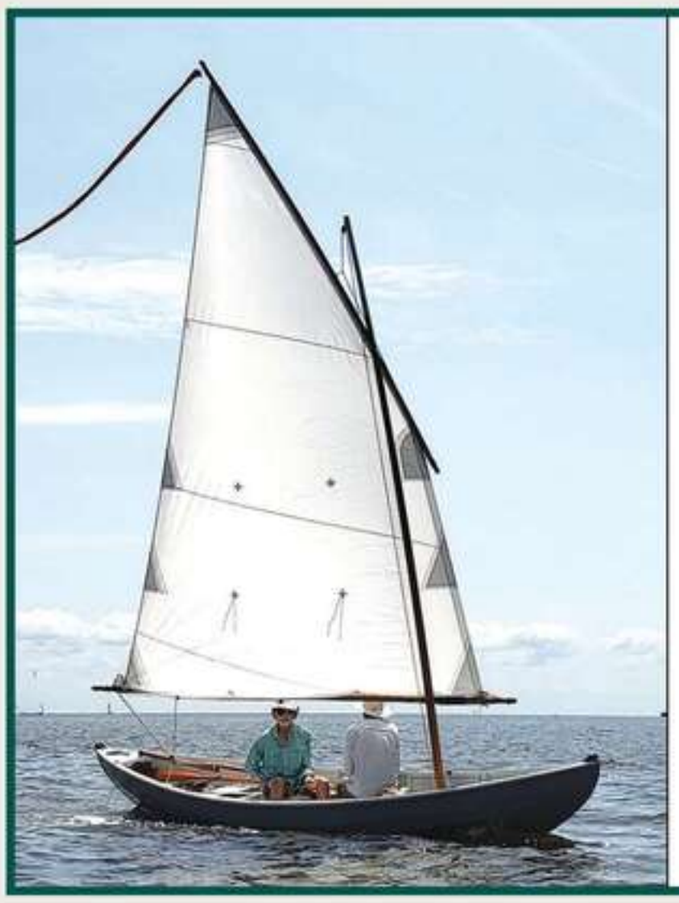
When Iain Tulloch decided to build a new boat for himself, he put his skills as a naval architect and marine engineer to good use. He also drew upon a lifetime of sailing and his earlier experience of designing and building several wooden boats, ranging from kayaks, rowboats, and sailing dinghies to a 43′ keel boat. For his latest boat, he had in mind a 22′6″ plywood schooner with a beam of 8′6″. To prevent excessive heeling when the wind pipes up, the boat has water-ballast tanks equipped with a pump to transfer weight to the windward side. The center cockpit can comfortably accommodate four for daysailing, and the cabin space has a head, a galley, and two full-sized bunks for cruising. Launched in May 2023, AKIMBO sails the Canadian waters surrounding Iain's home on Nova Scotia's Fox Point.



If, like David O'Halloran, you lived next door to a community boat ramp on the shore of Lake Mohawk in northern New Jersey, you'd eventually build a boat. David's only background in such a project was a woodworking class in high school, so he did several years of research before calling Chase Small Craft to order a kit for the François Vivier–designed Morbic 11. David went to work on the strip-built hull in his tiny garage and found the project, which lasted two years, "complicated, frustrating at times, but well worth the effort." He launched the boat, christened MELI-HA-HA in August 2023, and since then the bright-finished boat's patterns of western red and Alaska yellow cedar have never failed to draw admiring looks and appreciative comments wherever and whenever David takes her out.

PAUL O'HALLORAN

... AND RELAUNCHINGS



JUDITH POWERS (LEFT); MICHAEL JONES (RIGHT)

When Michael Jones, the president of the Florida Gulf Coast chapter of the Traditional Small Craft Association, learned that there was a dory built by John Gardner in need of a new home, he wasted no time in making the one-hour drive to see it in St. Petersburg. The Chamberlain gunning dory had an engraved bronze plate that read: "Built in 1966 at Saugus, Mass by John Gardner for Thomas A Howell of Califon, NJ." Gardner had written about the gunning dory in two of his books and had drawn plans for a version of the boat in batten-seamed plywood, the method used in the boat he built for Howell. The dory was in surprisingly good condition and needed only minor repairs. While the mast and boom matched the Beachcomber-Alpha rig Gardner had drawn for the gunning dory, Michael made the switch to a balance lug. The newly christened ECHO was relaunched in May 2024 at Cedar Key.

DEBRA FEINMAN

In 1987, David Bush built a 15′6″ Gloucester Light Dory, a Phil Bolger design. David was then living in Reno, Nevada, and rowed on Lake Tahoe. He had indoor storage for the boat for five years, but when he moved to the Pacific Northwest the best he could do to keep the boat out of the rain and snow was to cover it with a tarp. The plywood swelled to the point of tearing the fiberglass at the chines. After that first winter, he found indoor storage for the dory and sanded the paint off to let the plywood dry. Then the boat lay dormant for 30 years. David resheathed the hull in 'glass cloth and epoxy, repainted it, and relaunched it at Port Townsend, Washington, in April 2024. Since then, he has explored Puget Sound and Lake Sammamish under oars and is planning to row Lake Chelan in Central Washington.

ALAN HEISEY (LEFT); JEREMY ROHT (RIGHT)

Alan Heisey's uncle, Karl Heisey, bought a Handy Boy, a lightly built 14′ runabout, from Ontario's Peterborough Canoe Company in 1954. Karl was in his 20s then and used the boat to get to the family cottage in Georgian Bay. In 1963, Alan's parents bought a quarter-acre island with a one-room cabin in the same area. They bought the Handy Boy from Karl, who had moved on to a larger boat. When Karl died at a young age, the boat took on his childhood name, Kibby. Alan was given KIBBY when his father was in his 80s, and from 2005 on, Alan and his wife and four kids used the boat to get to the family cabin. In 2020, KIBBY began taking on water and was kept ashore until Alan arranged with Baron's Boat Repair to rebuild her in the winter of 2023. KIBBY was returned to the Heisey family in July 2023, ready to serve their next generations.

Hints for taking good photos of your boat

1. Set your camera for high-resolution images. We prefer jpg format, at 300 dpi minimum.
2. Stow fenders and extraneous gear out of the camera's view. Ensure the deck is clean and uncluttered.
3. Take your photographs in mid-angle sunlight for best results. Mid-morning or mid-afternoon usually work well.
4. Keep the horizon level and the background simple and scenic so your boat stands out from its surroundings.
5. Take some pictures of the boat underway and some at rest. Often a vertical format works well for sailboats. Shoot a lot of images, then send us your five favorites.

We enjoy learning of your work—it affirms the vitality of the wooden boat community. We receive so many submissions that there is not room in the magazine for all of them to be published. Launchings not printed in the magazine can be seen at www.woodenboat.com/boat-launchings.

Rhode Runner

A runabout with tradition

Particulars	
LOA	14′9″
Beam	5′5″
Draft	1′3″
Weight	350 lbs
Power	15–25 hp

Design by John C. Harris and Dillon Majoros
Review by Mike O'Brien

Photographs courtesy of Chesapeake Light Craft

This striking outboard runabout might be described as an exercise in nostalgia. Yet we'll build it with long-lasting and easily maintained contemporary materials. It will run efficiently when powered by a relatively small (15–25 hp) outboard motor—gas or electric.

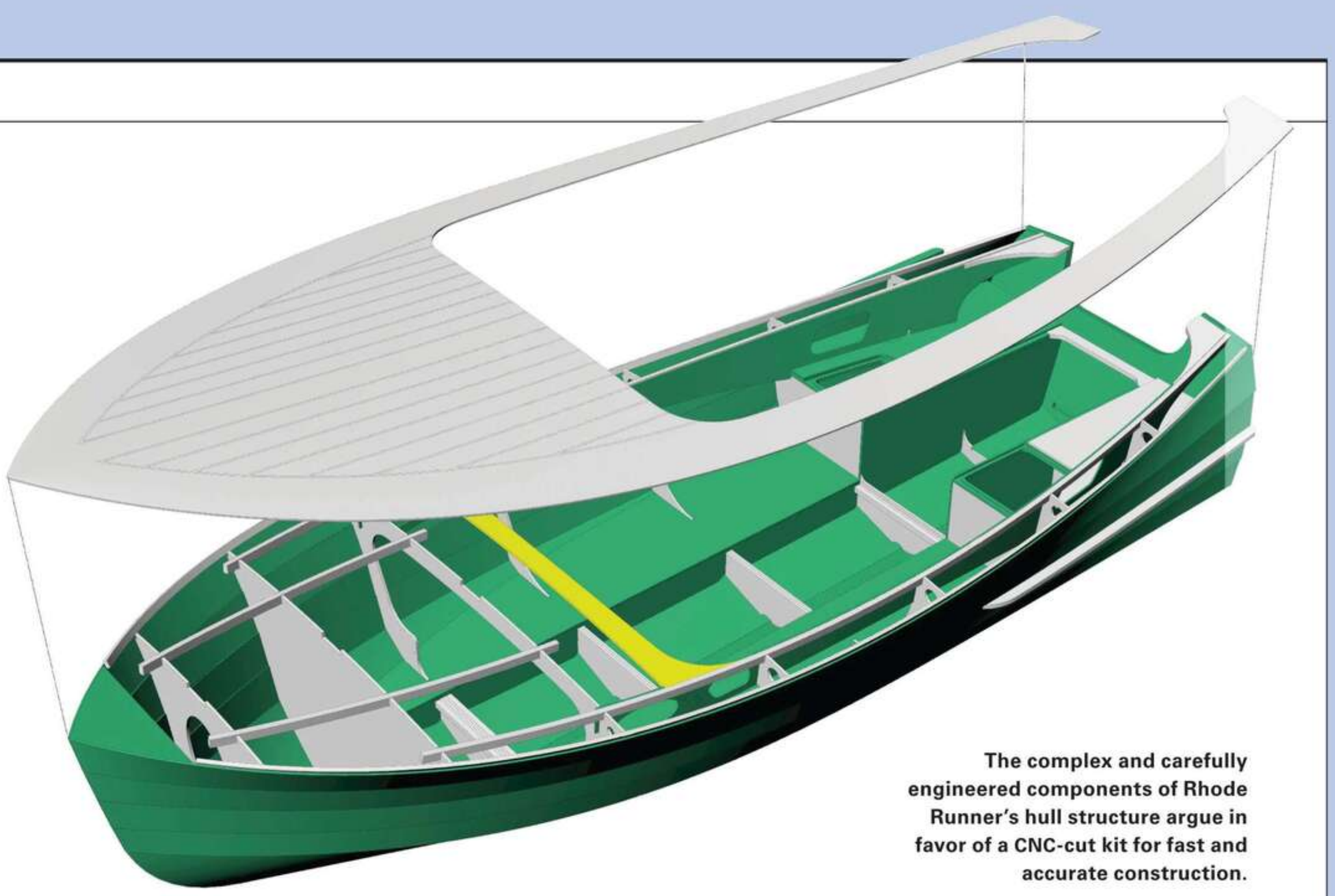
Designers John C. Harris and Dillon Majoros, of Chesapeake Light Craft (CLC), have brought the style and grace of a 1950s runabout to the present. Majoros describes the result as a shapely hull with purpose: "Water-shedding flare forward transitions to elegant tumblehome near the transom. Traditional lapstrake topsides are married at the chine to a contemporary, high-deadrise running surface."

Designer Harris is responsible for the strong sweep to the sheerline: "Why did I do that? Most 1950s runabouts had relatively straight sheerlines. If I attend a classic powerboat show, I want to be able to pick the Rhode Runners out of the crowd!" Many of us will agree that this distinctive feature looks good.

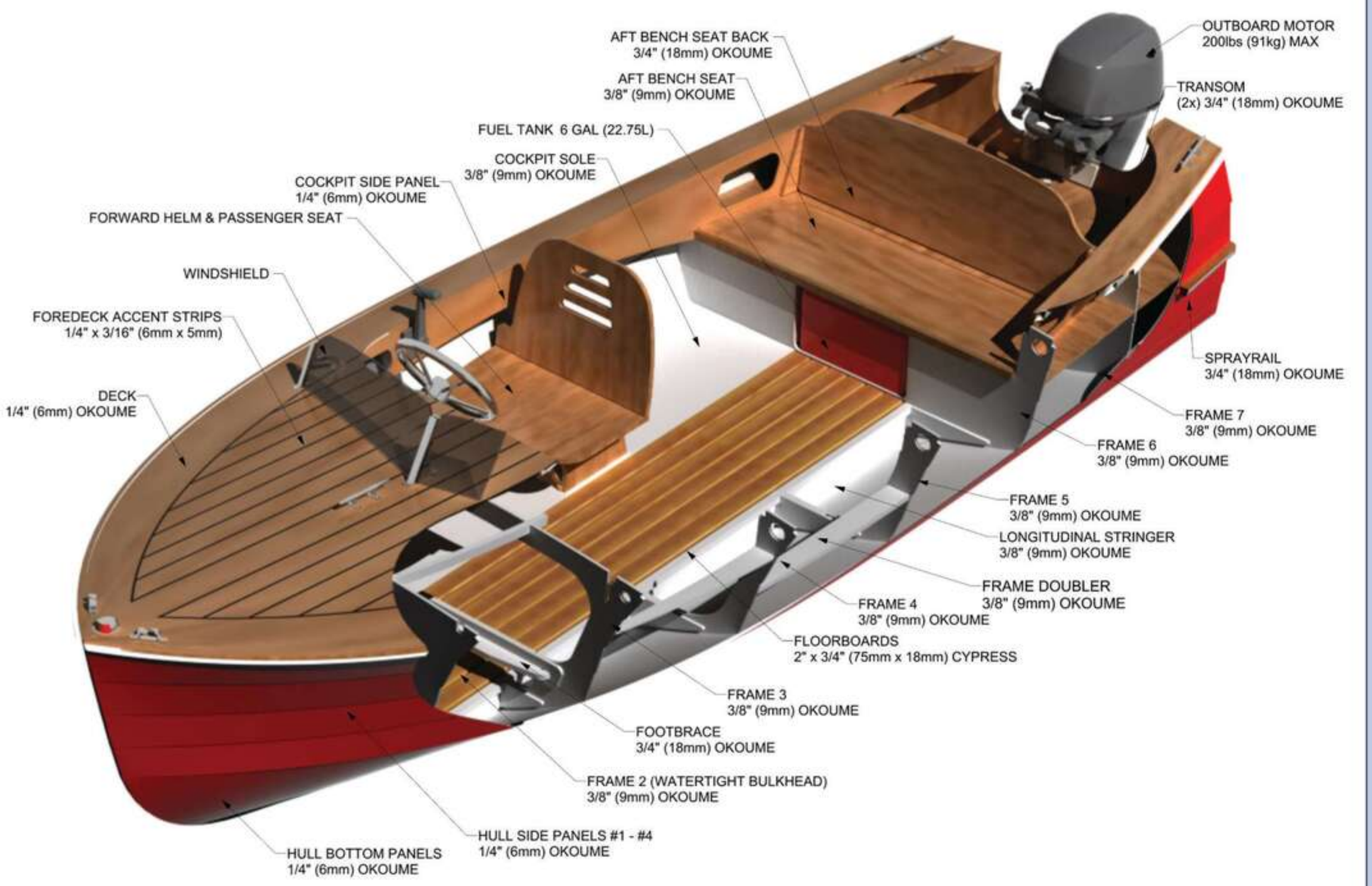
Despite its traditional appearance, Rhode Runner goes together in stitch-and-glue fashion. We'll need high-quality mahogany plywood and epoxy.

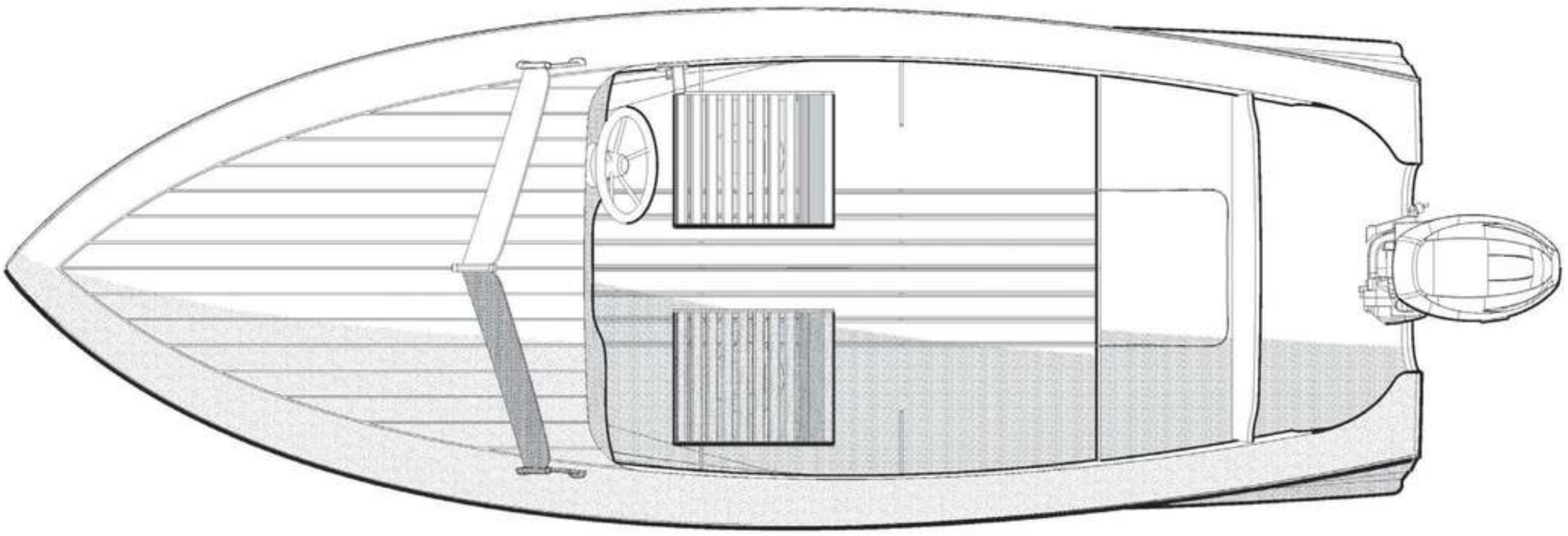
We can build directly to the Rhode Runner plans or we can obtain a kit from CLC. For most jobs, I prefer starting from scratch with paper sheets of drawings spread on my workbench. However,

***Above*—Rhode Runner combines classic style with modern construction, and it runs efficiently with modest power.**



The complex and carefully engineered components of Rhode Runner's hull structure argue in favor of a CNC-cut kit for fast and accurate construction.

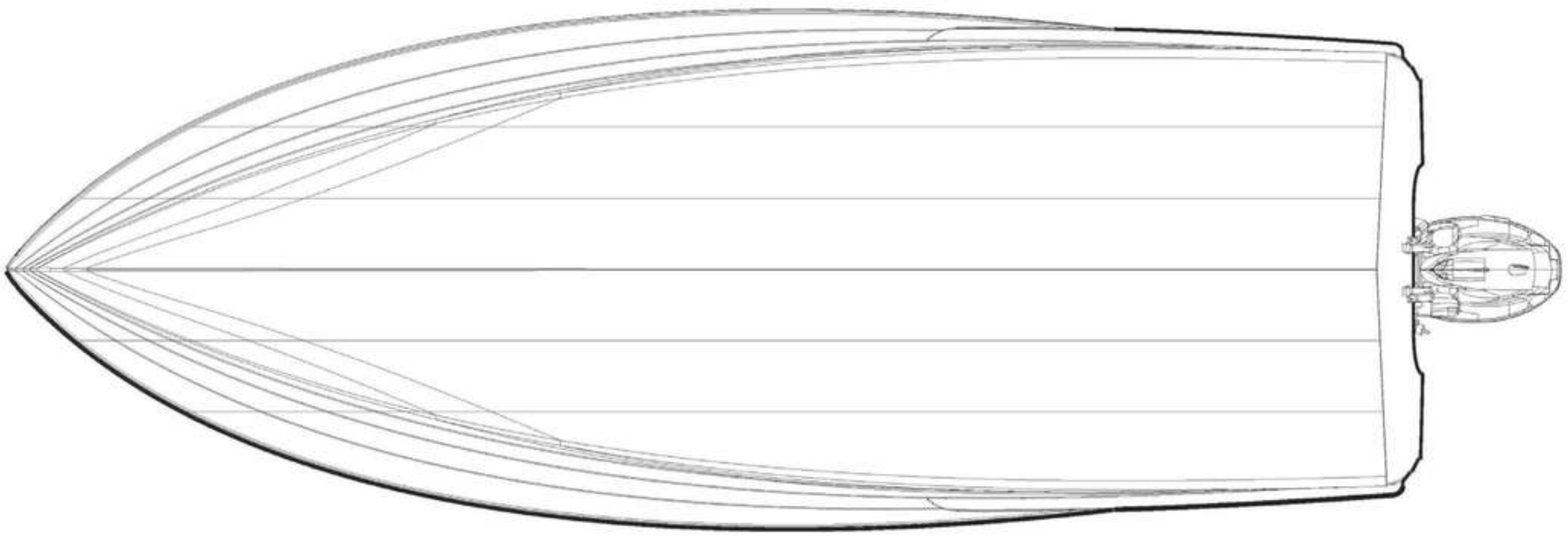




An open layout, with two comfortable seats, ensures good visibility from the wheel.

in this case, I'll strongly suggest that we purchase a kit.

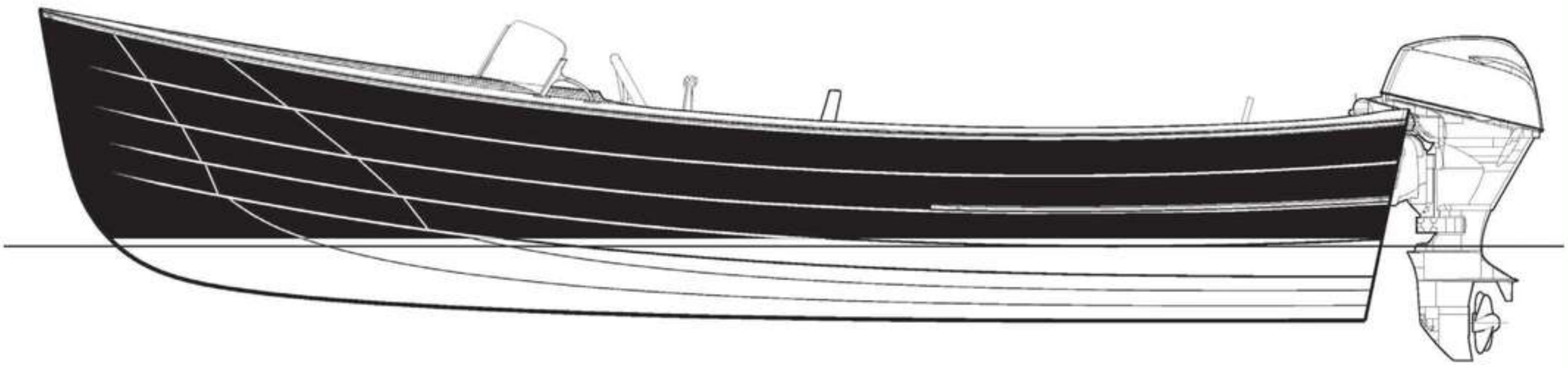
This hull shows us classically simple and elegant lines. Yet its internal structure consists of complex and carefully engineered components. For the kit, CNC machines produce these parts with incredible precision. Could a human builder match the machines' work? Even a slight inaccuracy at the beginning of our project might cause serious problems.



The hull lines show plenty of flare forward and considerable running surface aft. Rhode Runner rides well and planes easily.

Don't worry, machines won't take over our entire project. We'll keep the fun of setting up the structure, planking, and finishing the hull. This will require time, a steady hand, epoxy…and (as with many "epoxi-fied" builds) plenty of sandpaper. Harris suggests that prospective Rhode Runner builders ought to be familiar with stitch-and-glue construction and should have "already built a couple of boats."

Rhode Runner skims across the Severn River with designer John C. Harris at the controls.



The boat has a striking profile; lapstrake topsides accentuate the sweeping curves of this hull.

Co-designer Majoros, who performed the intricate 3D modeling in CAD, has put together an impressive 37-page assembly guide for this design. It's available to download at the CLC website. Warning: The manual contains many evocative full-color renderings of Rhode Runner. You might feel compelled to clear out the garage immediately and get started.

This is an elegant runabout worthy of our best efforts in the shop. With the creation of Rhode Runner, Harris and Majoros have moved forward to the past.

Mike O'Brien is boat design editor for WoodenBoat.

Contact designers John C. Harris and Dillon Majoros at Chesapeake Light Craft, 1805 George Ave., Annapolis, MD 21401; 410–267–0137; www.clcboats.com.

WoodenBoat
REVIEW
PRODUCTS • BOOKS • VIDEOS • STUFF

The Melbourne Tool Company's Low-Angle Block Plane

Reviewed by Greg Rössel

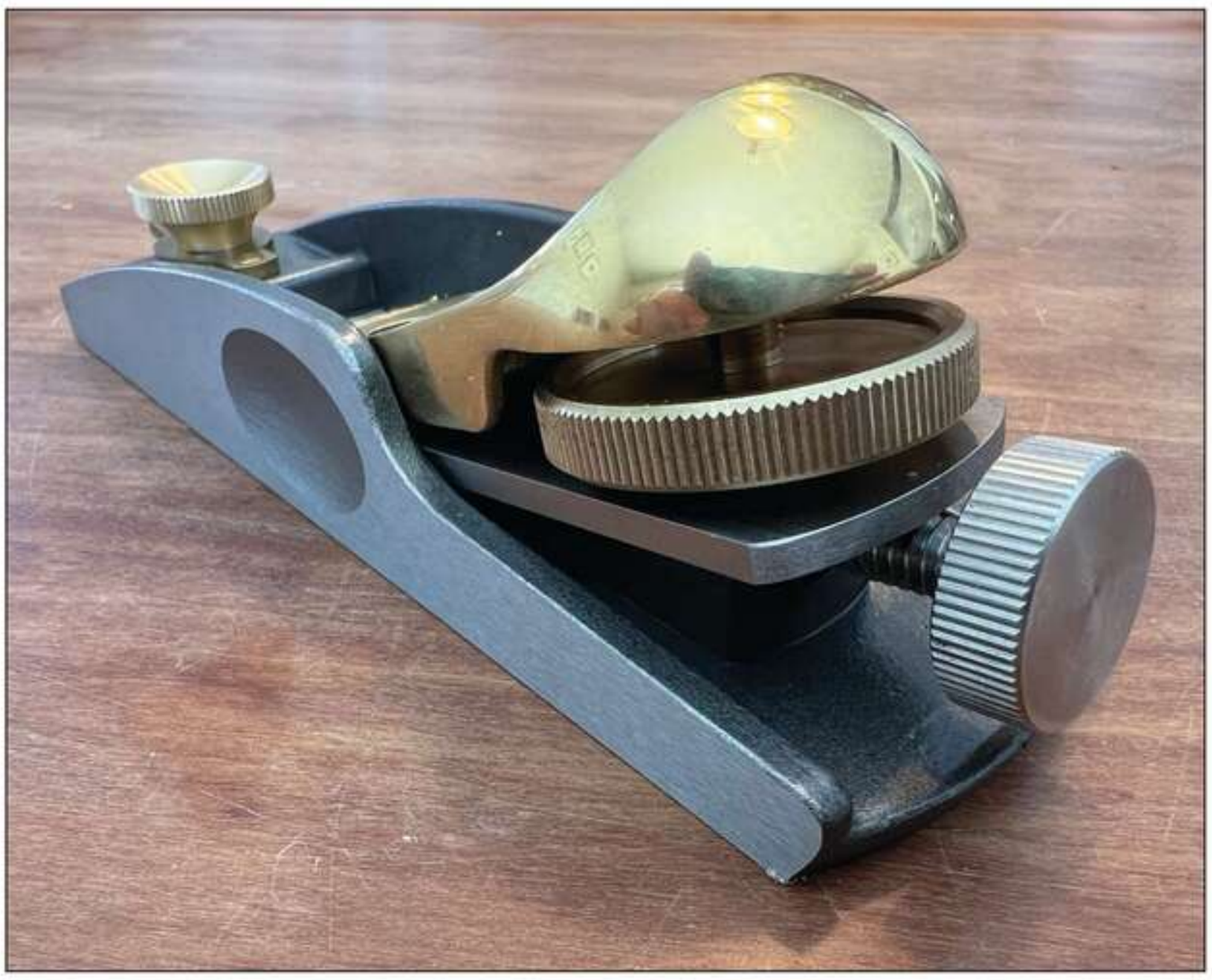
If I had to select my favorite woodworking tool, it would have to be the low-angle block plane. Indeed, I used to throw one, along with a pocket bevel gauge and a folding boxwood rule, into my backpack as a bit of travel insurance that allowed me to make some needed cash in far-flung locations such as western Ireland and Tampico, Mexico.

Block planes come in two different styles: "high" or "standard" plane-bed angle (in the 20-degree ballpark) and "low" bed angle (12 to 13 degrees). The high-angle version is the most common and the one most likely to be found at your local hardware store. Its steeper cutting angle works best on figured woods and dense hardwoods. The low-angle model cuts end-grain and softwoods better. The actual cutting angle is the combined angle of both the bed and the blade's edge bevel. For example, if a plane has a bed angle of 12 degrees and comes standard with a blade (or "iron") sharpened to 25 degrees, it will provide an effective cutting angle of 37 degrees. The user can sharpen alternate blades to steeper angles to afford the same benefits as a high-angle block plane. The lower angle reduces the tool's profile and makes it more comfortable to hold and use. For fashioning planks on small craft, a well-made low-angle block plane is hard to beat.

I like shopping for hand tools in person. Simply holding the implement can say a lot about whether you will enjoy using it—or not. You can engage the adjusting mechanisms and see how accurate they are and how smoothly they work. The quality of the casting can be inspected and evaluated. You can sight the run of the sole and place it on a dead-flat surface to assure that it, too, is dead-flat. And so on.

Purchasing from catalogs or online can be challenging because the product descriptions tend to be glowing and, quite frankly, at first glance the darned tools pretty much all look the same. Some venerable brands such as Lie-Nielson and Veritas are generally ready-to-go, out-of-the-box, with just a quick blade sharpening. Other brands may require tuning and lapping of the

***Above*—Melbourne Tool Company's low-angle block plane is well cast, finished, and machined.**



The depth-of-cut mechanism is precise, with little or no slop.

sole on a diamond stone. Then there is the reliability of the adjustments—that is, how easily and precisely the blade travels back and forth, how effectively and reliably the lever cap secures the blade, and how the adjustment mechanism deals with lateral movement, or skew. Most (but not all) low-angle planes have a sliding front "toe" that lets you close the mouth in front of the blade to help prevent tear-out of difficult stock or open it up to clear predictable stock, as when planing a bevel into a cedar plank or tuning up a pine construction mold.

Which brings us to the new kid on the block: the Melbourne Tool Company (MTC) 49407 low-angle block plane. MTC is a tool design and production brand of the woodworking retailer Timbecon, based in Melbourne, Australia. Their product literature notes that their "tools are developed by industrial designers who have strong practical woodworking experience. They perform real-world testing in tough Australian timbers, producing a tool that will excel in any wood, anywhere." Their tools are developed in Melbourne and manufactured in Asia.

On the sample I received, the body and parts were clean, well cast and manufactured, and fit properly. It has a comfortable feel to the hand. The ⅛″-thick cutting iron is made of M2 high-speed steel ground to 25 degrees. (Additional irons ground to 38 degrees and 50 degrees are available.)

One-third of the way down the iron are two holes, one of which engages the pin of the "Norris-style" front-to-back depth adjuster when you turn the lever cap wheel. (The mechanism also swivels to square the blade to the mouth.) Slide it side-to-side to skew the blade within the plane mouth. There is little slop in the threads when you turn that wheel. This system is similar to the one used on the Veritas block plane. It seems to work well, and the depth-of-cut setting is precise.

The brass lever cap that keeps the cutting iron in place is locked down by a knurled wheel or thumb nut on the after end of the lever cap. It presses a pin securely against the iron for the operation, and the wheel was easily accessible to the hand—which is not always the case with planes).

The mouth opening adjusting "toe" is similar to that found on other block planes and is well fitted. Melbourne Tool's comprehensive online owner's manual is among the best I've seen.

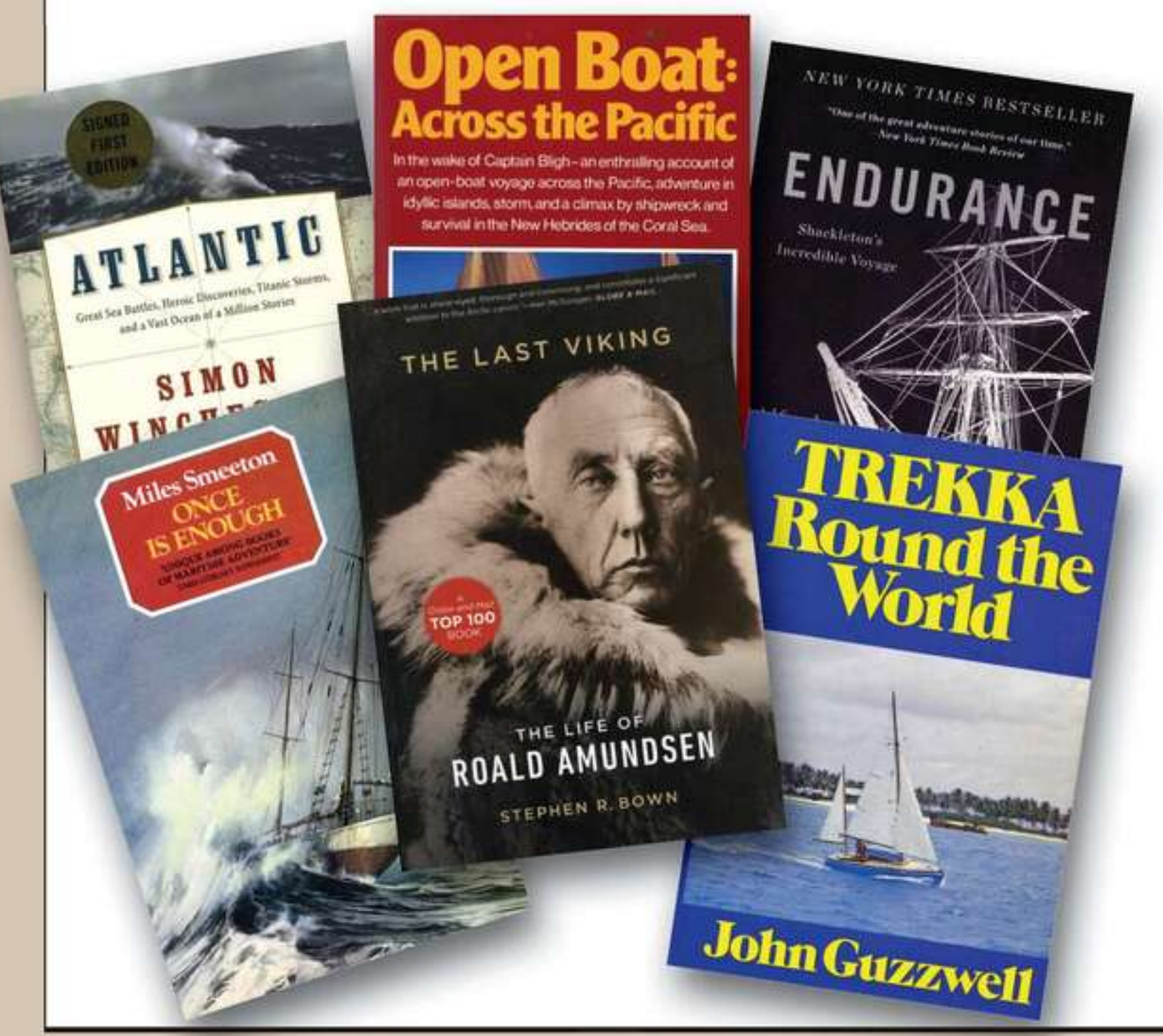
And how did the plane perform? In short, very well. On white pine and white oak, the tool produced clean cuts without chattering or plugging up. It was quite comfortable to use. At the advertised price it is a good value.

Greg Rössel is a contributing editor for WoodenBoat.

The MTC 49407 Low Angle Block Plane is available from The WoodenBoat Store (www.woodenboatstore.com) for $99.

The cutting iron is made of high-speed steel and ground to 25 degrees. The brass lever cap that holds it in place is locked down by a knurled wheel.

A Sea Bag of Books

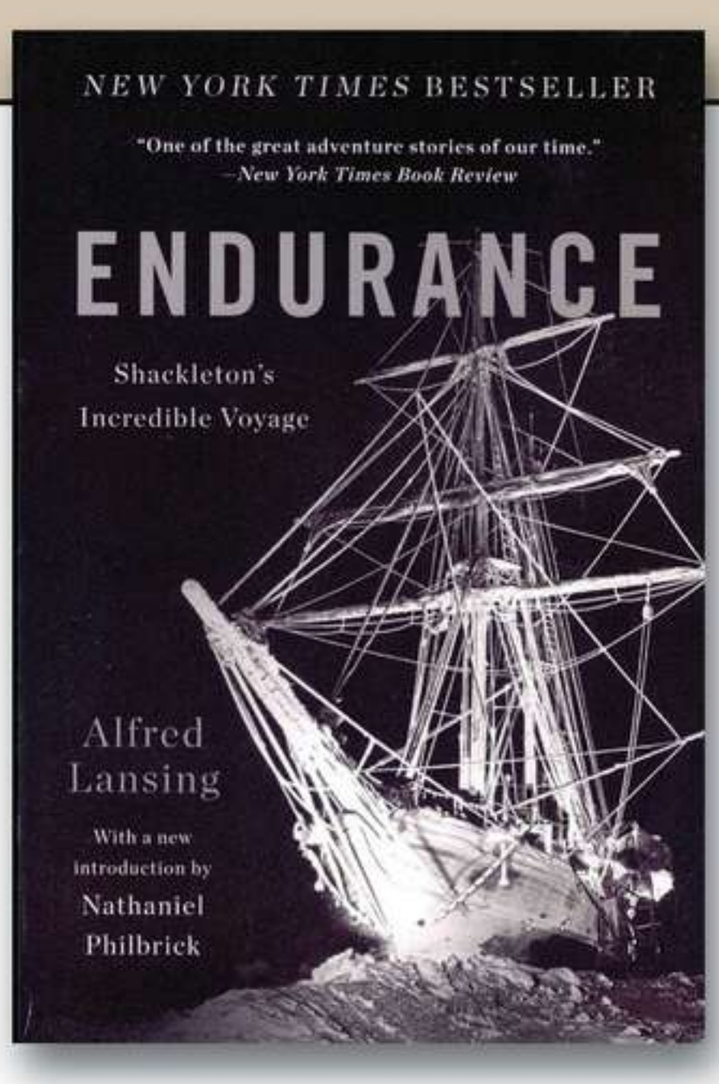


Reviewed by Bruce Kemp

The best way, in my experience, to keep a summer cruise interesting and entertaining is to have a small library aboard. As part of my preparation, I fill a bag with books I want to read; it lives in a locker in the V-berth, and I can fish out a good book whenever I want. Most of my books for cruise reading come from a friend's second-hand bookshop. After all, there's no point in spending a lot of money on something that's going to be passed among the crew or left in a marina's laundry room. One of the real delights of a bag of books is that books don't stress your boat's systems. They draw zero amps and never depend on connectivity. You don't need a library. For a two-week cruise, three to four books will do the trick. Here are six true sea stories for those quiet nights at anchor:

ENDURANCE: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage

ENDURANCE: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage, by Alfred Lansing. Basic Books/Perseus Book Group, 1959. 357 pp.



Alfred Lansing's book recounts Ernest Shackleton's last Antarctic voyage, which is the greatest sea story of the 20th century, if not the best sea story of all time.

At the start of the 20th century, there were few opportunities left for adventurers. Roald Amundsen had conquered the Northwest Passage and the South Pole, and Peary had made it to the North Pole. All that remained was the further exploration of Antarctica. Expeditions from half a dozen countries were being planned to traverse the globe's southernmost land mass. One was led by the Anglo-Irishman Sir Ernest Shackleton.

Shackleton's expedition set out in ENDURANCE from London on the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition just as World War I was starting. The ship's crew consisted of 27 men, including Shackleton, plus one stowaway. After crossing to Buenos Aires, where they acquired the stowaway, they continued on to the Grytviken whaling station on South Georgia Island. Whaling captains there tried to warn Shackleton off the adventure. Ignoring them, he proceeded south to the pack ice of the Weddell Sea. It was slow going as the ship approached the mainland of Antarctica. The expedition was to make an overland dash across the continent from the northeastern coast to McMurdo Sound on the Ross Sea.

Australian photographer Frank Hurley documented everything. He produced a remarkable archive of still and motion pictures that continues to hold the world breathless today.

Then the ship was crushed by the pack ice, forcing the crew to abandon her. Hurley photographed the

ship's final moments as she began her plunge to the sea floor, 10,000′ below. (The wreck wasn't discovered until 2022.) With no way to call for help, Shackleton and his crew began a long trek toward a small group of islands where they stood a slim chance of being rescued by passing whalers. Shackleton had the foresight to haul the ship's boats with them, and they were able eventually to sail to Elephant Island. Knowing rescue was up to them, Shackleton ordered one of the boats, the JAMES CAIRD, decked over and spartan accommodations prepared for six people. The boat, at 22′ long, wouldn't be most mariners' choice for a South Atlantic voyage. Cape Horn was closer to the castaways, but South Georgia was downwind, and with the easterly current the boat could make 60 nautical miles a day. On April 24, 1916, the six men set off in the double-ended ketch with 650 miles ahead of them; they reached South Georgia 17 days later, landing on the opposite side of the island from the whaling station. After waiting on the weather, three of the crew—Shackleton, Frank Worsley, and Thomas Crean—set off to cross the island. Upon their arrival at the whaling station, a rescue expedition was quickly mounted to bring the Elephant Island crew home.

If you read just one book this summer, ENDURANCE is a prime candidate to fill you with awe and admiration.

The Last Viking: The Life of Roald Amundsen

The Last Viking: The Life of Roald Amundsen, by Stephen R. Brown. Douglas & McIntyre, 2012, 356 pp.

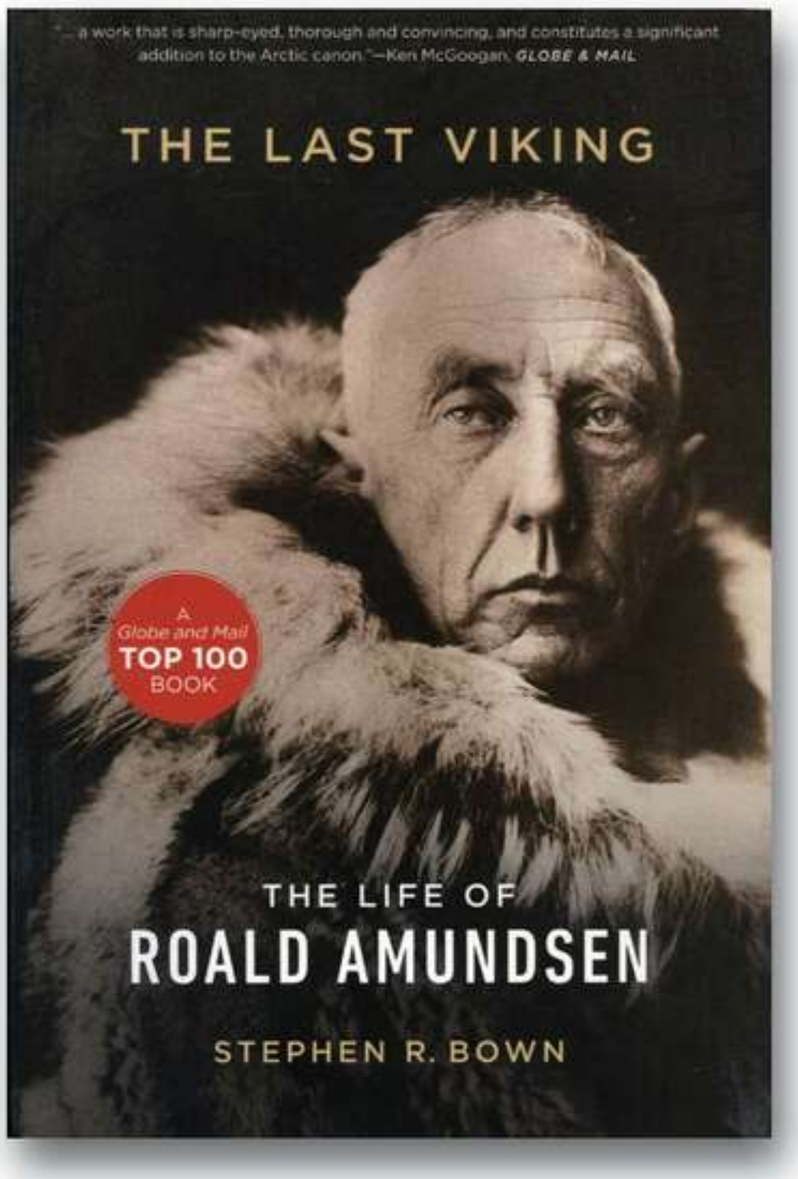
Before rock-and-roll, Arctic explorers were the heartthrobs of the daily press. The names Shackleton and Scott were as well-known as McCartney and Hendrix. But the Mick Jagger of those times was the Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen.

Stephen Brown's biography is the story of a man who accomplished incredible feats, often succeeding where countless others failed. Born in 1872, Amundsen grew up in Oslo knowing exactly what he was destined to do: become a famous explorer. The Arctic would be his stage. Devouring tales of Sir John Franklin's early voyages seeking the Northwest Passage, Amundsen trained for the rigors of exploration by undertaking ski expeditions, some nearly fatal, across Norway in the dead of winter.

Amundsen knew personal charm couldn't produce the funds necessary for exploration, so he painted his ambitions as a scientific quest. Approaching the

German Marine Observatory in Hamburg, he announced that he wanted to record the most accurate observations of the Magnetic North Pole available. This got him a three-month tutorial on magnetic science.

The next step was to acquire a vessel, and this is where he began his less-than-stellar career as a man who sometimes did not honor his debts and lied about his plans. GJØA was a 29-year-old, 47-ton, single-masted fishing smack he could afford. After buying the ship, he lacked the money to pay for the expedition, so he solicited loans. When repayment wasn't forthcoming, his creditors confronted him on the wharf in Oslo demanding their money or his vessel. In the middle of the night, he left his backers standing on the wharf and sailed for the Arctic. Two years later he returned as a Norwegian national hero for being the first to sail through the Northwest Passage. All was forgiven.



Biographer Brown's story is balanced between the great things Amundsen accomplished and his peccadillos. To mount his later Antarctic expedition, he outright lied to his crew, telling them they were sailing for the Arctic when they were really heading for Antarctica. Over the years, Amundsen continued to dodge and weave through various schemes (see WB No. 270) until, in an uncharacteristically altruistic gesture, he set off in his Latham biplane to search for the Italian airship ITALIA that had gone missing near Spitsbergen. The last anyone saw of Amundsen was on June 18, 1928, when he took off to join the search for the Italians.

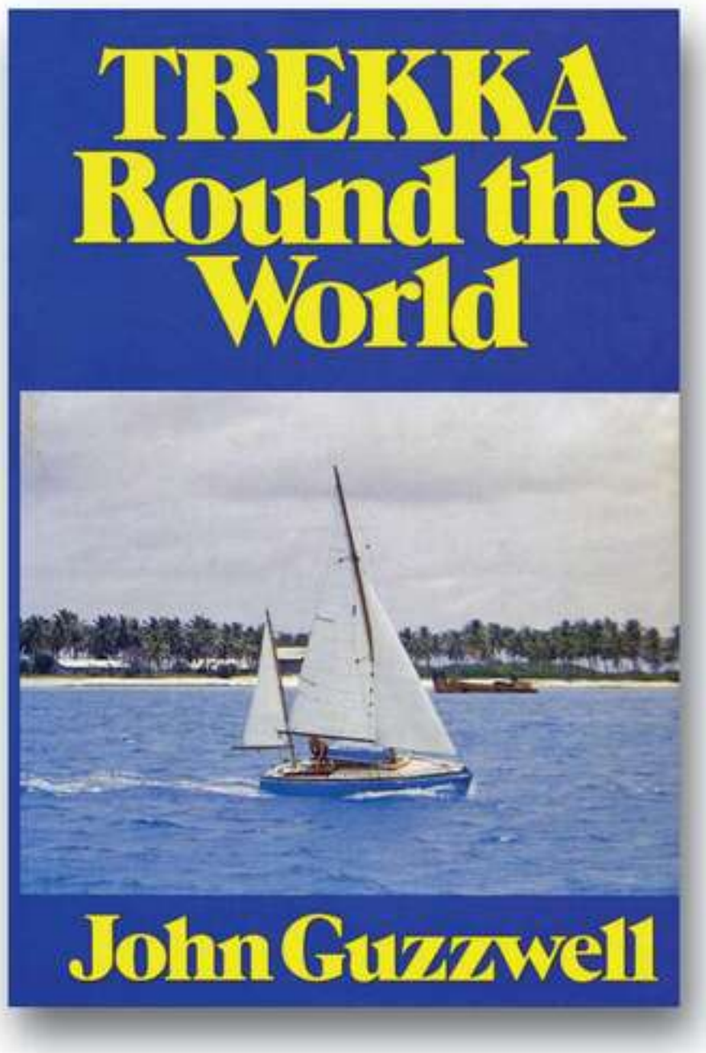
The Last Viking is a story of incredible adventure—often heroic and sometimes audacious in its chicanery.

TREKKA Round the World

Trekka Round the World, by John Guzzwell. John de Graff Inc., 1963. 199 pp.

Many polite people shake their heads and silently ask themselves "What kind of madman heads off into the world's worst seas in a 20′ boat?" The less-than-polite folks ask that question out loud. John Guzzwell, however, wasn't mad. He knew exactly what he was doing when he teamed up with the designer Laurent Giles to design the boat that Guzzwell built purposely for a voyage around the world. He described that experience in his classic book of small-boat courage and seamanship, *Trekka Round the World*.

Guzzwell was descended from a long line of Grimsby, England, fishermen, and thus came by his sea legs honestly. As a boy, he sailed with his parents in their custom yacht OUR BOY to South Africa. During World War II, young John spent a good portion of his youth in a German internment camp. After that, the world called, but he couldn't find personal peace until he emigrated to Victoria, British Columbia. On the B.C. coast, he dreamed of building his own yacht, as his father had, and he took inspiration from Capt. John Voss's circumnavigation, which started in British Columbia, in the First Nations canoe TILIKUM. Guzzwell built TREKKA in the spare room of a fish-and-chips shop in downtown Victoria. The little yawl slipped quietly out of Victoria Harbour in late September 1955, heading for Honolulu. She coasted down to San Francisco, where Guzzwell met Miles and Beryl Smeeton, who would become his great friends. After leaving California, TREKKA raised land, Mauna Kea, on November 3, and for the next four years Guzzwell continued his adventures, sailing south of the Cape of Good Hope in TREKKA and

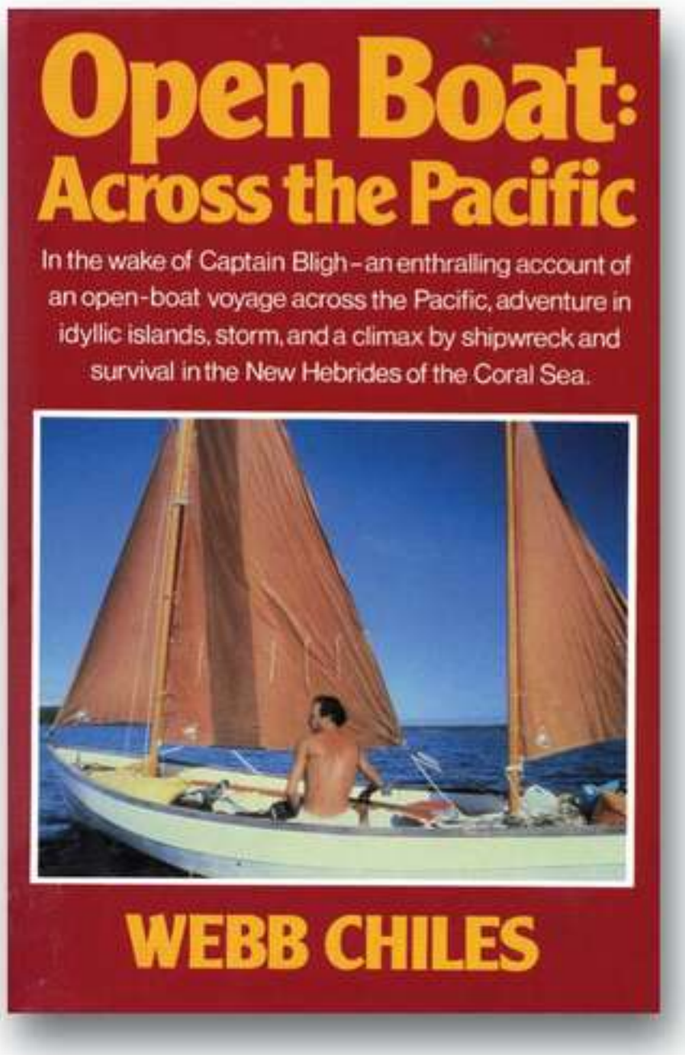


around Cape Horn in the Smeeton's boat, TZU HANG. It took Guzzwell four years to circumnavigate, and his adventures rivaled those of Joshua Slocum. *TREKKA Round the World* is a pleasant read with an evening's glass in the warmth of a cabin lamp.

Open Boat: Across the Pacific

Open Boat: Across the Pacific, by Web Chiles. W.W. Norton and Co., 1982. 204 pp.

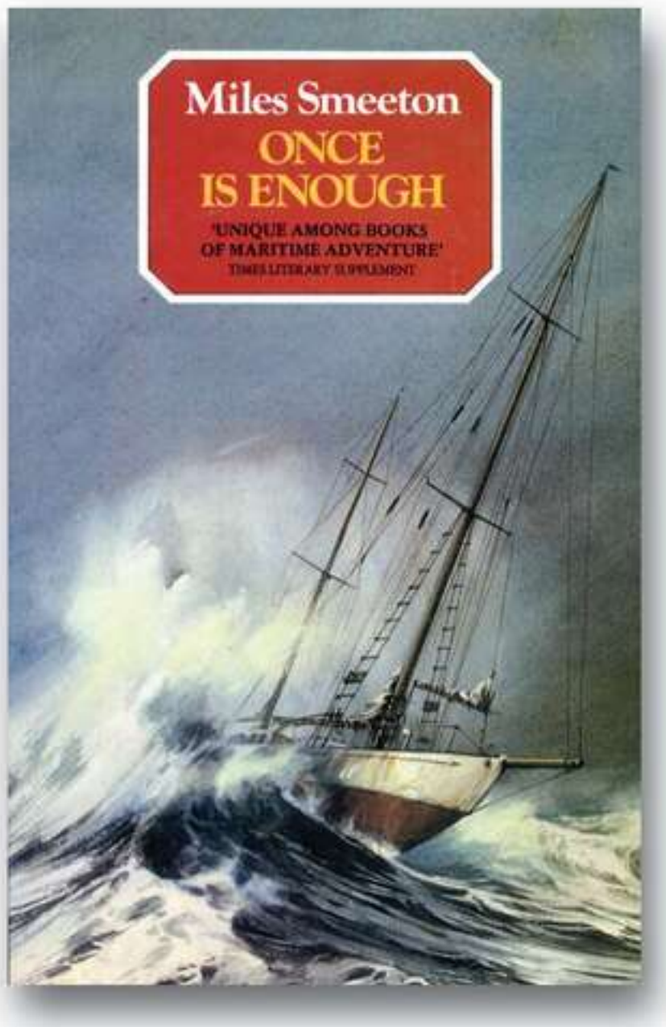
Not all adventurers lead well-funded, well-equipped expeditions, but they are still worth reading about because they show us the best of ourselves. Webb Chiles is one of those quiet guys who just goes out and does great stuff without a lot of who-haw. His story, *Open Boat: Across the Pacific*, deserves a place in the bag.



Chiles left San Diego in November 1978 in an open 18′ Drascombe Lugger and began by rowing directly into a gale that nearly ended his voyage before it truly got started. He capsized but continued on, crossing 7,000 miles of the Pacific Ocean before fetching up on Emae in the New Hebrides. In his longest stretch at sea, he crossed south beyond the Equator on a four-and-a-half-week leg that ended after 3,000 miles in Nuka Hiva in the Marquesas. After that, it was island-hopping in shorter stretches until he was finally shipwrecked. Inspired by Capt. William Bligh's voyage in the aftermath of the BOUNTY mutiny, Chiles endured pitchpoling, capsizing, shrieking gales, and flat calms. He got to explore the islands of the South Pacific in ways most of us will never experience. In the end, nature had its way, and he was shipwrecked in the sparsely populated New Hebrides. An excellent writer, Chiles tells a story that is as evocative as it is incredible.

Once Is Enough

Once Is Enough, by Miles Smeeton. Granada Publishing, 1959. 208 pp.

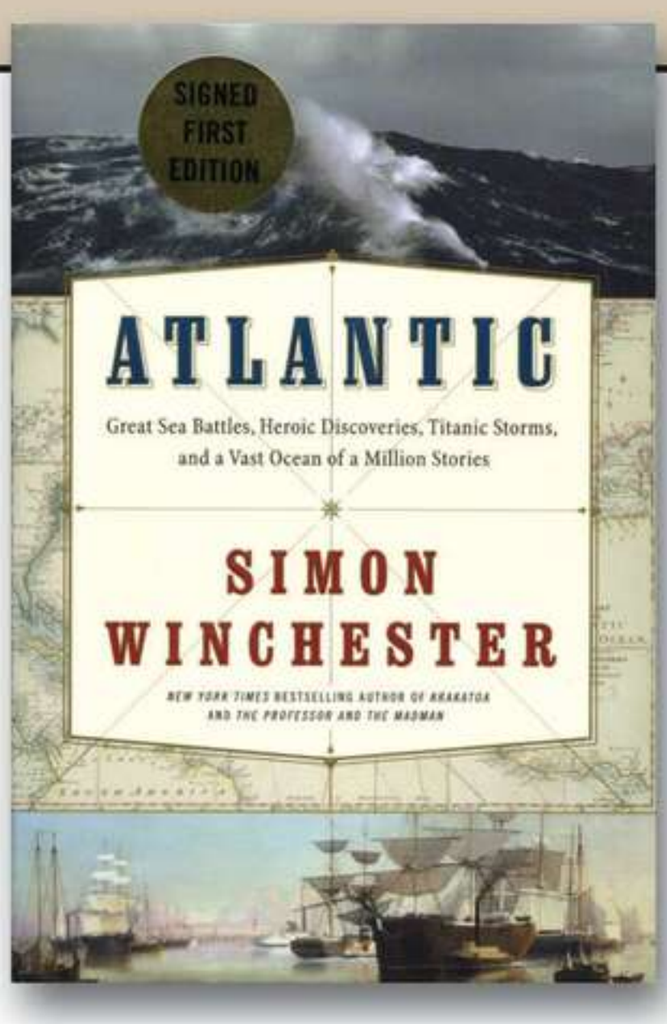


John Guzzwell's story continued amid his voyage in TREKKA. He embarked on a trip around Cape Horn as mate with Miles and Beryl Smeeton in their 46′ canoe-sterned ketch TZU HANG. Leaving TREKKA temporarily in New Zealand, Guzzwell set off with the Smeetons for Sydney, Australia, down the coast to Bass Strait, and then into the Southern Ocean. It was not the trip the three voyagers were expecting.

Miles Smeeton describes a relatively good passage below New Zealand to a point west of Cape Horn, when the gods of misery took umbrage and battered TZU HANG unmercifully until one sub-Antarctic breaker caught up with them, pitchpoling the yacht.

As TZU HANG righted herself, the three were amazed to be alive. Beryl was swept overboard after her safety harnesses lifeline snapped. She was nearly lost. She made an Olympic sprint with a broken arm through the icy seas until Miles and John could get her back aboard—just as the next wave struck. TZU HANG was dismasted, and the tumble scoured the deckhouses and skylights clean away. One of the deckbeams in the cabin was fractured. However, they were still breathing, and they began the arduous struggle of making the yacht seaworthy. Nailing locker doors over the gaping holes in the deck, John put his carpentry to work fabricating jury-rigged masts from spare lumber and recovered spars. Despite her injury, Beryl took over sailmaking and Miles spliced new shrouds and fabricated a chimney from tin cans so they could get a fire going in the cabin to dry them out and make it warm enough for the glue to set in the new masts. Like a story by Jack London, the shipwrecked sailors raised their new main and mizzen, then shaped a course for the coast of South America. The Horn was no longer their goal; survival was.

TZU HANG, as the book's forward points out, was the first boat to have suffered such punishment rounding the Horn and survived to tell the tale. Smeeton knows how to put a story together and build suspense. The raw terror of the pitchpoling and remarkable strength in surviving the event earn *Once Is Enough* a place in the book bag.



Atlantic

Atlantic, by Simon Winchester. Harper Collins, 2010. 475 pp.

Oceans are coquettish in the ways they reveal their secrets, hiding them behind screens of oily calms or howling gales. It takes an excellent writer and experienced sailor to discover and bring them to life, which Simon Winchester does in *Atlantic*, his biography of the Atlantic Ocean.

Throughout his life, the author has had a personal relationship with the Atlantic Ocean, and it is reflected in the story. *Atlantic* becomes a real portrait, as if of a living being. Winchester is no mere reporter, although he spent much of his career in the trade. He is a storyteller who uses verifiable facts to engage his reader; he is immune to the prevailing fear of adjectives, so his descriptions are as lush as they are evocative. Reading him is like listening to great music when you have the ear for it.

Tracking humanity's relationship with our planet's second largest body of water, the reader travels through history, cultural nuances, and fascinating tales. There are Viking settlements, fake maps, storms, discoveries, battles, pirates, and revolutions seasoned with old English poetry and Viking sagas. Although Winchester is detailed, *Atlantic* is not boring; he includes the human color so necessary to make this a good tale. One might recognize the author's name from a number of other bestsellers, including *The Professor and the Madman*, *The Meaning of Everything*, *Outposts*, and *The Map That Changed Everything*.

Bruce Kemp is a regular contributor to WoodenBoat

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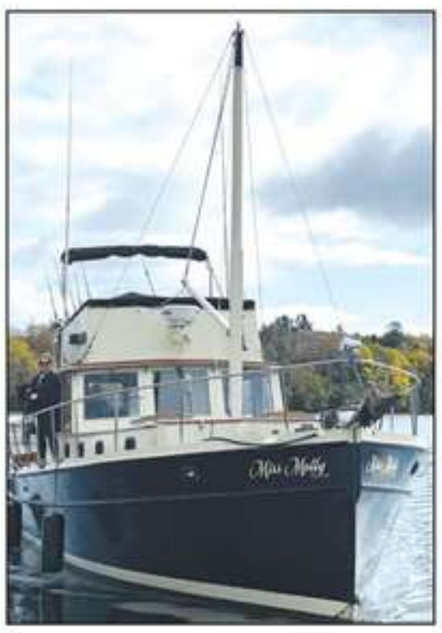

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Her current owners acquired CANIM in 2006, and in the subsequent 18 years, have **continuously upgraded the vessel** throughout. Her home port since 2006 has been in the **pristine fresh waters** of the **Great Lakes in Harbor Springs, MI**.

The owners intend to **relocate CANIM to San Diego in the winter of 2025** and, to that end, the vessel will make way to the **U.S. east coast** in the **fall of 2025** en route to San Diego.

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1929 Herreshoff Fishers Island 31
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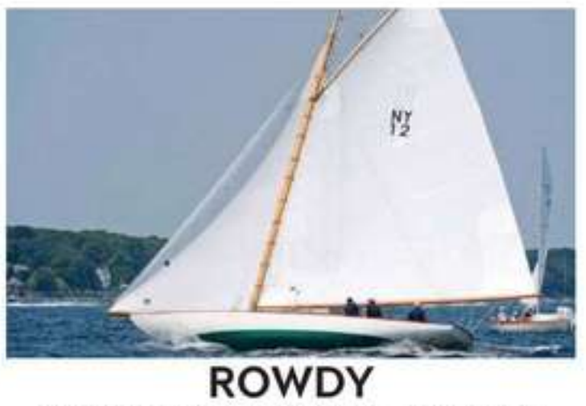

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1964 Concordia 41 Yawl
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1958 Sparkman & Stevens
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ALISANDE
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Lobster Yacht - $225,000

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SAIL MAINE aboard the historic schooner "Lewis R. French"—America's Oldest Windjammer. Escape to open air and the islands of Maine aboard this beautiful traditionally-rigged wooden tall ship. Enjoy exhilarating sailing, great food and hospitality with only 20 guests. Sails from Camden on 2 to 6-night cruises. 800–469–4635. www.schoonerfrench.com

CHARTER THE CLASSIC 47′ K. Aage Nielsen-designed, Walsted-built sloop "ELSKOV" (see WB No. 262) for an unforgettable cruise of the incomparable waters of Penobscot Bay, ME, and beyond. Themed and custom itineraries available. Nuada Classic Yachting. Family-friendly. We sand; you sail. www.charterclassics.me; 207–812–0796.

Education & Training

NAVTECH MARINE SURVEYORS' Course—Surveying recreational/commercial vessels. U.S. Surveyors Association, Master Marine Surveyor program. FL, 800–245–4425.

Employment

BOATBUILDER/RESTORER, AND SYSTEMS EXPERT. Tumblehome Boatshop is seeking an experienced boatbuilder, or graduate of a boatbuilding program, to help with wooden boat restoration and construction including framing, planking, joinery, and finishing. Also seeking someone to develop and design marine systems, as well as do motor installations, both electric and gas, early and modern engines; you'd also be responsible for engine and systems maintenance on the small fleet of boats we maintain. If either of these roles sounds like you, let's meet. Please email Reuben Smith at reuben@tumblehomeboats.com. https://www.tumblehomeboats.com/.

Events

BOOKEND YOUR SUMMER with No-Octane Regattas in New York's beautiful Adirondacks! The original No-Octane Regatta for Wooden Boats is back on Blue Mountain Lake Saturday, June 28, sponsored by the Adirondack Lakes Center for the Arts (For more information: www.adirondackarts.org). On Saturday, September 27, join us in Bolton Landing on Lake George for more no-octane messing about, sponsored by the Bolton Historical Museum (https://www.facebook.com/boltonboatfestival).

Events
continued

THE 33RD ANNUAL
WoodenBoat Show
June 27-29, 2025
Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, CT
www.thewoodenboatshow.com

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WELL BUILT STRONGBACK/ Mold for building the John Gardner Wooden 14′ Sailing Whitehall. Includes a completed backbone. Has every plank spiling and patterns for every part. Includes loftings, jigs, clamp blocks, wedges, etc. Tooling was professionally made. These beautiful sailing Whitehalls won Best Professionally Built Whitehall at the 2010 WoodenBoat Show. Photos available. Asking $1,000. 401–824–6585.

Plans & Kits

BUILD YOUR OWN BARTENDER. Plans for the original, seaworthy, planing double-ender available: 19′ to 29′. Photos, video, information available online. www.bartenderboats.com, boatinfo@bartenderboats.com, 253–651–6561.

BOAT PLANS — PRINTED PLANS with Full-Size patterns. Also available in digital format. Closeout sale—50% off on our best quality R&P bronze wood screws! Epoxy-Plus 1:1 mix, no blush! Clark Craft, 716–634–9481, clarkcraft@localnet.com, www.clarkcraft.com.

Real Estate

4-SEASON HOME FOR SALE on the Canadian Shore of the St. Lawrence River (Thousand Islands) with a boathouse. 30′ Antique wooden boat available at additional cost. Call/Text 613–561–0479 for pictures and details.

Sails

TRADITIONALRIGGING.COM. Sails, Rigging and Blocks. We have old stock cotton sail cloth! Specializing in vessels from 17th century to the early 20th century. Appleton, Maine. 207–542–4385.

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Spars

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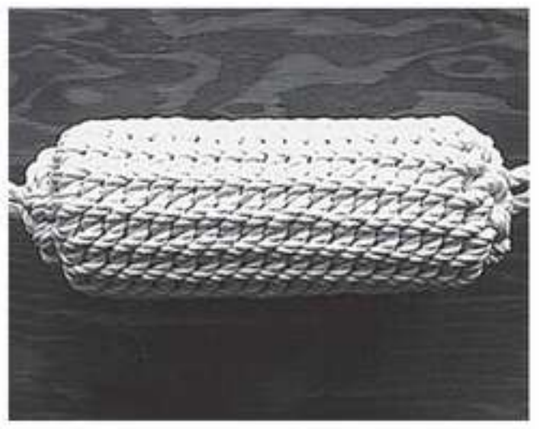
Supplies



SOFT COTTON FENDERS and classic knotwork. For catalog, send SASE to: THE KNOTTED LINE, 9908 168th Ave. N.E., Redmond, WA 98052-3122, call 425–885–2457. www.theknottedline.com.

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THE ORIGINAL SINCE 2001. The smallest composting toilet in the world! EOS, P.O. Box 5, Mount Vernon, OH 43050. www.airheadtoilet.com, 740–392–3642.

BRONZE CAM CLEAT with plastic ball bearings and 1½″ screw centers. BRASS SAIL TRACK, ⅝″ & ⅞″. All extant slides and cars will fit this track. BRONZE WING-TIP NAVIGATION LIGHTS with glass globe and colored LED bulbs. Side & top mount, stern, steaming & masthead. For current catalog visit JM Reineck & Son at www.BronzeBlocks.com, call or email us at 781–925–3312, JMRandSon@aol.com.

HAVEN 12½ COMPLETE high-quality bronze hardware sets. See our display ad elsewhere in the issue. For our free catalog, contact us at J.M. Reineck & Son, 781–925–3312, JMRandSon@aol.com.

Tools

Wood

BEAUTIFUL ATLANTIC WHITE CEDAR flat sawn 4/4, 5/4, & 7/4 plus 6/4 quarter sawn. Beautiful, clear stock. ashudak@gmail.com, ashudaklumber.com, 802–527–9802.

HOMESTEAD MARINE PLYWOODS. AB Doug-fir, CCA treated fir, ribbon sapele, teak & holly, teak, (BS1088 sapele, okoume, hydro-tek meranti) SOLID LUMBER ash, cypress, Doug-fir, teak, (Philippine, sap ele, genuine mahoganies), AD & KD white oak, Spanish & red cedar, ipe, custom cut oak timbers & planks, nationwide shipping, Vickery, OH. 419–684–5275, www.marine-plywood.us.

WWW.DIAMONDTEAK.COM—True teak wood. Planing, sanding available. Quarter-sawn teak for decking; tongue-and-groove; veneer; custom work. Also mahogany and Spanish cedar. Highest quality. We ship worldwide. 215–453–2196, info@diamondteak.com.

BOULTER PLYWOOD—Marine plywood 4′ x 8′ to 16′, 5′ x 10′ to 20′ —1/16″ to 1″ okoume, sapele, meranti, teak, ash, khaya, teak and holly. Lumber—Sitka spruce, teak, mahogany, ash, cypress, fir, western red cedar, teak decking—lengths up to 20′. Milling services. Nationwide delivery. www.boulterplywood.com, 888–4BOULTER (888–426–5837).

TEAK, MAHOGANY, PADAUK, purpleheart, white oak, teak decking, starboard. Complete molding millwork facilities. Marine plywood. Custom swim platforms. SOUTH JERSEY LUMBERMAN'S, 6268 Holly St., Mays Landing, NJ 08330. 609–965–1411. www.sjlumbermans.com.

PLANKING STOCK IN LENGTHS to 32′—angelique, silver-balli, wana, angelique timbers. Call for quotes. Gannon and Benjamin, 508–693–4658.

Boats For Sale

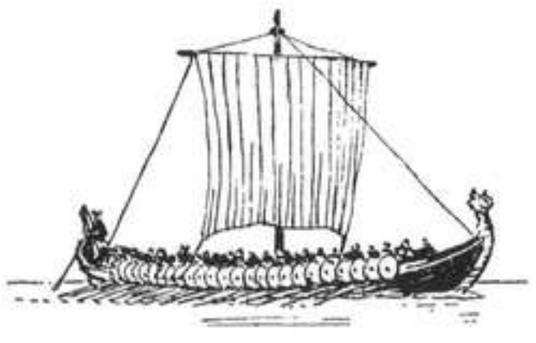
HERRESHOFF 12½. 1928 restored; with new stem, starboard planking, stern post, frames (11), enlarged mast step, Okoume Dynel decks, varnished/epoxy mahogany, teak sole, bulkheads. Equipped with bilge pump, solar panel/battery; epropulsion drive, portable battery, $22,000 in NJ. throberts2@yahoo.com. Photos online: https://woodenboat.com/boats-for-sale/herreshoff-12-12.

FAMILY CRUISER, 25′, perfect for lake or river cruising. Covered helm-station, stand-up cabin with galley and head, sleeps two. Power is 40-hp Gray Marine. White cedar carvel planking over steamed-oak frames. Rugged trailer included. Make an offer. Johncarroll.43@gmail.com. https://woodenboat.com/boats-for-sale/pocket-cruiser-25.

1929 HERRESHOFF FISHER'S ISLAND 31. Beautifully preserved by Ballentine's Boat Shop focusing on integrity of it's heritage. In museum condition, original teak deck, sails in excellent condition. Great cruiser with many amenities. Active and successful racing. $125,000. Located Pocasset, Mass. bruce.bradley@live.com. 313–910–9226.

"WILLOW" 1906 ELCO ELECTRIC Launch. She is in excellent condition with a 2020 revised drive system and extensive refinishing. Overhead canopy on brass poles, custom canvas cockpit cover, and a brass rub rail were added in 2022. 25′ length, 6′ beam, 22′ draft and 20′ freeboard. She can cruise between 6 and 8 mph for about 6 hours. Currently under cover at Sassy Marina, Algonac, MI. She rests on her own trailer (included), plus flagstaffs, equipment and furnishings. Price $34,000. Contact Drew Peslar, 248–594–6294. MI.

1915 DARK HARBOR 12½. Completely restored with all new Reineck bronze hardware, new sails and a new lead ballast. Possible full seasonal rental available, 5/15–9/15. jhoward@northeastboat.com. $52,000.



Boats For Sale
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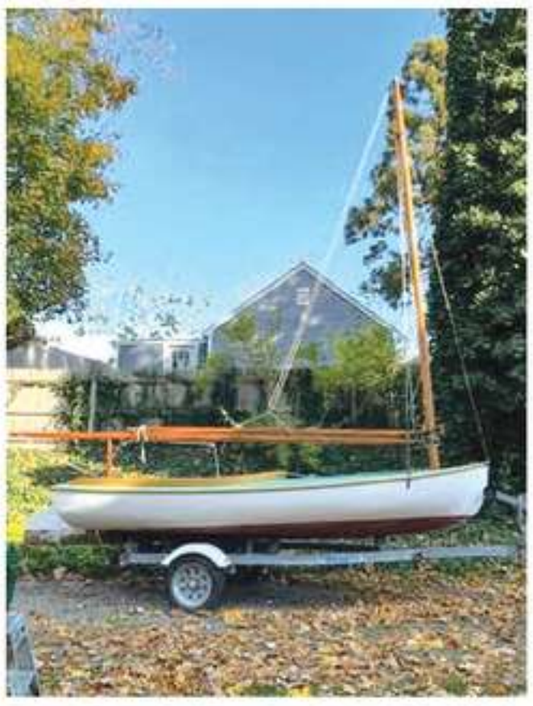


BEETLE CAT rebuilt IYRS 2015. Restored by Rick Waters 2024. Excellent condition. $10,000. Includes trailer and extras. Text Rick Waters 860–460–9314, Connecticut.

CUSTOM 1998 LAMINATED Honduras mahogany gentlemen's racer 30' Mercrusier 454 EFI 380-hp inboard. Bow thruster, new Load Rite trailer. $95,000. Please contact Sam Donato 609–276–6700.

R CLASS SLOOP 1924. Burgess Swasey Paine design. Fully restored, in racing trim. Aluminum spars, North 3Di sails. Harken winches and hardware. Yanmar 1GM10 with Maxprop. Fresh water sailed Lake Ontario. $60,000 USD. Contact Mreimann1@rogers.com. 647–401–6502.

HERRESHOFF 12½, #1489, "AUREA," Looking for new owner to love her. Excellent condition. $19,000. 860–442–5003. Call for photos. Trailer is extra.

PNW ORIGINAL NOW ON THE MARKET! Built in 1941 by the US Government for Alaska service and converted to private yacht in 1967. GYRFALCON is ready to go cruising now! More information available upon request. Todd Powell 206–939–0312, todd@chuckhoveyyachts.com. Asking price $749,000.

DESIGNED BY BRUCE KIRBY, built in 1993 by European Custom Yachts, West Wareham, MA. With a beam of 10′, and a draft of 1′6″ & 6′ 6″with a retractable keel and a retractable rudder, she can go anywhere, even to a beach. Equipped with a Yamaha 25-hp outboard, mounted on an enclosed winch track, it can be lowered when needed and cranked out of the water while underway. Aluminum spars and booms, with a cold molded wood hull. She has North sails including a main, mizzen, genoa and jib. She is presently on an aluminum custom trailer, under a tent in Connecticut. Trailer and tent included. Structurally sound. Needs cabin varnish and tlc. Was sailed as far as the Caribbean. Contact mac.brighton2@gmail.com. 203–856–4586.

1978 RANDESUND 38′ GAFF Ketch, "EMILIE KAROLINE." Oak and epoxy strip planked on laminated frames. Classic Norwegian craftsmanship, refitted for transatlantic 2024. Ready to go NOW. Fully found and seaworthy. Illness forces abandoning well laid plans. Must sell ASAP. Make offer. Located in Aviles, Spain. Asking $52,500 USD. brian@bviyachtsales.com.

$5,800 FOR "VIOLIN" sailed and named by Lyle Hess remarking that it sounded like a violin in the water. This is a beautiful, well-kept 13′ catspaw wood dinghy/sailboat, gaff/brass rigging; comes with 2 sets of oars, new trailer and Evinrude outboard. Contact Susan, susandever44@gmail.com. 805–459–3400.

RACING SLOOP "SEVERN II" 8-Metre class. LOA 14.86, Beam 2.56, Draft 1.95. Mylne design built in 1934. Mahogany plank on oak frames. Major improvements to the hull and deck. New rudder and mast section, rebuilt engine, new nav instruments, racing sails, cradle, survey. Berthed at Toronto, Canada. Contact c.gyles@sympatico.ca. 1–647–502–3640.

THE ALL WOODEN, completely finished sailboat "ELVER ROSE," was handcrafted by former owner, Rod Bunker, and finished by Great Northern Boatworks. The building plans are for the "Redmond Elver" sailboat which is 20-21′in length and includes: a finished cabin completely painted, an installed small working engine, finished all masts and sail, and a hand-crafted "pull-behind" trailer specifically fitted for the Elver Eel. The boat was fnished and launched in September 2022 and is now in storage with Great Northern Boatworks. Reason for storage is that Rod died in early January 2023. Price range: $50,000 to $75,000. www.woodenboat.com/boats-for-sale/redman-elver-20-21-eel-great-northern-boatworks.

32′ LOBSTER YACHT, ROK'OPPA. Built 10 years ago and has only been in the water for 3 short seasons. The 6 cylinder, 280-hp Yanmar has very few hours. The interior is beautiful with all the amenities. Possible full season rental available. 5/15–9/15. jhoward@northeast.com. $165,000.

CUSTOM WEEKENDER. 19′ LOA, 15′LWL, 5′Beam, carbon fiber mast, marine plywood, WEST System, Xynole polyester, bronze C.B., new 65lb and Torqueedo electric motors. Launched 1986, good trailer, ready to sail. Centrail North Carolina. Frank 239–334–6609.

2005, 30′ "ILONA"; This beautiful, seaworthy head turner of a cruising boat was designed and built by the renowned wooden boat builder Gannon & Benjamin. Equipped with a BMW, Yanmar marine 260-hp engine she cruises at 16 knots with a range of over 200 miles. Below deck are sleeping accommodations for two, with sink, stove, refrigerator, water heater, and head. She is the perfect cruising boat for an adventurous couple who want comfort, safety, and style. Her spacious cockpit is ideal for spending a day on the water with friends and family. She is the winner of The 2024 WoodenBoat Show'sBest in Show "Owner Maintained Power Boat." "ILONA" comes with her 8′lapstrake, rowing/sailing tender, cradled on the stern. $189,000. 203–216–1771, Norwalk, CT. edsegen@optonline.net. More photos: www.woodenboat.com/boats-for-sale/2005-30-ilona.

1986 (REBUILT 2014) NOE 36. Cross-Country move forces sale. 36′ LOA, 11′6″ Beam 6′6″ Draft. New Evolution mainsail, slightly used North 3Di jib. Repowered 2024. More Information/Photos: www.classicboatshow.com/classified/36-rieff-built-noe-36-sloop-1985-saint-panzer/. $50,000, lying Fall River, MA. 443–994–9479.

1936 "TUMLAREN" - #59 SVEK - 2022 Winner WoodenBoat "Best in Show." Fully restored with Gannon & Benjamin: Keel refastened, Spars 100% re-rigged, etc. In storage 40 years. Now sailing again. Custom trailer. p_otton@yahoo.com. Harwich, Cape Cod, MA.

"KIMBERLY ANNE" Own a piece of History. Graced the May/June, 2018 (issue number 262) of *WoodenBoat* magazine. Currently in my barn in Kentucky. Can deliver for cost. $119,000. www.spokeservices.com/kimberlyanne. justinpavoni@mac.com. 207–350–7570.

YANKEE ONE DESIGN SLOOP Sailboat 30′. Award winning, designed by William Starling Burgess/Stone built. "FLAME" totally restored in 2015. Complete survey in 2023. "A Sailor's Sailboat." Richmond, CA. Contact Bob, stefroche916@gmail.com.

BEAUTIFUL CLASSIC William Garden design 1968 Marine 40 ketch. Complete rehab done with many additional upgrades over the years. New sails and Yanmar 4JH57 diesel with fewer than 50 engine hours. Contact email: pkarczmar@gmail.com.

33' FRIENDSHIP SLOOP, #64, "AMICITIA", LOA 42′, designed by John Alden, built by Lash Bros. in 1965, cedar/oak; major refit by Jim Elk in 2016 included new mast; continued upgrades by Triad Boatworks; Yanmar 24-hp. Full headroom, well found. In my ownership for the past 50 yrs. Located Mattapoisett, MA. Asking $42,500; JPontiff65@gmail.com, 508–269–5815.

1938/2024 HISTORIC BARKHOUSE 44′ "WINDIGO" Yawl. WEST System epoxy-glued wood veneers over original oak. Varnished mahogany cabinhouse, coamings, and caprails. Bronze deck hardware, ports, winches, stanchions, and pulpits. New engine, spars, sail, electronics, and rigging. Beautiful restoration! Sail a classic! North Carolina $520,000. 252–341–7836.

"SIR HENRY" PM Sloop. Built in 1968 by Carlton Simmons Friendship, ME. Cedar on oak. Bronze fastened. Spruce spars. New frames and ceiling 2017. 1GM10 Yanmar diesel. 2 bunks. 22', Beam 7′ 6″, Draft 3′ 4″. One owner boat. Berthed Hingham, MA. John Nicholson, 857–939–2770, ruthenicholson@live.com.

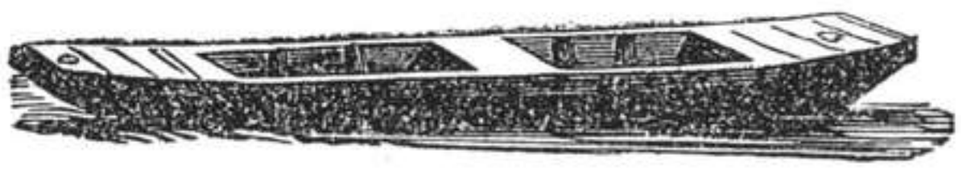
'66 CENTURY RESORTER 17. Mahogany inboard. New varnish & bottom paint. Newish 383 (500-hp). 50 mph. New upholstery. New cockpit sole. New fuel tank. New gauges. New: starter, alternator. New: injectors, plugs, wires, rotor, cap, coil, temp sensor. Rebuilt transom. New king Trailer. Ski tow-post. Nearly new custom cover. 5200 bottom w/glass-epoxy over. Custom teak swim step. Serious inquiries only. $14,000. Jim Llewellyn, 206–842–4552, jim.llewellyn47@gmail.com, cell-text 206–450–0101. Bainbridge Island, WA

2003 BARTENDER 20.5′ 70-hp 4-cylinder Mazda Westerbeke W70 constructed by Bill Childs. With the pointed Bartender stern the boat handles beautifully on Lake Superior. 28mph @ 3400rpm two eighteen gallon aluminum tanks, king galvanized trailer with surge brakes, 76 hours 2007-2012. Additional photos on request. $25,000. Storage in Marquette, Michigan. parlinjohn@yahoo.com. 513–231–7248.

"CHEERIO II," 1931 46′ YAWL, formerly owned by actor Errol Flynn. Three-time winner of her class in the Newport to Ensenada Race. First to finish, this July, in the McNish Classic Yacht Race. Google "CHEERIO II" to see photos, videos, and articles. Recent survey available. A SoCal classic! Asking $100,000. Text or call 510–846–4178 or jmcnish@earthlink.net.

"AURORA" Sparkman & Stephens 32′ Aux Cutter. Built by Seth Persson Old Saybrook, CT. Hull double planked mahogany over cedar. Bronze fastened. Frames laminated oak on 8″ centers. Plywood decks with fiberglass over. Mast: aluminum through cabin top on fabricated stainless-steel step. Galley aft, head to port, sleeps four. 3-cylinder Yanmar diesel. LOA 32′ 3″, LWL 24′, beam 9′11″, draft 4′10″. Refastened waterline down bronze 2023. Stored Avery's Dock West Cove Noank, CT. $35,000. Contact Bill: wburn41112@aol.com, 313–549–7455.

MAIN AND JIB ONLY broad reach > 11.5 knots. Located Santa Barbara Harbor. 2010 build. NO_1228489. www.schoonercreek.com/post/enchantress-41-pilothouse-sloop-designed-by-frank-stapelmann. Professionally maintained, Volvo D2 75-hp 729 engine hours, fully equipped, skiff deck/ocean access. Port Townsend Foundry bronze deck hardware. Specifications and equipment list upon request. $700,000 USD. SB slip available. Contact fstapelmann@outlook.com.



Boats For Sale
continued

28′ HERRESHOFF ROZINANTE Ketch, 1963. Solid teak construction by Cheoy Lee. Extensively rebuilt in 2017 by Rockport Marine. 2018 Beta diesel. New Sperry Sails, 2022. Impeccable "ready to sail" condition. Call Gay & Gray Yachts 207–363–7997.

BUILT BY THE BURR BROS in 1960, this 36′ beauty with a 10′9″ beam was restored over seven years and includes (from 2014) completely new interior, new wiring, new mast, new Beta Marine 25, new sails and refastened below the waterline in 2022. Featured in *WoodenBoat* Sept/Oct 2015 Relaunchings. An absolute joy to sail. Full inventory. Located Finger Lakes region NY state. Contact: William Benson 607–227–3837 or wmbenson68@gmail.com. Price just reduced $29,500. More photos online www.woodenboat.com/boats-for-sale/great-lakes-class-sloop.

18′ WITTHOLZ DOWNEASTER RUNABOUT (1991) Recent Restoration. All new wiring by ABYC certified technician. Repowered in 2023 with 60-hp Yamaha. Currently only has 10 hours. Stored in Old Saybrook, CT. $16,900 or best offer with Karavan Trailer in good condition. rjlavallee65@gmail.com. More photos online: www.woodenboat.com/boats-for-sale/adorable-one-kind-18-runabout-picnic-boat.

Boats For Free

FREE 1960 42′ STEVENS. NEEDS A NEW GOOD HOME! It's a great opportunity for the right person. Currently dry docked in a DIY yard ready to be restored. Interior is in beautiful original condition. Most planking and framing appear to be in okay condition. Cockpit deck needs to be rebuilt. Status of Crusader gas engines is unkown. Exterior needs work, all hardware is intact. Located at Sunset Aquatic Shipyard in Huntington Beach, CA. 562–592–2841. ron@sunsetaquatic.com.

"SCARLET LETTER," 1798 pattern pinnace FREE boat. 28′ classic pinnace 1798 pattern wooden boat. Boat was used in the film: "*The Scarlet Letter*" starring Demi Moore. 2-masted and 8 oars with 2 unique racks to store oars. Needs ½ dozen stern frames, some planking, etc. Pine hull on double sawn frames. Good sails included. Kept inside. All stainless steel and bronze screws used on boat, with specially cast bronze hardware. FREE to good home. Contact petersonclocks@yahoo.com. Photos on Boats for Sale Online. www.woodenboat.com/boats-for-sale/scarlet-letter-1798-pattern-pinnace-free-boat.

BUILT 1951, OVERALL LENGTH 32′, Length on deck 30′, Beam 11′, Draft 3′ centerboard up, 7′6″ down. Hull: Cape Cod Catboat with trunk cabin (design #870). Cedar planks on oak frames. Lead ballast. Bronze fastenings and bolts, also galvanized bolts. Rudder Oak with bottom pintle on keel. Engine: Gray Marine mod. 4112 4 cyl. 31-hp. Spars: Built up rectangular spruce. Stainless-steel shrouds. Sails, mast, rudder, other parts in storage. Fair condition, needs work. Must be taken off premises. Not for parts. Located in Lincolnville, Maine. Contact Mark, 207–522–0944. To see photos view listing on WoodenBoat Boats for Sale Online, www.woodenboat.com/boats-for-sale/john-alden-designed-catboat.

1964, 26′ MACKENZIE Cuttyhunk. 318 Chrysler. Second owner only. Will be in water July 1st. It's a great boat. Looking to get it to a good home. Leave a message. 203–544–7003. CT.

FREE TO A GOOD HOME. 1967 Von Hacht Flying Dutchman. Mast, sails, centerboard, rudder and all accessories convey. All items are believed to be in good, serviceable or restorable condition. Length 20′, Beam 5.90′. Contact Roger @ 410–251–8574, rogerealtor@gmail.com. Salisbury, Maryland. See photos online: www.woodenboat.com/boats-for-sale/1967-von-hacht-flying-dutchman-20.

1960 16′THOMPSON SEACOASTER w/1963 Evinrude 40-hp Big Twin outboard. Boat damaged by tree. Repairable but more likely best to just strip hardware and salvage any mahogany. Engine last ran (and ran well) in 2012 then winterized. Bring your own trailer or buy my trailer (2018 Karavan KBE-1250/900-46) – only used once and never in the water. Contact Dennis 410–279–7517. See photos online: www.woodenboat.com/boats-for-sale/1960-16-thompson-seacoaster.

21′ INDIAN CLASS RACER 1954. Free boat in great structural condition. Full rebuild 10 years ago. Was sailed last season at our Yacht Club. Needs TLC and a committed owner. 21′, built 1954, lapstrake, new sails, roadworthy trailer. Location Boston, Massachusetts. Get information sheet and photos. George Hasler, george.hasler@gmail.com.

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SAVE A CLASSIC

by Maynard Bray

A clipper-bow ketch and a speedy sportfisherman

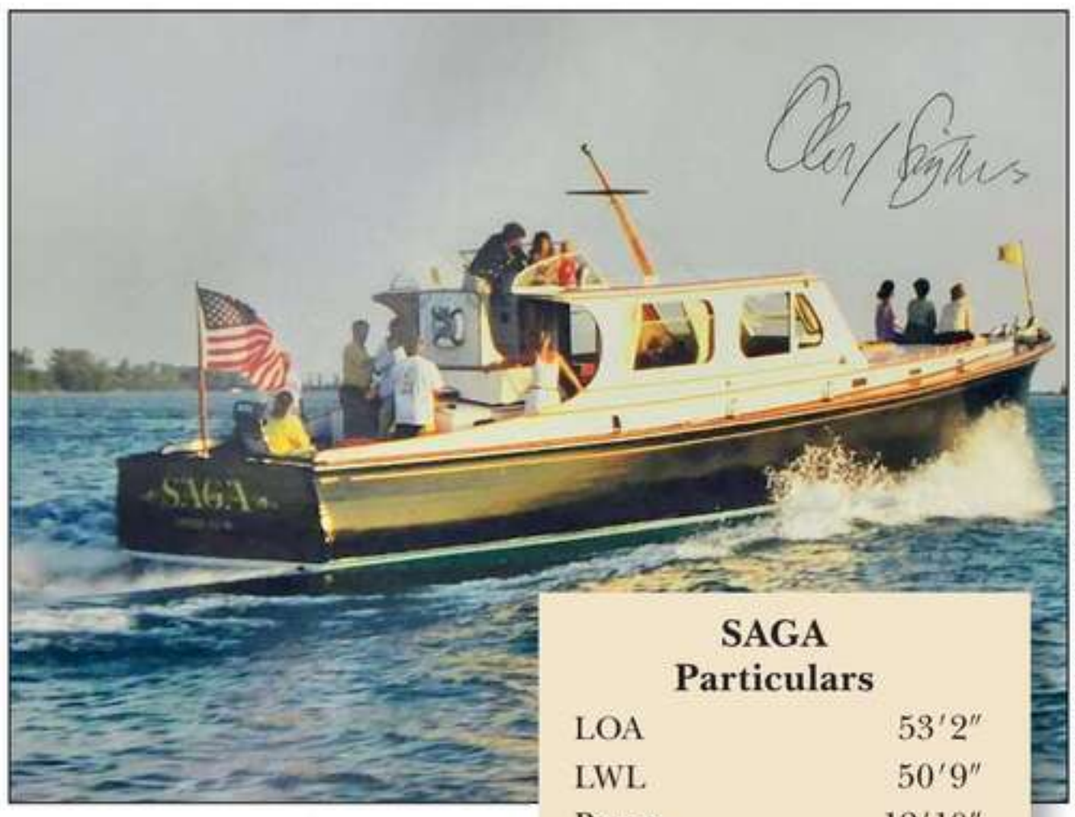
Boats show up on this page in a variety of conditions and for a variety of reasons. Here, we have an interesting contrast of a classic sailboat and a classic powerboat.

The first, NATIVE, is in usable condition but clearly shows weathering after a couple of seasons ashore with masts still stepped and the hull partially covered with tarps. Her owner has moved on to other interests and seeks a sailor who'll keep this half-century-old gem going. He says that her bottom needs some refastening and caulking, and it's obvious from the photos that a good deal of refinishing lies ahead. But what a lovely craft she could be! No one was better at designing handsome ketches with clipper bows than L. Francis Herreshoff (LFH). John Kendall, who had this one built as ALARIA, was so taken with the type that he owned several different LFH ketches, some used, and others built for him new. This design, named Nereia, provides full headroom and a generous interior as well as stunning good looks. She's a real little ship, with bulwarks all around and a place on the bridge deck for a dinghy. All of her drawings are in LFH's book *Sensible Cruising Designs* as well as a how-to-build description.

COURTESY OF PAT FINCHAM / *SENSIBLE CRUISING DESIGNS*

NATIVE
Particulars

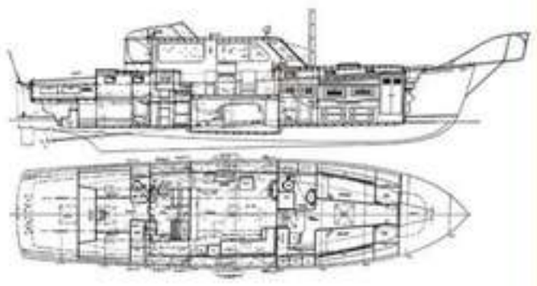
LOA	36′
LWL	31′6″
Beam	11′
Draft	5′3″
Displacement	24,000 lbs
Sail area	673 sq ft
Official No.	522550
Designed by	L. Francis Herreshoff
Built by	Allan H. Vaitses, Mattapoisett, Massachusetts, 1970



COURTESY OF BOB CAIRL / *YACHTING*, JUNE 1941

SAGA
Particulars

LOA	53′2″
LWL	50′9″
Beam	12′10″
Draft	3′8″
Power	Two GM 6-71N diesels
Official No.	241041
Designed by	Sparkman & Stephens
Built by	Quincy Adams Yacht Yard, Quincy, Massachusetts, 1941



***Top*—SAGA needs considerable work to bring her back to the form shown in this photo signed by her designer, Olin Stephens. *Above*—The layout is unusual, with the aft galley originally for a paid cook.**

***Above*—NATIVE, which lies in Deltaville, Virginia, was built in 1970 by Allan Vaitses. *Above right*—She was built to the Nereia design by L. Francis Herreshoff.**

Health issues and aging have brought SAGA's owner to decide to dispose of her instead of carrying out his planned restoration. The boat is far from turn-key, but over the past 25 years the owner has made a lot of careful progress. There's a great deal left to do, and for this she needs a seriously committed new owner. Luckily, the necessary mahogany, teak, and oak (almost 5,000 bd ft of lumber) go with the boat, along with refurbished hardware, rebuilt engines, and lots of other gear. The labor, some of it requiring skill, will amount to replacing the outer layer of bottom planking (her entire hull is double-planked); fitting and installing the remaining new sister frames and floors; reinstalling the tanks, engines, heads, and controls; sheathing the decks with plywood and teak; and building a galley.

SAGA, one of four sportfishermen of that name owned by Charles Shipman Payson, was laid out for a paid crew. One of these was a cook, which explains why her galley is part of the crew's quarters squeezed into the aft cabin with a ladder separating it from the big, light, and airy main saloon above, which is over the engineroom. With the owners' quarters forward, her layout is reversed from the usual. I'd be for moving the galley up a level to be part of the main saloon, where the action is.

NATIVE is located at Stingray Point Boatworks in Deltaville, Virginia. For more information, contact the owner, Pat Fincham, by email at barbarafincham@gmail.com.

SAGA is located inside at Safe Harbor Toledo Beach Marina, LaSalle, Michigan. Contact owner Bob Cairl for more information at 419–704–0360 (cell) or email at coolstuff@att.net.

Maynard Bray is WoodenBoat*'s technical editor.*

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