

The Ash Breeze

Journal of the Traditional Small Craft Association

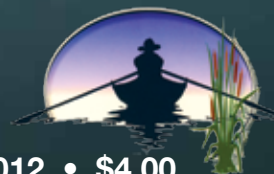
CAMP CRUISING
Key West to the
Dry Tortugas

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**FOUR-WEEK BOAT BUILDING
INTERNSHIPS**

SPOTLIGHT ON CBMM'S JOHN FORD

DO-IT-YOURSELF BEACH BOATYARDS



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The Ash Breeze

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The Traditional Small Craft Association, Inc. is a nonprofit, tax-exempt educational organization that works to preserve and continue the living traditions, skills, lore, and legends surrounding working and pleasure watercraft with origins that predate the marine gasoline engine. It encourages the design, construction, and use of these boats, and it embraces contemporary variants and adaptations of traditional designs.

TSCA is an enjoyable yet practical link among users, designers, builders, restorers, historians, government, and maritime institutions.

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Member Letter

Ash Breeze,

I just launched my version of John Gardner's version of the 17-foot Herreshoff rowboat. I went with the wider version, 4-foot beam, to get a little bit more initial stability as the boat will be used by all and sundry.

The photo shows my friend, Ralph Elliot, who rowed it over to the cabin while I drove the Boston Whaler. He was pleased with its performance.

I was in a hurry to get it built for this summer so am not too proud of my workmanship. It is what I call "smash and grab" stitch and glue. I have built lapstreaks and know how long that takes me—years.

Location is Donner Lake, California, where we own a lakeside cabin and dock.

Pleased to see the article on the San Francisco Bay Pelican. I started building my first Pelican back in 1967. It was a wonderful addition to my family. My youngest was two and she grew up with Pelicans and the wonderful members of Fleet 1. We cruised through the San Juan's, (American and Canadian) as well as the California Delta in the boat. Back when we all were younger, the annual race across SF Bay in mid-summer high winds was the thing to do. Now age and wisdom prevail.

I have a Shutterfly page with photos of building my super light Pelican. It may be the only Pelican at the minimum weight ever built.

My best to all the TSCA members and staff.

Mike Harper

Cool, California



Mike Harper in his Herreshoff rowing boat

New Council Officers Elected

We have new officers for the coming year. The council elected the nominated slate. Congratulations Tom Shephard, President, and Kim Apel, Vice President. Chuck Meyer and Pete Mathews will be continuing in their roles as Treasurer and Secretary respectively.

The Editor's Log

Anyone know what's happening on the West Coast? While at the WoodenBoat Show a member said that we're doing a great job covering what happens east of the Mississippi. I thought for a second and said, "We covered the *Coots* Yaquina River Float, but we really don't have a good news feed coming from the left side of the continent." So, if you are a member

on the West Coast (and there are more of you than on the East Coast), please include *The Ash Breeze* in your chapter newsletters and link us to your calendar of events...and send your photos (high resolution, please) and we will make sure the other side of the country and even the middle know what's happening.

Andy Wolfe, Editor



At the WoodenBoat Show

By Andy Wolfe

Talk about a good time! The 2012 WoodenBoat Show was a spectacular family event. As always, the staff of the Mystic Seaport Museum made the execution of a massive event look easy. From my vantage point on Australia Beach it was calm water everywhere.

The TSCA, Mystic Seaport, and WoodenBoat sponsored the Small Craft Workshop. Member boats and vendors like Chesapeake Light Craft and Adirondack Guide Boats were launching and beaching in a nearly non-stop cycle of motion.



My story starts with the front cover photo. After a long drive to Mystic from the sunset side of the Blue Ridge mountains, I woke up to a beautiful morning and a picture perfect setting... so I took the picture.

Most of my time was literally spent on the beach meeting members and show goers, and talking about my favorite subject. I rowed "to work" with my grandson and son-in-law in a Gloucester Gull. We were joined on the sand by a dozen or so TSCA boats that were available for everyone to use and enjoy. A grant from *WoodenBoat* magazine opened the museum's small boat livery for free public use of their boats, creating a very busy waterfront from opening to closing every day.

When break time came I wandered the grounds just like everyone else, keel kicking and smiling and dreaming and making pictures of some eye-catching boats and exhibits and taking a few photos to share.



Every Voice Heard

Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum's John F. Ford

By Tracey Munson

Whether presiding over an Easton Town Council meeting as a long-standing elected official, or working as the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum's (CBMM) staff liaison with the Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival's steering committee, one thing remains the same—John Ford makes sure every voice is heard.

Now serving as Facilities Manager for the 18-acre waterfront, non-profit museum, Ford has been with CBMM and the festival since 1990. Along the way, he's also served as Historic Cemeteries of Easton President, Easton Planning and Zoning Chair, Easton Town Council Ward 1 Representative, and Easton Town Council President.

"John has a great ability to bring people together," commented CBMM Chief Curator Pete Leshner and fellow Easton Town Councilman. "He's mindful in making sure Festival participants' ideas are heard—which is much the same



John Ford, the anchor of the 30th Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival

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style he employs with his constituents in Easton as well. John is a careful listener who builds a community of stakeholders in all of his endeavors."

John was born in Iowa and lived in Wisconsin before moving to Easton, Maryland, in 1966. He earned his BA in English from Towson University. Prior to working with CBMM, Ford kept close to the Chesapeake Bay through work at Crockett Brothers in Oxford and a marine construction company in Queenstown.

Around that same time, Ford met Peggy Joseph of Havre de Grace at their respective best friends' wedding. "We walked down the aisle together as part of the wedding party," commented Ford. They later married in 1978, followed by the birth of their son Ben on St. Patrick's Day in 1983. "We were the first couple to be married in the Benedictine School's chapel in Ridgley," recalls Ford,

noting Peggy was a teacher there at the time. Now with Ben marrying CBMM's Director of Education Kate Livie this September, the Fords keep busy with community involvement and other activities, including ballroom dancing.

When asked what the most gratifying aspect of his work at CBMM is, Ford notes his work with the Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival. "It may be the boats that bring people together here," commented Ford, "but it's the relationships, the ties of families coming together that make it so special. The joy of working here is watching people enjoy this place."

The 30th Annual Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival comes to CBMM in St. Michaels October 6–7, 2012. More information about the event is at www.cbmm.org/mascf.





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Beach Boatyard

Do-it-yourself Guide

By Richard C. Wolfe

When I became a yachtsman at the advanced age of 14, I followed J. P. Morgan's famous adage, "If you have to ask what it costs, you can't afford it," in its short form, "If it costs, you can't afford it." My yearly yachting budget couldn't exceed the twenty bucks or so of real money available.

Most of the techniques for bargain boating are quite well known: use house paint, and if you can get someone's leftovers, you are really ahead; don't buy anything you can make; hang around people who tend to throw away perfectly good stuff; take good care of everything so it will last forever, etc., etc.

That still leaves a major expense, the yard bill. In my first year as an owner, I found an easy solution: go to work at the boat yard and have the storage as a fringe benefit. Later on I did my own hauling/launching on a borrowed beach and had the cost down to nothing. Working in that little boat yard on Nantucket taught me all I needed to know to avoid yard bills forever. We did everything by hand (the only mechanical equipment in the yard was an old Buick, and it never ran). All it takes is a little waterfront, a little gear (which can cost nothing if you are a good scrounger), a little sweat, and a little knowledge. Today, when yard bills are no longer an insurmountable burden to my boating budget, I do it for the pure pleasure that I derive from having my small boats on my own beach, convenient to tools and supplies, and under my own control.

The knowledge you need was second nature to our seafaring ancestors who had to do everything with manpower, but is much less common in today's mechanized world. The realization of this was driven home to me when my youngest son, Chris, was helping me position an equipment trailer with my Buzzards Bay sloop cradled upon it. The



Drawing by Lionel Barrymore

boat had just completed the thousand-mile road trip from Maine, with brief stops at Falmouth, Cape Cod, and the Wooden Boat Show at Newport, Rhode Island, and was about to enter her new Chesapeake Bay home.

"Are you going to call in a crane to launch her?" he asked.

"Why would I do that?" was my surprised reply.

"How else can you get a ton of boat off the trailer and into the water? You can't put that trailer in the water!"

"I'll just use planks and rollers."

Blank stare.

Now, this son is no dummy. He has created a high-tech business and spends most of his time working with engineers and scientists, but they are on the frontiers of technology and this stuff is so ancient it appears to have been lost in the dust of time. He's not quite old enough to remember the fall and spring outings to Manhasset Bay where we worked on our venerable *Shady Lady*, nestled comfortably on a little piece of no-man's-land between two old boathouses. Here, for Chris and anyone else who wants to preserve archaic skills while saving money and having fun, is how it's done.

In engineering terms, our problem is to move a mass (the boat) from one level (the water) to a higher level (the upland bank where it will be stored). To accomplish this we can employ an inclined plane (planks laid on the sloping beach), a friction reducing device (rollers), and a force (the major variable in this particular problem). All of these elements were known to and employed by our ancestors, back to the pyramid builders, and they are readily available today; so, let's get to it!

First, select a site. The ideal is a uniformly sloped beach with adequate depth close to shore and a flat top reasonably above mean high water. A wide tide range can be very helpful as it gets nature to supply much of the lifting power.

Next, assemble your equipment. Unless the boat has a flat bottom, you will need a cradle. If you don't have one, it can be cobbled together from scrap lumber; the primary requirements are that it be stiff, have a straight flat bottom surface, and that it supports the boat comfortably.

Plank requirements will depend on the weight of the boat and the firmness of the beach. Generally, the softer the



surface, the wider (and longer) the planks you will need. In my experience, 2x8 planks (available at many construction or demolition sites and/or dumps) work on all but the softest mud for boats weighing up to a ton. They should be as long as you can comfortably handle but if you can “find” only 5 or 6 foot lengths it will work.

Rollers should be long enough to span the width of your cradle plus a foot or two. Any hard round material will work, but the most common roller is a piece of iron pipe (also available at construction/demolition sites and dumps). Your choice will be determined by working conditions: rougher surfaces call for larger diameters and heavier loads need stronger walls. Generally, if your planks and cradle are clean, 1½- to 2-inch diameter pipe is ideal. In the launch example cited above, my local scrounging still in its early stages, I had to make do with pieces of pine pilings and short scraps of one-inch pipe. It worked fine, downhill being much less demanding.

Force required will be determined by the weight of the boat and the degree of slope, but you will be amazed at how much you can move by yourself once you learn how. The physical principle says that the force required will be directly proportional to the slope with 0% of the mass at 0 degrees, increasing to 100% at 90 degrees. To this you will have to add some factor to overcome friction and imperfections on the surfaces, but it usually isn't much if you have prepared well. To move a 1,000 pound mass up a 6 degree slope requires only a theoretical 66.6 pounds of force. Unless you have allowed an awful lot of friction to creep into your system, 100 pounds of pulling force is more than ample, and easy to come by. You probably have it in your legs. Of course, if your slope is steeper than 6 degrees you will need proportionately more force, but the principle is the same.

My present motive force is a lawn tractor and it is overkill, but why not use it when it is handy. In years past, and at more remote locations, I have

used a block and tackle. A come-along or windlass of some sort works well if you have a suitable anchor. You can even run a line from your cradle through a snatch block secured to stout stob (like a piling or tree root) and back to an on-board winch, sort of pulling yourself up by your own bootstraps.

The haul out procedure is quite simple and straightforward. The boat is floated into the cradle, which is resting on rollers, which are supported by planks. The planks provide a solid smooth surface for the rollers, and the rollers reduce friction so the cradle can be pulled up the slope. Here is the process, step-by-step.


At high tide, determine where you must place the cradle to have sufficient depth to float the boat on. Mark the spot, then go do something else for half-a-tide. At low water (you don't have to wait, but it really is easier than working under water) place two parallel planks (aimed at your final destination) at the spot where you have determined the

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Experience small craft at its best at the 30th Annual
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Four Boats in Four Weeks: Interns Hard at Work

By Bill Armitage

John Gardner Chapter, Groton, CT

The University of Connecticut Avery Point Campus has been the host of the John Gardner Chapter of the TSCA (JGTSCA) since the chapter was organized in 2000. Professor Stephen Jones was instrumental in aiding the chapter in securing a lease on an underutilized maintenance building located on the edge of the campus. Over the years the members have conducted community outreach programs including our annual Pine Island Cleanup, a small barrier island owned by the University and located off the southern tip of Avery Point. The UConn Maritime Studies Program in conjunction with the JGTSCA offered boatbuilding internships to three students during the summer of 2010. The six credit course included a series of lectures by Prof. Jones, selected readings, a research paper, and the construction of a wooden rowing craft by each student. Construction activities were led by Bill Armitage with assistance from Sandy D'Esopo.

The decision was made early in the planning phase to construct a twelve-foot plywood version of the Adirondack Guideboat. Key considerations included: relative low cost of materials, the ease of stitch and tape construction,



Four hulls assembled by the end of the first week

and the time required to build. The instructor had already built the design during the prior summer and as a result molds and panel patterns were available. Construction plans and instructions are available from the designer, John Gardiner of Vancouver, BC, via his website www.guideboat.ca.

The group met each morning over a four week period for a total of twenty days. The instructors would arrive early and usually stay late to prepare

materials for the next day. Supplies were purchased by the chapter and each student was given the opportunity to purchase their boat at the cost of materials, just over \$400. Each phase of construction would be demonstrated by the instructor on the sample boat and then students worked cooperatively on their vessels. At the end of the four week session each student left with the vessel that they had constructed, including their handmade oars.

Laying out the panels



Placing the molds on the strongback





Stitching the bow



Adding the chines



A few quick coats of paint



Finished boat

Museum Small Craft Association Annual Meeting

Monday, October 8–Thursday, October 11, 2012 at Mystic Seaport, Mystic, Connecticut

The Museum Small Craft Association is a group of individuals who share an interest in small boat conservation and restoration, and skills preservation, documentation, history, interpretation, and research. While most members are museum professionals, all are welcome. This year's annual meeting of the Museum Small Craft Association will be at Mystic Seaport, which has the largest collection of historic boats in the United States and possibly the world. The conference will have presentations and discussions on a variety of small craft and museum related topics, ranging from preservation, restoration, and conservation to boat plans. In addition there will be time to explore the museum including the hundreds of historic boats stored in Rossie Mill. Monday evening will feature a trip down the river aboard the *Sabino*, a coal-fired steamboat built in 1908 for use along the Maine coast. We'll also tour the *Charles W. Morgan*, the 1841 whaleship, which is undergoing a major restoration in preparation for sailing again in 2013. On a smaller scale there will be opportunities for networking on the water aboard the Seaport's livery boats. Thursday we'll take a field trip to next door Rhode Island with stops expected to include the International Yacht Restoration School in Newport and the Herreshoff Museum in Bristol. And as always there will be lots of opportunities for informal discussions. For more information visit the Museum Small Craft Association website www.museumsmallcraft.org or contact David Cockey at davidcockey@gmail.com.



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*Something else to
read at anchor...*



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Key West to the Dry Tortugas

By Mike Wick

Last summer, Kevin MacDonald and I were sailing together in the Southern Chesapeake, mostly side by side, in the boats that we'd built. In my melonseed in the Chesapeake afternoon chop, I often envied the comparative luxury of Kevin's Marsh Cat, *LITTLE T*, with its greater freeboard and luxury accommodations. We had a favorite cruising ground, based around Crisfield, Maryland. There are many nearby destinations—Winona, Deal Island, Smith Island, Tangier, Manokin River, Fishing Bay. We racked up many miles, pausing at Janes Island campground for an occasional shower and some well-cooked seafood in Crisfield between trips. Our outings sometimes swelled to flotilla size and then shrank back to just two boats as friends with other boats came and went according to work and family schedules.

This winter, Kevin had some vacation time that had to be used in February, and he proposed a trip. I leapt at the chance to go south in his boat, way south. I thought of the Dry Tortugas, located seventy miles west of Key West with a welcoming National Park—home of Fort Jefferson, best known as the Civil War era prison of the doctor Samuel Mudd. One major attraction of that particular destination for me was that a third of the way out lay an atoll-like group of islands—the Marquesas Keys—that would provide a perfect pit stop. The name itself was enough. In my imagination, I was halfway to Tahiti. We could split the passage into four legs, out and back with a rest stop in between. Open water with a moderate degree of challenge—Marsh Cats were designed by Joel White for just that.

I could go on for hours about the wholesome behavior of *LITTLE T* in all conditions. Kevin had built strength in every rib and plank. She rode a little low with crew, supplies, and water,



On the hook at the Dry Tortugas

but she had generous freeboard decks, washboards, and coamings to turn away most of the spray and water. We had two muck buckets for emergency dewatering (they are faster than pumps), and dry bags for gear and electronics could double as buoyancy bags when securely fastened to the ribs. We had redundancy in GPS and VHF, flares, and the SPOT transmitter. We had practiced capsizing drills in smaller boats, we felt that capsizing a catboat was unlikely, and we felt that we should be able to survive every emergency that might come. No small boat voyage is completely without danger, but we felt that by waiting for our weather window, we would get out of it all right.

Kevin drives hard; we made a quick trailer leg and launched in haste to grab the fair weather while it lasted. We said our cell phone “goodbyes” and activated the SPOT.

Day 1, February 20—Leg 1

We had floor loaded Kevin's truck, so it was a small task to prepare and provision *LITTLE T* while she was on the trailer. Oceanside Marina, on the South Side of Stock Island, FL, was happy to store trailer and truck while we were gone. We were in a hurry because the weather was right and our game plan was to make maximum use of any weather window for the passage toward the Marquesas (25 miles) and Fort Jefferson (45 miles further). We had lots of stuff because there was no provisioning anywhere

west of Key West, and we had no idea how long we might have to wait at any particular leg of the journey. Ten gallons of plastic bottles stored easily in the bilge and lasted the whole vacation.

A quick try at the Lakes Passage, a shallow passage that went inside, in shoal water, as far as Boca Grande, convinced us that we would be better going the long way—south along Kingfish Shoal, in Hawk Channel. We turned around at Mule Key, surprised that the water was so shallow nearly everywhere.

1030 Departure from Key West. Passed Man, Ballast, and Woman Key.

1330 Boca Grande abeam.

1530 Anchored in Mooney Harbor, Marquesas.

1730 Moved to a passage anchorage to the west of Marquesas for early departure. 30 miles.

Moonie Harbor, center of the Marquesas atoll, is a beautiful, protected all-weather harbor that is entered from the southwest. Fish and birdlife are plentiful, and the harbor made a welcome change after crossing the sometimes boisterous Boca Grande Channel. The channel can pick up a chop in wind against tide situations. We had just about settled in for the night when we realized that it would be difficult to exit before dawn, so we moved outside of the harbor to a passage stop just west of the group. A larger boat was anchored nearby, probably for the same reason.



Day 2, February 21—Leg 2

0445 We are awake and underway in a light to moderate easterly, steering by the stars. The Jetboil stove is great for quick coffee before an early departure. Boil time is so quick that you just hold on to the stove for a couple of minutes. No need for gimbals.

0515 Nasty surprise. Passed five large unlit buoys close aboard and another unlit target tower from the bombing and strafing area immediately west of the Marquesas. They suddenly loomed up in the dark. I guess we were getting into a really remote area if they didn't bother to light large buoys. It's called the Quicksands, so I guess they figure there isn't much traffic, but still... We were now eager for sunrise, and it came quite soon. We took turns at the helm in quite a pleasant morning. We had tied in a reef before starting but quickly shook it out, in a mild wind, perfect for a quick passage.

0830 Passed flasher at western tip of New Ground Shoal, north of the Quicksands. Weather report was fair, so we decided we were safe to continue toward Dry Tortugas. Moderate chop as we got into the deeper water of Rebecca Channel.

1315 Land! First the lighthouse at Loggerhead Key, then Fort Jefferson in sight. East Key's white sand was very visible in the bright sunlight.

1525 Anchored, Garden Key, 48 miles from Marquesas. The rangers decide that, since we were small, we could pull *LITTLE T* up on the dinghy beach instead of anchoring off in the Garden Key anchorage.

Day 3, February 22

We spent the day wandering around the fort and enjoying the shady spots. Having the boat anchored at the dinghy beach was very convenient. When the passenger ferry *Yankee Freedom II* was at the pier, we were welcome to buy a thorough lunch for \$5 apiece. Cold sodas, money well spent.

1400 Up-anchored for a quick visit to Loggerhead Key. We anchored on the west side for a walk and a swim, but I soon turned around, anxious about the possibility of the anchor dragging and leaving us stranded. The water was perfect for swimming. We returned to the Garden Key anchorage at 1720. One of the rules was that all boats must be there for

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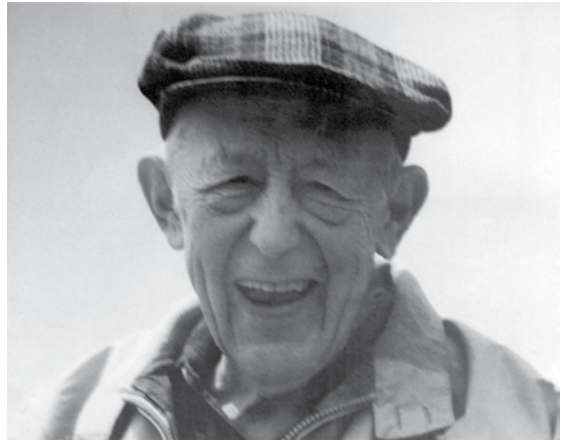
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In 1999, TSCA created the John Gardner Grant program to support projects for which sufficient funding would otherwise be unavailable. Eligible projects are those which research, document, preserve, and replicate traditional small craft, associated skills (including their construction and uses) and the skills of those who built and used them. Youth involvement is encouraged.

Proposals for projects ranging from \$200 to \$2000 are invited for consideration. Grants are awarded competitively and reviewed

semiannually by the John Gardner Memorial Fund Committee of TSCA, typically in May and October. The source of funding is the John Gardner Memorial Endowment Fund. Funding availability is determined annually.

Eligible applicants include anyone who can demonstrate serious interest in, and knowledge of, traditional small craft. Affiliation with a museum or academic organization is not required. Projects must have tangible, enduring

results which are published, exhibited, or otherwise made available to the interested public.

Projects must be reported in *The Ash Breeze*.

Program details, applications, and additional information:

www.tasca.net/gardner.html

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Deltaville Maritime Museum Devastated by Fire



Firefighters working to put out the blaze

Tragically the main building and boat pavilion of the Deltaville Maritime Museum were destroyed by fire, Wednesday, July 18, 2012. All of the boats pierside, the Boatshop, and Billz Bistro were saved.

The fire is believed to have started in the WA Johns' Boat Shed and spread to the main exhibit building when the roof collapsed. The museum building is totally lost, as is the boat pavilion which contained the century old WA Johns, a three log canoe, donated by the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. Several other historic small boats were also lost.

Museum volunteers and 8 families from all over the area were in the final
continued on page 16

Beach Boatyard

continued from page 7

cradle will sit. The planks should be placed where they will be directly under the fore-and-aft beams of your cradle. Now place two rollers across the planks and then the cradle on the rollers. At this point you can test to see how easily the cradle can be rolled. As you are probably on a slope, take a hauling line from the cradle to a solid belay point ashore to keep it from rolling off the planks. Since your cradle and planks are probably made of wood, plan on adding enough weight to keep them from floating out of position. Old chain works well; just tie a line to it so it can be pulled out of the way once the boat is in the cradle.

Have at least four cradle lengths of planking and at least three rollers ready. It's a good idea to place the next set of planks and the third roller while the tide is out. Remember to weight all the planks so they won't float away. Planks should be positioned where they will be under the cradle timbers as it moves forward, and the rollers can easily make the transition from one plank to the next. On a firm flat surface, placing

them alongside with a slight overlap will suffice, but on a soft or uneven surface you may have to shove the second plank under the leading edge of the first. This will cause a bump as the roller drops to the new (lower) surface, so be careful in crossing these transitions.

Rollers are holding the entire weight of the boat as it leaves the water. You must keep at least two under the cradle at all times, one on each side of the point of balance of the loaded cradle. Never let the cradle pass its balance point without a new roller picking up the weight or else the cradle will tip forward and rest its nose on the planks, causing you a lot of extra work lifting it up again. Roller positions can be plotted quite easily when you are setting up since the rollers will move at half the speed of the cradle. For example: if your forward roller is three feet ahead of the point of balance, it will reach the critical point when the cradle has moved ahead six feet. The next roller must pick up the leading edge of the cradle before it has moved that far.

At high tide, float your boat onto the cradle. Once you are satisfied with its position on the cradle, pick up the hauling line and pull. As the cradle

moves up the beach it gradually takes more and more of the boat's weight until it has it all as the hull comes completely out. With the weight of the boat well supported by the cradle, you can either continue hauling or pop a beer and wait for the next low tide when positioning of the planks and rollers may be easier and dryer. If a roller is not placed at a right angle to the cradle and planks, you will find the boat crabbing to one side or the other. Sometimes you will want to do this to clear an obstacle or finesse your final position, but if it is not going where you intended, the rollers can be persuaded back to the proper course with a few taps of your maul.

Once up on the beach, keep a couple of planks under the cradle to prevent its settling into the ground. If the site is not level, you can lift up the corners of the cradle with a prybar and chock it appropriately.

That's all there is to it. You have hauled your boat. Reverse the procedure for launching with the exception that gravity provides the force and you will probably be more concerned with snubbing to keep it from running away.



Museum Fire

continued from page 15

stages of building Wright's Skiffs during family boatbuilding week. The pavilion had been tidied and tools put away in preparation for the next two days of construction. The families' boats were also a total loss.

Museum founder and board member Gene Ruark stood with many community members. Finding some hope in the situation, Ruark said, "You know, we were considering expanding the main building. Now we will have to rethink it all—but it will be all right." As a reminder that things could be worse, Ruark said, "We need to be thankful too that no one was in that building."

In the museum, there was slightly better news, if there is such a thing. While the building is totally destroyed, the firefighters were able to save a lot from the office, including some models and pictures, file cabinets and artifacts. Some

items near the floor were protected by the wet insulation that fell from the ceiling. However, all of the museum exhibits were destroyed. Luckily, many original photos, including those of the buy-boat *F.D. Crockett*, were stored off-site. Volunteers have been rescuing boatbuilding tools and other items that were tucked away.

Amazingly the painting of the late board member John Coe that hung in the John A. Coe Memorial Library was pretty much untouched, as was a painting and model of his steel schooner *Mistress Quickly*. The library, however, did not fair so well, but hopefully "We have preserved the archives which his endowment is helping to develop," said a staff member.

To support the Deltaville Maritime Museum's rebuilding program you may make a general donation to the Museum. Check the Museum's website www.deltavillemuseum.com for information. Mail donations to: Deltaville Maritime Museum, P. O. Box 466, Deltaville, VA 23043.

Dry Tortugas

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the night. We watched the weather, which was perfect for the return legs of the trip. We didn't want to rush our visit, but good weather is something to cherish.

Day 4, February 23

0730 Went out on the channel to plot GPS waypoints so we would be ready for a possible pre-dawn departure. Back before 0930. Spent a hot day swimming and exploring the shady passages in Fort Jefferson. We made our goodbyes to the park rangers who announced that we were the smallest to make the passage since at least the early 1980s. Two years ago, a Hobie Cat had made the attempt but had turned around at Boca Grande.

Day 5, February 24—Leg 3

Woke to a light southerly which was great for our important leg 3 of the passage. I would wake and look to the northern star, then pound my pillow and drift back to sleep.

0700 Underway under power and sail. We slept in until after dawn; no hurry in such a mild, fair breeze.

1000 Ferry passed in Westward Passage. The outboard was earning its keep. We ran it to maintain a good speed so we would avoid entering harbor after dusk.

1050 Rebecca Shoals tower abeam, 1½ miles south. Some spray but made good progress. Motor off when the wind picked up but often motor sailing in close reach to make Moonie Harbour by dusk.

1150 Halfmoon Shoal tower abeam; on the Quicksand, which was deep enough for navigation, at least by daylight.

1715 Anchored just west of Moonie Harbor Key with more than an hour of daylight to spare. 50 miles.

Day 6, February 25—Leg 4

0800 Under power in very light SE breeze.

1000 Across Boca Grande Channel with Boca Grande close abeam.

1100 Woman Key and Ballast Key. The only house in the area is on Ballast, with dock and several outbuildings but a modest

continued on next page

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continued from previous page

homestead. Since the whole area is the Key West National Wildlife Refuge, that island must be grandfathered in.

1200 Mule Key abeam.

1430 We were back at Safe Harbor, Stock Island, for fuel and cell phones and clean clothes from the truck. We then explored Cow Key Channel as far as Route 1 Bridge. Even though Key West is crowded, the mangrove channels in the south part are peaceful and fairly deserted. Too low for housing?

1800 Anchored in Cow Key Bight south of Stock Island for the night. 39 miles.

Day 7, February 26

0730 Underway along the south shore of the Lower Keys in a brisk southeasterly. We were glad we made our offshore passage when we did. That day's weather would have slowed us down and been uncomfortable in the tide-ridden Rebecca Passage or Boca Grande Channel. There was substantial spray in the Hawk Channel but some relief when we tacked inshore. The shallow water reduced the seas. We were glad we made the long passage before the easterly set in again. At that latitude, trade wind easterlies are the norm. We were glad we caught our chance of fair wind.

1130 Looked in at Saddlebunch Harbor, just west of Boca Chica. We found that we made the best time by staying in the northern edge of Hawk Channel where shallow water kept the seas down. Less hobby horsing than in deeper water.

1345 Approached the entrance for Cudjoe Bay. We discovered that it was necessary to round the first gate of markers, even though it appeared to be a long way out into Hawk Channel. Cudjoe Bay and Kemp Channel were enormous shallow areas. They were well marked but some markers were missing. We saw a blimp hovering over the island but noticed it didn't move around at all. We decide that it must be a radar-equipped, tethered balloon keeping an eye out for Cuban refugees and drug smugglers. We saw a refugee boat at Fort Jefferson that had been wheeled into an empty corridor. It was an aluminum launch with a six cylinder gas engine. Not much boat for a 90 mile trip. We heard reports of Cuban refugees being discovered by the Coast Guard offshore. Because Cuba is a "repressive regime" they wouldn't be returned if they managed to walk ashore on American Soil.

1400 Anchored in Cudjoe Bay with fine protection from the southeast wind. Running down the entrance we were "carrying too much bush" and had major weather helm for the

continued on page 18

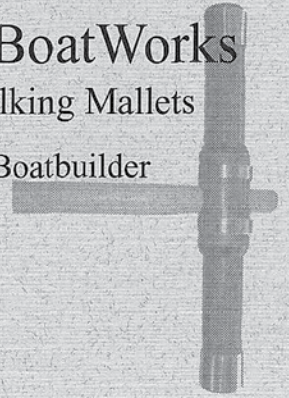
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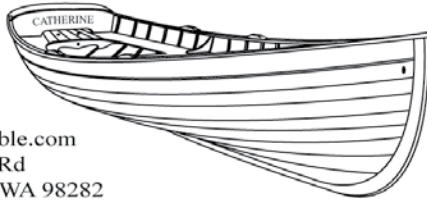
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continued from page 17

first time. The GPS registered 7.1 kts. We ended up with lots of wet gear that we spread over the boom to dry. Even though we used lots of sunscreen, I found that my skin was angry red and itchy in the cool of the night. I had taken to covering up, head to toe, in the time of maximum sun between 1030 and 1530, and that I felt better and was actually cooler than when baking in the sun in shorts and t-shirt. Northern climes have changeable weather, but there in the south it was sun and steady wind that were fierce.

Day 8, February 27

A short rain shower in the night wet everything down, but we grabbed a tarp and spread it over our sleeping bags, so they didn't get too wet. It was worth this kind of moment to have the pleasure of sleeping under the stars all night. Jupiter and Sirius were up at sunset along with a sickle moon, and we quickly learned to tell time by the position of the Big Dipper circling Polaris. I thought I caught sight of Canopus in Carina. Although the dark lasted about 12 hours each night, we found that we could pretty much go to sleep at sunset and wake up again at dawn. Only one night did we talk until after eight at night. Yet neither of us had this kind of sleep habit in our daily lives. Don't know why it worked, but it did leave us ready to go in the first light of morning.

0730 Underway but heading west again. We decided that our plan to head toward a possible passage under Route 1 in Niles Channel wouldn't be much good in the strong southeast wind, so we reversed our course and explored to the north of Key West itself.

1400 We made a lightning speed passage around Key West and Fleming Key, down Garrison Bight Channel, but it was no place to anchor as the southeast wind made for no protection from Sigsbee Island, so we went back to Man-O-War Harbor and nestled close to Key West for the night.

Day 9, February 28

We headed north from Man-O-War Harbor through Calda Channel into Florida Bay and then into Lower Harbor Keys. The channel was short and everywhere was shallow, so we turned around and headed back for our anchorage in Man-O-War Harbor. We were caught in a strong thunderstorm coming back through Calda Channel and were glad we could use the outboard instead of beating up a narrow twisty channel in a strong squall. Although we were just a couple of miles from Key West, the storm was all our own.

Day 10, March 1

We went around Key West and up Boca Chica Channel up to Route 1. It was a military base, so landing was out of the question even though there were some good beaches. Kevin suddenly had a good idea—"It is time to go home." An hour later, we were packed and on the road north.



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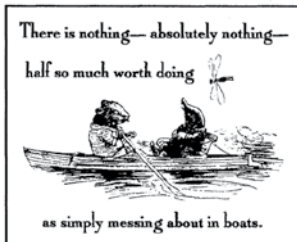
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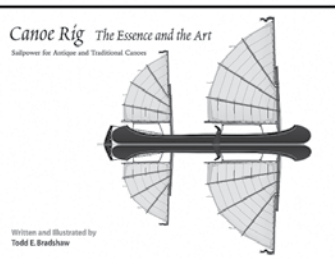


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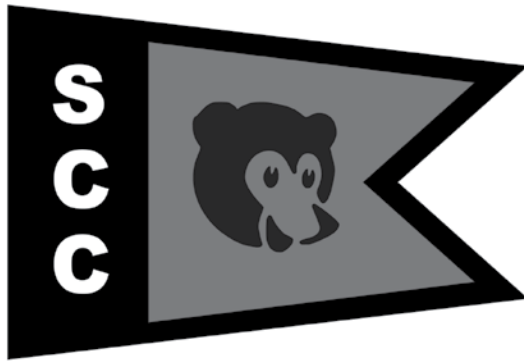
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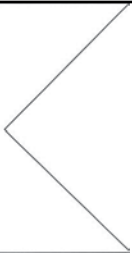
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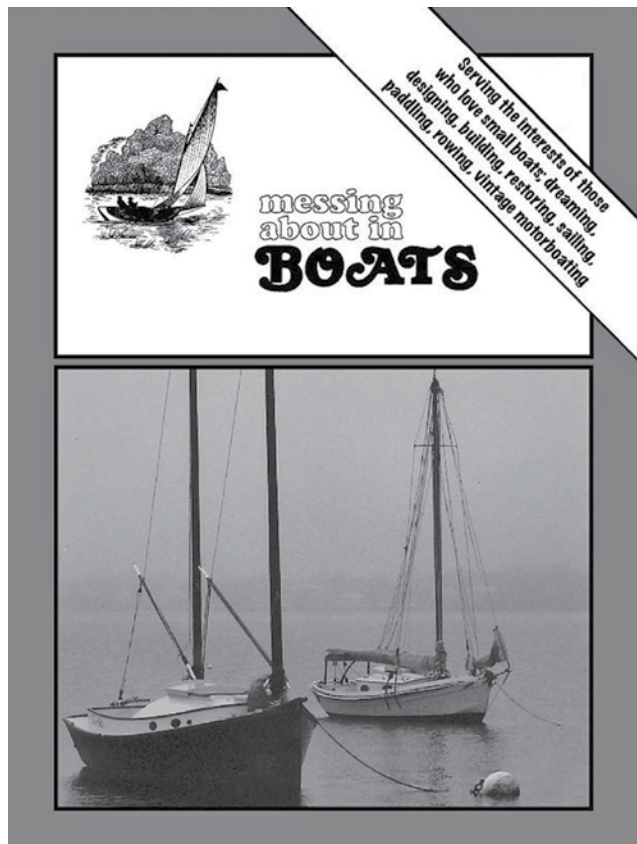
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The Ash Breeze

Winter 2012, Volume 33, Number 4

Editorial Deadline: November 1, 2012

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