The Ash Breeze

Journal of the Traditional Small Craft Association

Frostbiting: To Hull and Back

IN THIS ISSUE

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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. We encourage the design, construction, and use of these boats, and we embrace 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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Cover Photo: © Rosemary Wyman

President's Message

I thought I would use this opportunity to reflect on the history of the Traditional Small Craft Association and the man who inspired it. I think it is good to look back at the origins of an organization to better appreciate its existence.

The TSCA as an organization was first created in the 1970s in response to a plan by the Federal government to adopt a set of "safety" standards that would, in effect, have declared traditional types such as peapods and dories "unseaworthy." This seemed WRONG to people such as John Gardner. They were told that protest would be much more effective if they were speaking for an organization, and so they went and built one. We'd like to think that the TSCA had a significant part in the result, which was that the regulations were revised so that traditional boats were permitted to continue to exist. Having got by the crisis, the organization turned to the long-term business of "passing the word" about traditional boat types to the world in general or at least that part of it which might be interested.

The late John Gardner was a historian of watercraft, a writer, and a designer and builder of wooden boats. From 1969 to 1995 he was Associate Curator of Small Craft at Mystic Seaport Museum, Connecticut. He was technical editor of *National Fisherman* magazine. He was called the "Dean of American Small Craft" and the father of the modern wooden boat revival. His work in marine history and in analyzing traditional boat designs preserved many classic small craft designs from being lost. He is honored by the Traditional Small Craft Association through its John Gardner Fund. The Gardner Fund provides grants for traditional small craft initiatives.

TSCA partners with *WoodenBoat* magazine and Mystic Seaport to host the annual John Gardner Small Craft Workshop as part of the WoodenBoat Show at the amazing Mystic Seaport in Connecticut. The June event shows that traditional small craft are a practical and economical way to enjoy the water. The workshop includes a display, shared use of participant's boats at the discretion of the owner, demonstrations of small boat skills, morning rows, and guided access to the Museum's boat storage area. This is a great time to get together with like-minded traditional boat folks, to share our love and knowledge of traditional small craft with others, and spend some quality time with friends new and old on the beach and underway. This is really a fun event.

TSCA has grown to twenty-eight independent chapters throughout the country, with three more in organizational stages. Many are affiliated with nautical museums or preservation societies. These chapters offer meetings and events for fans and builders of the traditional boats that built our country.

In my opinion, the growth and future of the TSCA and its chapters will be to offer an informal organization for the growing number of amateur builders and owners of modern variants based on the traditional craft to network and learn.

–Frank W. Coletta
President
Traditional Small Craft Association

Aging with Old Boats

by Peter A. Evans

I enjoyed Andre de Bardelaben's article "A Decision Too Long Deferred" in *The Ash Breeze*, Fall 2013. Traditional boats, old boats—old people?—are not always the most efficient design. And I certainly agree that dealing with traditionalists can sometimes be trying. There are wonderful shapes in plastic that would be difficult to impossible to achieve with wood. But then, wood is a living material—with all its attendant problems. Plastic is dead. You can develop a bond of understanding with a wooden boat. I like the idea of aging with an old boat.

Too many boaters spend their lives trying to find the ideal craft. They wax enthusiastic over a new purchase, only to lose interest after a time and proceed to acquire something different. During their active years, they might run through a half dozen boats, never finding the right one. This has its advantages of course: it leads to new experiences; it provides incentives for new designs; it churns the market. Nevertheless, I suggest that finding the ideal boat is about as likely as finding the ideal wife or husband. It does happen, but the odds are such that maybe it's better to stick with the same old one and just get used to the warts.

I've been rowing the same old wooden boat around San Francisco Bay and along the coast for 37 years, an 18 ft. Grand Banks dory built in 1977 by Jeremy Fisher-Smith when he was an apprentice to Bill Grunwald at Aeolus Boats. (Before the dory I rowed an old flat iron skiff rescued from the mud and pickleweed in Bolinas Lagoon, but rot and rusted fastenings finally persuaded me to let that one go.) The dory is traditional, like the ones stacked on the deck of the Grand Banks schooners, and like Winslow Homer used to paint. Bill Grunwald, however, fiddled the lines just a little to provide a singularly beautiful workboat—not one of the slab-sided, rough cut affairs that worked the Grand Banks, but equally safe, eminently practical. And heavy. She lives in the water all year-round and probably weighs about 250–300 lbs. There have been times off the coast or in heavy winds when I have sworn that I would sell the darn boat if I could just get her home; but she always did get me home, and after a suitable rest, I've returned to her with, well, pleasure.

Over the years, I've devised ways to live with her. Early on I designed a bow seat to counterbalance the seat at the tombstone transom, thus two people can relax comfortably at anchor with the boat still in good trim. I tried a sliding seat but discarded it. In rough water a sliding seat will sometimes jam and throw the rower off-balance, or, possibly, off the seat altogether. As to sleeping accommodations, two can sleep comfortably—well, reasonably so—in the dory by opening up the stern area, lifting out the aft thwart, and putting a couple of plywood sections across the remaining thwarts, thus providing a two-decker bunk. (The plywood sections are cut so they fit along the sides beneath the thwarts when the boat is underway.)

Shelter is available in a variety of ways. One, a three-quarters size dodger held up by a line to the mast and snagged over the stern. It's very simple to set up, even in a strong wind, and when the dory is anchored by the stern, the boat wind-vanes and the dodger provides an effective shelter (see top right picture). Two, a full length tent supported by flexible battens that gives the appearance of a Conestoga wagon and provides complete shelter from the elements (see bottom right picture). Three, a good set of foulies. Two wooden boxes, cut to fit under the thwarts, are useful for stowing cooking gear, lights, bug spray, etc. Consistent stowage is so important for peace of mind. (I've spent up to a week in the dory, often without being driven to profanity more than once or twice a day.)

continued on page 19

Top: What can you say about two old men in a row boat? Top Right: Wind-vanes and the dodger provides an effective shelter Bottom Right: Dory under full camping shelter.

Oar Etiquette and A Rant on the Misunderstanding of Tradition

by John Murray

I have noticed a recent trend of oars swiveled till the handle is outboard and the blade rests on an inboard seat. Let us call this technique "swiveling oars." It creates the following problems:

1. It deposits salt water on the seat, and this dries to salt crystals, excellent for causing a rash on the bum.

2. For boats swinging on a mooring, facing the current it acts as a kind of barb for careless rowers to run into, such as I have experienced. It is also excellent for catching trailing ropes and fishing lines.

3. Left on the beach this way can spear careless walkers in the groin.

4. It lacks the aesthetics and symmetry of properly drawn oars.

The proper way of handling oars is to draw the handle inboard and forward till the blades are up against the oarlocks. On moorings some prefer to do this instead of boating the oars as the latter results in salt water being laid on the seat and the oars rolling around in the boat with each wave.

I have researched terms for this common technique and none of the historic terms describe it. However, I would like to propose that this technique be called "drawing oars."

Now that I have that off my chest, let us look at what is meant by "traditional" seeing as that is what this magazine is all about. We are now in the twenty-first century and what was not traditional in 1970 may well have become traditional now. The Free Online Dictionary defines traditional as "A set of customs and usages viewed as a coherent body of precedents influencing the present."

This morning I heard a radio conversation that went thus: "Are you going back to traditional music for the accordion?" Answer: "But what is traditional music for an accordion? It is still a developing instrument."

The truly excellent Herreshoff rowboat was designed in 1947 and reached its final form in 1979 at the hands of John Gardner and, I suppose, could not have been called traditional design then, even though traditional clinker methods of construction were used. But always the best timbers, glues, and fastenings were used as they became available. For example, urea formaldehyde glue superseded casein, and this was superseded by resorcinol formaldehyde and then epoxy. So what is traditional is a constant improvement of form, function, and construction. In addition machine tools (shock, horror) replaced hand tools. At around the same time as the Herreshoff boat was designed in 1947, fiberglass came onto the scene. This has now been in use for over 60 years and may now be considered "traditional." What should not apply today is the ugly blow molded heavy contraptions made out of polyethylene, polypropylene, or ABS plastic. So far these only seem to have made it into canoes, but it won't be long before they graduate.

I noticed in our local rag this week a promotion of the modern tender, which has now almost completely replaced the rowing tender. It is a motorized rubber blow up thing, which has become a "status symbol to flaunt alongside your cruiser, to tie outside the taverns, and be seen on board."

continued on page 17

Top: David Micklethwaite rows his home built boat with Gaco rowlocks and oars with the "sailing blades." He is "delighted with them." If the planks are ply and bonded by epoxy, is his Oughtred design "traditional?"

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Building Hollow Wooden Oars: Part 1

by Jim Swallow

The natural extension to building your own wooden rowing boat is to build your own oars. Although I had built several boats, I had always eschewed building oars because the only oars I have ever seen made by boat builders were crude at worst and unappealing at best, unless they were made by master woodworkers, whose capabilities far exceeded mine. Hence, I bought oars, and although the prices have been dear, the looks and performance have been good.

This came to an abrupt halt after I managed to shatter two pairs of $600 sculling oars within two years. The first was due to running into a pier at rather high speed and the second was due to an immense act of stupidity that I cannot describe. So, after the tears and self-recrimination subsided, I decided I needed to reconsider the idea of building my own oars.

A careful examination of the shattered remains revealed that these beautiful, hollow sculling oars could be made with normal shop tools and the woodworking skills that I possessed. Over a period of about two weeks, I constructed a very nice set of 9'8" sculling oars that subsequent use has confirmed to be a worthy replacement. I then realized that I could make the same shaped oar scaled down to the 8'6" length I used in my dory. This boat is usually rowed by two rowers, and I figured that I could make two pair in almost the same time as it took to make one. What follows is a photo essay of that process.

I started with two 9' and one 4' lengths of 2" x 5" air-dried Coastal Cypress. Ideally, spruce would be used because of its light weight, high tensile strength, and straight, clear grain pattern. Unfortunately, spruce is very hard to come by, so I opted for Coastal Cypress, since some clear, air-dried, and affordable pieces are available in my area. Compared with spruce, it has many similar characteristics but is about 20% heavier. I predicted—and subsequent experience has confirmed—that for recreational rowing, the slight added weight will not matter if the oars are well-balanced and move easily in the oar locks.

The 9' lengths are ripped on a table saw to provide eight roughly 1" x 2" strips. Cut a few extra if you plan to make laminated, rather than solid, spoons (see below). The strips are then thickness planed to 1¾" x ⅞", so that they will be 1¾" square in cross section when "clam shelled" together.

The strips are stickered and weighted for several days to do what little more drying they are going to do and to "relax" a bit.

Next, dadoes are cut with a radial arm saw into the outboard sections of what will become the oar shafts. Although it is a bit tricky to lower the dado blade into the material so that just the right depth is cut, it worked well for me.

For a four foot distance from just outside the oarlock to just before the

blade, three decreasing dado widths are cut to such a depth that when clam-shelled together, the "voids" will be 7/8" x 7/8", 5/8" x 7/8", and 3/8" x 7/8". The dadoes must be reduced in width because the shaft is tapered in the vertical direction. In the horizontal direction, where the forces are greatest during the stroke, there is very little taper.

Next, the two halves are "clam-shelled" together and glued with epoxy.

This is one of several uses for the long bench vice I made on the face of my work bench. A "fence" is secured in the vice and the two halves are clamped to it vertically, and at the same time to the bench horizontally, to assure a perfectly straight shaft. Strips of plastic sheeting are carefully placed so just the shaft parts are glued and nothing gets attached to any part of the jig.

I had previously paired, oriented, and marked the strips.

Each of the future shafts is glued, clamped, and dried thoroughly. Once they are removed from the gluing jig, the centers are carefully marked at each end, and 1/4" holes are drilled 3/4" deep, which will serve as the pivot points on each end when time comes to turn the grip. You want the grip to be in the center of the oar, so this step must be done before doing any tapering or shaping. I use an awl to mark the center of the hole, and then carefully drill.

After marking 1" in from each end for removal during the project and making sure the final length of the oar will be 8'6" (or whatever length you have decided on), the tapers are marked. The taper starts 6' up from the end of the spoon and tapers 7/16". I use a 7' long level that has a very straight edge to mark the tapers, and I put one mark on each side so that when I saw them on the table saw, I could cut one side, turn the piece over, and make the same cut on the other side. Making the same cut each time lessens the chance for error.

After the tapers are "rough cut" on the table saw, I smooth and flatten each cut with a jointing plane. This is another very handy use for my long bench vise. If you can't do this step perfectly with the plane, consider using a jointer for the job.

continued on page 14

Building a Replica Boat from the 1900s Petoskey Boat Co.

by Bud McIntire

With its origins lost in the archives of the mid-late 1800s, a "new" Petoskey Boat Co. was "organized from the old Petoskey Boat Company" in December 1901 by business partners L.R. Merrill & J.S. Burnham. Their shop was a thriving business on the waterfront in downtown Petoskey, Michigan, with a 2,400-square-foot building built in 1906 on the site of their old facilities (see top right photo), which burned to the ground—as many wooden boat shops do.

The Petoskey Company crafted a variety of rowing, sailing and eventually power boats. Building between 150–200 boats per year in sizes typically ranging from 14'–30', this was a significant enterprise. The partners built a new boat livery and storage building on the waterfront in 1909 and a boat showroom, employing 15–20 skilled wooden boat builders.

Their largest boat was the 80' steam-powered passenger boat contracted by A.L. Hamill in 1906–7 to be used for the Inland Water Route from Cheboygan to Topinabee. In 1911 Merrill bought out his partner, Burnham, and continued under the original name for many years; however, after this date the archives again grow cold and the history is lost.

In the early 1990s the business was re-opened under the original name by local boat builder and vintage automobile restorer, Jack Gardner. He employed several wooden boat craftsmen in both restoring older wooden boats and building new ones. Although no longer an active business, the name is still on record.

Petoskey resident Mr. John Young owns an original 14-foot Petoskey rowing boat, which his grandfather bought used in the 1930s. Actively enjoyed on Douglas Lake by three generations of the family, the boat finally became a bit too leaky to trust, so it was put away as a family artifact. After languishing in storage for many years, Mr. Young considered having the reasonably well-preserved boat restored.

Young discovered the Great Lakes Boat Building School in Michigan's Les Chenaux Islands in the eastern Upper Peninsula, and asked if a newly-built replica of his original boat could be crafted. GLBBS Program Director Pat Mahon saw an excellent opportunity for the school's students. Not only would they learn how to build a fine wooden boat, they would also learn more about, and help preserve, the extensive heritage of wooden boat building in northern Michigan.

The first step in building a replica of a historical boat is "taking off the lines," which is to carefully measure all surfaces of the boat and then re-create the full-size drawings which would have been used to build the boat originally. The process of making these drawings is called "lofting." Great care must be taken in doing this to make sure that the lines of the boat are "fair." Lofting is a challenge because older boats can become twisted and misshapen over the years.

With complete, accurate and fair lofting of the boat, the students began the actual building process. Just as the Petoskey Boat Company did over 100 years ago, they fabricated the molds which the boat is built on and shaped the keel, stem, stern post, and transom from clear-grain Douglas fir and native white oak. These components are centered on the molds and comprise the "backbone" of the boat.

Next came the overlapping "lapstrake" planking. Using native northern white cedar, just like the original boat, the students crafted each plank, or strake, to its exact place on the boat. In some cases, they had to steam bend the planks where excessive bend and twist was needed to fit it to the boat.

With the hull fully planked, it was flipped right side up and steam-bent white oak frames, rails, and the breasthook were installed using traditional copper clinch nails, copper rivet-and-rove fasteners, as well as bronze screws. The necessary hardware was installed and marine finishes were applied to complete the boat.

The students also made a correct set of oars for the boat, so it is ready to return to Douglas Lake for a summer of rowing, fishing and just "messin' about" on the water where Mr. Young and his family can take a step back, some 80 years, in time!

The first appearance for the boat was a display at the Quiet Water Symposium, held March 1, 2014, and the official launch was May 15. We hope that Mssrs. Burnham & Merrill are able to glimpse one of their fine craft on the water again, as we think they will be gratified to see the work of a new generation of craftsmen carrying on the work they started in 1901.

Left: On Display. Right: On the water.

New Life for Hurricane Island

by Barney Hallowell

A hundred years ago Hurricane Island, located 12 miles offshore in Penobscot Bay, Maine, was a granite quarrying community with enormous steam boilers, huge cranes, and a single track railroad. People lived to work and worked to survive. Fifty years later, a new community arose on the island: a thriving Outward Bound community. That too, disappeared when competition and the high cost of operating a sea school offshore forced relocation to the mainland.

Now a new community is developing on Hurricane Island. It is privately owned, but a new nonprofit organization, the Hurricane Island Foundation, leases most of it to run its Center for Science and Leadership. The island, a favorite destination of boaters, is about one mile by one-half mile, totaling 125 acres. The organization secured a 40-year lease in 2009 and began running programs on-island in 2011.

The new community is building on the island's unique location, character, and extraordinary beauty, and focused on marine science and ecology, resilient support systems, and education for the 21st century. The purpose is to conduct scientific, technical, and academic research in such areas as climate change, lobster biology, cultural ecology, natural history, and sustainable energy technology that cannot be done as well almost anywhere else.

Students from middle school through college come to the island to do hands-on work in the STEM fields with resident scientists and educators and to learn to become environmental leaders. On Hurricane, "alternative" and "sustainable" energy systems are not a choice but a practical necessity. Without them, scientific work and community life could not happen.

Hurricane is not an artificial community or a laboratory demonstration of sustainable technology. It is a real working scientific and educational community, a model of resilient, cutting edge systems,

continued on page 15

Top: Hurricane Island. Lower: The Maine Deptartment of Education...rowing twelve miles to class.













Hull and Back

by Richard Honan

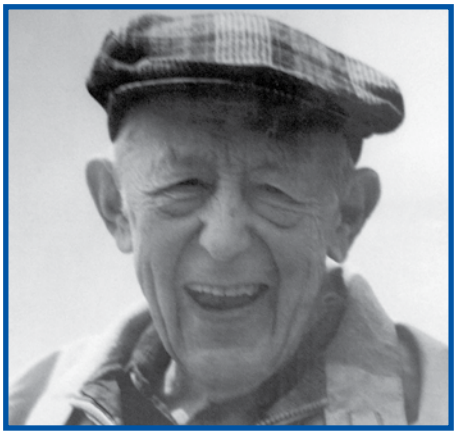
With calm seas and temperatures expected to rise to the high 20s, the conditions were near perfect for the annual mid-winter Hull Snow Row. In what has become a ritual of winter, we gathered aboard Larry Bradley's lobster boat, the *Sandy B*, for the journey across Boston Harbor to Windmill Point and the Hull Lifesaving Station.

We had two boats aboard the *Sandy B*, Richard Honan's home built 15' Ducktrap Wherry, the *William & Anthony,* and Josh Aranov's, the *Lucy Too*, a 12' Whitehall pulling boat. There was a lot of excitement in the air as we arrived in Hull. Boats and crews from all over New England were scattered along the beach. Who would have thought that so many people would be so eager to get out on the water on such a cold winter day?

We unloaded our boats and secured a spot on the beach for our boats. The race, which started approximately 10:30 a.m., is a four mile course around Hingham Harbor, beginning and ending just off the old Lifesaving Station. Conditions were near ideal, the temperature a toasty thirty degrees, a light southerly wind, and the sun peaking through the thin cloud cover.

Although we were once again denied a spot in the top three finishers, Brother Bill, Josh, and I considered the day a success. After the race we gathered on the rear deck of Larry's boat with our own personal cheering squad for some hot chili, sandwiches, a little brandy, and a congratulatory toast to another Hull Snow Row.

John Gardner Grant



"To preserve, continue, and expand the achievements, vision and goals of John Gardner by enriching and disseminating our traditional small craft heritage."

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.tsca.net/JohnGardnerGrant.html

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Florida Gives Folk Heritage Award to Boat Builder

by Cindy Lane

Whenever you see Bob Pitt, you can bet there's a boat nearby. For eight years, Bob supervised the nationally recognized volunteer crew of boatbuilders at the Florida Maritime Museum's boatbuilding shop in the FISH Preserve in Cortez. He remains active in the historic fishing village, building boats with volunteers and serving as president of the Florida Gulf Coast TSCA.

Pitt was awarded a Florida Folk Heritage Award for his traditional boatbuilding skills. The award is conferred on "outstanding folk artists and folk culture advocates who have made longstanding contributions to the folk cultural resources of the state," according to the Department of State's Division of Historical Resources.

Dr. Tina Bucuvalas, curator of Arts and Historical Resources in Tarpon Springs, nominated Bob for the award. She wrote, "Pitt has demonstrated a lifelong interest in preserving maritime history by teaching and practicing disappearing skills. His profound knowledge of regional boat building has not been learned from books, but was passed down to him from knowledgeable, skilled boat builders and refined through a lifetime of experience."

The saltwater in his veins comes from a family of shipbuilders and captains who lived from the 1750s to 1868, when they arrived in Key West on his great-great-grandfather's schooner, *Azorian*. His mother's family was immersed in the culture of the islands of Florida, Cuba, and the Bahamas, where his great-grandmother was born.

Bob was born in Sarasota in 1953 and grew up near 85 acres of piney woods and palmetto. He spent his childhood in Florida scrubs and along coastlines with his father, collecting scallops and crabs to eat and all types of sea life for their saltwater aquariums.

Pitt learned sailing from his father and began helping with boat repairs at age seven, eventually working at Durbeck Yachts. A liveaboard, he augmented his skills with boat carpentry while apprenticing with a Welsh shipwright. He and his wife, Cynthia, moved ashore to the old Manatee County village of Fogartyville in 1978 when their first child was born. Their house, built in 1885, had been the first church in Fogartyville.

In 1993, the Fogarty family donated Bat Fogarty's Boat Works to the Manatee Village Historical Park, a county historical site. When it opened, employees did not have enough maritime knowledge to identify many of the tools, so Bob was brought on board to identify tools and boat parts. He stayed on for 12 years to refurbish the museum, develop a curriculum for school tours and serve as a volunteer.

In 2005, Pitt began working for Manatee County as the volunteer/education coordinator at the Florida Maritime Museum at Cortez. During his tenure, they logged 8,300 volunteer hours per year building museum displays and boats distinctive to the area.

Some of the most culturally significant boats were the *Sallie Adams* (an 1890s design Cortez 21-foot mullet boat), the *Esperanza* (a 16-foot Cuban refugee boat, which came into Pitt's possession decades after it brought a group of Cuban refugees to Florida), the *Anna Menendez* (a 24-foot Spanish longboat built for DeSoto National Memorial historical reenactments) and the *Elizabeth Ring* (an 18-foot Bat Fogarty sailing skiff built for three people to camp and cruise Florida rivers).

The museum also implemented an outreach program to display the boats throughout Florida and as far as Pennsylvania, Maine, and Maryland, garnering national recognition and admiration.

The Sallie Adams

Hollow Oars

continued from page 7

Using that bench vise, again, I create a "fence" 1¾" off the surface of the bench and then attach another 1¾" high piece about 3' away to create a "trough" that will serve as a jig to rout the flat and top sides of the shaft. The "flat side" is routed with a ⅜" round-over bit and the "top" is routed with a 1" round-over. That leaves plenty of flat material on the "bottom side" of the shaft that will bear against the pin in the oarlock, and the 1" round-over on top will create the "spine" of the shaft. I put a stop on the blade end of the shaft, so as to not interfere with the construction of the blade.

Here you'll see in the bottom left picture what will become the grip end of the shaft. That 1" round-over creates almost a half-circle on the grip end, but as the picture below shows, as the shaft tapers, a distinct "spine" appears exactly in the center. This must end before you reach the blade, as the transition from shaft to blade will require a different method of shaping, later.

Now it is time to shape the grip. This is an approximately 1½" x 5½" cylinder in the center of the shaft on the end opposite the blade. The best way to do this is to rotate the shaft on its axis. This is where those holes drilled in the ends earlier come in to play. I remove my routing jig from the bench and place a spindle at each end of the oar. This set-up allows me to turn the oar by hand on its axis.

I place a guide for my router over the end where I want the grip to be. This is aligned over the end of the shaft. Stops are placed very carefully to get the right dimensions, and the router is slid back and forth in the guide, as I rotate the shaft by hand. I end up with perfectly round grips of just the right length.

The shafts are now done. There will be some final shaping and sanding, but they are done. Now, it's time to shift gears. Construction of the oar blades is a "sculpting" project, whereas what has been done before is a "machining" project. The second half of the project consists of making and sculpting the blades, doing a final sanding, then applying the finish. The final step is to install the sleeves, buttons, and grips, then the new oars can be taken out and used.

Part 2 will appear in the Fall issue of *The Ash Breeze*.

Hurricane Island

continued from page 10

utilizing solar energy, low impact waste management, high performance building construction, local food production, and daily living practices that focus on conservation and environmental preservation. The off-grid infrastructure serves as a teaching tool for all program participants.

The rebirth of Hurricane combines the strength and heritage of its granite quarrying days with the innovation and education of Outward Bound, reversing the 100 year trend of declining Maine island communities and again contributing to the nation and world. Hurricane Island strives to serve as a model for all who come to visit of how to live more gently, purposefully, and responsibly.

Visitors are welcome to come ashore and explore the nearly four miles of hiking trails. Several moorings are available on a first-come, first serve basis, and small crafts can land at the sandy beach at the north end of the island. Programs run from April through October, and include high school science classes, summer programs for teens, and a myriad of contract courses, including wilderness medical training, masonry oven construction and baking workshops, a writers' retreat, and a school leaders' conference.

You can learn more at www.hurricaneisland.net or by calling 207-867-6050

Top: Measuring our whelk site
Bottom: Students learning in a seaside classroom.

Crossing the Bar

Sadly this spring the TSCA lost two stalwart members, Myron Young and Chuck Meyer. Both were key organizers and supporters of our organizations and served in leadership roles through the years.

Myron Young, 82, Laurel, NY, was a TSCA member from the very early stages of our development. He loved sailing and rowing, was a skilled boat builder and wrote several stories for Messing About in Boats. His rowing boat, the first recorded boat from John Gardner's plans for GREEN MACHINE, is now a part of the livery at Mystic Seaport.

Ben Fuller, from the Down East Chapter in Maine, said, "We had some pretty good times when I was working at the (Mystic) Seaport—a good guy and excellent craftsman. We should work to get his boats into appreciative hands." John Weiss, from Puget Sound Chapter in Washington said, "Myron was an inspiration to many of us, including to me personally."

Chuck Meyer, 78, Grand Island, NY, was a key organizer of the Buffalo Maritime Museum (formerly Scajaquada) Chapter. A quiet man, Chuck came aboard in the fall of 1994, answering an ad for community volunteers to help build a traditional Whitehall lifeboat for the Schooner *America* being built in Albany. Chuck not only helped build the boat and helped finance it, but he never left.

President Board of Trustees at Buffalo Maritime Center John Montague said, "Chuck was the founding member of the adult volunteers who have become such a central part of our mission and our operations." Chuck also served as TSCA National Treasurer from 2008–13.

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Oar Etiquette

continued from page 4

Oars are not optional in old motor boats.

And, "what is a greater sight than a bunch of tykes puttering about the anchorage in a tender?" Makes you so proud of your wealth and status, doesn't it? So this is the enemy of the ancient art of rowing, and this is what now makes the rowboat of almost any type "traditional."

I must agree with Andre de Bardeladem's (of Middle Path Boats) on the rowing performance of some of the traditional boats of old (in the 2013 Fall issue). As a sea scout, I experienced the sluggish performance and heavy hardwood oars of the whaleboats and heavy clinker rowing boats. In 1988 I took part in a reenactment of the 200-year anniversary row of Captain Arthur Phillip to Dangar Island in a whaleboat. Wow, what a task that was. This attitude seems to be implied in the Fall 2013 issue. After rowing the whaleboat the author commented that "the consensus was, don't argue with a real whale man." My very strong friend Anders made a similar comment after rowing the whaleboat made by the Living Boat Trust in Franklin Tasmania. This type of heavy boat is difficult to maintain, store, and row and is destined to turn people away from the activity.

The Herreshoff rowboats we build weigh 72 pounds, can be easily car topped, and launched and are wonderful to row. I own a traditional putt-putt that requires a mooring fee, a license fee, annual anti-fouling, and general maintenance including, now, replacement of a cracked head. I love it but the rowboat loves me back by giving me none of this.

In order to be traditional, I believe that the rowboat should be aesthetic with elements of wood such as gunwales, backrests, foot stretchers, and oars. It should be light for ease of handling, seaworthiness, and rowing. It should be capable of carrying three adults in reasonable comfort and safety, but forget about a sliding seat, traditional all right, but for racing skiffs. Such a boat made out of low maintenance fiberglass will have a much better chance of attracting the public to the fine and fading art of rowing.

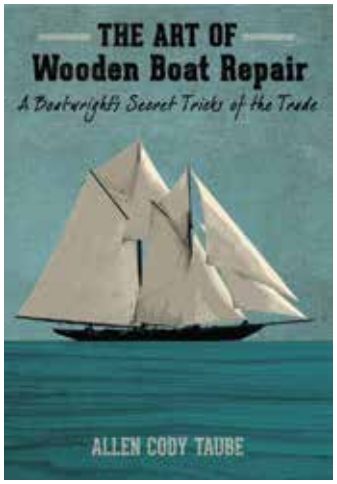
I much admire Andre's work on developing rowing skiffs and gained much from the articles on his website. Particularly I was interested in his comment that boats over 18 feet had too much windage and were difficult to handle in a blow. Anybody tempted to win races with a longer boat should remember this as they may be sacrificing practicality and safety for speed.

Before leaving the matter I must take issue with Greg Foster whose *Ash Breeze* article appeared in Vol. 17, No. 3 in 1995. The article is in the excellent book *Building Classic Small Craft* by John Gardner. Greg in his article "The Dark Side of John Gardner" refers variously to oars as poverty sticks and agony sticks. If not satire, I would argue the point. I doubt too many people who make rowing equipment are making serious money, and I regard my own activities as a paid hobby, but a passion nonetheless. I will agree that some oars are indeed agony sticks. It is one reason I have paid so much attention to the design of oars and rowlocks. I have argued in this magazine that a round oar is the wrong shape and also that the traditional flat blade is quite inefficient (articles about these have appeared in *The Ash Breeze* and on my website www.gacooarlocks.com). We oarsmen and women have so little horsepower that efficient rowing equipment is highly desirable. For this reason, I use carbon fiber for the blades to enable the compound shape needed for the highest efficiency. This is then painted white to preserve the aesthetic look of the traditional oar.

Notwithstanding all of the above, I have to confess that I find magic in the older clinkers and carvels planked over ribs and fastened with copper nails and roves and varnished. To me they have a whiff of old square-riggers and long gone old salts. However, I am old enough to have had experience of these craft when they were used as hire boats, and it was rare to find one that did not leak, and being waterlogged, quite heavy. It would be a shame if a passion for building these craft died, but it would be equally a shame if the more practical, lighter, and durable modern classic type designs died. This would make rowing less practical as a modern healthy, environmentally friendly, activity.

The Art of Wooden Boat Repair: A Boatwright's Secret Tricks of the Trade by Allen Cody Taube

Book Review by Andy Wolfe



What we have here is a book that's worth a whole lot more than the $19.95 cover price. Allen Taube has really provided a step-by-step working guide to all those things the old shipwrights knew and the wannabes need to know. His writing style is conversational, and informal. His instructions and illustrations and side stories are clear and understandable. He is insightful and the reader will come away with a sense of *can do* and *now that makes sense*.

Taube's story covers 40 years of boat building, owning and sailing wooden schooners, marine surveying, and wooden boat repair. He takes time and care to answer the many legitimate questions a boat carpenter or boat owner might ask.

Beginning with the directive that developing a good positive attitude, organization, and making good templates are most important to your success, Allen moves on to discuss practical details like selecting and using the correct tools and woods, framing, building a steam box, replacing sawn and laminated frames, and replacing and repairing carvel planking. He clearly illustrates the art of caulking, refastening, and making templates for floor timbers. You'll learn how to battle shipworms and putty bugs, what woods they like and those they don't. Everything is covered, from replacing and repairing stems, keels, and keel bolts to through-hulls, masts and rigging, and decks, and includes more than 100 hand drawn illustrations.

So if you'd like to take the mystery out of wooden boat repair and learn some of those hoarded tricks of the trade, buy this book—you'll feel confident and have the information you need to work on, repair, and maintain your own wooden boat.

The publisher is giving TSCA members a hefty 15% discount if you purchase direct from this secure url link, www.createspace.com/4163631 using this discount code M626GPWU.

Old Boats

continued from page 3

And a sailing rig, of course! I started with the traditional sprit rig plus a small jib (see top right picture). This proved to be a good arrangement; simple and the dory would sail upwind like a dog walks on his hind legs. Eventually leeboards helped. Operating on a broken wing device I made, leeboards were effective but awkward to put in place, so after thirty years I figured I might consider a change. Iain Oughtred's "Variations on the Lugsail" (*WoodenBoat*, no. 73, Nov/Dec 1986) encouraged me to think that a standing lug might be an improvement on the sprit rig. And the leeboards? Replace them with a daggerboard. (But what a hard decision that was! Cutting a slit in the bottom of the dory for a daggerboard, casing-sacrilege! But, there you are, progress, ehh?!) I experimented with a mizzen, but it was more trouble than it was worth.

I've changed the rudder several times, once because it broke and again after the upgrade to a lug rig. A tiller is awkward in a dory so I use rudder lines. Recently I got the idea of running these lines through pulleys forward of the stern seat so that I can look ahead while sailing without having the steering lines draped over my shoulders or on my lap, where it is easy to pull the wrong one. A friend advised me about a downhaul, and I found that it does wonders for tightening up the lug sail.

As the boat and I age (37 and 84 respectively), I sometimes think about a motor. But dories don't handle well with a motor. With their narrow, angled stern, they tend to squat under power, get out of trim, look ugly, and don't steer well. A motor well? No! I could never cut a hole that size in the bottom; and the sides of the boat are too high for a normal engine mount. A lightweight, electric trolling motor with a long shaft off the transom? Ummm, maybe? But batteries are heavy and take up space inside the hull. Anyway, there appears to be some time ahead for both of us to continue with experiments, to age together. I admit that I talk to her, quite often now, sometime curse her when she's clumsy; and a boat will behave differently under similar conditions on different days. Some days she rows like a dream; other days it feels like I'm towing a sack of cement. I've rowed racing shells, whitehalls, peapods, skiffs, whaleboats, etc. They are all good in their own way.

Top: A traditional sprit rig plus a small jib.
Bottom: A boat to grow old with.

The dory is heavy, high-sided, with enough rocker to turn quickly—in short, a traditional boat that is responsive and relatively safe in the open ocean off the Golden Gate, and presumably on the Grand Banks. She is more of a workboat than a pleasure craft in the sense that I believe Mr. Bardelaben intends, but my dory does work well under the conditions for which she was built. I have chosen to adapt to her quirks rather than seek a more perfect boat. We're both sort of stubborn.

WoodenBoat Show

June 27–29 at Mystic Seaport

The John Gardner Workshop runs from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. The TSCA will have a booth to acquaint show attendees with the organization and demonstrate skills that enhance the traditional small boat experience. All TSCA members are encouraged to bring a boat and join in the fun.

The boats of the Mystic Seaport Boat House will also be available at no charge for show participants to use. We are hoping for a continuous back drop to the show of traditional small craft in action on the river.

At 8 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday morning there will be a cruise in-company leaving from Australia Beach rowing up river or down river to Mason's Island depending on the weather. All workshop attendees are invited to cruise along.

Workshop Registration forms are posted on TSCA.net.

Bids for Council

Mike Wick

Brought up in a sailing family, Mike Wick said, "Sailing and racing were always my prime avocation during my career as a schoolteacher." Mike worked for almost a decade onboard tall ships, primarily the sloop *Providence* out of Rhode Island, and earned his 100 ton Coast Guard Master's License.

In 2005 Mike was elected to the TSCA Council and served two terms as Secretary. Locally he served as vice president and president of the Delaware River Chapter, editing the newsletter, *Mainsheet*. Mike co-edited *The Ash Breeze* from 2009–12 and is the journal's advertising manager.

Roger Allen

Prior to his last three years at Buffalo (NY) Maritime Center, Roger Allen founded and was the Director of Workshop on the Water at the (now) Independence Seaport Museum in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He was instrumental in creating the Florida Maritime Museum in Cortez, Florida, and also served as the Director of the Harvey Smith Watercraft Center at the North Carolina State Maritime Museum.

At Buffalo, Roger has been responsible for moving the BMC into its own 27,000 square foot facility in the historic Black Rock section of the city and managing the $380,000 renovation to the building.

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Chapter member? ☐ Yes ☐ No Which Chapter? _____

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Photocopy and mail to: Secretary, Traditional Small Craft Association, Inc., PO Box 350, Mystic, CT 06355. Or go online to tsca.net/member_join.html

Note: Individual and Family Memberships qualify for one vote and one copy of each TSCA mailing.

Family Memberships qualify all members of the immediate family to participate in all other TSCA activities.

The Ash Breeze

Fall 2014, Volume 35 Number 3

Editorial Deadline: August 1, 2014

Articles: ***The Ash Breeze*** is a member-supported publication; members are welcome to contribute. ***We strongly encourage you to send material electronically***. Send text in an e-mail message, or as an MS Word attachment. Send photos as e-mail attachments, in TIFF or JPG formats, as large and/or as high-resolution as possible. Please give captions naming people, places, and to whom photo credit should be given. You may also submit photographic prints, clean line drawings or ***typewritten*** material by U.S. Mail. ***Please contact us IN ADVANCE if you must submit handwritten text, or material in another word processing or image format.***

E-mail to: *mikewick55@yahoo.com* or *andy@marinermedia.com*.

The editors reserve the right to refuse publication of any material deemed not to be in the best interest of the TSCA.

Advertising Rates: For insertion into four consecutive issues of *The Ash Breeze* —

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Patches: 3 inches in diameter featuring our logo with a white sail and a golden spar and oar on a light-blue background. Black lettering and a dark-blue border. $3.00 Please send a SASE with your order.

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Visit: ***www.tsca.net/wares.html*** **for ordering information.**

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Help us save time and postage by updating your membership *before* we send you a renewal request. Cut out or photocopy the membership form **at the top of this page**, complete it and return it with your renewal payment to the Secretary, PO Box 350, Mystic, CT 06355. Or, you may send the **address portion of the back cover** with your payment.

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