

# *The* Ash Breeze

Journal of the Traditional Small Craft Association

## CAMP CRUISING

### *IN THIS ISSUE*

Youth and Boat Building

Making Boat Kits

What We Missed



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#### Editor:

**Andy Wolfe**

[andy@marinermedia.com](mailto:andy@marinermedia.com)

#### Editors Emeriti:

Richard S. Kolin

Sam & Marty King

David & Katherine Cockey

Ralph Notaristefano

Ken Steinmetz

John Stratton

Dan Drath

Ned Asplundh

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: Tom Friedl and Hannah Flood in Doug Hylan designed 'Beach Pea'. Hatch Cove, Castine, Maine. Photo by Rosemary Wyman.*

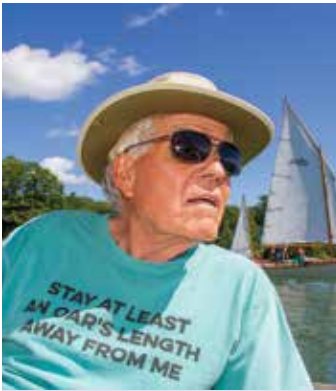


Photo by Rosemary Wyman

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*David Wyman*

I have been fortunate to have spent much of my life in and around boats of all types and sizes. That said, small traditional boats continue to be my passion. I love designing, building, and using small boats and helping others to do the same. Some of you know me from my involvement in the Downeast Chapter's Small Reach Regatta or from the articles I have written for *The Ash Breeze*. My greatest joy is heading out on the water for an hour, a day, or a multiday adventure either alone or with friends, many of whom I have gotten to know through the TSCA.

I have given a lot of thought about what I could do to further our association during my year as president. The word and concept of communication has come to the forefront. At present, our main form of communication is our wonder journal, *The Ash Breeze*, a Facebook Group with over 4,300 members, and a well-designed website. We have a substantial number of diverse chapters, spread from coast to coast, who are joined by a common interest, but chapters have little interaction with each other. We also have a national council (made up of nine members, elected at large by the membership for three year terms) plus four officers, but in-person meetings of the council and officers are impossible because of geography. In the past, emails have been used with limited success as a tool for communication. With the recent rise in the popularity of the virtual meeting due to the pandemic, we have an opportunity. In July, the TSCA council and officers had their first virtual meeting on Zoom. During this meeting, we got to know each other a little and we started a discussion of what important issues the council should consider. The list developed in our first meeting included:

- Encourage education programs for youth
- Greater emphasis on boat building
- Generate a TSCA Blog for the website for updates and the exchange of information
- Develop better synchronization between national TSCA and the Chapters
- Promote commercial sponsorship of *The Ash Breeze*

*continued on page 25*





# ONE SAILOR'S APPROACH TO CAMP CRUISING

*by Douglass Oeller*

My favorite time to be out in a small boat is the last two hours before sunset. The air temperature cools, most of the boat traffic goes away, and the ever-changing colors of sunlight reflecting from the surface of the water are captivating. I have tried to photograph this light show, but you can't capture or even describe the experience. You have to be there. In my opinion, the best way to do that is to choose a safe anchorage, drop your hook in the late afternoon, and spend the night on your boat. To me, experiencing these evenings on the water is a strong part of the allure of camp cruising.

Camp cruising is a broad topic, and there are many approaches to the hobby. For this article, I am using the term to refer to sleeping aboard a boat that does not have built-in accommodations. A variation on this theme is beach cruising when you spend nights camping ashore. Either way, you get to enjoy more time on or by the water without the expense of a large, complex cruising boat.

I live in Maryland. For the last 15 years, I have been camp cruising in a 15' Marsh Cat design catboat. Catboats make good camping platforms because they are beamy, stable, and shallow draft. You can anchor in sheltered places where larger vessels cannot venture. And you get a lot of living space on a short waterline. Initially, most of my trips were local in the rivers and creeks of the Chesapeake Bay. As I gained experience and confidence, I started planning longer road trips that eventually covered the East Coast from Florida to Nova Scotia. Camp cruising is now my favorite hobby, and I encourage you to give it a try.

What do you need to get started? Not much. During the quarantine period for the COVID-19 pandemic, I spent a lot more time than usual watching videos on YouTube. The movement toward "tiny homes" is interesting to me. So, I watched a lot of tours of small living spaces. The links in those videos took me to a series of videos featuring people who

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*Top: Morning at anchor with rain fly and boarding ladder deployed.*



build their own log cabins. That topic took me to links about tent camping. From there I found a series about camping with only a tarp for shelter. Finally, I reached some videos of people using piled brush, caves, or holes in the ground for shelter. It was sort of a devolution of human dwellings. And it was a good reminder that we tend to create complex ways to deal with basic needs. The relevance to camp cruising is that it is OK to start, and maybe stay, simple.

The requirements are basic—food and water, shelter, bedding, and a sanitary way to deal with human waste. If you become an enthusiast, you can add refinements to how you meet these needs and choose a level of comfort and complexity that suits your budget and lifestyle expectations. So, let's get started.

## FOOD & DRINK

We're going to be aboard the boat for at least two days and one night. How should we handle meals? You can decide how simple or complex dining should be. I have friends who camp cruise without a stove or cooler. They eat mostly packaged or prepared foods and somehow survive without the life-saving properties of ice cubes. I am not that hardy. I like cold beverages, hot meals, and coffee in the morning.

To me, coffee is a necessity of life. For camp cruising, I have tried using coffee bags, freeze dried coffee, a filter device that mimics drip-type coffee makers, an old-fashioned percolator, and a French press. The French press is my current favorite method of brewing coffee. It produces flavorful coffee and is

safe to use on a boat rocking at anchor. You can find plastic ones made for camping.

The type of food I carry differs for short and long trips. For a short trip, I carry instant oatmeal, fruit cups, and juice boxes for breakfast. Lunch is usually a sandwich of PB&J or cold cuts. Dinners are left-over or pre-cooked meals from home that I can easily re-heat. I enjoy dairy products and usually carry milk, cheese, and butter. If I will be out for more than two nights, I bring groceries and prepare simple meals much as I would at home.

If you plan to cook, you will need a stove. My favorite is a single burner butane cartridge stove. Propane stoves also work well on boats but are heavier and take up more space. Some camp cruisers use cannister stoves intended for backpacking. But those seem a bit unstable to me.

You can do most of your cooking in a single pot. If you plan to cook meals, start by using a small pot from your kitchen. As the hobby takes hold you can acquire more gear. If you camp often, you will probably want a pot with lid, small skillet, and a kettle to heat water. The kettle makes pouring boiling water much safer.

For dishes and dining utensils you can bring things from your kitchen at home, use disposable picnic ware, or purchase items intended for camping. I carry "silverware" that I borrowed from our kitchen, plastic plates and bowls, and a tin mug that serves equally well



*Left: The galley Box. Below: Cockpit set up for sleeping and cooking. Under the fore deck are a bucket with toilet seat and supply of Wag® Bags. Next to the bucket is a water-resistant plastic bin to store wallet and truck keys, electronic devices, spare batteries, and a first aid kit. The stove sits atop a galley box that holds all items necessary for cooking and dining. The tote in the fore ground is for food storage.*



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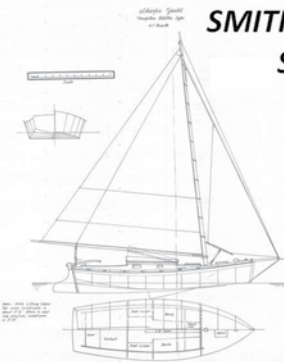
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Gerard Crowley has a team rowing around Ireland for charity ([www.rowaroundireland.com](http://www.rowaroundireland.com)). He writes about the Gaco oarlocks: *Hi John. We've hit some pretty rough seas and wind over tide situations along the NE corner and northern coasts of Ireland and the rowlocks are absolutely brilliant and great comfort from the fact that they always stay in position. I'll write you a great endorsement on them when finished.*



as a coffee cup, water glass, or wine glass. A plastic washtub is useful for doing dishes. It also works well as a general catch-all bin to hold things you want to have close at hand during the day.

## SHELTER

Imagine this scene. You savored the experience of watching the play of evening light on the water. You had your evening meal. The sun is setting. And it's time to deploy your shelter. My assumption is that the boat will be at anchor in a safe area with plenty of scope in the anchor line, so we will awaken in the same spot where we went to sleep. There is a strong temptation when camp cruising in warm weather to simply sleep under the stars. We try and figure out the dew point to predict whether the boat will be wet by morning. Take it from me, the boat will be wet in the morning. If you want to sleep under the stars at least cover your sleeping bag with a poncho or tarp. My own preference is to use a rain fly as a boom tent. This is simple, inexpensive, and can be set up in the dark when you are tired from a long day on the water and perhaps a bit befuddled by the effects of some type of malted beverage. If you already own a tent with a rain fly, you might try using that rain fly on your boat for the first few expeditions while you get a feel for what, if anything, you want for a more custom fit. If you need to buy something, consider getting a cheap plastic tarp and making a prototype before investing a lot of time and money.

If you go for long trips, or start camp cruising often, you may prefer the additional shelter of a full tent. There are two approaches to tents on boats. The simplest is a boom tent, which uses the boom as a ridge line support and attaches in

some way to the sides of the boat. There are many variations on this theme because you need to customize the tent to fit the boat. One drawback to a boom tent is that you don't get much head room. The way to get more head room is to advance in complexity and use a self-supporting tent with flexible poles. You can design and sew your own. But an easier and less expensive approach is to buy a tent and cut the floor out. Or you can buy a tent designed for use in a pickup truck. Either approach can work well. But both require more room to store, take more time to set up, and can be a bit confusing to figure out in the dark when you are tired. When I started camp cruising, I bought a nice Conestoga wagon type truck tent. It provided good shelter and ample head room, but that tent was much too complex to set up. It was also a real challenge to fold and stow in the morning. Another disadvantage was that it created a lot of sail area and my boat veered from side to side on the anchor line all night long if there was any wind. Sometimes simple is best.

## BEDDING

OK, now we have some shelter over our head, a full belly, and it is time to roll out our bedding. Being uncomfortable at night can take all the joy out of camping. So, borrow or purchase a comfortable sleeping pad or air mattress. My advice is to get the widest, longest, and thickest one that will fit in the space available on your boat. This can make the difference between misery and bliss. If you camp during warm weather, a sheet and blanket are better than a sleeping bag. For the past few years, I have carried a wool blanket and found it to be warm, comfortable, and versatile. If you will experience cold nights, you may need a warm sleeping bag. But, for the



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most part, you are more likely to be too warm than too cold. The final item for getting a good night's sleep is a comfortable pillow. Forget about using a tiny camp pillow or laying your head on folded clothing. Pillows are easy to stow in a boat. Bring the one that you use at home. Carry it in a dry bag. Sleep well.

### HUMAN WASTE MANAGEMENT

This camp cruising adventure is off to a good start. You had a nice day of boating followed by a simple but tasty warm meal and then snuggled for a comfortable night's rest, sheltered from the wind or dew, and warm under your sheet and blanket with your head resting on a familiar pillow. It feels so good in there that you hate to get up in the morning and deal with nature's call. But some things just cannot be ignored forever. From an environmental impact perspective, it is acceptable to urinate into a river, creek, or tidal waters because urine is normally sterile. Obviously, if you are anchored near houses, a little discretion is called for. You wouldn't pee on the curb in front of your neighbor's house. So, please don't stand up and pee over the side of your boat in someone else's neighborhood. Use some type of urinal that you can easily empty and rinse out. There are commercial devices available. A simple bucket also works well. But my preferred device is a plastic bailer because it also works well as—wait for it—a bailer!

There are several companies now marketing funnel devices that, when held in the appropriate location, allow a person of the female persuasion to pee standing up. The funnel directs the stream downward and forward and allows one to aim. I'll give a nod to GoGirl™ for having the best product name and the catchiest marketing slogan: "Don't take life sitting down."



Oh, you reluctant lady campers, think of what fun you could be having!

Disposal of solid human waste requires a different approach. It is not OK to use the historic "bucket and chuck it" approach. Human waste can contain disease-causing organisms and is most decidedly not sterile. It is illegal to discharge untreated human waste within 12 nautical miles from land. Camp cruisers should have a containment system. The best solution that I have found is to use a system comprising a biodegradable plastic bag and some type of dry material to absorb moisture and eliminate odors. It is kind of like a sea-going litter box. You can find these products at camping supply stores. The one that I prefer is the WAG BAG® Go anywhere toilet kit™. The kit contains a waste bag, zip close storage bag, toilet paper, and hand sanitizer. You can dispose of the used system in any trash receptacle when you reach shore.

A few words of caution are in order here. This is a single-use device. You do not want to be re-opening a used bag to "have a second go." So, bring along more than you expect to need. Also, the odor neutralization may not be total. If you are planning a multi-day trip you may want to store the used bags in a bucket that can be hung off the stern of your boat at night when you are enclosed in your shelter. Never store a used bag under the floorboards near where your head will be while sleeping. And never mind how I know that.

### THOUGHTS ON SAFETY

I don't recommend using liquid fuel stoves on a small boat because of the risk of spills and fire. And speaking of fire, some of you sail and oar enthusiasts may not normally carry a fire extinguisher on board. If you plan to use a stove, it is a good

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idea to have a fire extinguisher within easy reach. If your boat has an outboard motor, it is also wise to make sure your gas can is down wind of your stove when you light the burner.

Cooking on a small moving platform can be dangerous. It is a good idea to learn some basic first aid and carry a kit with materials to treat cuts and burns. A tube of cortisone cream also comes in handy to treat sunburn or ease the itching of mosquito bites.

Have an easy way to get back into your boat from the water. When you go out for several days, you are likely to want to go for a swim at some point. Or you may fall overboard. A boarding ladder could save your life. But only if you have it where it can be reached and deployed from the water. I tie mine to the boat and hang it on the inside of the coaming every time I go sailing. At anchor, I hang the ladder over the side, secured and ready for use.

### MISCELLANEOUS ADVICE

Your food should be stored in a sturdy water-resistant container. I prefer plastic tubs over dry bags because they protect foods from getting crushed. Stow your food container where you can easily access the food during the day.

If you enjoy a cold beverage and niceties like eggs and dairy products while camping, you need to carry a cooler. The best size to take depends on how much space you have available to stow the cooler. Based on my experience, you will tend to fill whatever size cooler you have. More room beckons for more provisions—even if the trip will be short. This adds a lot of weight in the boat. But it also allows you to be a good host when sailing with a group. For a short trip, consider using frozen containers of water rather than putting ice cubes in the cooler. This keeps the contents of the cooler dryer, and when the ice melts, you can drink the water from the containers. I

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*Sunset in Leeds Creek off the Miles River.*



mentioned that I like to have ice cubes for my drinks. I keep my cold food items in a dry bag and put the dry bag inside the cooler. That prevents my provisions from getting waterlogged when the ice cubes melt.

You'll want some kind of lantern. For a while, I was very salty and carried an oil burning hurricane lantern. It looked great. But it didn't burn very brightly. And I had to stow it in a bucket because it leaked lamp oil when the movement of the boat caused the oil in the reservoir to slosh around. I now use that hurricane lantern for atmosphere when dining on my screen porch at home. For camp cruising, I carry two compact LED lanterns. One lantern is run up a halyard for an anchor light. (Make sure you remember to attach a down haul line.) The other gets hung on the boom to illuminate the cockpit. I hate head lamps because, if you are not alone, your instinct is to look at whoever you are speaking to, which will shine that light right into their eyes.

Baby wipes are useful to give yourself a sponge bath after a sweaty day of sailing or a swim in salt water.

Wipes saturated with insect repellent work better than bug spray on a boat and will keep the chemicals out of your food and drink.

### FINAL THOUGHTS

I began this dissertation describing the tranquil beauty of sunset in a protected cove. Let's finish up with a brief glimpse of dawn. Chances are that you awoke once during the night to use the bailer. You admired the stars and the quiet beauty of your surroundings for a short while and then retreated to the warmth of your blanket. Later, as the tide changed and your boat swung at anchor, you were startled awake by the thump of the centerboard striking against the side of its trunk. It makes a sound like something hitting your boat. Sorry, I should have advised you to raise the centerboard and secure it tightly to avoid that.

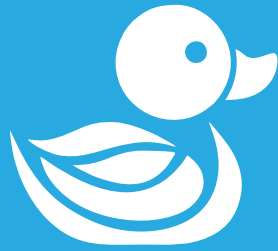
When the sun begins to rise, you are gently awakened by the dawn chorus of the local gulls and songbirds. Dogs and roosters also serenade the morning in a less gentle manner if there are farms nearby. In the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, the sounds of wildlife are joined in the early morning hours by a symphony of inboard engines and VHF radio chatter as the Watermen set and run their trot lines to catch blue crabs for the restaurant trade. In New England, you will hear the Lobstermen leaving the coves before sunrise.

Your tent or rainfly will be soaked with dew. I told you so. After tending to nature's call, detach the aft portion of your shelter and fold it forward so that most of the cockpit is open to the morning. Then light the stove to start the coffee water boiling. With a mug of steaming coffee in hand, lean back against the coaming and just be in the moment. The light is soft. The air temperature is pleasant. And you know for certain that there is nothing more worth doing than simply messing about in boats.



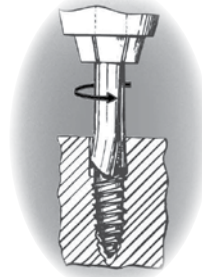


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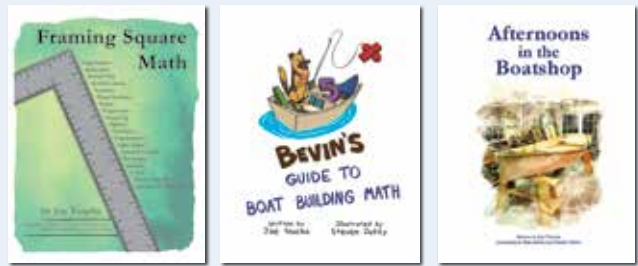
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# OUR YOUTH AND BOAT BUILDING

by Richard Honan

**Editor's note:** Richard Honan has been singlehandedly creating a meaningful youth building program with his neighbors and family. We asked him to share the story of building a Peapod.

At this point of my life (I'm seventy-two), I'm very fortunate to have such a rewarding hobby as building small wooden boats. It is something that I dreamed about doing when I was younger. As luck would have it, when I retired, my nephew Matthew Honan let me have the use of his woodworking shop located in the cellar of his sign company. It's a woodworker's dream shop—table saw, band saw, drill press, compound sliding miter saw, four routers, and numerous cordless drills and sanders.

Even before I retired from my career as a sign company owner, I had begun building small wooden boats, sailing prams, canoes, and kayaks. Most of the time, I would be fabricating or building the boat by myself. Often, I would enlist the help of my brothers, son-in-law, or nephews in the

construction process. The most rewarding time is spent with young children, such as my neighbor Christian Buonopane or my granddaughters, Anna Rauseo and Emily Rodriguez, who are all eager to learn about wood working and boatbuilding.

They seem to enjoy the problem solving, the wood working, and the learning. My neighbor Christian started with me when he was thirteen years old. He was walking home one day, and I asked him what he did after school and whether he would like to help me build a boat. It has now been over two years that he has been working with me, and he has been an integral part of my 13-foot Peapod building process. Even at thirteen years old, Christian was able to help me estimate how many hundreds of linear feet of bead and cove strips we would need to build the hull. He has learned about tool safety, fasteners, how to mix and apply epoxy, along with the proper use of power tools.

My granddaughters, Anna and Emily, joined me on a regular basis about two or three months ago. Last week, we laid out

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Top: Richard working on a boat with his granddaughters



# John Gardner Grant

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 annually by the John Gardner Memorial Fund Committee of TSCA, typically in May.

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 that 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:

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the shapes for the bow and stern seats. Afterwards, I was comparing our dimensions of the seats to the dimensions in the Doug Hylans plans. I realized there was a mistake, and for the life of me, I couldn't find it. I tried to explain it to my granddaughters. They asked me how to read the plans. I showed them how to read the plans and explained how to use a scale ruler. Within a couple of minutes, they showed me my mistake. That was a great morning, having Anna and Emily learn how to read a boat building plan and how to read a scale ruler. It was the best mistake I ever made! Second to none!

Whether any of the three ever builds another boat remains to be seen, but I hope they will all treasure the time we spent together, learning about boat building and each other.

*Above: Anna and Emily reviewing the plans.*  
*Below and Right: Christian working on the boat.*





# EVOLUTION OF BOAT AND PROGRAM—THE LAST YEAR

by Steve Kingery

On June 18, 2020, we turned over the “Sharkie” hull. It has been a long time coming as evidence by the previous article in *The Ash Breeze*, Summer 2017. The boat is built to lines taken in the 1950s from a boat built in the early 1900s as a “pull boat,” an “iceboat,” and/or a “mullet skiff.” These were common names for the early power boats the fish houses used to move fish, move fisherman’s skiffs, and fish themselves. The original Sharkie was 36’ long. Our Sharkie is a 2/3 scale build. The smaller build better suits our budget and motor. We were generously given a make and break from Dave Lucas and Friends but traded when we had the opportunity to get a 100-year-old marine motor with a transmission. As cool as the make and break is, having neutral available seemed a good choice for today’s waterways.

We, Crystal River Boat Builders, TSCA, build boats that were typical of this area through time. It is a way to expose members and visitors alike to local history, marine history, boat design, and wood working skills. Over the last ten years, we have built and exhibited a sailing skiff, flat iron row boat, pirogue, 36’ sailing scow, and 16’ punt. We have also acquired, and maintain and sail a 1980s build of Monroe’s Egret conveniently named *Egret*. The Sharkie is moving us into the motorboat era. The boat is a great example of the evolution from sail to power in small working craft. The inexpensive sharpie hull adapted well to the heavy, high torque, low H.P. motors of the time. While the flat bottom sharpie hull presented a “V” bottom when sailed, the motorized version pounded when heading into the waves. The Sharkie exhibits

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**Top:** Hoisting for the turn over. Crew standing by, all according to plan. The tree, while not the best cover for a wooden boat, has come in handy. **Right:** Fairing the inwale for the washboards. Working outdoors in the Florida heat, now that is traditional!



the addition of deadrise forward to minimize the pounding. Over the years the deadrise increased as did the beam as larger motors became available.

Likewise, small organizations like ours must adapt to changing conditions. CRBB, as we usually refer to ourselves, has had an especially challenging year (years). One year ago, we moved out of a luxurious temporary home. We were not sure we would have a place at all. We were gifted a new temporary home adjacent to the Port Hotel and Marina, a bit of grass, help with acquiring a shipping container for storage, and a wonderful oak tree for shade. So we downsized and moved. Many of our members could not make the move because of the limited facilities, but a strong, amazing core group held on. The move included the Sharkie, which had three planks on each side at that time. We had also recently moved our Egret and our small boats. While we are limited in what we would like to do, we make do.

This is why the turning of the hull is a bit of a big deal, a signal of success, of growth. And on the brighter side, we have what is being referred to as our new permanent home to look forward to. So later this year we will be moving the Sharkie and all to a new place that will allow further adaptation and growth. Evolution at its best.



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# MAKING BOAT KITS



by Clint Chase

One of the best things that ever happened to me was to go to the John Gardner Small Craft weekend—one of the last ones as a stand-alone event—back in the early 2000s. After months of poring through books on boatbuilding and drooling over the designs, here I was in Mystic and seeing them first-hand and able to get in them and try them out. I felt like a little kid.

One of the other best things that ever happened to me was the failure of my first business attempt. I started a boatbuilding business in the tail end of the great recession with some repair jobs that were already on hand and an idea that boatbuilding would be more profitable and sustainable if the boats were built from kits. This, after all, is how the dory builders did it. A kit can be as little as a pile of luan patterns hanging on the wall to a bin of precut wood parts, labeled hardware packages, and ready-to-go rigging. In my first commercial shop space in East Bayside area of Portland—now the epicenter of craft beer, distilling, and coffee—I discovered that not enough people would order boats at my price point and that the process of kitting the boats to make the idea work was too time consuming. I had no time to build the boats! To add insult to injury, people wanted to build their own boats; they

wanted more kit offerings, instructions, and support! Even if I had the boat building orders, I could never satisfy them and the interest in the kits. After a couple years of working “in the red,” the Landing School came by and offered me a teaching job out of the blue. They saved me from an ugly ending.

During the next several years, I was able to really focus on finishing the kits I had started—like the Deer Isle Koster (by Bruce Elfstrom), the Echo Bay Dory Skiff, and others. I was also able to become more competent in using the design software—Rhino 3D—required in creating the new designs and kitting the boats to a detailed level. As life changed for me, I never let go of the pursuit of my own gaggle of boats that I could offer to the world again. While I was able to release a few kits on the side, I had a vision of a future venture that focused on only boat kits, a business that helps people build and launch the most beautiful small boats in the world from complete kits, detailed instructions, and unparalleled customer support.

That last line forms the mission behind Chase Small Craft, which I started unofficially at the very end of 2015 and more officially as an LLC a bit later. I threw my anchor down in

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**Top:** *Clint Chase early on developed a wonderful collab with François Vivier. The Ilur was one of the first kits offered by Chase in 2010.*





Saco, Maine, on Rt 1 in a multi-use building that allowed me to slowly grow the space as needed to about 3,000 square feet. In a typical tour, you can find me standing proudly in a corner—a 15 x 20 rectangle—arms out saying, “And this is where I started.”

The process of building a boat kit is more than just taking a design and CNC cutting the plywood molds and planks. First off, the amount of 3D modeling required to do it well is dizzying. After completely modeling and rendering the boat in its final form and upside down on the building jig, dozens of layouts are created. Layouts are like windows into the 3D model—very little 2D drawing is done. In Rhino, I can create any scaled view of the 3D model I want—plan, profile, sections, perspective views—and then annotate these layouts to create a coherent boat plan. In this CAD process, the modeling continues as I build the boat in my mind and on the screen: the strongback is built, hardware and fasteners are inserted, sail rigs worked out, stowage of oars is determined, and so on.

With this complete picture of a boat and a whole lot of parts fitting together in 3D, we go back to the 2D. All those parts—the strongback pieces, molds, frames, seats, knees, and

so on—need to be made into closed, 2-dimensional, vector geometries that are nested into the sheets, which will be cut on the CNC machine. This is a critical step as this geometry must be drawn and cut with just the right tolerances to allow the real wood parts to fit together appropriately on the shop floor. Like in traditional boatbuilding, there are a range of acceptable tolerances depending on what we are doing, from less than 1/16” in lofting to a 1/4” in an epoxy glue joint. I am usually working in thousands of an inch in a lot of my work, sometimes less, sometimes more, but that is “normal” to me in CAD-CAM terms.

Most of the boats are mine, but some of my offerings are not, like Michael Storer’s Goat Island Skiff, François Vivier’s Morbic 12, Ilur, and Jewell (which incidentally I was involved in back in 2010). The Echo Bay Dory Skiff and Caravelle were originally penned by my friend Eric Risch. The Deer Isle Koster was originally drawn by Bruce Elfström. The Calendar Islands 18 hull was designed by David Cockey, based on the successful CIY16 model. I am grateful to all of them for their help. Often a new design starts as a napkin sketch like the cute, Compass Skiff, and quickly brought to 3D form. Others are drawn to 1/8th scale as a set of fair lines (how the CIY-16

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*One of the finer Deblois St. Dories built by J.R. Krevins in Bar Harbor, Maine.*



started) and some come from a full-size lofting like the Echo Bay Dory Skiff. The Goat Island Skiff never was 3D modeled but worked out from careful 2D work. The Deer Isle was started as a set of rough CAD lines and two original, scratch-built boats to measure. Often a new design starts as a 2D drawing of lines or sail plan, and through a fascinating series of steps that I teach about in my Computer Design class, the 2D lines become 3D curves, the 3D curves become surfaces, and the surfaces become a boat model in the computer. It is ironic that we go through so much effort to go from 2D to 3D and back to 2D again, but that is my way of combining the “old way” and the “new way” to create a new design and complete kit.

You may have heard of CAD—Computer Aided Drafting. CAM stands for Computer Aided Machining and for years I outsourced that work because it did not make good business sense to spend up to \$75,000 on a CNC router, most of which would be financed. Now, all CAD-CAM processes are done in house, and it has been one of the more interesting developments of my business because of the learning curve I had to march up but also because of the opportunities this creates for the business. I am currently developing a suite of high-precision products from CNC: knock down sawhorses, boat cradles, highly accurate spar gauges, and even molds for

the birdsmouth masts that come in most kits. Another new offering is CNC-milled, foil-shaped centerboards and rudders for the boats. These foils come off the machine ready for finishing.

What perhaps is least known about the kitting process is the amount of detail and time required to make a kit “complete.” Without the precut solid wood, hardware, fasteners, and rigging, a boat kit is never complete. All this information is built into the computer model and helps answer a myriad of questions. For instance, how many wood screws should go in to appropriately reinforce the boat and how long should they be? If this block is placed next to the mast, will it form a fairlead for the downhaul line? What quantity of cleat stock is needed to support the tank and seat tops? How long do the precut gunwales need to be? The end product of this process is a detailed timber cutting list that is used to cut the ash, pine, mahogany, spruce, and other wood parts for the boat. We then cut a scarf joint on the longitudinal and spar stock and pack it on top of the CNC cut plywood, loaded on a custom-made pallet. Do you like spreadsheets? Well, then you would be interested in seeing the ones that capture the contents and pricing of the hardware and epoxy kits!

So you have all the precut plywood, timber parts, hardware, and the glues to put it all together. But how do you do it?

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*The original Deblois St. Dory built and used as a row-cruiser by Shane Hall.*





*Left: An early KDI kit built by Steve Borgstrom of Bainbridge Island, WA, and presented at the Wooden Boat Festival. Right: Originally penned by Bruce Elfstrom, the Deer Isle Koster (KDI) was offered to Clint with the request that it be made available so others could build it and take joy in it's fantastic sailing characteristics.*

Thus begins the most important part of the process, the plans and instruction manuals that detail the steps and processes of building your boat. In my process, the plans are started back when the boat was modeled, but they are finished and polished in concert with manual writing that describes the build. As I write, I think, pull photos, and work out the details of how a boat will be built. I am also detailing the plans and sometimes going “backwards” to the 3D modeling steps to refine a joint or add a needed part, perhaps because I simply forgot it or more likely because in the drafting, writing, and thinking steps it finally dawned on me that the addition of a part would really help the construction of the boat or be beneficial to the architecture of the boat. Maybe it was an extra mold support in the strongback, a deck reinforcement, or a simple addition of a cleat. This tweaking will inevitably circle me back to the solid wood cutting and hardware lists to refine the needs there. Perhaps it is as simple as changing the size of a plywood part which will need to be updated in the cutting file (and you thought those were all done!). All

the individual parts are important, but how they go together is how the whole is formed. You may have heard about the design loop? Well, designing and kitting a boat is really like a swooping series of loops and circles that twist and turn together like terns in flight along the seashore.

It is always a big day at the shop when the 18-wheeler backs in and we can load the big kit. A typical pallet is 99” x 49” and a foot or two off the floor. Weighing in at anywhere from 200 to 1500 lbs, it is a monstrous thing to load on a truck without a forklift. Inspired by the Romans, I have a pair of 16’ loading ramps that lead from ground up to the trailer. The pallet sits on heavy-duty casters that allow the team to roll the kit out the door and into the driveway and up the ramps into the truck. Typically two kits are cut and packed together in the shop, and when they are gone, the shop feels quite large! But before long another pallet is laid down and the process begins again. Over the years, the files and documentation for the boats have been refined enough to make each kit a little easier to cut, more profitable, and less time intensive.



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# BUILDING THE HAVEN 12½—PART 8

## INSTALLING THE SHEER CLAMP, DECK BEAMS, AND THE DEADWOOD

by David A. Fitch

Probably the hardest single task thus far in the build was installing the sheer clamps. It looks simple enough. One long piece of Douglas fir attached to the inside top of the frames. Looks can be deceiving. The first hurdle is finding the Douglas fir. Especially for me since I am building the Haven in South Carolina. But then most boat building wood species are difficult to find in the Southeast. I got lucky. I was at one of my favorite lumber yards in Greenville, South Carolina. I was there for something else but just happened to ask if they had any 6/4 Douglas fir. To my surprise, they not only had some but it was pristine, straight grain, and knot free. I bought all they had in stock.

The sheer clamps are not only beefy but they also have this silly tight double curve, affectionately referred to in the instructions as the squiggle. The squiggle is located where the clamps enter the bow area. In my case, it was even more difficult because I plan to finish my decks other than the traditional Hereshoff method of using canvas or Dynel. I am going to strip plank the decks with Spanish cedar, so I need an additional ¼-inch variance in height at the top of the deck beams.

The sheer clamps run from transom to breast hook. The aft end of the clamp requires a compound miter to set fairly against the transom. I also had to cut a notch and compound miter at the forward end to sit against the breast hook. Then there is something like a quarter knee there to support the sheer clamp at the transom. As a further complication, the overall length has to be exactly the distance between the transom and the breast hook. Wait, there is more. You have to get this total length taking into account the squiggle. I wish I had a magic solution for this. I guessed at it and then did a lot of little cuts at the forward end until I got the fit I wanted.

The squiggle requires steam bending the sheer clamps. I set up a steaming jig on my work table. That worked well for me. The exact shape of the squiggle is not provided. I had to

play around a bit to get what I thought would work in my situation.

Unfortunately, the challenge does not end there. The clamps have to be installed by bending them to meet the curve of the sheer and sit fairly against the top of the frames. I somehow got lucky on the first sheer clamp on the port side. I laid it in

---

### *Sheer Clamp Squiggle Jig*



# I WAS RUNNING LOW ON DOUGLAS FIR, SO I HAD TO IMPROVISE.

loosely and then began the slow process of drawing it into the outside curve of the boat by applying clamps at each end and then working them toward the mid-section one at a time. No problem. Not so lucky with the starboard side. The first two attempts broke in the process of drawing them into the sheer. I was running low on Douglas fir, so I had to improvise. For the third attempt on the starboard side, I ripped the sheer clamp and installed the two halves one at a time and then laminated them. Piece of cake. I wish I had thought of that for the port side. I used deck screws to hold the clamps temporarily. After the clamps were securely installed, I replaced the temporary screws with copper rivets.

Then it was time to tackle the deadwood. Fortunately, I had some experience with this. I attended the WoodenBoat School where we restored a Herreshoff 12½. One of my assignments with another student was to build the deadwood for that project. The shape is a little different because of the centerboard, but the method is similar. I made templates for each of the mating surfaces and one for the side view. I glued up enough wood to roughly match the side view template. Then it was off to the band saw to take off as much excess wood as possible but staying clear of the finish shape. It is almost like building half models. You glue up a stack of wood and then start cutting away until the half model appears, or in this case the deadwood.

The second part of the deadwood is the oak stern post that is attached to the aft end. This piece is rather simple, but I suggest using templates here as well.

The deck beams require an ark as prescribed in the instructions. The difficulty here is that the instructions tell you that the ark is equal to 1½ inch in five feet. The beam of the Haven is six feet. I had to do a little plane geometry to figure this one out. I don't think the exact ark is critical as long as it is symmetric and looks good. I am using the same ark on both the forward and aft decks as opposed to a lesser ark specified in the plan book. In my case, I had to deviate from the instructions again in order to provide for sufficient space between the deck beams and sheer clamps for the strip decking. Since I am using ¼-inch Okoume plywood and ¼-Spanish cedar strips for deck material, I need to allow for ½-inch clearance above the deck beams. To accomplish this at the forward deck area, I decided to notch both the beams and the sheer clamp where they join. I wanted to avoid taking too much wood from either piece. I then used epoxy and screws to secure the joints.

I decided to install the deadwood before installing the aft deck beams. My purpose was to allow for the drilling of the deadwood and stern post bolts. The aft deck beams would have restricted the angle of the drill and bit.

The next article will discuss the decking and bulkheads.

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*Sheer Clamp*



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*Deadwood Template*





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262 State Route 409  
Cathlamet, WA 98612  
805-208-7335  
*allenbennett@centurytel.net*

## Michigan Maritime Museum Chapter

Pete Mathews, Sec'y  
PO Box 100, Gobles, MI 49055  
269-628-4396

*canoenut@bcwildblue.com*

## North Shore TSCA

Nathan Burgess, 28 Ronaele Road  
Medford, MA 02155  
*northshoretscs@outlook.com*

## Old Bay Club (Chesapeake Bay, VA)

Eddie Breeden, 3001 Winterfield Rd.  
Midlothian, VA 23113  
(804) 615-4413

*oldbayclub@gmail.com*

## Oregon Coots

John Kohnen, PO Box 24341  
Eugene, OR 97402  
541-688-2826

*jkohnen@boat-links.com*

*https://groups.io/g/oregoncoots*

## Patuxent Small Craft Guild

Brian Forsyth, 13464 Lore Pines Lane  
Solomons, MD 20688  
443-804-6439

*brforsyth@comcast.net*

## Pine Lake Small Craft Association

Sandy Bryson, Sec'y, 333 Whitehills Dr.  
East Lansing, MI 48823  
517-351-5976

*sbryson@msu.edu*

## Puget Sound TSCA

Claire Acord, President  
*whidbeyboatpainter@gmail.com*  
Marty Loken, Secretary  
PO Box 216, Nordland, WA 98358  
360-316-1557, *norseboater22@gmail.com*  
E-mail forum: *tscs-puget@yahooogroups.com*  
*www.tscapuget.org*

## Ralph Middleton Munroe Chapter

Barnacle Historic State Park  
Coconut Grove, FL 33133  
John Palenchar, *john@palenchar.net*  
7641 SW 65th Place  
South Miami, FL 33143  
305-666-9588 (h), 305-803-1653 (c)

## Sacramento TSCA

Todd Bloch, 122 Bemis Street  
San Francisco, CA 94131  
415-971-2844  
*todd.sb@comcast.net*

## South Jersey TSCA

George Loos, 53 Beaver Dam Rd.  
Cape May Courthouse, NJ 08210  
609-861-0018  
*georgeowlman@aol.com*





### St. Augustine Lighthouse Chapter

Jim Millette  
2353 Commodores Club Blvd  
St Augustine FL 32080  
410-279-9826  
Sailbythelee@icloud.com

### Texas Boatcrafters and Messers

Mack McKinney  
159 Albrecht Rd.  
Center Point, TX 78010  
830-370-8488  
mack@woodnboats.com

### Thames River Chapter

Russell Smith  
6 Drawbridge West  
Gales Ferry, CT 06335  
860-536-1113  
fuzzy@hotmail.com

### TSC Raleigh

Dean Herring  
494 Darius Pearce Rd  
Youngsville, NC 27596  
919-632-5915  
dfharing@aol.com

### Warren Rivers (Rhode Island) Chapter

Rock Singewald  
10 Taylor St.  
Warren, RI 02885  
443-980-5601  
rock9@mindspring.com

### Chapters Organizing

### Fundy Chapter

John Kipping, 506 Rusagonis Rd  
Rusagonis, NB E3B 8Z2 Canada  
jkipping@nbnet.nb.ca, 506-444-1550

### "Twin State" NH/VT Chapter

Nate Carey, Grantham Boatworks  
P. O. Box 27, Grantham, NH 03753  
603-863-2915  
granthamboatworks@myfairpoint.net

# PRES. MESSAGE

*continued from page 2*



- Encourage members and chapters to contribute articles to *The Ash Breeze*
- Improve national representation and involvement with local chapter events
- And, increase TSCA presence at boat shows

We plan to continue monthly discussion meetings on Zoom. John Weiss, our Chapter and Membership Coordinator, will send our monthly meeting minutes to the chapter presidents to keep them involved. I plan to share the Council's thoughts with the greater TSCA membership in my column in *The Ash Breeze*. The other area of communication that I want to encourage is the writing of articles for publication in *The Ash Breeze*. I believe we each have different experiences and skills that are worth sharing. Enjoy your time on the water.

MANY EVENTS HAVE BEEN CHANGED OR CANCELLED, SO WE WILL NOT BE INCLUDING A CALENDAR OF EVENTS IN THIS ISSUE.

TO SUBMIT EVENTS FROM YOUR CHAPTER AND IN YOUR AREA GO TO

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# OH WHAT WE MISSED IN 2020...

by Andy Wolfe

Sometimes it is hard to fathom how messing about in boats could be a hazard to your health, but this year is unlike any year we have ever experienced. Our normally active three seasons of fun with friends basically vanished with the best intentions for our mutual health and wellbeing.

Personally, we spent those few days when it wasn't rainy restoring our 36-year-old Catboat conveniently resting next to our home at the foot of Elephant Mountain. We've made good progress, and the boat looks almost new again, but it wasn't the same satisfaction as actually sailing.

Virtual boating is great if you like scrolling through Facebook groups (TSCA now has over 4,300 members) or you subscribe to Off Center Harbor with an almost unlimited supply of eye candy and handy tips, or *Small Boat Magazine* with a guide to camp sailing the Pacific Northwest's creeks too small for the "big" boats.

But it's not the same as being lost in the fog on Maine's Eggemoggin Reach or racing toward nowhere on the Miles River near St. Michaels, Maryland. I really missed the 50th year of small craft workshops at Mystic Seaport. Every TSCA chapter missed their signature event this year.

So, here's a smattering of what we missed around the country with images from my camera roll and a few from other TSCA members that I can't identify....

1. The race to nowhere on the Miles River in St Michaels. (above)
2. Marla Surgent of Sea Worthy Small Ships in a recycled Calvert Maritime Museum billboard. (see page 28)
3. Somewhere up the creek in Washington state.
4. The John Gardner Small Craft Workshop livery at Mystic Seaport.
5. Ben Fuller explaining the finer points of the sprit rig.
6. Pete Peters calls the crews, the old fashioned way.
7. Nip in the fog off the Maine coast, what a surprise...
8. An 8½ foot double paddle canoe designed and built by me some 20 years ago, and it's still my favorite design.







2

*On the date of the postponed 2020 Small Reach Regatta, a few intrepid friends gathered for a multiday cruise among the islands of Downeast Maine. Pictured are a few of the six boats that attended "The Smallest Small Reach Regatta."*

# The SMALLEST SMALL REACH REGATTA

July 2020  
Brooklin, Maine

by David & Rosemary Wyman



# NEW EXHIBITION FEATURES PHOTOGRAPHER DAVID HARP

A new exhibition titled “Where Land and Water Meet: The Chesapeake Bay Photography of David W. Harp” will open Sept. 25, 2020 through Sept. 20, 2021, Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum’s Steamboat Building gallery, as well as in a virtual format.

“Dave Harp has a long and varied career, and his naturalist’s eye provides an unparalleled perspective on the interdependence of communities, land and water along the Chesapeake,” said Jenifer Dolde, Associate Curator of Collections. “His passion for the environment continually draws him to explore the Bay’s rivers, marshes and guts by kayak, on foot and by air, always revealing them in new ways.”

The Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum officially reopened to the public at the end of June. Everyone on campus must wear facial coverings inside buildings at all times and outdoors when within six feet of other guests.



*A great blue heron shoots the gap between two stands of phragmites along the shore of the upper Choptank River. Digital image, 2013. Photograph by David Harp. Forty years of Harp’s images are display this fall at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels, Maryland.*



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*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

Winter 2020 Volume 41 Number 4

**Editorial Deadline: November 1, 2020**

**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: [andy@marinermedia.com](mailto: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.*

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