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STRAHAN
HOME
OF THE
PINER'S
PUNT

ISSN 1039-1657



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PROJECT IDEAS

The BoatCraft Team have assembled a list of possible projects as thought starters, where they have the relevant plans and usually personal experience in a similar project. They are happy to help you from the "Thinking about doing something" stage to final finishing tips and deciding on paint colours.

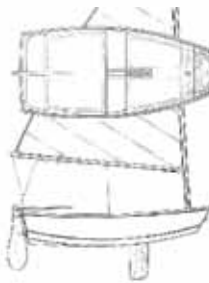
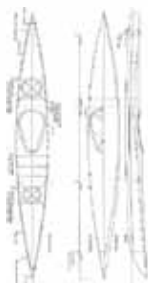
PROJECTS:

- Small dingy / tender
- Canoe
- Kayak
- Water Rat (canoe / kayak)
- Goat Island Skiff
- Handy Punt
- Stand Up Paddle Board
- River Table
- Bench top



Ian Phillips
MANAGING DIRECTOR

"I like boats, and we like to talk about boats! I built my first boat when I was a teenager and here I am still at it years later!"



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FRONT COVER:

Strahan

**Home of the
Piner's Punt**

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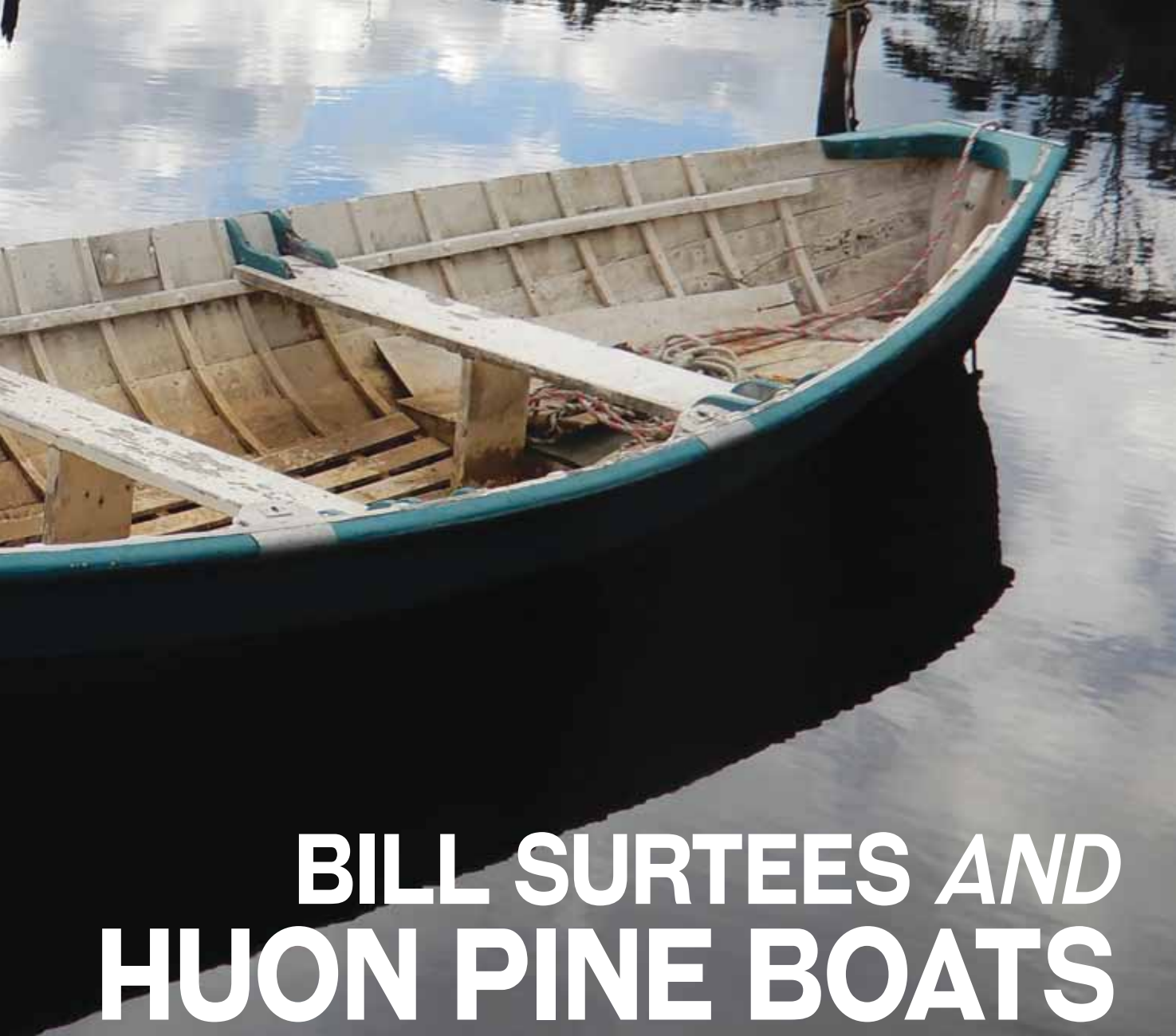
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Traditional Piner's punt on Strahan foreshore.
photo Jonathan Wallis

by **JONATHAN WALLIS**

The west coast of Tasmania is splendid in its isolation, being, even today, quite remote from either Hobart or Launceston, and that by very winding and hilly roads means a lengthy car trip. But the very wildness of the area with its lakes and mountainous terrain is also a great attraction for old sailors like myself who delight in the wind-blown expanse of its Ocean Beach, the breakers combing in through 'Hell's Gates', the narrow perilous entrance to Macquarie Harbour and to Strahan, the indigo stormy skies and the wind tossed Pacific Gulls and the Shy Albatross wheeling on the updrafts.



BILL SURTEES AND HUON PINE BOATS

Excursions by the stunning Wilderness Railway or the renowned Heritage Cruises' beautifully appointed vessel *Harbour Master*, or on Gordon River Cruises' *Spirit of the Wild* showcase the natural beauty of the vast harbour and the dense forest along the King, the Queen and Gordon Rivers, with their healthy Huon pines dotted even today along their banks, not the great forests of yore, but still occasional male and female trees to delight the discerning eye.

And, of course, the much visited Penal Colony known again now by its original name of 'Sarah Island', though later as Settlement Island, by the regions rugged Piners. These were groups of men who ventured up the many rivers and tributaries that flow into the vast Macquarie Harbour following in the footsteps of those chained convicts who had in days gone by lopped nearby Huon pines and rafted

them down to the harbour to be towed back to Sarah Island for the renowned shipbuilding convicts in the boatyards there.

It is always good to catch up with wooden boat enthusiasts anywhere, but on a recent visit to Strahan, we were delighted when Trevor Norton owner/operator of the beautiful 65' yacht *Stormbreaker*, kindly introduced us to long time wooden, and particularly Huon pine, aficionado, Bill Surtees.

We found Bill at home lovingly restoring a 12' clinker-built Huon pine dinghy in his purpose built shed and we were impressed to see that Bill, a graduate of the Shipwright's Point School of Wooden Boat Building at Franklin, was putting his skills to practice in a most impressive and professional manner.

He told us he had recently purchased the dinghy in Taroona where it had lived in a shed for 20 years, and



had trailed it back home to Strahan where he is hopeful of taking it back to its original beauty and then selling it on.

In another shed we found the 10' dinghy he had built as part of his diploma some years ago, also ready for further work and restoration, as well as a collection of old seasoned lengths of Huon pine from his previous 26' power boat that he dismantled some time back, in preparation for the reconstruction of a traditional 14' Macquarie Harbour Huon pine 'Piner's' punt, traditionally used by the local men to get up the nearby rivers (they had to be tough enough for the rapids they would encounter and light enough to be carried over impassable reaches) where the piners would fell the trees and then float them back down in 'rafts' to Macquarie Harbour for milling at local mills such as Morrison's Mill, still in operation on the wharf at Strahan, or for export from Regatta Point.

LEFT FROM TOP: Bill Surtees 10' dinghy he started at the school at Franklin. *Photo Jonathan Wallis*

Bill Surtees at work on his 14' Huon Pine dinghy restoration. *Photo Jonathan Wallis*

Bill Surtees' dinghy restoration plus two newly made rowlock holders. *Photo Jonathan Wallis*

ABOVE: Bill holding the rudder for *Wild Honey* – the name of the 32ft Bristol Channel cutter which was Bill's main project at the school. *Photo Bill Surtees*



Bill's boat – his sister-in-law, Judith Surtees, found this dinghy for sale in the Huon Valley. It is the dinghy which he helped build at the Wooden Boat School with a nameplate in the stern.

Photo Bill Surtees

In fact, several of these unique boats can still be seen on the Strahan foreshore near Regatta Point where there is a model of a traditional punt on display for tourists, but more interestingly there are several still in use alongside the little jetty there. Sturdy robust long-lasting craft they are a huge part of the mystique of this region.

Bill, who has a history in local government on the west coast, has always had a love of the sea and of the small, and traditional, craft that once used to abound here. Now retired, he feels he at long last has the opportunity to take this interest a serious step further.

Having taken a redundancy back in 1999 he enrolled at the 'Shipwright's Point School of Wooden Boat Building' at Franklin where he completed a diploma in 'Traditional Wooden Boat Building', building an Iain Oughtred designed 10' clinker dinghy. Here he received comprehensive instruction in working with wooden boats, and the tools and skills required to build, repair and restore them, but he also deepened his love for his native Huon pine with its many advantages, including its longevity and resistance to the inroads of Teredo worm attack and other traditional enemies of wooden boats, and of course, their useful robust strength.



The canoe was originally made by one of our members out of Western Red Cedar. It has recently been fully restored with new seats and external and internal coating.

The canoe measures 4.5m long and has a capacity for two adults. The members have decided to sell the canoe to raise funds for our new shed with an **asking price of \$1500.**

We can arrange free delivery to anywhere in the Toowoomba region and anywhere outside that area would be negotiable.

Contact Crows Nest Mens Shed
crowsnestmensshed@outlook.com



TOP: Bill Surtees with his 14ft dinghy restoration.
Photo Jonathan Wallis

ABOVE L-R: Bill Surtees boat – interior coming along well.
Photo Jonathan Wallis

Display Piner's punt on foreshore Strahan. *Photo Jonathan Wallis*

Bill Surtees restoration – tools as required. *Photo Jonathan Wallis*

Happily, recent salvage of submerged Huon pine logs (now called 'Hydrowood') from the Reece Dam on the nearby Pieman River, and possibly other Hydro handmade lakes, has ensured a pleasing reserve of this amazing timber which can be seen stockpiled in several yards en-route to Macquarie Heads/Ocean Beach from Strahan.

It would be fair to say Bill has more than one project underway at his house with a splendid view

overlooking the harbour in Strahan, but we found him, paint scraper in hand happily engaged in removing layers of old paint from his newly acquired 12' Huon pine clinker built dinghy which he had recently sourced at Taroona and had subsequently trailered home across the mountains via Derwent Bridge to Strahan.

He has collected a selection of traditional tools for the task but is not averse to using some more modern ones as well, including the triangle paint scraper in hand, and appears never happier than when working on a boat with his old faithful German Short Haired Pointer gun dog 'Lilly', always sitting patiently close at hand.

Apart from removing multiple layers of paint from the dinghy, and replacing the rowlock blocks which had been worn by years of use, the boat is in surprisingly good condition and he doesn't see any major problems ahead in her ongoing restoration.

His love for the traditional Piner's Punts has, in anticipation of his next major project, seen him amassing a pile of old and seasoned Huon pine planks that will be used in building a 14' Carvel hulled punt for himself. He had already amassed a quantity of timber to be recycled from his now dismantled 26' long boat and has the plans already in his mind.

He fondly remembers working on the 32ft Bristol Channel cutter which was the main project for the two years he was at the school. It is currently moored at Kettering, he tells us, adding, "It is owned by Chris and Pip Bourke who live on Bruny Island. Chris was another of the main teachers at the school with Peter Laidlaw, and is the person who will be building the proposed Piner's punt with me here at Strahan.

I currently have a 19' glass 'Kingston 580' boat that I admit I do enjoy putt putting around Macquarie Harbour in, and a dinghy which allows me access to many of the historic sites around the shores, up the various rivers which are too shallow for the cruise boats, once traversed by generations of Piner's punts, and examining such places as the historical ruins of the Pillinger township."

He added that he was born in Queenstown, but since his earliest memories, he has had an on-going passion for wooden boats and the west coast. "I lived in London and travelled extensively in my younger days, but always returned to the west coast, which I call home. In fact, we have a family tradition here, and my father was one of the engineers who built the turn-table on the Wilderness ABT Railway, at Dubbil Barril on the way to Queenstown. You may say my heart is here. Previously I always had motor boats, and used to spend too much time effecting repairs and modification, and that's why I decided to do the course at Franklin, so I could learn how to do things 'properly'. And I must say the skills I learned from some of their Master Craftsmen, such as



TOP: Piner's punt still in use Strahan. *Photo Jonathan Wallis*

ABOVE: Piner's punt still in use. *Photo Jonathan Wallis*

Peter Laidlaw, who is still lecturing there, have stood me in good stead to this day."

Certainly, looking at the painstaking professionalism Bill applies to his various projects, we would have to observe that his time spent at the school at Franklin (now the Wooden Boat Centre) was time well spent indeed.

We look forward at some future time to catching up with Bill Surtees again and resuming our own love of the region, the Huon pine itself, Piner's punts, and the collection of traditional wooden boats still found at Strahan and along the west coast!

SCUTTLEBUTT



by **ALASTAIR SANDS**

I had previously built a number of boats ... a Sunburst, a FireBug, a Joker 6.7, and a Pelin powerboat.

ABOVE: Akaroa sea trials.



Since a boy I had dreamed of owning a boat (anyone relate to that?) and more recently I bought John Teale's *How to Design a Boat* which encouraged me to actually do it ... despite the many warnings from designers not to!

After some preliminary sketches the plans took shape and the overall look was certainly a nod to the wonderful Bolger mini tugs built, it seems, largely in the US. But I was more comfortable with the traditional building using frames, stringers etc and the solid structural longitudinal beams bonded to the floor used by the Pelin design gave me confidence to proceed.

On paper this boat looks like a planing hull with a wheelhouse stuck on it ... relatively narrow beam maximised amidships and tapering towards the stern. At a glance it has a comical appearance ... what is that Canadian canoe bow doing on a trailerable 6m mini trawler?

ARE YOU

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 ELECTRONICS **SAILING** RACING
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KIT LAUNCHING **BUILDING A RUDDER**
 USING EPOXY **MAKING A MAST**

*or simply dreaming about
messaging about in boats ...*



If so, we'd like to hear from you!

Australian Amateur Boatbuilder & KitBoats magazine is interested in hearing the story of your project, how you got started and what was your motivation. Don't worry if you can't write a masterpiece and naturally, you'll have to include some clear photos, showing the various stages of construction from the beginning to where it all ended!

AUSTRALASIAN AMATEUR
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wendy@multihull.com.au



ABOVE LEFT: Wheelhouse prep.

ABOVE RIGHT: Forward cabin showing details not included in plans!

LEFT: Skipper's fishing seat.



You see, I wanted character, a quirkiness which reflected my character ... perhaps you can see it in Scuttlebutt.

The name comes from a slang term I heard used on the TV series NCIS. It means rumour or hearsay and although scuttle may not be ideal for a boat, it stays!

The main feature is the wheelhouse which was built as a module in my garage, then lifted by crane into the hull. Less obvious is the window design. How do you go from a rectangular side window to a raked front window without an A pillar?

By using acrylic and inducing a twist ... it worked ... I have that traditional trawler look with a raked front screen to improve airflow for towing. The boat is very light, Gaboon glassed and weight estimated at 800kg plus trailer, custom built in Ashburton by Premier Engineering.

Propulsion is an old 60hp 2-stroke Mercury, the triple sounds wonderful at full song although my intention is to cruise the boat at planing speed ... about 10kts with occasional bursts of up to 25.

She was launched in a lake amidst some anxious looking jetskiers not used to a trawler doing 25kts on their lake ... and I intend circumnavigating our South Island lakes at a leisurely pace.

In the meantime she is undergoing sea trials in the sheltered waters of Akaroa, a village with a French flavour and at an hour away from



Christchurch, the ideal place for daytrippers to bring their boats or just come over for the day. Scuttlebutt fits in well ... not fast, not noisy and certainly not a boat to walk past without wondering whether she trawls the depths outside the heads or shuffles around the bays in more sheltered waters. The answer is the latter on the basis that she is a lightweight, narrow beamed cruiser intended to give the skipper and motley crew (no certainly not my wife, my fishing mates) a comfortable ride to nowhere in particular.

The sedate speed seems to suit her in choppy water as we (my wife Jenn, not motley crew this time) cruised around to Takamatua to have a nosey at the new holiday houses perched up on the hill with a view ... not surprisingly, some occupants were checking out the wee trawler gliding past.

A final word to those who think they don't have the skill to build ... yes you do ... I'm pretty rough and won't be showing off detail to anyone soon but as long as you follow the mixing instructions for epoxy resin you'll be right. I've often wondered if people are put off because they don't have building skills.

The journey in building a boat is, for me, a tremendous boost to my confidence and I approached the prospect of making hundreds of decisions during the build with zeal. For me there is huge value in solving problems, not giving up ... permanently ... but getting there in the end.

TOP: Nicely balanced to tow ... ready to launch.

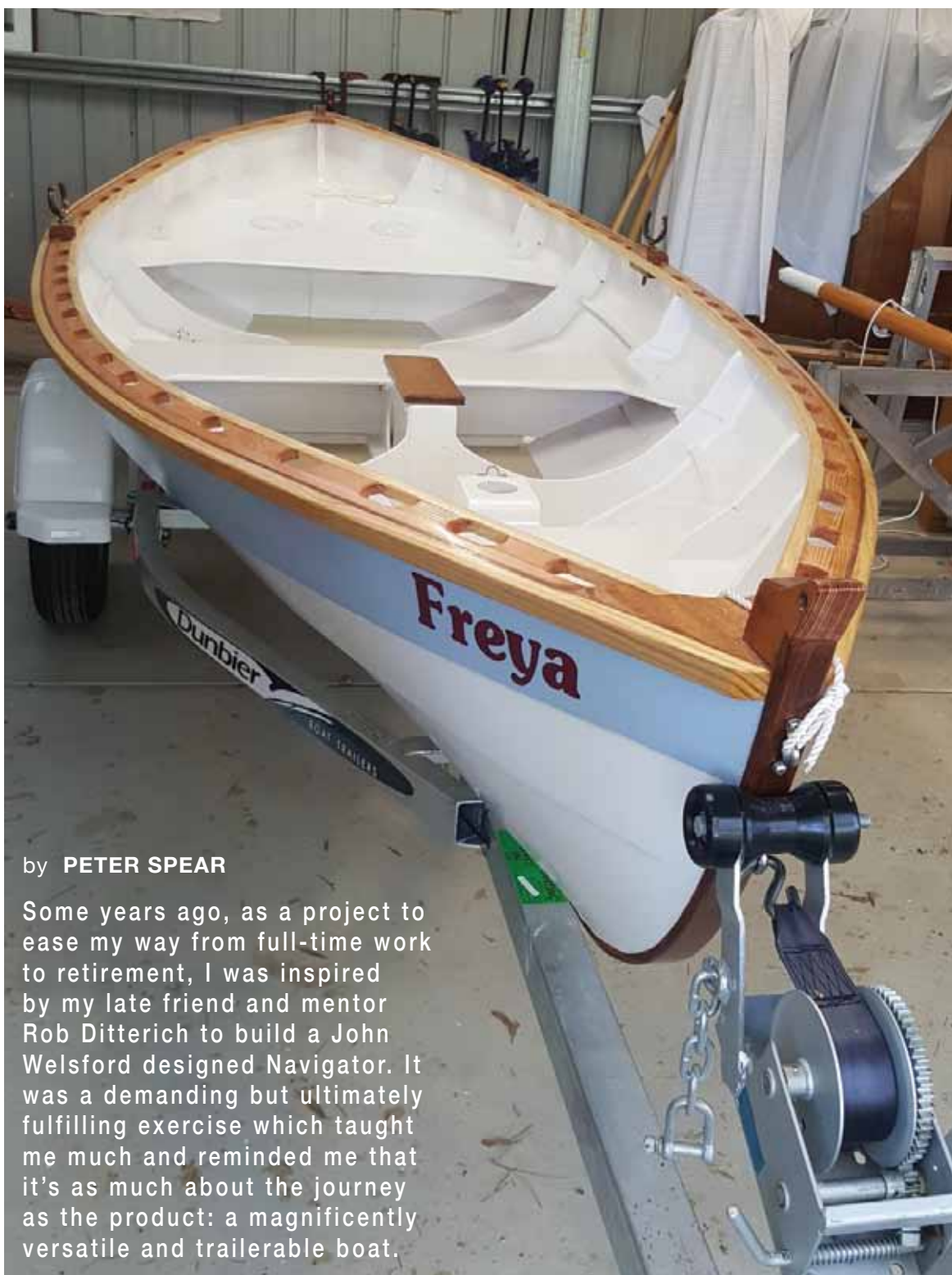
ABOVE L-R:

Wheelhouse – varnished and with porthole.

Chain locker. Note footstools for crew.

Helmstation ... basic is best.

FREYA



by **PETER SPEAR**

Some years ago, as a project to ease my way from full-time work to retirement, I was inspired by my late friend and mentor Rob Ditterich to build a John Welsford designed Navigator. It was a demanding but ultimately fulfilling exercise which taught me much and reminded me that it's as much about the journey as the product: a magnificently versatile and trailerable boat.

Fast forward to the July-September 2019 edition of this magazine and there on the cover was Welsford Sei, 'a Norwegian Raider for the home boatbuilder'. How was I to resist this invitation to do it all again?

The plans and comprehensive construction notes arrived and were studied.

I picked up a trailer-load of MDF from a local cabinetmaker, (they receive it as protective packaging for fragile, costly panels and leapt at the opportunity to be rid of it).

AN INSPIRED COVID PROJECT

The Gaboon plywood and Bote-Cote supplies were delivered by Warren Slater of Marine Timbers of Seaford shortly before Christmas and the patternmaking and cutting of the frames and planks got underway early in the New Year.

By the time the Covid restraints were upon us the build was well underway on its building frame in my dedicated boat-building shed.

By following John's suggestion to halve and join the frames I used one less sheet of both 9mm and 6mm ply – worth noting when you're ordering costly materials.

The pictures tell the construction story, but don't reveal that, other than in the construction of the centreboard case and the mast-step box, I did not use the prescribed screws but relied on Bote-Cote epoxy to provide the bond. It's worked before for me and so far *Freya* has held together, laminations and all!

Rather than adopting John's specification of alloy spars, I went for aesthetically more pleasing, though more labour-intensive, spars of clear Oregon. To shape the spars from their initial square form, I used a jig which Peter Brown of our Geelong St Ayles Skiff building group, (we have built three), developed to shape the tapered looms of the skiff oars. Essentially



TOP: Taking shape on the building frame.

ABOVE: Laminating the bow and stern outer stems.



the jig is reminiscent of a long-bed lathe. But instead of the material spinning under a shaping tool, it is turned incrementally by hand after each pass of a router mounted in a sliding carriage. This, though noisy and dusty, is a quick and reliable means of producing nicely rounded spars which, in the case of the mast, also is tapered, (as are the oar looms).

Our talented Geelong sailmaker, Tony Bull, made the traditional wine-dark Dacron sail, (loose footed for improved set), and I've been able to use bronze rowlocks which were a gift to me 66 years ago from a skilled metal-casting friend!

The Navigator I named *Felicity* for my 'understanding' wife. I was keen to stick to the letter 'F' when naming the Sei, so when our grandchildren suggested *Freya*, the Norse goddess of love, there was no hesitation.

We look forward to enjoying this quickly and simply rigged and launched boat for years to come.

There's no doubt about the appeal of the Welsford designs and there can have been no better lockdown project for a serial amateur boatbuilder.

What's next? I have no idea, but I do know the fulfilment of engaging in creating something beautiful and useful from wood is what it's all about.

TOP LEFT: Almost ready to turn.

TOP RIGHT: You can never have too many clamps!

LEFT: Rigged and ready to launch.

NEW MARINE LIGHT BAR RANGE FROM NARVA

Narva has released a range of fully submersible LED light bars designed specifically for watercraft. The new 'Navigata' series light bars are a marine-specific variant of Narva's 'Explora' light bar range, which have proven popular in the four wheel drive and passenger vehicle market.

Sharing technology and design cues with Explora light bars, the all-white Navigata range utilises high-powered 5W LEDs and Narva's Optic Drive™ technology. This captures and focuses more of the light generated to produce an extra penetrating light output, eliminating waste and resulting in a 30% brighter output compared to conventional light bars of the same length and power.

Built with superior construction, the one piece die-cast white aluminium housings are designed without end caps to provide optimum sealing (IP68 and IP69K) and heat dissipation. Virtually unbreakable hard-coated polycarbonate lenses and stainless steel mounting brackets and hardware ensure Navigata light bars are safe and secure for bow or roll bar mounting in any conditions. Prewired weatherproof DT connectors make installation a breeze and 9-32V input means the light bars are suitable for a multitude of vessels both large and small.

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The new Navigata light bars are covered by Narva's five year LED warranty across the range and are available from leading marine and transport retailers nationwide.





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SCRUFFIE WORLD NEWS a new dawn

by **DEREK ELLARD**

As I write this the American people have finally decided that a certain 'presidential' person has to go, ending a shameful and embarrassing chapter in US history. We can all breathe again! New green initiatives! The return of dignity!

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One of Paul's finest.

SHIPPING NEWS

For us at Scruffie Marine/Go Sail Cargo it's a shot of turquoise adrenaline in the arm. Almost immediately after the presidential shenanigans in came an email from an American who hopes to set up a fleet of zero carbon sailing cargo ships in US waters – and we're top of his list. But wait, there's more! A Brazilian cadet training organisation is seriously interested in a Clipper 70, particularly as it's a cargo ship. And then there's the enquiry for a Secret 33 ferry and/or a 100-passenger E-Cat. All this and another very positive day of meetings with the shipyard and a government 'growth facilitator'.

Phew! I need to go and lie down for a bit.

But I can't – we're filming a new promotional video for the cargo ships. By the time you read this it should be up on the website. Simon of Colourberry

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is the producer <https://www.colourberry.com> and he'll be doing some animation of the new boats in the near future.

While I'm on the shipping news channel, Harwood Marine are hiring now. They're in need at least 40 new people to work on barges, yachts, rescue boats, fishing boats and shortly sailing cargo ships in steel and aluminium. They are good people and do mention me when you ring up. Harwood Marine is on the historically important river at Yamba and it's a lovely area. You could moor your live aboard along from the shipyard.

OTHER GO SAIL CARGO NEWS

We're committed to the E-Cat or should I say Clipper Cat and I now have all the drawings and photos of Len Perry's moulds/hulls to hand. The photo

clearly shows the fine entry/exit lines and full mid sections.

The basic drawings and layouts of the new cats are done and they'll shortly be going on to the computer to clean up all my wobbly lines. All the upgrades and revisions of the other boats are now complete, including the 16-container schooner which continues to be a joy to work on. I mean catamarans are all well and good, but a three masted schooner with a rakish bowsprit and a couple of squaresails plus our own stunsails set from the derricks ... well you get the picture.



The fibreglass stern view hulls are the underwater sections. The upper hulls and superstructures are in aluminium. The sailing version has a shallow keel and extended stern section incorporating the feathering prop and rudder.

THE FINAL RESTORATION JOB

I have to announce a few milestones now. The first is the completion of Scruffie Marine's final restoration contract – this one a Scintilla 24. We've done two this year but this one, sold as a kit 20 years ago, will definitely be the last. To be honest it's just too much for me and finding just the right people to take on the work is difficult, besides, the original owner's son, Darren, wanted the designer to refurbish and upgrade his dad Leo's boat.

We've made new sails and spars, resprayed the hull, upgraded the tiller/rudder and fitted new chandlery. Interestingly the streamlined rigging system has been highlighted by one of Paul da Roza's 'Sailing Kate Louise' video featuring a Stornaway I built over a dozen years ago https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0akk2T5T5tc&t=205s&ab_channel=SailingKateLouise

One of the most important improvements we have introduced is the fitting of a brailling line, previously an option. A tug on the light line instantly gathers

Rigging begins.

up the main – a brake in fact. The mainsail set up on Kate Louise was one of the last times we used the old system. The new simpler system which is now on the Scintilla is ‘much easier to rig and sail’. That, plus notable performance increases means Darren is very happy with his ‘new’ boat and Leo, now in his 80s, will enjoy her for a good few years yet.

SCRUFFIE PRODUCTION

We’ve sold the Sienna 19 moulds to Blue Peter Australia <https://bluepeteraustralia.com/> who already have six or eight of our boats. The Secret 33 moulds have been sold to a Northern NSW marine training organisation. So the Siennas are still in production and shortly we hope the Secret 33s will be too.

We’ll keep the Shimmy production going as they are by far our most successful boat – we’ve just completed three kits, one has gone to New Caledonia and two for Victorian customers. We’ll keep the Stornways going, they’re very successful too but the others, the Secret 20 and the Scintilla 24 will be mothballed along with the Scruffie 16 (which was superseded by the Stornaway anyway.) These model templates are available for younger (than 74) marine minded people to take over so I’m open to offers. I suppose the Shimmys and Stornaways could also be included – I can’t keep doing this forever and the way the cargo and tourist boat projects are going, I’m surely not going to have time. We’ll see. Email me **derek@scruffie.com**

That’s all for now as I’m getting perilously close to deadline again (sorry Wendy) and I need a day off tomorrow.



Darren and his new boat.



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The sea is not just a body of

water. It bears witness history, and the land it is still embracing.

And then there are the boats. Geoff has from childhood roamed the waters from Corio Bay to Hobart and beyond. Most recently he has become involved with the ownership, and the lore of Norwalk Islands Sharpies. It's great read. Recommended.

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CAPE CUTTER 19 AND CC19 BAYCRUISER



by **DUDLEY DIX**

The Cape Cutter 19 design was commissioned by a young South African couple when I still lived in Cape Town. They had owned a custom gaff schooner version of my Shearwater 39 design that was built as an excursion boat in Hout Bay, the village where I lived. With a large cockpit to seat 25-30 passengers, they operated *Spirit of Anegada* as an excursion and dive boat in the Caribbean.

Their brief for the Cape Cutter 19 design was for me to draw my version of the popular little British traditional gaff-rigged lapstrake trailer-sailer concept. These were to be built as a GRP production boat in South Africa for export to UK. That operation proved very successful, with a few boats going to South African owners and most of the production shipped to UK, two boats on trailers in each 40ft container. Orders were well over 100 boats when my clients decided to sell the business and production was moved to England by the new owners.

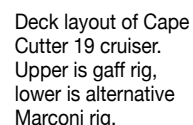
In parallel to the GRP production boats, I was able to sell plans for plywood boats and the builders agreed that a local CNC company in Hout Bay could sell kits for plywood boats. The plywood plans were secured by the design contract but the kits were under licence to the owners of the GRP production. When the GRP company was sold, the new owners cancelled the

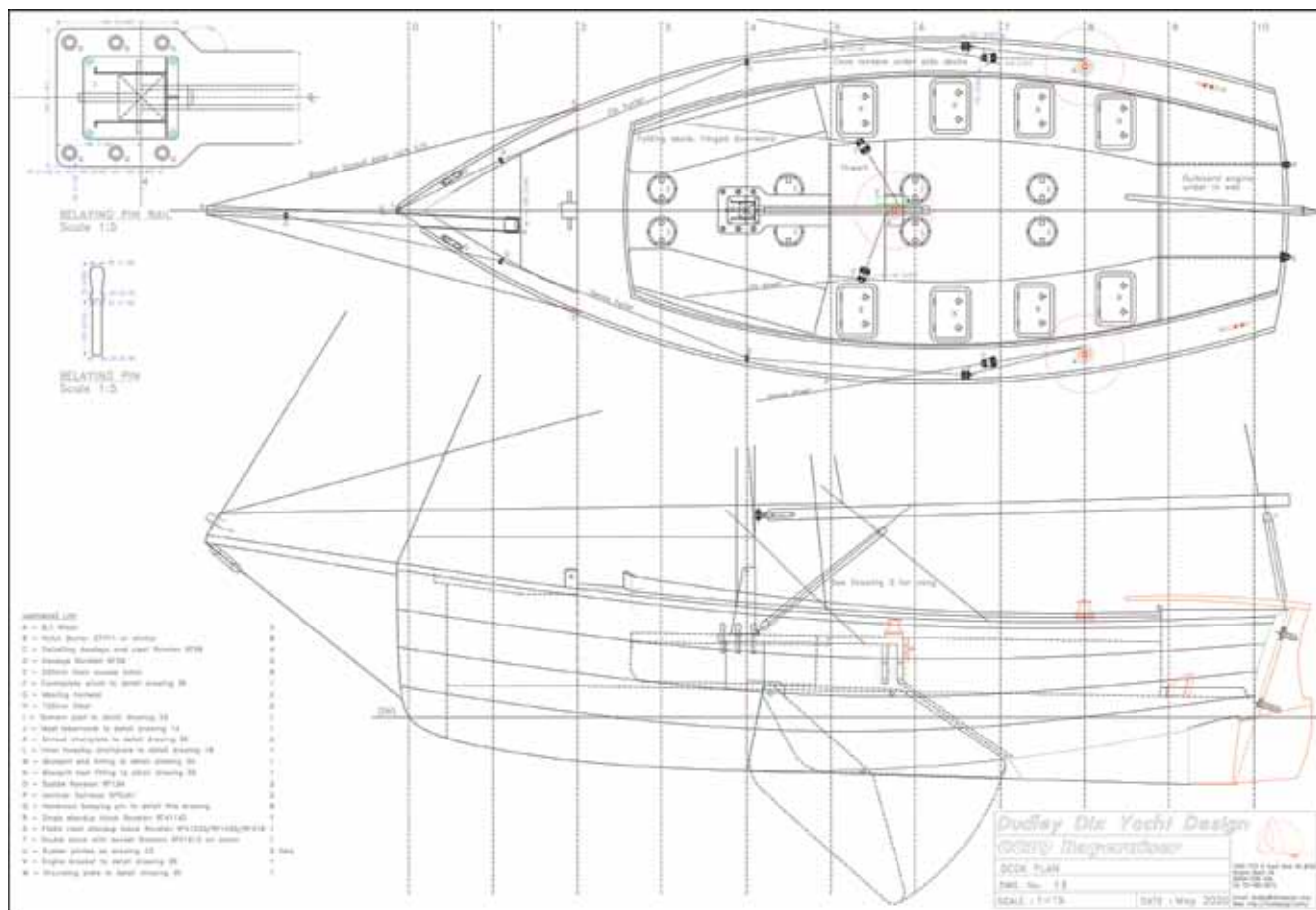
The transfer of production from South Africa to UK was a major disruption. The new GRP factory took a long time to get production going and many orders were cancelled. When they did eventually start building they were never able to build at the rate required to meet order commitments. The result was that even more orders were lost and far fewer boats were built than had been ordered. Despite that, more than 130 GRP boats have been built, in addition to about 90 plywood boats. When the owners retired and sold the company to a new owner, I negotiated the permanent return of rights to sell plywood kits. Since then kits have been cut in various countries and building of plywood boats is far outpacing the GRP production boats.

These boats have also done some creditable voyaging. One owner shipped his boat to the head of the Ayeyarwady River in Myanmar and sailed the 3000 miles to the Bay of Bengal, then to Singapore, via Thailand. Two others have circumnavigated England at different times.

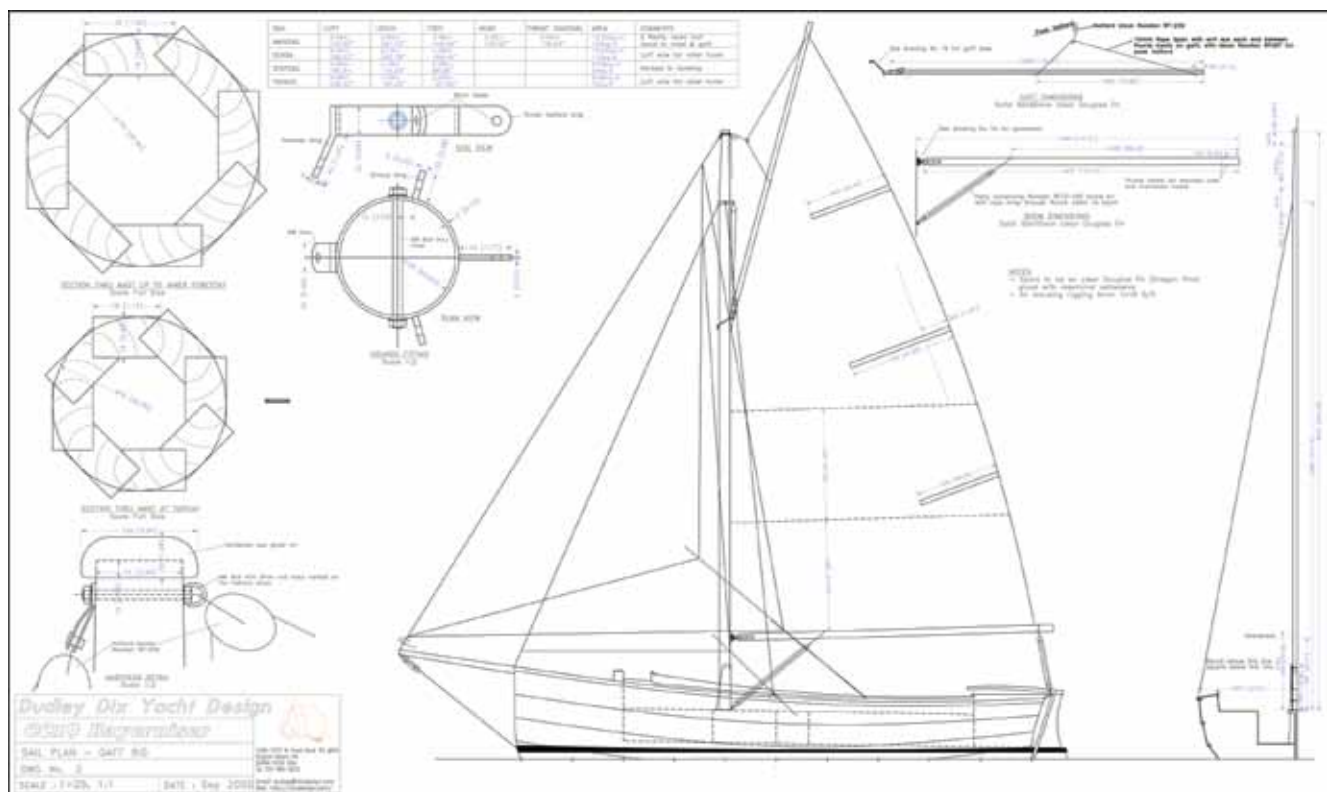
The rig is a modern version of the traditional gaff rig, with high-peaked mainsail. The mast is stepped in a tabernacle, with the gooseneck on the tabernacle to allow the mast to be dropped without first removing the mainsail. The main structural forestay is the inner one, to the stemhead, allowing the outer forestay and bowsprit to be used for raising and lowering the mast. The bowsprit is hinged on the sunken foredeck and folds back to lie along the main deck. The headsails can be arranged in cutter configuration, with Yankee and staysail. Alternatively, it can be sailed as a sloop, with a Genoa or Code 0 set on the bowsprit in light breeze, changing down to the staysail as a working jib, for a fully-inboard sloop rig in stronger winds. This low-profile rig allows a large amount of sail to be set in light breeze to keep her moving when others have stopped.

Under water there are two options. The original form is a steel centreplate that swings up into an internal casing. The other option is twin asymmetrical bilge keels set up with toe-in to help with windward ability. Ballast is a combination of lead shot set in epoxy, in





Deck layout of CC19 Baycruiser. The large open cockpit has fixed seating with watertight storing under, aft of the mast. Forward of the mast are seats that fold down to increase usable space. A small cuddy cabin is under the foredeck.



Sail plan of CC19 Baycruiser.

the bilge, and the centreplate or ballasted bilge keels. The two versions have similar stability.

Steering is with a semi-balanced transom-hung rudder aft of keel deadwood, separated by the engine, which is mounted in a well at the aft end of the cockpit.

Construction of the plywood boats is lapstrake plywood over stringers and permanent bulkheads. The stringers are located at the lapstrake joints, for easier construction and to strengthen the joints. Deck construction is also plywood over stringers that are supported by permanent bulkheads and widely-spaced laminated beams. The bulkheads are sealed against the hull skin, allowing the spaces under the forward berths to be watertight up to berth-top level for safety in the event of hull damage in that area.

An amateur-built Cape Cutter 19 is soon to be launched in Queensland. The owner estimates that by completion he will have spent 800 hours building her. Another is soon to start construction in Western Australia. This build will be by the Denmark High School, as part of their curriculum over the next few years.

Recently I was asked if I could adapt the Cape Cutter 19 to an open dayboat. I have now drawn that version, named the CC19 Baycruiser. The hull is identical in detailing to the cruising version, aside from the bulkhead shapes to suit the new deck.

This one has a large cockpit that can comfortably seat a large family both sailing and motoring. The aft part of the cockpit has fixed seating with sealed dry storage below, broken into sealed compartments to serve as buoyancy compartments. The forward part of the cockpit has hinged seating that can be folded down to increase open floor space. The area under the foredeck is a small cuddy cabin for dry storage or shelter for kids if needed. The volume under the entire cockpit is buoyancy compartments, each with an access cover for cleaning and inspection.

Cockpit drainage is through the engine well, against the transom and below an engine cover. There is also secondary cockpit drainage through a shallow gutter each side of the centreplate casing and draining into the casing. This detail was drawn to allow the



TOP: Stainless steel deck hardware for a Cape Henry 21, custom fabricated by our Australian agent, Stainless Boatworks.

ABOVE: This is the Cape Cutter in Queensland early in the build. Bulkheads and centreplate casing set up and bonded, galley unit being built in place before the stringers and skin will be fitted.

SPECIFICATIONS

Length overall

(incl. bowsprit and rudder) 7.19m (23'7")

Length on deck 5.80m (19'0")

Length waterline 5.50m (18'0")

Beam 2.20m (7'3")

Draft centreplate up 0.45m (1'6")

Draft centreplate down 1.22m (4'0")

Draft bilge keels 0.60m (1'11")

Displacement to DWL 1100kg (2425lb)

Lightship weight 870kg (1918lb)

SAIL AREA

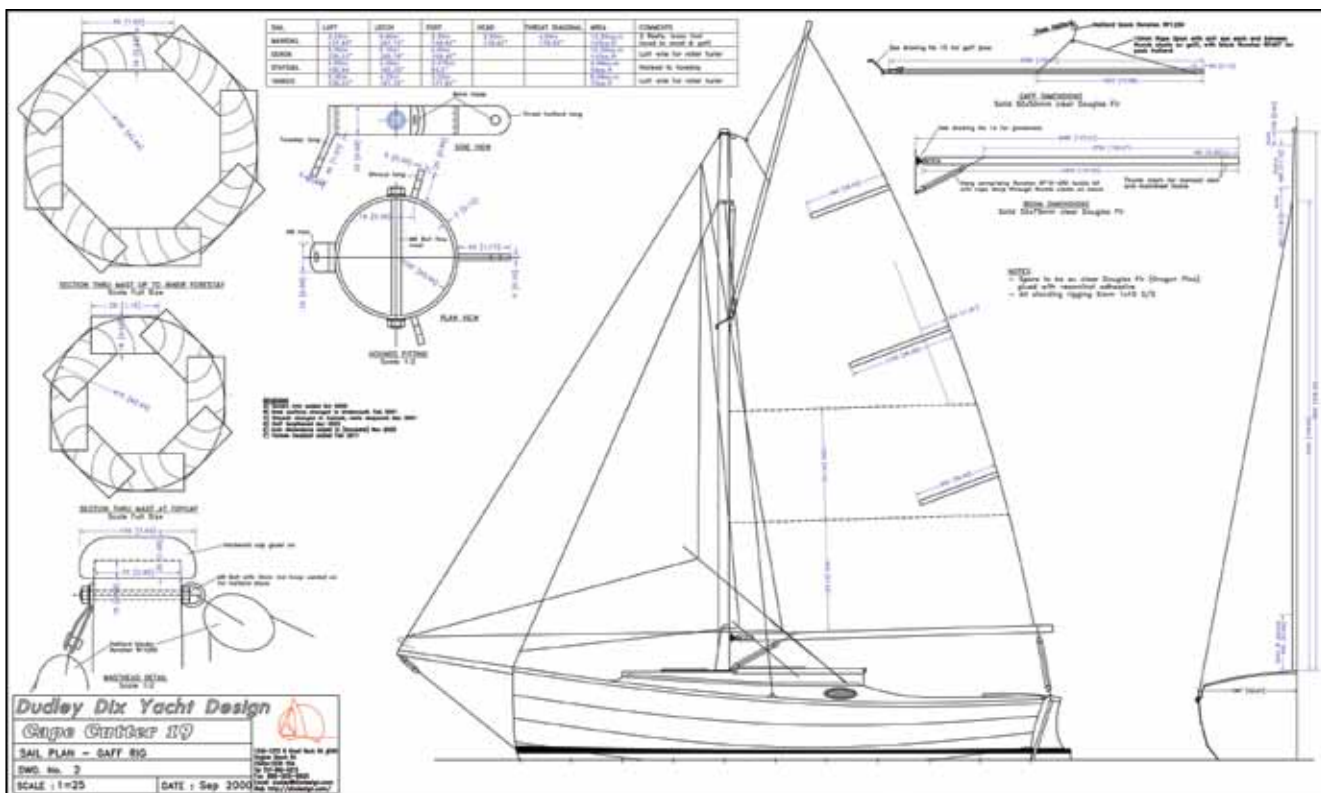
Main + Genoa 23.52sqm

(253sqft)

centreplate pivot bolt to be accessed from above the cockpit sole without dropping the sole to a level that would risk wet feet if a large number of people is partying in the cockpit. Each side of the engine space is a lazarette accessed via a large hatch and sealed from all other hull compartments.

The owner/builder requested that we retain the fixed internal ballast as used in the cruising version. Along with this we have detailed the centreplate for plywood sheathed with glass/epoxy and ballasted with lead.

This rig is unchanged except that the mast is longer to compensate for the lower mast step. The top of the centreplate casing forms a pin rail around the step, with belaying pins for halliards. The jib sheets to fairleads on the cockpit seats, led to a central winch. The Genoa or Yankee sheets to fairleads on the sidedecks, led to winches alongside the helmsman. Headsail furling lines are also led to the same winches, via stoppers.



Sail plan of the Cape Cutter 19 cruiser.

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The configuration of this version will work well as a family dayboat, camp cruiser or a small excursion boat for harbour cruises, nature viewing etc.

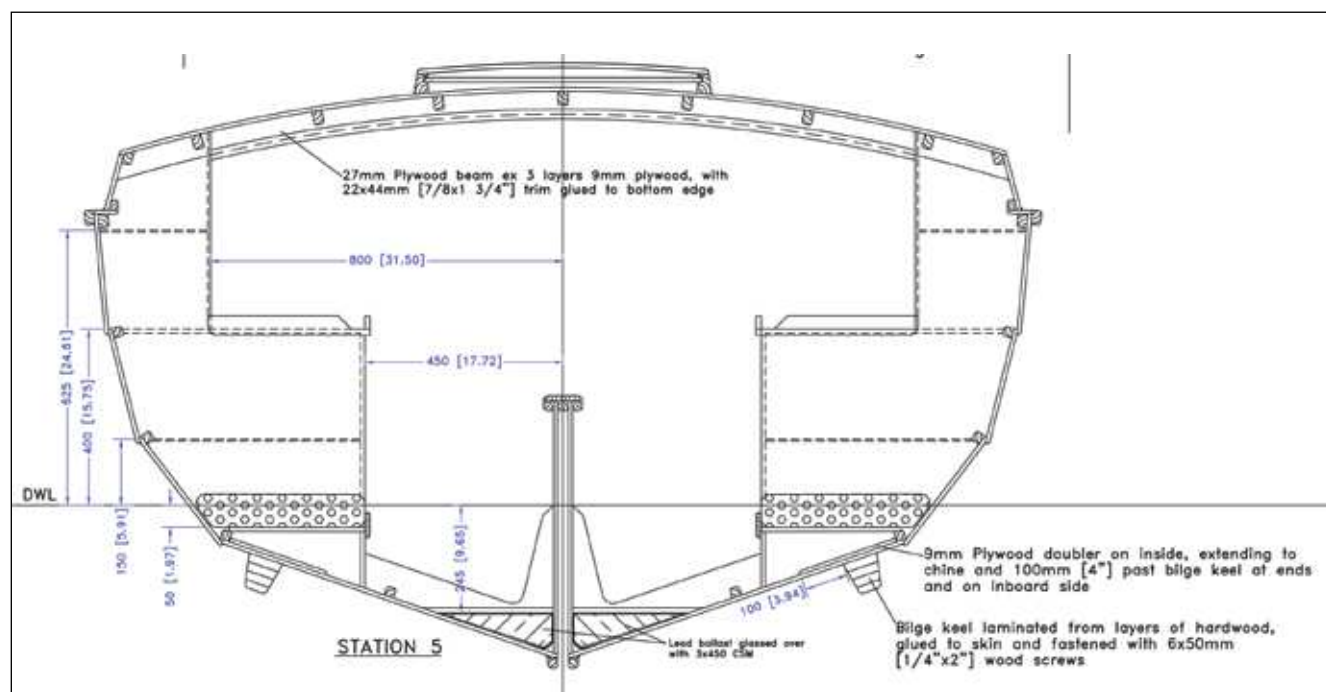
There are three options for a plywood build project.

1. From plans only, which include full-size Mylar patterns for bulkheads, transom, backbone and centreplate casing.
2. As 1) but add full-size Mylar patterns for all hull, deck and cockpit skin panels.
3. From plans plus a plywood kit, cut by CNC router, for all plywood components of hull, deck, bulkheads and centreplate casing. Kits are available in Australia from our Australian agent, Stainless Boatworks (<https://stainlessboatworks.com.au>).

South African born yacht designer Dudley Dix is a graduate of Westlawn School of Yacht Design. He has a wide range of designs, built by professional and amateur builders in 90 countries. The Dudley Dix Yacht Design office is in Virginia Beach, USA, with website at <https://dixdesign.com>. Australian agent is Ron Jesche of Stainless Boatworks, with website at <https://stainlessboatworks.com.au>



Amateur-built plywood Cape Cutter 19 cruiser on Table Bay in South Africa. This builder is soon to start a new project, a 36ft bigger sister that is now on the drawing board.



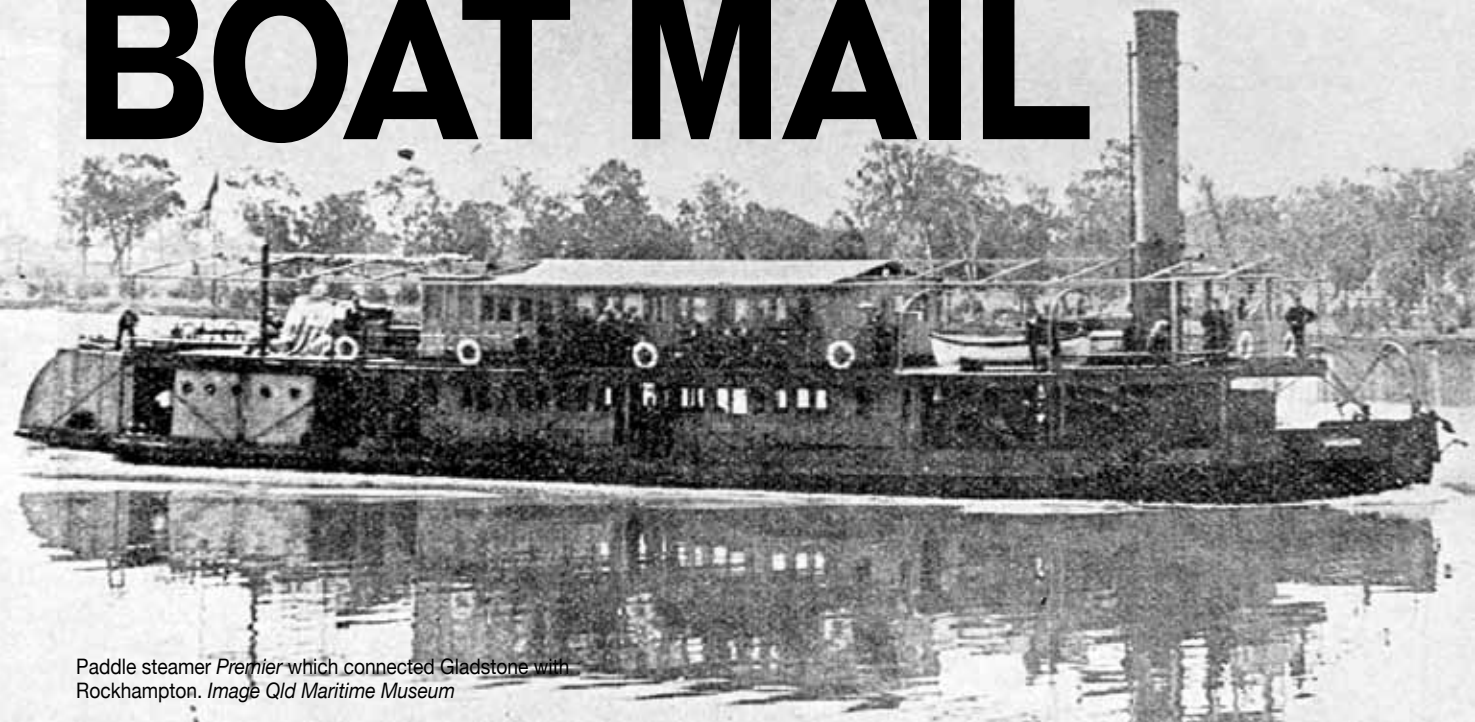
Section through the Cape Cutter 19 cruiser.

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QUEENSLAND'S BOAT MAIL



Paddle steamer *Premier* which connected Gladstone with Rockhampton. Image Qld Maritime Museum

by **DAVID JONES**, QUEENSLAND MARITIME MUSEUM

For the first hundred years of European settlement in Australia sea travel was the only way to connect our coastal towns and cities. Railways pushed their way out from the major centres and in time, challenged the dominance of sea travel. The railway joined Sydney to Melbourne in 1883 and Sydney to Brisbane via Wallangarra on the border and Toowoomba in 1888. Once railways connected the capital cities mail was transferred from sea to rail carriage. Passengers were slower to change as an interstate rail trip was cold and uncomfortable.

In Queensland the railway threaded west from Brisbane, Rockhampton, Townsville and Cairns, but linking the coastal centres north was a much slower process. It was not until 1898 that the railway from Brisbane reached Gladstone prompting a revision of the northern mail arrangements. The post would now be carried by rail from Brisbane to Gladstone, then transferring to a coastal steamer for delivery to northern ports. Thus was born Queensland's 'boat mail.'

The boat train steamer's timetable was strict and demanding. In the space of a week she was expected to make a return voyage between Brisbane and Townsville with three port stops in each direction connecting with the mail train at Gladstone, then on-going rail and steamer timetables in Townsville.

A speedy ship was needed to maintain this gruelling schedule. This ship was SS *Barcoo* of 1,505 tons

belonging to the AUSN Company which had a strong history of serving Queensland. *Barcoo* was not a new ship, completed in 1885 and now 13 years old, but she was popular and fast. She had gained a reputation for speedy passages and carried a silver greyhound at her masthead to mark the fact. Her designed speed of 12kts matched that of the mail contract, but she consistently made 15kts at sea. *Barcoo* departed Brisbane to inaugurate the first weekly co-ordinated northern mail service on 28 October 1898.

Barcoo left Brisbane at 8am on Friday for Gladstone where she would arrive by midday on Saturday to meet the mail train which had left Brisbane at 7.30pm the night before. In this way the train allowed businessmen to save a day on the journey, working through Friday while *Barcoo* was at sea, then catching her at Gladstone next day.

Barcoo continued north to call at Flat Top and then at Bowen on Sunday before arriving at Townsville around dawn on Monday. Flat Top Island, the transfer point for Mackay, was exposed to the prevailing south-easterly wind and many were the stories of seasickness as passengers transferred from a heaving tender to the ship. A quick stop was made at Bowen jetty with nine minutes being the shortest time recorded between lines ashore and cast off.

In Townsville mail would be rushed to a train travelling west to Charters Towers and to a smaller steamer heading north to Cairns and Cooktown via ports. Both would be on their way by 8am. *Barcoo* would sail from Townsville that evening, reversing her course via Bowen, Mackay and Gladstone to arrive in Brisbane on Thursday afternoon. On the following morning she would sail again on her next service.

It was a punishing schedule. *Barcoo*'s timetable allowed just a few hours in Townsville and Brisbane for cleaning, coaling, maintenance and repairs. If a voyage was delayed by heavy weather, her port times were reduced, or ports by-passed so the schedule would not be affected. This schedule was maintained week after week throughout the year, cyclones notwithstanding.

A different aspect of the northern boat mail service was delivering mail to Rockhampton. The arrangements made had all the hallmarks of having been planned remotely by bureaucrats around an office table.

The route chosen took the mail boat four times a week through the Narrows, a strait 27km long between Curtis Island and the mainland. While this appeared on paper to be a direct route, it was a difficult one. It was both narrow and shallow, at one point so shallow that cattle could be driven across from the island to the mainland at low tide. Only a specialised, shallow-draught vessel could navigate it and the Queensland Government ordered the stern wheel paddle steamer *Premier* for the purpose. Built in Britain and assembled in Maryborough, she was a two-deck passenger ferry of 148 tons similar to paddle steamers on the Nile.

Despite her shallow draught, *Premier* could only navigate the Narrows at higher levels of the tide. This dictated her departure times, sometimes leaving passengers waiting many hours before the tide was



TOP: Friends and family farewell departing passengers on *Bingera*.
Image State Library of Queensland



ABOVE: *Barcoo* off Flat Top Island. Image State Library of Queensland

right. She made a disappointing start. Returning from her first service in July 1898, *Premier* ran aground and had to be taken out of service for repairs. Disruptions like this were frequent and when the railway from Gladstone reached Rockhampton in December 1903, few tears were shed when *Premier* was laid up for sale.

By 1903 constantly maintaining an unforgiving schedule was beginning to take a toll on *Barcoo*'s engines. Her boilers were wearing out and the decision was made to build a replacement specially designed for the Gladstone boat mail service. Named



Bingera sails from Gladstone after connecting with the mail train from Brisbane. Image Qld Railways

Bingera, she was a larger ship of 2,092 tons with cabins for 145 passengers in two classes. Built for speed, she inherited *Barcoo*'s masthead greyhound. AUSN bravely chose to fit her with geared steam

SHE WAS A GLAMOUR SHIP ON A PREMIER ROUTE AND HER SALOON-CLASS ACCOMMODATION WAS LUXURIOUSLY APPOINTED

turbine engines, only the second vessel in Australia to be powered by this highly advanced technology. Her potential was demonstrated when she maintained 16kts on her builder's trials.

Bingera was given a rough introduction to the Queensland coast. Leaving Brisbane for the first time on February 2, 1906 she was beset by gale

force winds, blinding rain and rough seas, arriving in Townsville some 12 hours late. Despite adverse winds and seas she was able to maintain her schedule on the southern run. Five months later she was still

able to maintain her schedule when a propeller was damaged and a new one was fitted without affecting her turnaround time in Brisbane.

All went well for a time with fast passages and passengers complimented her steadiness. She was a glamour ship on a premier route and her saloon-class accommodation

was luxuriously appointed. But behind the scenes the picture was not so rosy. She was expensive to operate, her innovative turbines were prone to breakdown and her speed fell away.

Despite the herculean efforts of her engineering officers *Bingera* struggled to generate sufficient steam to reach even a moderate speed. Poor local coal

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and hard, mineral-laden Brisbane water combined to restrict power and accelerate wear on her delicate machinery. When less than three years old, *Bingera* had to be taken out of service for an emergency overhaul. Again in 1910, when her speed was merely 10kts, she was withdrawn for five months for a major overhaul of her engines. Her place on the northern mail was taken by AUSN's interstate liners.

As public support for *Bingera* waned, the company pointed out that the Brisbane to Townsville mail service was the fastest coastal route of any in the world, and her arrival at northern ports was made to fit in with trains and mail coaches. This timetable was carried out without respite throughout the whole year. Over the course of a year *Bingera* would steam a total of 72,672nm.

Nevertheless, her problems continued to increase and in 1914 the company took the drastic step of taking her out of service and replacing her troublesome turbines with conventional steam engines. Now fitted with three sets of triple expansion reciprocating engines and larger screws *Bingera* ran trials and reached 15.5kts, resuming service that December.

Bingera's old troubles seemed to be over, but things had changed. The world was at war and the railway was creeping further north, progressively closing the gaps. By 1922 it was clear the coastal railway would soon be completed and *Bingera* was retired. She arrived in Brisbane at the end of her last northern service on August 3, 1922 and she was laid up.

The boat mail contract was extended incrementally using interstate vessels of the AUSN fleet until December 1923 when the rail link between Brisbane and Townsville was finally completed.



TOP: The fast passenger-mail steamer *Barcoo*. Image State Library of Victoria

ABOVE: Turbine steamer *Bingera* outbound in the Brisbane River. Image State Library of New South Wales

At the age of 18 there could have been more years in *Bingera's* life, but as a purely passenger vessel built for speed on a particular service, no buyer could be found for her. She was dismantled, then abandoned on Bishop Island, eventually disappearing beneath the Fisherman Island development.

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BOAT IN A BOX

The compact offshore racing boat, known as the Globe Mini 5.80, the brainchild of adventurer and sailing legend, Don McIntyre, is taking off all over the world, a DIY kit constructed with plywood and epoxy resin, such as WEST SYSTEM.

The new International One Design Class of plywood, Mini 5.8m (18ft) yachts is aimed at 'home builders and adventurous racing sailors', according to McIntyre.

"The Mini 5.80 is for all sailors, young and old, who have a dream to sail oceans in small, fun, affordable and proven safe, ocean-going yachts," he says.

"Simple plywood construction means anyone can build this Mini in a few months, or your local shipwright can do it for you. It all fits inside a 20ft container for shipping to or from international events. The mast has a sleeve to allow two-piece shipping and removing keel and rudder is simple. It can be taken home on a trailer by an ordinary family car."

Less than four months after its official launch in April, 80 sailors have signed up to build in 23 countries. Conceived by McIntyre, founder of the 2018 Golden Globe Race, as an affordable 'People's Mini' for amateur construction, this solo ocean and offshore racing yacht is proving popular.

A whole new segment of sailors is embracing the benefits of a simpler more sustainable challenge, says McIntyre.

"The idea of an affordable wholesome, back to basics, non-foiling and safe Mini yacht, able to sail anywhere, has great appeal. Being easy to build, own and maintain, then offering fun yet serious one design sailing, seems to have hit the spot. Adventurous solo sailors are excited, but there are plenty of club racers who see this as an opportunity for some fun."

International fleets are expected to appear over the next few years. "The yacht is creating real interest and new opportunities travelling to Europe for the 2021 Globe 5.80 Transat and Mini Globe Race in 2024," he adds.

The concept is simple: "Building plans (Euro \$300), hand tools, plywood, epoxy resin, then clear out the garage and start building your Globe 5.80. Build time is approximately 500-600 hours."



"There's an ambitious calendar of events for this little boat and getting any new class of boat off the ground is hard work," says Andrew. "But if anybody's going to pull it off, it will be Don."



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BoatCraft Pacific

SUMMER FEATURE

“Rough-n-Ready” Boat Building...



Ian Phillips
MANAGING DIRECTOR

One of the things we have enjoyed supporting over the years has been the **Rough-n-Ready boat building contests.**

They have been a hit at Wooden Boat Shows throughout the country, since we got involved with the concept 17 years ago. We donate the plywood, three lengths of pine and Epox-E-Glue and each team has 3 hours to complete their vessel and its propulsion system. Then they have to survive the ultimate test of launching their boat and propelling it round a prescribed course, without sinking!! There are prizes for the winner, the most inventive design, most innovative propulsion system, elegant crew and anything else we can think of at the time.

The antics of the teams are a feast for photographers, TV stations and local papers.

Sadly with shows postponed it's not happening at the moment, but as soon as we are allowed we will start them off again.

Most of the boats float quite well despite the outlandish designs. Just shows what can be done with plywood and epoxy glue and how easily you can build your own boat.

So, if you are feeling like starting a project and not sure what to do next or how to do it, BoatCraft Pacific and our distributors around Australia are only a phone call away.

If you have a boat build in mind, a call to our team is a good place to start.

Stay safe and get started!



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"Rough-n-Ready" Boat Building... cont.d



FEATURED PRODUCT

Epox-E-Glue

One of the key things you need to hold a wooden boat together is GLUE!

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A number of equally good glue products are made by us and used for different glueing tasks, but the most popular and easiest to use is our Epox-E-Glue range. Epox-E-Glue is a high strength epoxy adhesive which is mixed in an equal volume 1:1 ratio for ease of handling. Even in small quantities, for quick glue repairs around your house as well as your boat.

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Not "Rough-n-Ready" but good Starter Projects



Joey 2.4m Pram Dinghy Row or Motor Version Plan or Kit

Joey is an elegant lightweight pram dinghy designed for stitch and glue construction using just three sheets of plywood to make a full 2.46 m (8ft)...



Joey 2.4m Pram Sailing Version Plan or Kit

Joey is an elegant lightweight pram dinghy designed for stitch and glue construction using just three sheets of plywood to make a full 2.4 m (8ft)...



Joey 2.4m Nesting Dinghy Pram Plan or Kit

The Nesting Joey is an elegant light weight pram dinghy designed for stitch and glue construction using just four sheets of plywood to make a full...



Iluka Sea Kayak 5.2m LOA Plan or Kit (not precut)

The Iluka sea kayak is a contemporary plywood design based on the 5.2m length and 575mm beam dimensions favoured by many of the dedicated sea kayak...



Eureka 155 Touring Canoe by Michael Storer, Pdf by email or Printed Book

Eureka 155 - Pretty, Lightweight, Plywood, Touring Canoe - simple to build. Length - 15'6" (4.73m), Beam - 34" (0.86m), Weight - 44lbs...

Here are the plans, instructions and kits for dinghies, canoes and kayaks. Most are intended as a first boat building project; usually completion to a good standard should be possible in 40 hours or so.

Even so, don't be fooled, the sea kayaks are enormously seaworthy and capable, the Joey is a great yacht tender and the Eureka canoe is a delight on inland waterways.

The canoe kit, the kayak kit and the dinghy kit all use the stitch and glue method of construction for simplicity. All the plans and the kits include detailed step by step instructions. With the kits we do the hard part of cutting out the plywood for you, you then stitch the pieces together using the supplied materials.

BoatCraft Products used:

BoteCote Resin
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Marine Ply
Aquacote Clear
Aquacote Colours
Fibreglass Tape
Sandpaper
Rollers
Brushes
Rubber Gloves
Mixing Pots

IS THIS THE PROJECT FOR YOU?

If a Joey pram dinghy, a kayak or canoe is the project for you or you want to tackle something more ambitious, then your first step is to phone the team at BoatCraft on 1800 148 442. We can have your boat kit on its way to you right away and answer any questions you may have about this or other projects you may be considering.



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PRICE LIST

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Hardener choices: Fast, Standard, Tropical

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6Lt	\$197.00
12Lt	\$376.00
Trial kit	\$16.10

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Resin Choices: Standard, Carbon Fibre

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BOTE-COTE EPOXY ACCELERATOR

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86gsm	Plain Weave	96.5cm	\$17.15
125gsm	Plain Weave	100cm	\$10.22
200gsm	Plain Weave	100cm	\$8.34
200gsm	Plain Weave	140cm	\$11.80
300gsm	Plain Weave	100cm	\$12.27
313gsm	Uniaxial	127cm	\$9.58
329gsm	Biaxial	127cm	\$5.69
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Acorn 17, a study in practical elegance. Art in the looks, science in the performance.

by **ROBERT AYLIFFE**

Over the 35 plus years we have represented Iain Oughtred in Australia and the Pacific, the easy introduction to his unique catalog has been the word, 'elegant'.

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Here is the Acorn 17.

She may be set up to take three rowers, or brilliantly with just one. With two, with her load carrying capacity she will be a very stylish rowing camping cruiser. She will sail well with her easily driven hull form, but with care.

Acorn 17 will car top on any medium car with good roof racks. Her length and relatively light weight actually makes her easy for one person to slide on upside down and into position. A simple jinker may be made (or you may modify a commercially available kayak jinker) to transport her across the sand by one person, to the water and back.

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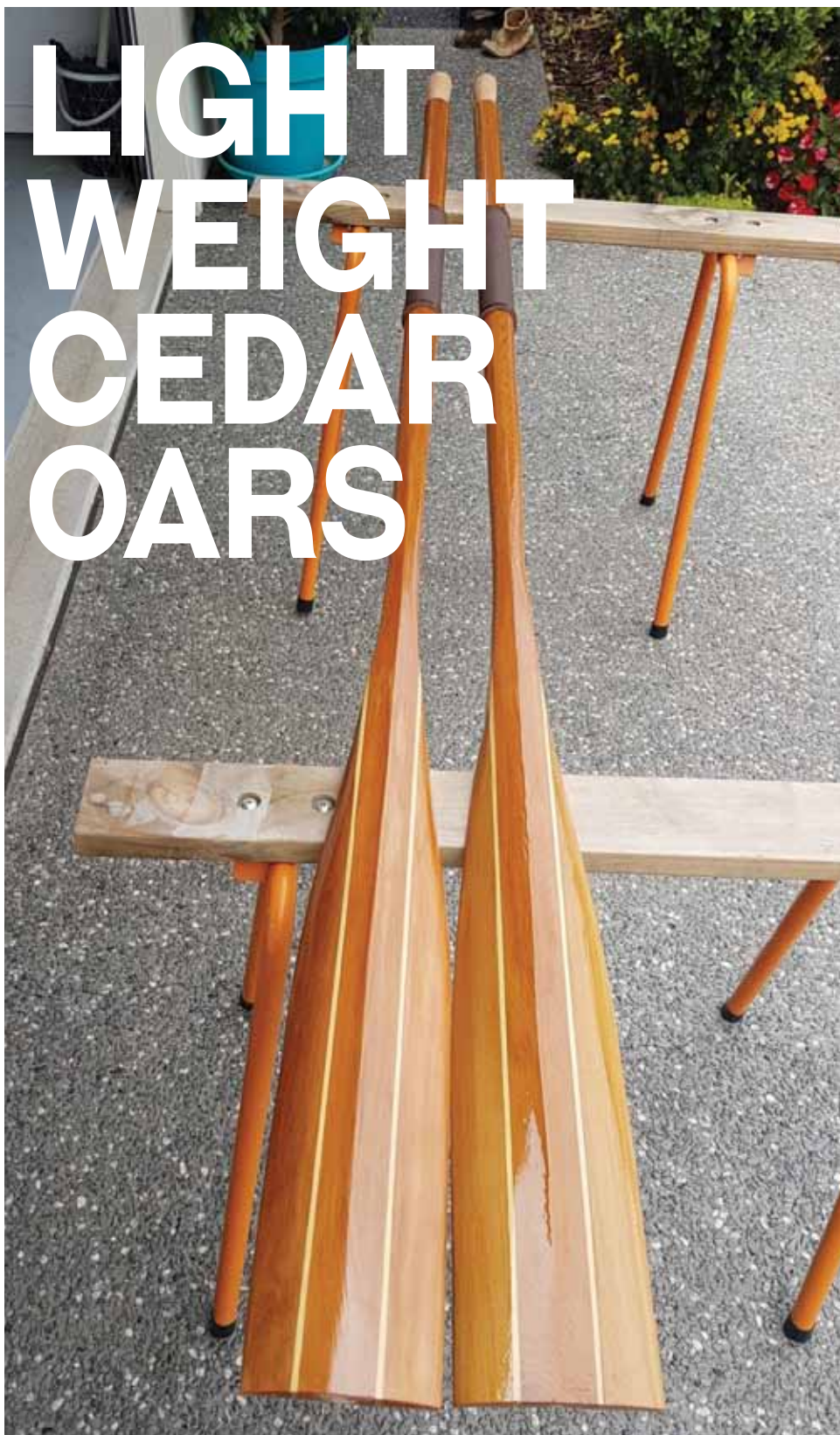
Acorn 17 is available as our newest kit.

Please contact us at www.straydogboatworks.com for more details.



Acorn 17, on a jinker, easy one person launching! Note luxurious aft passenger seat. This one is set up for single or double (in line) rowers, with plenty of room for camping essentials.

LIGHT WEIGHT CEDAR OARS



by **JONATHAN WHITE**

We are going to make a 204cm (7ft) pair of oars suitable for a dinghy up to about 13ft.

I have made oars out of Cedar, Kauri, Hoop pine and Celery Top pine but I found the resultant finish and look of the Cedar oars extremely attractive and easy to work.

A typical bench of about 6ft is required and a pair of saw horses for later use.

I ordered 2 x 40mm square clean knot free Cedar, the looms (shafts) 7ft long and four lengths of the same material 24 inches long for the blades.

I start with the grip measuring down 5 inches on each side and then do a 1/4 inch cut. I then circle the end of the grip usually with a lid that will just touch the square sides. I then do a series of cuts starting at the 1/4 inch end and going towards the end of the grip reducing the saw cut accordingly on each side of the timber. I then chisel out down to the shoulder of the grip and smooth off using a spoke shave. The grip not varnished in accordance with correct oar making.

I then use Bote-Cote to glue the blade sides to the shaft. Use plenty of clamps and use Gladwrap underneath. Don't glue the job to the bench! Once set I shape the blade to a nice taper to the shaft. You can use a bandsaw and it would be quick but I simply use a jigsaw. Once I have done the outside of the blade I then using my electric plane shape down the blade with a slight crown on each side and about a 1/4 inch around the sides. Use callipers to measure each side to get them even. These blades will be flat but you can use a flap disc in your angle grinder and scoop out the oar and curve the outside. Be careful, the flap disc is aggressive. Watch the grain in the blade sides when spoke shaving because sometimes the grain is running in the wrong direction.

At this stage you can glue on a hardwood tip of Jarrah or Red Gum.

I taper the shaft from the grip to the shoulders of the blade area after drawing a pencil line on each of the four faces and plane down and spoke shave down to make the shaft round. Don't make the end near the blades too narrow. Make a smooth transition of the blade shoulders onto the shaft. Sand down with 240 and finer paper for a good finish.



Preparing the grip.



Finished grip.



Grip left bare.



Shaping up the shoulders.



Shaping the shaft.

I then set about spraying the ultra gloss varnish after setting up the oars with a small nail in the blade and the taped up grip and put on the saw horses. Two person job. Just have the nail end on the saw horse and roll over (again with two people) and spray the other side.

Ten minutes between coats, leave for a day sand down and redo.



Ready for shaping the sides.



Clamping the blades.



Shaping the hard way.

LEATHER WORK

I buy top grade leather from the saddle shop with appropriate sewing thread. For a 10 inch sleeve of leather allow one and a half metres of thread. You don't want to run out half way through. I use a herringbone stitch which I can't explain how to do but Google it ... At each end of the leather sleeve I do a collar in thick quarter inch wide leather and nail on with 1/2 inch brass nails.

So there you are, an attractive pair of oars for rowing or decoration.



BACK, BY POPULAR DEMAND:

Six10 Thickened Epoxy Adhesive is a useful adhesive that adds convenience to the versatile WEST SYSTEM product line. It is completely compatible with all other WEST SYSTEM products so that it can be used on top of or underneath any 105 resin-based epoxies, whether cured or uncured.

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Six10's shear thinning properties make it 'thinner' as it's worked. It can be easily tooled into a non-sagging fillet or used to wet out light to moderate reinforcing fabrics like fibreglass. The hardener provides a long open time but has fast thru-cure. Six10 stays workable in the static mixer for 42 minutes, making it practical for long or complicated assemblies.

Each tube of Six10 contains 190ml and comes equipped with a static mixing wand. Additional static mixers are available in packs of two and 12.

Six10 Available through the WEST SYSTEM national dealer network.

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HOW I GOT INTO SAILING



by **PETER TAIT**

“Peter you are sailing really well but your boat’s a wreck. If you call at my place on the way home from school a couple of nights a week I’ll show you how to build a new one.”

Wowee! A dream coming true! Bert Yates at the Blockhouse Bay Yacht Club on the Manukau Harbour in Auckland was a retired boat builder with a workshop in this back garden and the Australian designed Mk 2 Moth for me was built over the next few weeks.

Prior to that wonderful offer from Bert I was from an early age fascinated by boats especially sailing ones at the local club just a short walk away. My older cousin Mike lived next door with a small shed workshop. He used to give me a rectangular piece of wood and a hand plane, “Put this in the vice and plane a point on one end and it will be a boat.” Pretty basic but it got better, soon came a model that sailed, then a while later a very small dinghy, the ‘Pipi Shell’! This scared my parents who could imagine me getting blown out to sea in it and the ‘Pipi Shell’ disappeared from its little anchorage at the beach, confiscated!

I was taught to sail, cousin Mike again in his Zeddy. Thinking about the learning experience still gives me goose pimples. We were silently slipping along under sail, I was wide eyed with excitement! Older by then I built some models on my own, good fun but how do I get a proper boat I can sit on? We lived on a large property with a big garden and an extra large lawn which I was happy to hand mow for pocket money.

MOTH SAILING

It took a while but by the age of 13 I had enough to buy something. At the local yacht club the Mk 2 Moth was the boat of choice, there were some secondhand ones for sale and I bought one. The *Jimmy John* was a bit of a wreck as Bert had noticed but it still sailed okay and next came the one I built with Bert’s help, the lovely *Michelle* named not after the attractive blonde girl in my class at school, she found that hard to believe, but the song by the Beatles.

The new boat was great but could have been lighter. As a schoolboy I couldn’t afford the super lightweight plywood that some of the others were using. Several of my school friends also bought Moths and we were regular



FROM TOP: I think I know what this is?
Not mine but I’d like it!
Like this. Still making them!



racers even attending events like national champs at clubs miles away. Again the older club members were helping us young fellas out, all much appreciated at the time.

A highlight was winning the Northland Moth Championship but I have to confess I won only because I didn't follow the leading boat like everyone else. After having to replace a shackle on a sidestay the fleet were so far ahead I couldn't see which marks they went around and had to follow the written instructions. Bang! As I crossed the finish line the winner's gun went off for me, the only person to sail the correct course and I took the overall prize, North Auckland Champion. There's a life's lesson there, always read and follow the instructions!

I'm still in touch with two school friends from that era, Whitey and Nick. Both sailed Moths and came on sailing/camping 'Swallows and Amazons' holidays to an island across the harbour.

Whitey just called me as I was writing this and we reminisced those times. He said he never won a race in his Moth because he was short sighted, unable to see the next mark and always had to follow someone! Ron bought secondhand then built a new one himself. It was a big learning curve for us as teenagers breaking new ground. The other thing that went wrong for him was he made all his fittings, chainplates and rudder gudgeons from aluminium not stainless steel, because it was easier. It was much easier but not strong enough, on his second sail the rudder fell off and the first windy day the mast went over the side! Lessons learned.

Nick and I built two Moth hulls and sold them for pocket money while still at school. Then he qualified as a chemist, married and lived in South Australia until recently when he saw the light and returned to Kiwiland. What took you so long?

TOP: Mk 2 Moth racing in fleets of up to 100 boats, 56 is me.

ABOVE L-R: High speed planing, fantastic fun!

The boys heading out on *Coastwatcher*.

Boat building timber on the car roof.



GONE CRUISING

Our secondary school woodwork teacher enjoyed our love of sailing and one summer he offered his 16ft 'Coastwatcher' to us for a few days Manukau Harbour cruising on the way to delivering the boat to his holiday house out near the Heads. The harbour is very tidal with sandbanks and channels meandering in all directions but we had a chart and reasonable knowledge from racing and also fishing trips with our Dads. The boat had a centreboard so that came in handy for locating shallowing water. We cruised to all corners of the harbour and sleeping aboard was great fun. Wow, I look forward to own a boat that can be cruised!

BUILD A KEELER

I crewed on a Flying Dutchman for a while then owned a 12ft Q Class for a season but my next big move was when I was 20 working as a cadet at the Auckland Harbour Board. One of my workmates talked about a boy my age

TOP LEFT: Framed up, stringers going on.

TOP RIGHT: Spencer 30 underway. Clever modular framing.

ABOVE: Manhandled out onto the lawn, keel next.



The *Julius Pleazar* at Ponui Island.

building a small keeler under his Dad's house. Hey, I could do that I thought and called on Auckland yacht designer John Spencer who said 'I've got the design you're after right here on the drawing board, it's perfect for what you want, the 'Stiletto 25'. The plans duly arrived, I ordered the timber, bought some tools and spent the next nine months building a keelboat; made the frames, set it all up, laminated the stem, double skin plywood, fibreglass skinned everything, melt and pour the lead keel, makeup the spars, fit out the four bunks in the cabin. It was a big job but all very satisfying as things slowly took shape as a lovely 25 footer. I couldn't afford a motor which turned out to be a good way to learn navigation and sailing. It was the first Stiletto launched and a lot followed. We had a lot of class racing in Auckland with up to 20 boats and a lively class social scene. Not to mention four annual 300 mile Christmas cruises up the coast.



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BUILD A BIGGER KEELER

But I yearned for something bigger and more capable and went back to John a few years later talking 30 footers, perhaps a racer/cruiser. No response for a few months then one day he rang up very excited saying 'Peter can I come and visit, I've worked out your new boat!' He came across town to where I was working in a precast building design office and entertained the whole team talking through the new boat ideas. With some input from me the Spencer 30 was exactly what I wanted and a few months later work started but not by me this time, too big for Dad's basement. John built the hull and decks. I finished off the rest with my crew of keen and capable helpers.

The design was very popular with boats being built in timber then glass in both New Zealand and Australia.

The next milestone was to have a family which turned the race boat into a family cruiser. A baby in a high chair in the cockpit surprised my racing mates, 'Haha, you'll have to rewrite the rulebook now!' And then adventure sailing on dark and windy nights with Dads and boys. Also handy as the great escape for Dads who needed a break from work stresses. Caught a lot of fish too.

THE FIREBUG

And then it was time for the boys to learn sailing in a dinghy. I called to see John who by then lived in the small historic coastal town of Russell in Northland's Bay of Islands. I asked him what I should do about building a small dinghy with the boys who were six and eight by this time. He said 'The FireBug is the one for you. I have a half finished one in the living room, take it home, finish it off and if you think it's any good we could try to establish it as a new DIY class for families.'



TOP: Sunrise discovery of the beautiful Bay of Islands.

ABOVE: Lindisfarne Sailing Club at the AWBF.



ABOVE: FireBug day sailing.

RIGHT: Young painting team Chris and Anja.

I wasn't expecting that and the boys were excited too, 'Will it be a boat for us Dad?' We took it home, finished the woodwork, spars, rudder etc and invited John down for the launching.

It was a great little boat, sailed well with one or two children, and adult or even an adult with a child learning and that sure beats Dad shouting from the beach or RIB as seems to be the norm these days. The wide shape forward (one bow for each



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TOP: FireBug high speed planing.

ABOVE: Happy sailing!

tack) gives the boat plenty of buoyancy and power meaning the boat planes in spectacular fashion! And much more capable and faster than the popular little plastic yachts for kids.

The years of promotion that followed have been great fun and gone extremely well. Today there are FireBug plans in 37 countries around the world and plan numbers are at 1350. Who knows how many 'Bugs are out there? Plan royalties aren't a concern for most people, thanks to those who do pay up but I'm not too bothered, the idea was to get a design out there for families, schools, clubs or other groups where young people can experience building a boat and learning to sail. It doesn't have to cost a lot to get afloat. And surprise, surprise it's possible to make things yourself. All great fun and the experience can be a life changer for young people often leading into a career. One boy I know landed a job as a grip making movies as an eighteen year old and later said 'Dad I wouldn't have got that job if I hadn't learnt to build and sail a yacht.' Handy and unexpected qualification!

SUMMARISE ALL THAT

Looking back at all those times, I see beyond the fun and games and look at how good it was for me as a young person to be involved in the decision making and responsibility that came with yacht building, ownership and racing. As a boat skipper, especially in the bigger crewed boats it's important to see and understand the 'big picture' quickly and go straight to the correct decision. Back on land these skills can work wonders around home and career-wise too.

pete@firebug.co.nz

WHEN SELLING *YOUR BOAT*

The day you wake up and realise it's time for a new boat. Maybe you want a bigger one or a smaller one or a newer one or a faster one, the reason for your decision does not matter. But before your new boat arrives, you'll have to sell the old one you have. Here are the key tips to help you move the old one on:

1. PRESENTATION

The first impression is the most important experience your buyers will experience. It's known fact. People make their minds up quickly and often simply because of the first impression. When your buyer first sees your boat and sees frayed docklines, in their mind there is an issue with maintenance straight away. When the buyer looks into the bilge or in lockers or in the engine compartment – room and finds oil and stained services they likely have already formed the opinion that you don't look after your boat.

When the boat you're inspecting is dirty and a mess inside you will automatically think it's poorly maintained. If you're still interested and you decide to make an offer then your offer is likely to be very low.

The broker will tell you that the 1st appearance is the most important, and if your boat is pristine and well-presented it's already half sold. In real estate, the three most important words in a home are 'location, location, location.' For boats, it's 'looks, looks, looks'.

Externally the paintwork needs to be tip top, gelcoat needs to be polished, and any varnish needs to be thick and shiny. Best spend your time getting this work up to scratch and if you can't then consider paying a pro to do it for you. A small investment in maintenance can earn you thousands in resale value.

Inside the boat needs to be clean and neat. Remove any and all loose equipment, parts etc just like you would do when selling a house. 'Less is more'.

Timber floors need to be shiny and carpet needs to be stain free and shampooed. Curtains and upholstery also need to be dry cleaned to remove stains and unwanted smells.

Like the lounges and floors the galley needs to shine and the benches should be clear of any condiments etc. Your fridge and freezer must be sparking and smell free. Best to have them empty to give the best impression. Sprinkle vanilla essence in the fridge if there is any odour! Leaving a jar of coffee open on the shelf is a common trick.

Spray and wipe all surfaces, cabinets, bulkheads using a good household cleaner, Spray the upholstery and bedding with a fragrance. Cabinets in the cabins where you store spare sheets etc will also benefit from a quick spray. Remove any old or unused sheets as these will likely have a musty or diesel smell if they have been there for any length of time.

Don't leave any space unattended! A serious buyer will open every locker and floor board and so will absolutely find the space you forgot to attend to!

If the bilge is stained then take the time to clean it and if necessary re-paint in new light coloured flow coat.

2. DE-CLUTTER

Like your much lived in house, your boat will likely have its cabinets and storage spaces filled with junk you have brought on board over the years. Remove it and throw it away unless you're so emotionally attached that you feel you need to take it home a box it in the corner of the garage! Especially remove all old grease cans, WD40, paint, and spare parts etc. Not only will this make your storage spaces look bigger but it will most likely remove a cause of some of the old smells. If stained get in there with more light coloured paint or flow coat. Best it looks clean and new and no better way to do this is a fresh coat of paint.

3. DE-PERSONALISE

Remove all your personal gear. Photos, clothes, toiletries, etc.

This helps you the seller as much as the buyer as it helps you detach from your once loved asset!

As before it also helps in the de-clutter process.

Especially remove the stinky wet weather gear, especially the jacket your ex neighbour left there some years ago! Along with the items above remove anything you want to keep. It's always a bad look for an owner to start taking stuff off the boat on handover. This process makes most buyers very uneasy!

4. FIX WHAT'S BROKEN

If something is broken or does not work then fix it. This includes electrics, dinghy. You don't need a buyer to walk or stop the process because he finds stuff not working. This always creates doubt. Suspicious buyers start looking harder at time like this. Always good to make sure safety equipment is in date and in good working order. Not a good look to find fire extinguishers and flares that went out of date in the 90's!

**ALWAYS GOOD TO MAKE SURE
SAFETY EQUIPMENT IS IN DATE
AND IN GOOD WORKING ORDER.
NOT A GOOD LOOK TO FIND FIRE
EXTINGUISHERS AND FLARES THAT
WENT OUT OF DATE IN THE 90S!**

Externally canopies and covers need to be clean and in good condition. If they're not and you don't want to spend money replacing its best just to remove them. If your boat looks bare without the canopies then best to dig deeper and replace them.

Operationally make sure the engines start and stop as they should and always a good idea to have then services so that when dipped the oil is a nice new golden colour. Obviously batteries need to be in good cond so that engines and services are 100% operational. You don't need equipment to not operate because battery power is suspect. Coming back a second time to check things off always puts buyers off.

If your boat is older you may even consider steam cleaning the engine and engine space. Just remember that if you start this process you will likely have to re-paint the engine and engine room as well. Not a bad move if you have the time as this will only assist in the sale process. Make sure that old metal parts are clean and rust free and that all sea-cocks and thru hull fittings work freely and look maintained. Definitely remove that green stain from your thru hulls

as it will only alarm the surveyor. Remember if you do half the job here it will be very obvious and just give the impression that you covered bad stuff up!

If you old electronics are presentable and work, that's okay. If they don't then consider replacing them or if they are not necessary then remove them if your budget does not allow replacement. Buyers often have a different opinion as to the value of electronics anyway so in this case it's just about removing any negatives.

Any work you may have done including engine rebuilds and significant parts replacements should be supported with a file evidencing all the works completed with corresponding receipts for same. If your engine has been fully re-conditioned then always a good idea to install a new hour meter and have this covered in the receipt for works completed. This way you don't need to get into a lengthy explanation about engine hours with a buyer.

5. HISTORY

Some boats may have additional value associated with their history. It may be that they have won a high profile race or that they were owned by someone famous. In these cases it's always worth having the history documented. Where you have spent considerable sums on renewing and replacing older components or where you have altered and modernised or significantly improved the boat, it's in your interest to have this properly documented again with invoices and receipts for all works. These documents will always help educate your buyer and assist in a hassle free sale.

Your boat may have an identical or close sister ship and if you have

ads or sale information on these boats that evidence and support the value you are seeking then it's always good to have this information included in your file to show any prospective purchaser. Nothing better than a recent comparable sale to justify your asking price.

If you're promoting your boat online or in a brokers window then be sure to have great quality images available. Here it's always worth taking time to show your loved asset in its best light. You may need to email images to a prospective buyer so be sure to have enough to be able to show every feature both inside and out.

6. DO I PROVIDE A SURVEY?

Providing a survey can be a positive and can assist in a fast sale. Some buyers will still insist on having their own survey, as some can be suspicious about the likely independence of the one you may provide.

If you're not an experienced boater and or your boat is older, then getting an independent report from a surveyor can be helpful in identifying issues that you can easily fix to make sure that at the time of a sale,

your sale is not delayed and or called off because of a 'surprise' that could have been identified and fixed before a prospective buyer came on the scene.

7. ASKING PRICE

Always a contentious issue.

Owners have an investment both financially and emotionally in their boat. Some more than others and this will effect what they believe their pride and joy is worth.

Buyers more often than not are looking for a deal and are likely to have looked far and wide to find and compare their new purchase. The fair sale price is somewhere in the middle. The best place to start is to compare like for like, and recent sales of sister ships or similar boats is a great place to start.

The above applies well to production boats while the sale of a one off boat can be more complicated in terms of arriving at a fair sale price. In his case its

IN THE END IT COMES DOWN TO HOW COMMITTED YOU ARE TO SELLING

best to look for similar boats with similar equipment at a similar age. Then look for condition and presentation and again compare wherever possible. It stands to reason that if you list your boat at what you believe is a fair asking price and it's still for sale 12 months later that you likely have been asking too much. On the flip side if you list your boat and have three offers in the first week then it's also likely that you have under-priced it!

When assessing what you should ask you should ask a broker for advice. You don't have to follow this advice 100% but at least you can use the knowledge that the broker can impart to help you determine what a fair asking price may be.

In the end it comes down to how committed you are to selling and how fast you want to move your existing boat on.

8. PRESENTATION REVISITED

Here we consider presenting your boat like you would a house. You can set the galley up with a bowl of fruit, set the dinette up with plates and cutlery, and you can buy new bedding for the cabins. Display images of your favourite anchorage showing crystal clear water and dolphins can also help. In this process its horses for courses! If you boat is a caravan and lightly to appeal to a buyer looking for same then dressing it up with homely features will help. Likewise if it's a game fishing boat setting the bale as suggested above is unlikely to assist!

No matter what you do here always remember less is more!

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FROM THE SWIFT AND ELEGANT TO THE LESS SWIFT BUT STILL ELEGANT



Nigel's completed Feather, Huru.



The writer sailing a Viv Hood 'Feather' in about 1997. Hair was a different colour then. Note simple sprit rig. Sweet as.

by **ROBERT AYLIFFE**

Got this great mail from Nigel McCarter in Hamilton, New Zealand (Aotearoa).

Thought you might like to see photo of finished Iain Oughtred Feather (Huru in Māori) ...

Build went well, with some minor issues, and Huru was actually finished before lockdown, but didn't get into the water until last month.

Biggest mistake was to use Cedar for the floors ... I had some spare in the bin, but the wood is too soft to hold the screws if you kick the cleats by accident. Now all the screw holes filled with epoxy and hope that solves the problem.

Out of interest, what is your guesstimate for shipping a Humble Bee kit to New Zealand? I have a friend contemplating a build, and I am trying to persuade

him to buy the kit, rather than slog through cutting all the molds and spiling planks. I've been looking at the Jordan web site, I presume you use the same CNC files and instructions.

Nga mihi

Nigel

She is the clear opposite of Acorn. Not as sleek and fast, but she is possibly the ultimate tender pram, designed to carry on a cabin top, or, with a suitable cover, towed behind a deeper draft mothership. She is intended for use in quiet water to get the crew to shore and back with supplies, and just one or two person gunkholing along a sheltered coast or lake. She may be sailed, best single handed, and her plans show a leeboard rather than the the more usual centre board. The lee board is not that hard to use, I have had the pleasure of sailing extensively in one of



the several ultra lightweight 'Feathers' that legendary and much loved builder Viv Hood built in our Ifould Street, Adelaide workshops many years ago. It was fun. She rowed sweetly but of course slowly and attracted a lot of attention.

In answer to Nigel's question, yes these are the Alec Jordan conceived kits, and we DO send the kits to New Zealand (Aotearoa).

We can advise also on local timber and epoxy requirements as well.

Please contact us for more information.

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ABOVE L-R: Huru in Covid induced gestation.

Viv Hood Feather Pram at SA Wooden Boat Festival.

Viv in 'flight', building ANOTHER Feather! So many 'Feathers' it could have been a chicken yard!

FEATHER PRAM



LOA 6' 8" / 20.3m
Beam 3' 9" / 1.145m
Depth 15" / 380mm
Weight / 18kg
Sail area: 26sqft / 2.42sqm

Type: round-bilge pram
Optional rig: standing lug with leeboard
Capacity: 1 or 2, sometimes 3

REFLECTIONS ON THE STEAMER'S RUN



Rubeena, Da Mirrie Dancer, Mordialloc Skiff and Cariad.

by **PATRICK GROOT** and **JONATHAN WALLIS** images **PATRICK GROOT**

2020 has indeed been a tumultuous year which will be remembered for some time as the year of the Covid Pandemic. And sadly, this pandemic has absorbed the media's attention to the extent that some amazing and worthy events have slipped by, literally under the radar. And there was one such particular event held on Gippsland's amazing lakes and waterways, in Victoria, that was so outstanding that it simply had to be printed. And who better to report this event than Patrick Groot who has kindly written the following eye witness report, and submitted the accompanying photos for our enjoyment."

“What was to become the Steamer's Run St Ayles Skiff raid was born of collaboration between the Paynesville Classic Boat Rally team and the St Ayles Skiff Community Rowing Association of Australia (SASCRAA). The Steamer's Run would follow the 19th Century steamers' route from the Port of Sale down the Sale Canal into the La Trobe River, across Lake Wellington and McLennan Strait and across Lake Victoria to Paynesville, a distance of 74km. The distance would be rowed in three days (February 26-28, 2020), seeing the raid party arrive in Paynesville on the day before the Paynesville Classic Boat Rally. The four skiffs would

then participate in the Rally's Grand Parade on Saturday 29.

The Gippsland Lakes form the largest inland navigable waterway in Australia and are the historic homelands of the Kurnai people. The Steamer's Run was designed to traverse Lake Wellington, (Murla in the Gunai Language) and Lake Victoria (Toonallook). Europeans started to move into this area from 1839 onwards after which a permanent opening to the ocean was created at Lakes Entrance, about 5km from the systems natural and intermittent opening. The artificial and permanent opening has resulted in greater salinity in the system as well as a loss

of depth in the order of about 60cm. Regardless, this amazing body of water continues to support significant ecosystems with a large part of the system listed as a Ramsar wetland because of its importance to waterbirds.

The suggestion by Peter Medling to stage a raid through this system was met with great enthusiasm by members of the St Ayles Skiff community. It is hoped that this inaugural Steamer's Run will lead to replications of this event over time.

Participating skiffs/clubs were the Welsh Church/ Box Hill boatbuilding groups (*Cariad*, AU02) Warrnambool St Ayles Skiff Club (*Fast Messenger*, AU07), Marlo Coastal Rowing Club (*Da Mirrie Dancer*, AU14), Mordialloc Sailing Club (with newly launched but unnamed skiff, AU23), a contingent of the Living Boat Trust members from Franklin, Tasmania, and members of Community Rowing Williamstown (*CReW*). Backup vessels supporting the Run were *Rubeena* (Sale), *Moongalba* (Paynesville), *Sea Fog*, (Lake Wellington/The Heart), and *Beachcomber* (Paynesville). Vehicular support teams were supplied by the Tasmanian rowers, the Mordialloc Sailing Club and the Marlo Coastal Rowing Club.



Alan Lewis with the *Rubeena* (a 36ft Pittwater style ferry) – built in Balmain in 1911 and launched at Lakes Entrance in 1912, now moored at the Port of Sale.

In the early stages of organising the Steamer's Run various Gippsland local contacts were provided which could potentially assist in putting all the things we would want in place to make the raid safe, successful and above all, enjoyable. Alan Lewis of Port of Sale Heritage Cruises was immediately supportive in offering the *Rubeena* as the support vessel for the first stage of the Run. Peter Medling sourced additional support crew and boats for other stages of the Run.

The Port of Sale was constructed in the 1880s when there was no rail link between Gippsland and Melbourne, with the steamers providing the only efficient form of transport and an essential shipping link to Melbourne and beyond. Initially paddle steamers were used with the more efficient screw steamers eventually taking over. The Port of Sale is linked by the Sale Canal to the Thomson and Latrobe Rivers and the Lakes beyond. The Sale Canal is 2km long, built by man and horse over a three year period.

DAY 1, FEBRUARY 26, 2020, PORT OF SALE TO THE MORASS OF THE HEART



TOP: Port of Sale with skiffs and the *Rubeena* and a healthy SW breeze.

ABOVE: *Da Mirrie Dancer*, Marlo Coastal Rowing Club.

Rowers and skiffs had travelled various long distances to Sale and it was a great relief to finally launch and row the skiffs along the scenic waterway. The recent Gippsland fires ensured that our long-awaited expedition came attached with a sense of poignancy given the impact that local people, property and the natural world had suffered. The Sale Canal, Thomson and Latrobe Rivers' stage on the Run saw the skiffs rowed along sheltered waters bordered by forest and views to low lying farmland.



The *Rubeena* at the swing bridge.

The centre-pivot swing bridge, designed by South Australian engineer, John Granger, was opened in 1883 and is located 4.5km down river from Sale at the junction of the Latrobe and Thomson Rivers. At its peak the bridge was opened up to 20 times a day allowing the steamers to run between Sale and Melbourne. The bridge is swung open on Saturdays between 3 and 4pm or other times at a cost of \$200 plus – fortunately the skiffs squeezed under with plenty of room.

The fact that the Steamer's Run was the first mainland St Ayles Skiff raid to be staged added a degree of excitement and just a bit of uncertainty. However, as novice and experienced rowers alike progressed down the Latrobe River uncertainty was swept aside and only joy and excitement prevailed as we marvelled at the environs of the river. Sea Eagles and Wedge-tails observed us from above and a fast swimming snake managed to find a gap between the skiffs as it crossed the Latrobe.

The Mordialloc Sailing Club had the Parkdale/ Mentone East 'Bendigo Community Bank' as their financial partners and this has been a recurring theme with other skiff builds, whereby community banks and philanthropic trusts have provided funding for these types of grass roots activities. It had been hoped that the Mordialloc skiff might have been officially launched and named before the raid, however as is often the case, St Ayles Skiff builds have a life of their own not necessarily conforming to a schedule. Regardless, Bart Scheen (Commodore of Mordialloc Sailing Club), Geoffrey Daniel and the build team have excelled in having their skiff involved in the Steamer's Run. Geoffrey Daniel advises they are planning to conduct the official launch in October 2020.

As the raid party progressed along the Latrobe River the support vessel *Rubeena* was exchanged for Peter Bell's *Moongalba*. Forest slowly gave way to thick tea tree, swamp paper bark and sweeping reed



TOP LEFT: *Cariad* with Chris Kennedy, Mandy Whyatt and Nicole Tierney.

TOP RIGHT: *Cariad* and crew heading down the beautiful Latrobe River.

ABOVE LEFT: Mordialloc Skiff.

ABOVE RIGHT: Jon Narik from the Warrnambool Skiff Club in *Fast Messenger* and Peter Bell's *Moongalba*.

beds which eventually opened out into the 'Heart Morass Reserve' where the boggy wetlands support a multitude of waterbirds and potentially squadrons of mosquitoes. This first stage from Sale to the Morass was a 17km row which provided rowers who had barely rowed a skiff before some valuable oar time ahead of the potentially more challenging waters of Lake Wellington and Lake Victoria. Of course, the experienced rowers who had rowed the St Ayles in a variety of conditions knew how versatile the craft was,

however we were all hopeful that the westerly and freshening wind would persist, enabling us to cover the next 35km stage from the Heart Morass Reserve to Loch Sport in relative comfort and in good time.

The 'Heart' gets its name from a report written in 1840 by Commissioner Tyers who described the area as 'truly ... the heart of Gippsland', resulting in a pastoral run of that name and subsequently the name of the locality. Formally the Heart Morass was heavily grazed but now as a reserve managed by Parks Victoria it has been restored over time to a 1,800 hectare wetland wedged between two Ramsar sites.

For the purpose of the raid party there was a small cleared area at the end of a sandy/muddy track, culminating in a rudimentary boat launching facility which was to be our first night's campsite. Thanks go to Chris Svenson (Secretary, Paynesville Classic Boat Rally Inc') who orchestrated the raid's insurance coverage which in turn allowed us to secure the permit to camp at the Morass from Marina Scott of Parks Victoria's Activation Agreements Team. Everyone agreed that camping where we pulled up in the boats was a far better option than heading back into Sale to stay the night, then returning in the morning. The reputation of this area being mosquito infested proved to be somewhat ill-founded, however we were all tucked up in tent and swag pretty early. The waterbird night-time chorus provided us with a very pleasant aural backdrop.

The Living Boat Trust rowers from Franklin, Tasmania were supported by Warren Harrison in their hire vehicle, and he was able cart gear for LBT and other rowers. *Marlo* and *Mordialloc* were also supported by road crew. Other gear was carried on the support vessels.

The plan for this raid was to travel as light as possible given that the participants were well away from their own homes, club supports and waterways. To that end there was a concerted effort made by the organisers to engage support and services from the Gippsland community. The Sale Lions Club catered superbly for our 30 plus party at the Heart Morass. The sentiment expressed by Steve Boyce was that they were grateful for our



TOP: LBT with Warren Harrison (Road Support).

ABOVE: Steve Boyce and the Sale Lions Club team with their mobile barbecue and kitchen.

patronage given that the recent fires had caused quite an economic downturn in Gippsland generally.

DAY TWO, FEBRUARY 27, 2020, THE HEART MORASS TO LOCH SPORT

Camp was struck early at the Morass with a view to getting out of the last section of the Latrobe River, and to commence the crossing of Lake Wellington in the best possible conditions. The Moongalba and Peter Bell was joined by Gavin Mills in *Sea Fog* as our support vessels for the Lake Wellington crossing and we were joined by three new rowers from Williamstown Coastal Rowing. *Da Mirrie Dancer* led the way into the rising sun as our small flotilla exited the Latrobe River.

The combined forces of the sea currents of Bass Strait creating the Ninety Mile Beach barrier to the ocean, and the output of the Avon, Thomson, Latrobe, Mitchell, Nicholson and Tambo Rivers, and their associated delta systems, have created this amazing network of lakes, marshes and lagoons.

These wetlands form part of the dreamtime stories of Bimba-towera, the fire-tailed finch and for marriage, within the creation story of Borun and Tuk. A partnership between the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and the Gippsland Lakes Environment Fund has led to a mapping of the

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Gunaikurnai cultural sites which both parties believe will add value to this site.

A sense of urgency prevailed at the outset of the Wellington crossing as local knowledge informed us that winds often came from the east as the day progressed and waves and chop could prove difficult, and even treacherous, due to the relatively shallow depth and changing weather conditions.

However, the westerly following wind moved the skiffs swiftly across the lake on waves of a 1-1.5m, seeing any rowing effort propel skiff and crew along to the point of surfing on occasion. The expanse of Lake Wellington, when in its middle, gave the impression of being at sea with shorelines being barely discernible in the haze. As we counted down the crossing

markers from number 20 to number two we were guided to Plover Point's sandy beach and rendezvous point.

The average depth of the strait is 4m with minimum depths of 1.8m at entrance and exit.

The 9km row from Plover Point through the McLennan Strait provided the raid party with sheltered waters once again. Waterfowl proliferated along the banks, and in the adjacent Morley Swamp. Pelican, several species of Cormorant, Ibis, Spoonbills, Egrets and Herons were just a sample of the sightings and a hint of numbers occurring further into the swamp. We were accompanied by a small pod of dolphins as we progressed along the Strait. The lakes are home to about 50 of the recently described species of



TOP L-R: Peter Bell from the *Moongalba* captures the silhouette of *Cariad* and rowers as they cross Lake Wellington. *Fast Messenger* is a small blob in the distance.

Mark Burnside steering *Fast Messenger* across Murla or Lake Wellington.

Living Boat Trust members Karen Corbin and Richard Forster enjoying Lake Wellington.

ABOVE: *Fast Messenger* joins *Da Mirrie Dancer* at Plover Point.

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TOP: *Cariad*, *Sea Fog* and *Moongalba* at Plover Point, the western entrance to McLennan Strait.

ABOVE: *Fast Messenger* and *Cariad* keep pace as they fly across Lake Victoria toward Loch Sport.

bottlenose dolphins, the Burrunan dolphin. The other 150 or so of this rare species are to be found in Port Phillip Bay. A pause at Holland's Landing allowed the rowers to use the facilities and change positions for the final stretch of the day across the western end of Lake Victoria to Loch Sport.

Lake Victoria or Toonalook (in the Gunai language) was quite choppy as a result of the strengthening afternoon south westerly wind. The average depth of Lake Victoria is 5m throughout its length, however shallowing towards McLennan Strait requires vessels with significant draught to follow the recommended

and marked channel. A following wind again provided the raid party with relatively comfortable rowing conditions which of course was very welcome at the tail end of a 35km row.

With good rowing conditions and the support of the safety vessels, the three skiffs that participated in day two of the raid, were able to spread out and pretty much row at the pace that suited the mood and capacity of the rowers on board. Having said that, the skiffs were rarely beyond sight of one another, and there is a certain joy to be attained by rowing within proximity of another skiff. Another common phenomenon that seems to occur when two or more skiffs are rowing in company is the occurrence of certain improvements in rowing technique if not boat speed, after all this craft has overwhelmingly been used as a racing boat in Scotland, where she was designed, and where most have been built by community groups dotting the coastline and lochs of that country. That is not to say that raids or adventure rowing are not a feature. The raids such as Tawe Nunnagah and the Return Raid in Tasmania and now the Steamer's Run are testament to the fact that adventure rowing in St Ayles Skiffs in Australia is growing in popularity.

The Raid Party were very pleased to beach the skiffs at the 'Loch Sport' Boat Club after the second days exertions. After setting up camp and refreshing showers at the Loch Sport Caravan Park, food and

drinks were on hand at the Loch Sport Boat Club. Kaye Hogben (Treasurer and Publicity Officer) had taken advance orders enabling the Club to cater especially for our dinner as well as breakfast on day three. She had also similarly arranged for the Loch Sport Lions Club to provide a packed lunch to go on our final leg to Paynesville.

It was fantastic to experience the hospitality of the Loch Sport Boat Club and its members. The sense that one gets from the Gippsland boating community is that it is tight knit and very friendly. By utilising local

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Jenny Weller-Newton and Kaye Hogben at the Loch Sport Boat Club.



Graeme Hogben providing the raid party with breakfast prior to departure for Paynesville.



Claire Tierney, coxswain on *Fast Messenger*'s final leg to Paynesville.



Mandy Whyatt and Mark Burnside.



ABOVE LEFT: Geoffrey Tapper with *Beachcomber* supported the skiffs from Loch Sport to Paynesville.

TOP RIGHT: Interior of *Beachcomber*, SASCRAA shirt included.

ABOVE RIGHT: At Paynesville Beach.



services and clubs it has been possible to stage the Steamer's Run without having to field a large support crew of our own. And it is certainly true that we could not have conducted our raid without the owners of the support vessels in, Alan Lewis, Peter Bell, Ivan Mills and Geoffrey Tapper. We felt secure in the knowledge that these locals knew the waters well and that they were there in case.

DAY THREE, FEBRUARY 28, 2020, LOCH SPORT TO PAYNESVILLE

The row from Loch Sport to Paynesville was characterised by deeper water and bigger swells that moved the skiffs along at a cracking pace. With the Mordialloc skiff re-joining us, after bowing out on day tw due to a shortage of rowers, we were four again which saw us row past the Gippsland Lakes Yacht Club to applause from those welcoming us after our 74km journey.

As the Paynesville Classic Boat Rally was kicking off the next day there were lots of boats in town either moored or on the hard – a boat enthusiasts delight. We learnt that we would be up towards the front in the Grand Parade rowing four abreast.

DAY FOUR, FEBRUARY 29, 2020, PAYNESVILLE CLASSIC BOAT RALLY GRAND PARADE

Some of the usual suspects who form the burgeoning St Ayles Skiff Community of adventure rowers.

CONCLUSION

The Steamer's Run was a wonderful event; relatively inexpensive, well supported by shore-side services, well organised without being tightly controlled. It was a great course of varied waterways – canal, river, straits and open water lakes. Participants enjoyed themselves without being over-extended. While more experienced rowers could challenge themselves in rowing harder and faster, novice crews could work within their limits and had the satisfaction of safely completing the course without exhausting themselves.

From SASCRAA's perspective, such Runs provide an alternative way of using skiffs, and alternative ways of clubs and Skiffie communities interacting. Having six Tasmanian rowers (with support crew!) joining us added an important dimension. If we could provide more skiffs we would have berths available for rowers from other states (WA?, NSW?) which would widen Skiffie community involvement. It also provides a model that can be used interstate (e.g. if the 4 skiffs in WA were available for a river or coastal row people from Tasmania and Vic could fly there to participate).

Such raids as The Steamer's Run, the Tawe Nunnugah and the Return Raid (Tasmania) add a different element to skiffing. Often undertaken in concert with other wooden boat festivals or rallies, they bring a different pace and dynamic to competitive skiffie events such as regattas and should be promoted as part of a balanced program of St Ayles skiff activities."

With gratitude to Patrick Groot and Jim Barr for this incredible and descriptive report, and compliments to Peter Medling and all those involved in making this the huge success that it turned out to be.





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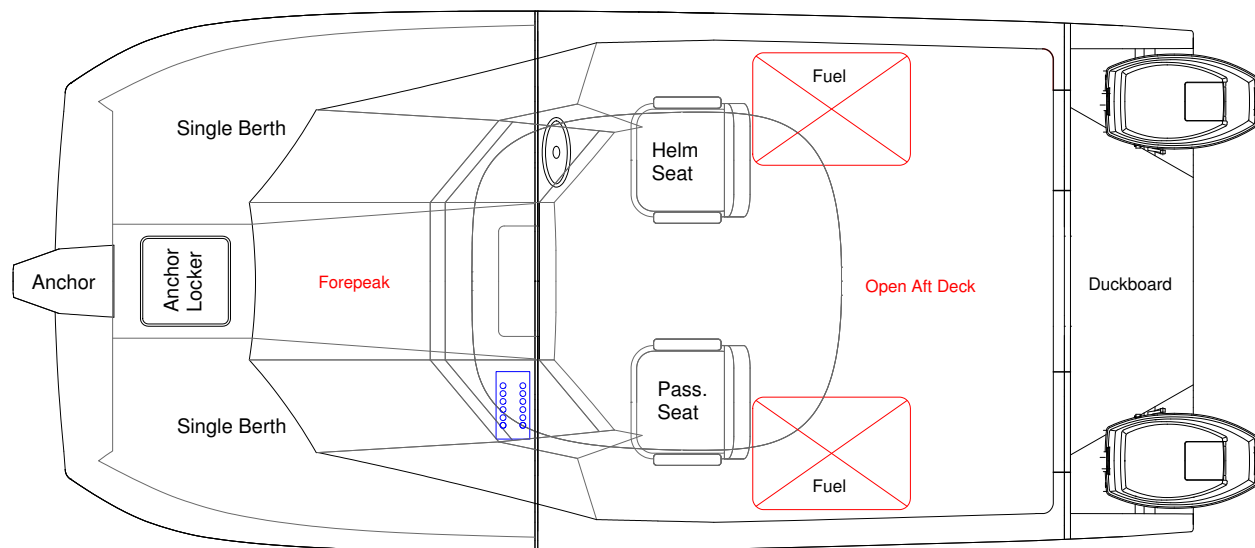
If you hang out at boat ramps a lot you'll notice that nearly all the boats are a production model of some kind. If we narrow this down and focus on the fiberglass boats, these are mostly solid GRP moulded boats which although might look modern in styling, are still built very much the way they were over 40 years ago. What that means is that they are still usually laid up with a chopper gun using polyester resin. To achieve the required hull strength with this method the builder must stay within a minimum skin thickness, and this means a substantial amount of mass or weight per square meter. I have met plenty of die-hard fans of a particular brand of fibreglass boat, and I'm referring to mostly half cabin style of boats, where they will praise the fact that the hull is very 'solid' or in other words, very heavy, and rides well. This can assist in a more comfortable ride in some cases no doubt however could this be attributed to the hull design even if the boat was built lighter?

Coming from a lightweight multihull background it goes against the grain to 'add' weight to a boat to improve its ride or performance. I've seen from experience how even starting with a lightweight structure can very quickly become similar in weight to any other 'run of the mill' boat if a careful eye isn't kept on heavy additions. The advantage with this is that at least you can strip off any unnecessary gear and get back close to the original launch weight. However, there is not much you can do if the structure is already heavy from the start.

Getting back to the boat ramp, a typical fibreglass half cabin trailer boat can be quite a heavy handful on the boat ramp if the conditions aren't ideal and there is a cross wind or current. Man handling the weight of a boat like this on or off the trailer can be challenging. More weight also means more horsepower which consumes more fuel and also requires more fuel capacity onboard. Society these days is driving the trend towards more equipment and luxuries fitted, therefore additional batteries etc etc ... you can see where all this is heading.

My new Ballistic 5000 half cabin power catamaran design is a foam epoxy structure built from a flat panel kit with extra reinforcement in key areas. This approach sees extra reinforcement only where required and minimizing weight impact on the hull structure. One area critical to the durability of the hull is the underwater section which will take considerable wear and tear from trailering and potential grounding. Using epoxy which is far stronger than polyester combined with foam core sandwich panel design allows for a very lightweight hull shell. Technology has come so far and it makes sense to take full advantage of it without going to expensive extremes such as exotics like carbon or Kevlar.

If building from a kit, this is a compact sized project that would fit into a double garage for a DIY home build. As with my other power designs, included in the



kit package is an MDF build jig to form the hull over. This is supplied with interlocking slots for quick and easy assembly. The hull panels are then fitted to the frame with temporary screws. This process allows the builder time to make adjustments where required and check the run of the parts before gluing the edges of the parts together. With full access to the underwater section of the hull, the additional reinforcement is then applied followed by the filling and fairing. While the hull is inverted its recommended to prime and paint this section before turning. Once the hull is turned over and sitting upright, the fit-out can begin, starting with the main bulkheads, deck and internals.

ONE AREA CRITICAL TO THE DURABILITY OF THE HULL IS THE UNDERWATER SECTION WHICH WILL TAKE CONSIDERABLE WEAR AND TEAR FROM TRAILERING AND POTENTIAL GROUNDING

Another trend in this style of boat is a weather-proof half cabin with a fixed panel windscreen. This feature boosts the weather protection and general usability of the boat, pushing it into a more offshore capable vessel offering better crew comfort. To improve visibility the front windscreen panels can be fitted with wipers when dealing with spray. Weight above the waterline can create excessive rolling at sea and this is where the lightweight foam panels come into play, keeping the topsides and superstructure light but strong. When building the cabin, an option is to construct this off the boat and even finish it before final fitting.

At 5m, this is an entry-level size for those wanting to get their foot into the market. As with most half cabin boats, there is a helm and passenger seat behind the dash, these can be pedestal seats or custom boxed seats utilizing the underside space for storage or a bait tank. Being a project-based boat, the fit-out can be personalised to suit any chosen configuration. This applies to the look of the boat as well, in terms of paint colours and equipment choices. Whether you are wanting a serious fishing rig or prefer a family day boat for general recreation, the arrangements can be customised to suit. The back deck is spacious and uncluttered with room to move for fishing or

recreation. The side decks are flat for easy fitting of rod holders down each side. The fuel tanks are fitted below the aft deck in the hulls and are positioned for optimum weight distribution. There is also additional storage below this deck which could be used as a kill pen. Double doors provide access onto the duckboard between the engines through the aft bulkhead, these

doors provide security to the crew and protection from a following sea. Boarding the boat is via the duckboard and would be even easier if the boat was backed into a marina berth.

The recommended engines start at twin 40hp outboards through to 75hp maximum. Because of the excellent power to weight ratio this design is very easily driven and doesn't require the horsepower seen on other production boats. From my experience with my other planing power cats they are quick to jump onto the plane and extremely comfortable in a seaway or going through chop. The twin hulls and tunnel cushion the ride and keep the boat's motion flat and level underway. The feedback from owners has

all been positive, with some being first time catamaran converts who would never have anything else! Owners also comment on the safety aspect of having twin engines in the unlikely case of a breakdown, you can always get home.

The trailer design is also a simple flat deck style with Teflon skids and an island frame that guides the boat onto the trailer using the tunnel. Although hull rollers can also be used on the trailer if preferred. Twin engines also make life much easier with superior manoeuvrability when negotiating the line-up onto the trailer or general docking. As mentioned earlier, the lightweight advantage of this design will also make launching and retrieving from the trailer a much more manageable process.

For further information on this design please contact us on: info@spiriteddesigns.com.au



SPECIFICATIONS:

LOA	5.1m
BOA	2.45m
Draft	0.38m
Displacement	900kg
Engines	Twin 40hp to 75hp
Estimated build hours	700
Kit package starts at	AUD\$19,500 inc GST ex factory



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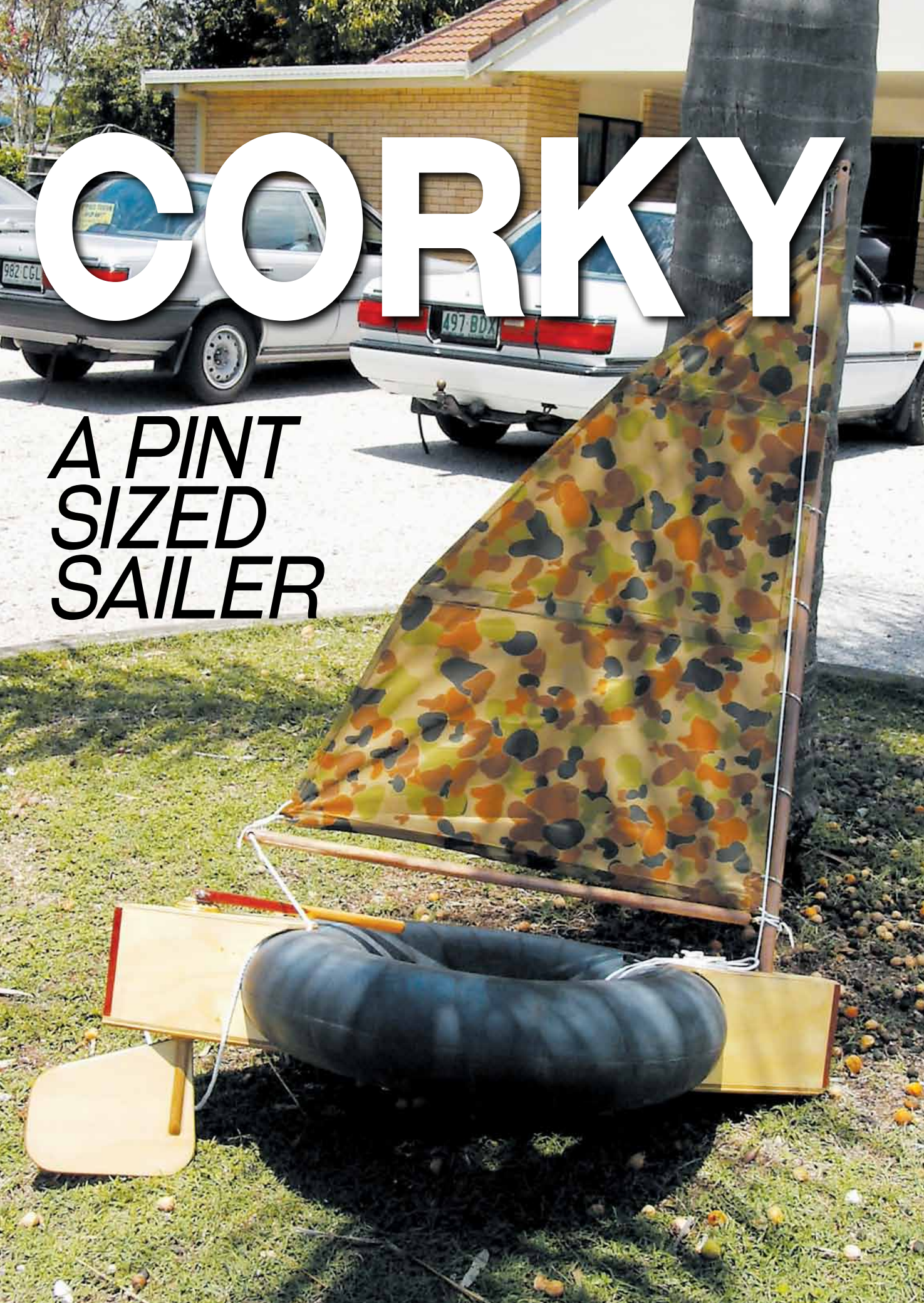
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CORKY

**A PINT
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by **DAVID M SWARTWOUT** courtesy *Boat Builder's Annual 1950*

You needn't worry when Junior decides to play Robinson Crusoe in this sailboat. It can't sink ...

Here is a non-sinkable sailboat for the youngsters that can be made easily in one or two evenings in the workshop. Mother can help on this one too; have her sew up the sail while you are making the hull parts. Most any of the standard sized innertubes will fit the frame for the sides of the boat. A 600 x 16 size was used on this one.

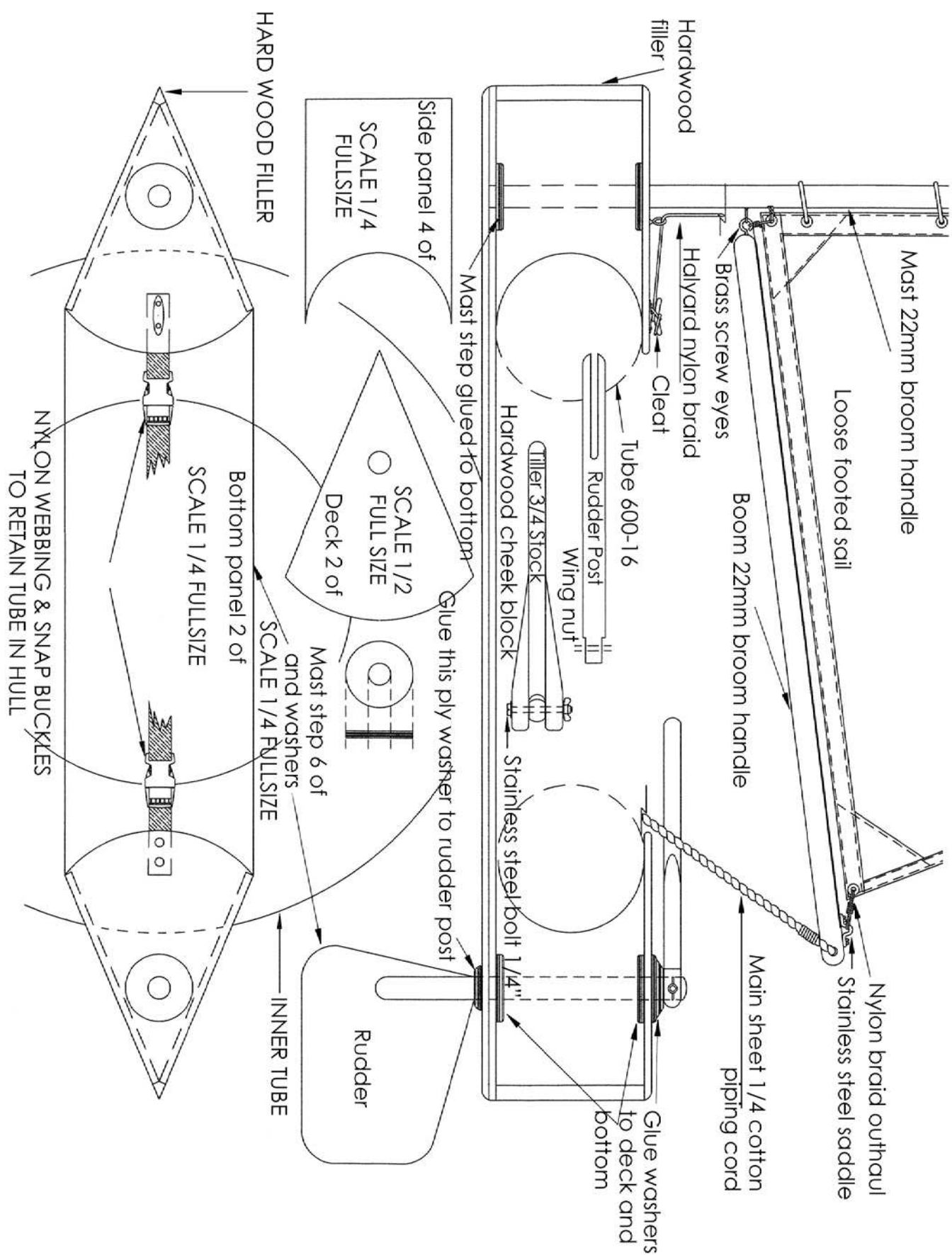
Saw the various wooden parts to shape from the $\frac{3}{4}$ x 8 in white pine. Then drill holes for the rudder post and mast. Do not drill the bottom piece for the mast, only the mast step. Next fasten the pieces together with $1\frac{1}{2}$ in #10 rh brass wood

THE MAST AND BOOM ARE MADE FROM BROOM HANDLES

screws as indicated. Two old GI belts will serve for the innertube straps. They should be screwed in place with two $\frac{3}{4}$ inch #10 rh brass screws and brass washers. Bolt an awning cleat to the forward deck for the halyard. The forward upper strap may be fastened to the underside of the deck using the same type bolts as were used for the deck cleat.

The mast and boom are made from broom handles. For the halyard block use an awning pulley fastened to a large screw eye. The boom fastening is made from two large screw eyes hooked together. The rudder

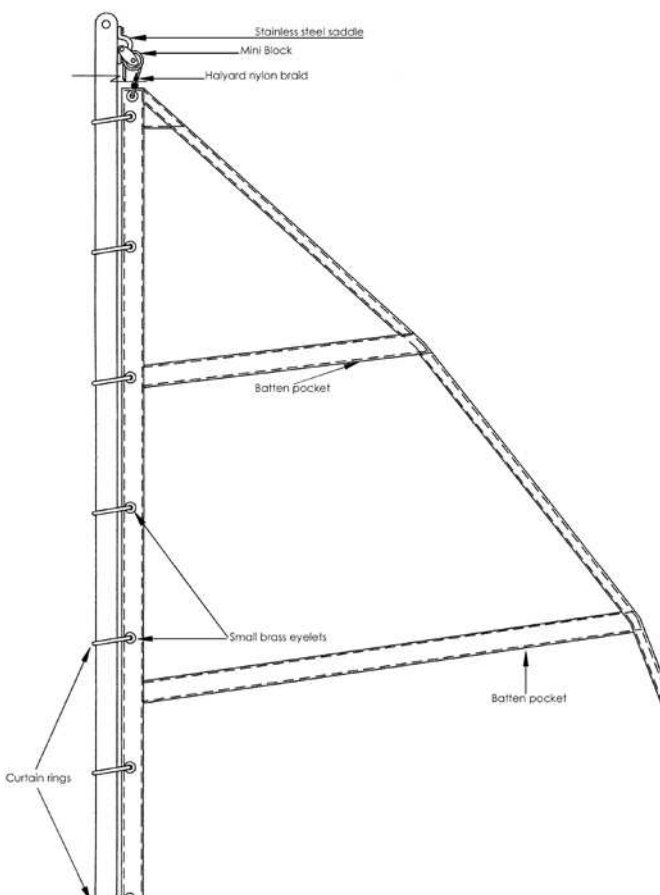






post is also from a broom handle. Use 1/4 inch Masonite or 1/2 inch plywood for the rudder blade, and fasten it to the rudder post with two 3/4 inch bolts. Notch the rudder post as shown to take the blade. Make up the tiller from a piece of 3/4 inch oak fastened to the rudder post with one 1/4 inch bolt and wingnut.

For the one-piece sail, a piece of 3 or 3 1/2 oz canvas, 48in long and a yard wide will be needed. First lay out a pattern on a sheet of wrapping paper. Pin this pattern to the canvas and cut to shape. The foot of the sail should have a wide seam to take the grommets for the sail rings. Metal shower curtain rings will make ideal sail rings. Ten feet of 1/4 in clothesline for the halyard and five feet for the sheet rope are all that is needed to complete this miniature sailboat, which will mean happy sailing for Junior.



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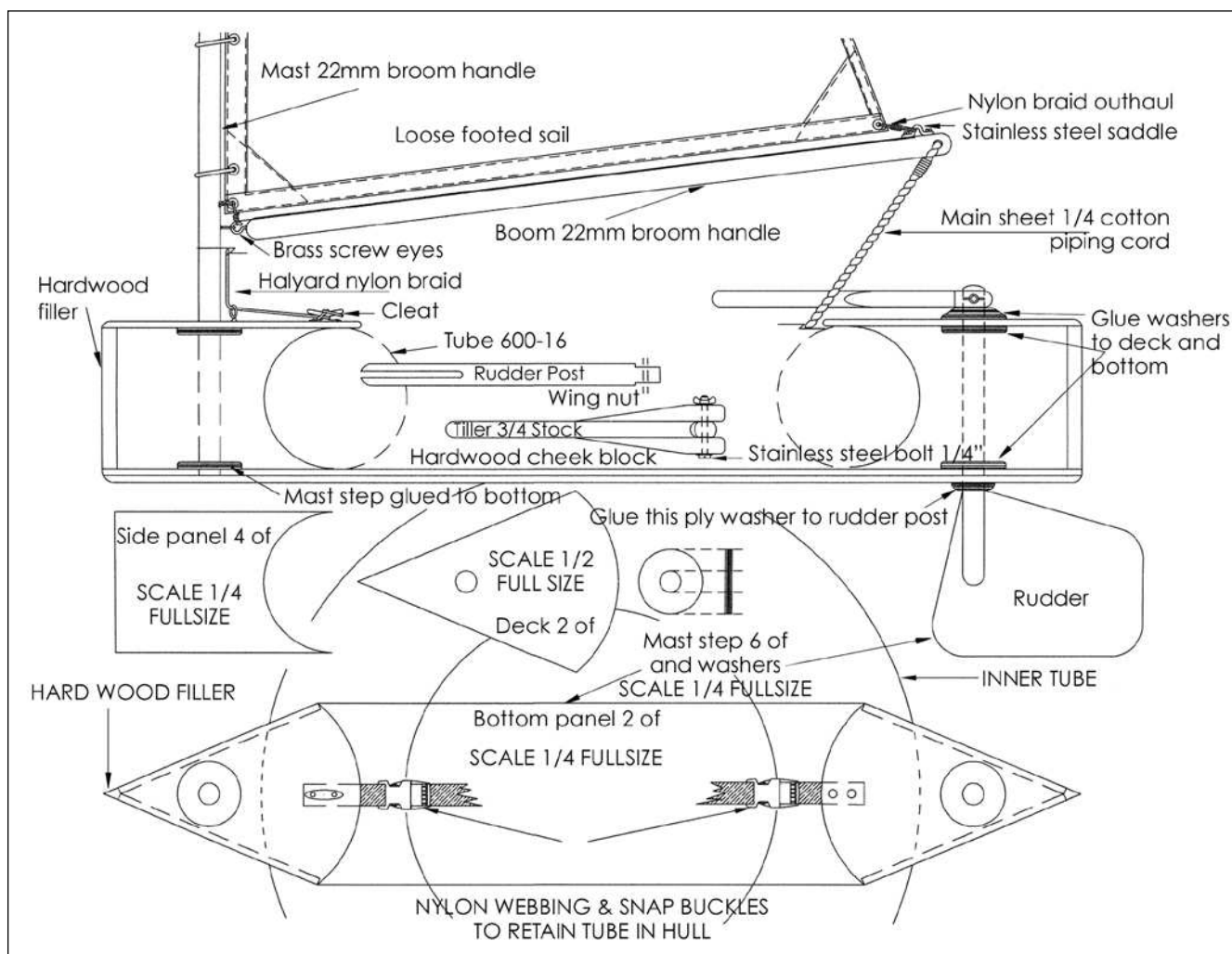


STUCK WITH ONE OAR?

If you are caught out on open water with only one oar try sculling your way back to shore. Sculling is a method of propelling a boat that fishermen have used for centuries. Sculling a boat is easy, but you will require a little practice to become proficient.

First place your self in the stern of the row boat. Grasp the oar so that one hand is on the handle and

the other about halfway down on the shaft. Put the blade on the water until it is about $\frac{3}{4}$ submerged, holding it at a 45° angle. Using the lower hand as the fulcrum, move the handle back and forth, twisting the oar at the end of each stroke with the upper hand so that blade cuts into the water forcing the boat ahead; action is similar to that of a propeller blade in water. If boat has a notch for a steering oar, use that notch as the fulcrum.





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