

# *The* Ash Breeze

Journal of the Traditional Small Craft Association

## WOODENBOAT SHOW & JOHN GARDNER SMALL CRAFT WORKSHOP

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The Simplest Lee Board

Building a Lighthouse  
Keepers Boat, Part 1

Building the First Sjogin III,  
Part 1

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The  
Ash  
Breeze

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### Volume 43, Number 3

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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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*TAB Layout Design: Karen Bowen*

*Cover: A beautiful Whitehall with a large Sliding Gunter Rig at the Wooden Boat show. Photo by Bill Rutherford.*



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Michael Jones*

As the Presidency moves from Bellingham, Washington, to the Florida Gulf Coast, it is symbolic of the national coverage of the Traditional Small Craft Association. We owe a big thank you to Ben Sebens as he steps away from the helm and to the council members of the board who have finished their years of service: Bill Stirling and Bill Rutherford. Welcome to the new members of the council Pete Mathews, Pete Peters, and Sam Shogren. We are in our 47th year as an organization, and that has been kept on an even keel by long-term dedicated individuals who shoulder the bulk of the work: John Weiss as Membership Coordinator, Bill Rutherford as Secretary, Andy Wolfe as Editor of *The Ash Breeze*, and Bill Meier as Treasurer. After a decade of service, Bill Meier is ready for someone new to assume the duties as Treasurer. As good fortune would have it, David Deaville volunteered for the position and council made a unanimous vote to accept David as Treasurer.

We are a community of volunteers, and as such we know the rewards of volunteering surpass the costs. Volunteering rewards us with new knowledge, new friends, and the joy sharing something that we love. The national council is continuing to look for ways to encourage the construction and use of traditional small craft by supporting festivals and educational events, but we are dependent on the support and input from the local chapters. Financial support for the TSCA and the John Gardner Foundation is of course essential, but also essential is communication between local chapters and with the national council. Sharing details of events and programs helps to build individual chapters and encourage other chapters, all of which help us to grow and fulfill our goals as an organization. Consider writing an article for *The Ash Breeze* about your chapter or local event. If you have videos of a festival or event, let us know; we are working on a plan for an online platform for sharing videos and stories. Be sure to list your upcoming events on our website. Through sharing our experiences, we receive encouragement and give inspiration to others.

As I take the helm as the new President of the TSCA, a brief introduction would be in order. I have lived my life on the Florida Gulf Coast with my teenage years spent in the Gulf and on the bayous of Tarpon Springs. The docks on the Anclote River were

*continued on page 27*





# JOHN GARDNER SMALL CRAFT WORKSHOP 2022—A COLLABORATION

*By Bill Rutherford*

This year we were back teaming with both WoodenBoat and Mystic Seaport Museum as part of the WoodenBoat Show on the weekend before the Fourth of July, and we took full advantage of that partnership. We piggybacked on to their Skills Demonstrations held all day every day at the Seaport Shipyard as well as the Speaker Series held in the Seaport's fully equipped audio-visual Masin Room in the Seaport's new North Entrance Building ("The Wave"), where our own Ben Fuller and David Cockey led a lively historical and technical discussion on "Peapods of Maine." Ben later led tours of the Seaport's Small Craft Hall, emphasizing the peapods in the collection as well as other interesting boats along the way, many of which he was involved in collecting.

Back at Australia Beach, this year's emphasis was on the boats and their stories, freely shared whenever we gathered. This fit with the Seaport's recently opened exhibit, *Story Boats: The Tales they Tell*. Located in the Collins Gallery in the new North Entrance Building, the exhibit has selected small boats from dugout canoes to kayaks to small yachts from the

collection—suspended from the ceiling, lining the walls, as well as mounted on the floor—each with a specific story to tell. Well worth a visit.

Signing up for the Small Craft Workshop allowed participants access to Australia Beach both before and after hours to launch and retrieve boats as well as to the entire WoodenBoat Show for all three days—a bargain at \$40 (or only \$20 if a museum member). To encourage families, youth rates were half those rates. We had twenty people signed up specifically for the Workshop with many others joining in as Seaport Members or WoodenBoat Show attendees. We managed to launch and retrieve most boats from Australia Beach, even Ben Fuller's Dory, *Tipsy*, on its special trailer. Steve Mack took advantage of the Seaport's offer to launch his period accurate New Haven Oyster Skiff by forklift at the shipyard. Others launched at the dirt ramp upriver under the I-95 Bridge or at the more civilized ramp downriver next to the Daniel Packer Inn. Car-toppers like Bill Meier's and our Natoma Skiffs were hand launched at the old Isham Street





boat ramp just south of the Seaport Shipyard. With a little preplanning, all were accommodated with many hands to help.

While lots of sea stories were exchanged at the beach or at our booth, the real fun occurred on the water. Matt McKenzie led the morning rows in his recently rehabilitated White Dory, leaving at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday on a tour upriver with plenty of time upon return to attend Ben Fuller and David Cockey's "Peapod's of Maine" talk. Sunday morning's row was downriver, under the Mystic River highway bridge—recently rehabilitated for its 100th anniversary—and the Railroad Bridge a little further on down, ending at Sixpenny Island opposite Noank on the west side of the river. Our sandy spit of yesteryear is slowly eroding away, but going to Sixpenny gives us a nice tour of the Noank waterfront as well as the classic yachts on moorings—one of which is an original Dunkirk Boat, one of the small boats that evacuated British troops from Dunkirk early in the Second World War.

Another example of close cooperation was our relationship with the Seaport's Boat Livery. New leader Nick Parker has the Boathouse fleet in fine shape with fresh putty and paint, lovingly applied by fellow volunteers throughout the winter.

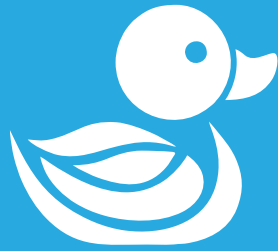
New to the fleet this year is a nineteen-foot Gardner Dory, perfect for a family of five with two rowing. Dion Dory, Gardner's design from Fred Dion's molds, is back in service as were three Catboats to sail and a fleet of flat-bottomed skiffs for beginners. Nick graciously shared life jackets and offered boats for before-hours river rows. Fees were waived, which added to the activity level resulting in a record number of "rentals."

The school ship *Conrad* was available Friday and Saturday nights for \$20/person/night of which a number of our participants availed themselves. Weather was warm and clear so a number of sleeping bags found their way out on deck. Saturday evening, we organized an offsite potluck dinner (thank you, Peggy Vermilya for the potato salads and the Cockey's for that fine Maine microbrewed beer).

A big thank you to the behind-the-scenes Seaport staff who provided the floating docks and a tent, staffed the *Conrad*, and ran the computers to check us all in. A special thanks to Sarah Clement, Waterfront Programs Administrator, who guided us through all this, starting last January, and to Nick Parker who was so welcoming at the Seaport Boathouse Livery. Throughout the weekend, as well as before and after,

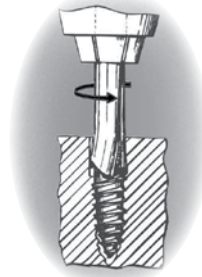


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fellow participants stepped up to assist with the nuts and bolts work to make this all happen. Thanks to the Club Dory handlers, Brian Cooper, the Blackwell family for delivery, and John Hacunda for returning them to Mystic Shipyard East; to Matt McKenzie for leading the morning rows as well as filling in at the booth and elsewhere; to the booth sitters who were the faces and people show-goers first met then stayed to talk boats with and learn about TSCA. Carl Kaufman anchored the booth to great acclaim, which gave him the opportunity to tell the story of his Nick Shade-designed *Mystic River Wherry*, suspended on supports alongside. Brian Cooper staffed the booth on Friday and helped set up the site and the beach. The Mystic Seaport Ship Modelers were gracious in sharing the use of Australia Beach as were the Chesapeake Light Craft folks when doing their demos. Thanks to Sharon Brown for her photos. The list goes on, because all who attended helped in significant ways, both materially and in spreading the word about TSCA.

What about next year? We look forward to continuing our close teamwork with WoodenBoat and Mystic Seaport Museum. We would like to publicize our standing invitation




to staff and participants to join us on early morning rows before starting their daily routines and perhaps join us in some late afternoon sails. The more small boats on the water the better. How about an after-judging splash for the "I Built It Myself" boats? Perhaps they could join us on a Sunday afternoon Parade out past the lighthouse and back? Send us your ideas. See you next year!

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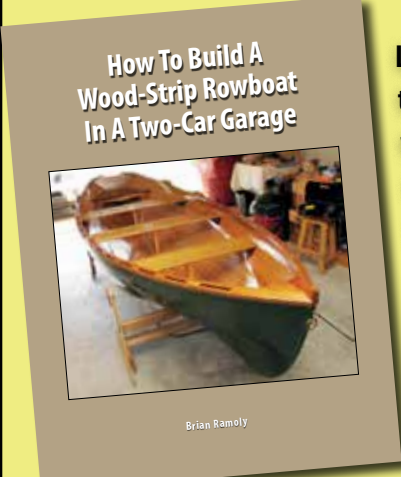


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# SOJOURN'S JOURNEY

## BUILDING A PAUL GARTSIDE SJOGIN III

*Part 1 of a series by Steve Brookman*

Just over four years ago, after many months of hemming and hawing, I finally decided to do it. I rolled some white paint on the plywood panels screwed to the floor of the appropriately named loft above my boat shed. This was to be my sixth build. Not only would it be much larger and challenging than the previous boats, but Paul Gartside's plans, while renowned for their beauty, do not come with instructions. Another concern was the time commitment, as this would be a multiyear project, and, like everyone, I was not getting younger. How much time was I willing to put in, and once launched, would I really enjoy pulling all those strings in my seventies?

A little history to set the stage, possibly offer encouragement for someone thinking about building their first boat, maybe mitigate critiques from those that really know what they're doing. I've been accused of having talent. I might have a little, but what I really have is persistence. Winslow Homer said, "What they call talent is nothing but the capacity for doing continuous hard work in the right way." For me it usually takes several attempts to find the "right way." I had no woodworking experience or tools when Mike O'Brien wrote in a *WoodenBoat* article that Reuel Parker's Ohio Sharpie would be a good boat for a beginner. So it's all Mike's fault

as I built that 19' sharpie, gradually acquiring tools along the way and gaining some experience using them. That was fifteen years and six boats ago, as I now had the boat building bug big time.

Back to the build. *Sojourn* is a Gartside Sjogin III that I've modified so much I've designated it a "IIIa." Caution: unless you have a background in boat design or are fortunate as I am to have a naval architect friend looking over your shoulder (fellow TSCA member, David Wyman), straying from the designer's plans could result in...you'll find out. Years of sailing combined with the engineering courses at the Naval Academy, the few I took from Westlawn, and an old, dog-eared copy of Skene's, gave me a basic understanding of design considerations. During this build I didn't hesitate to email Paul or check with David with questions, concerns, or things I wasn't quite sure of, which was often.

Sjogin's plans were inspired from a lovely double-ender, Koster style of unknown origins, owned and sailed by Russ Manheimer in Barnegat Bay, New Jersey. A group of us on the WoodenBoat Forum commissioned Paul to draw the plans. Paul's Sjogin II plans came in at 21'5", 4,200 pounds with an estimated 2,500 hours to build; quite an undertaking. The

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*It starts, lofting in the loft.*

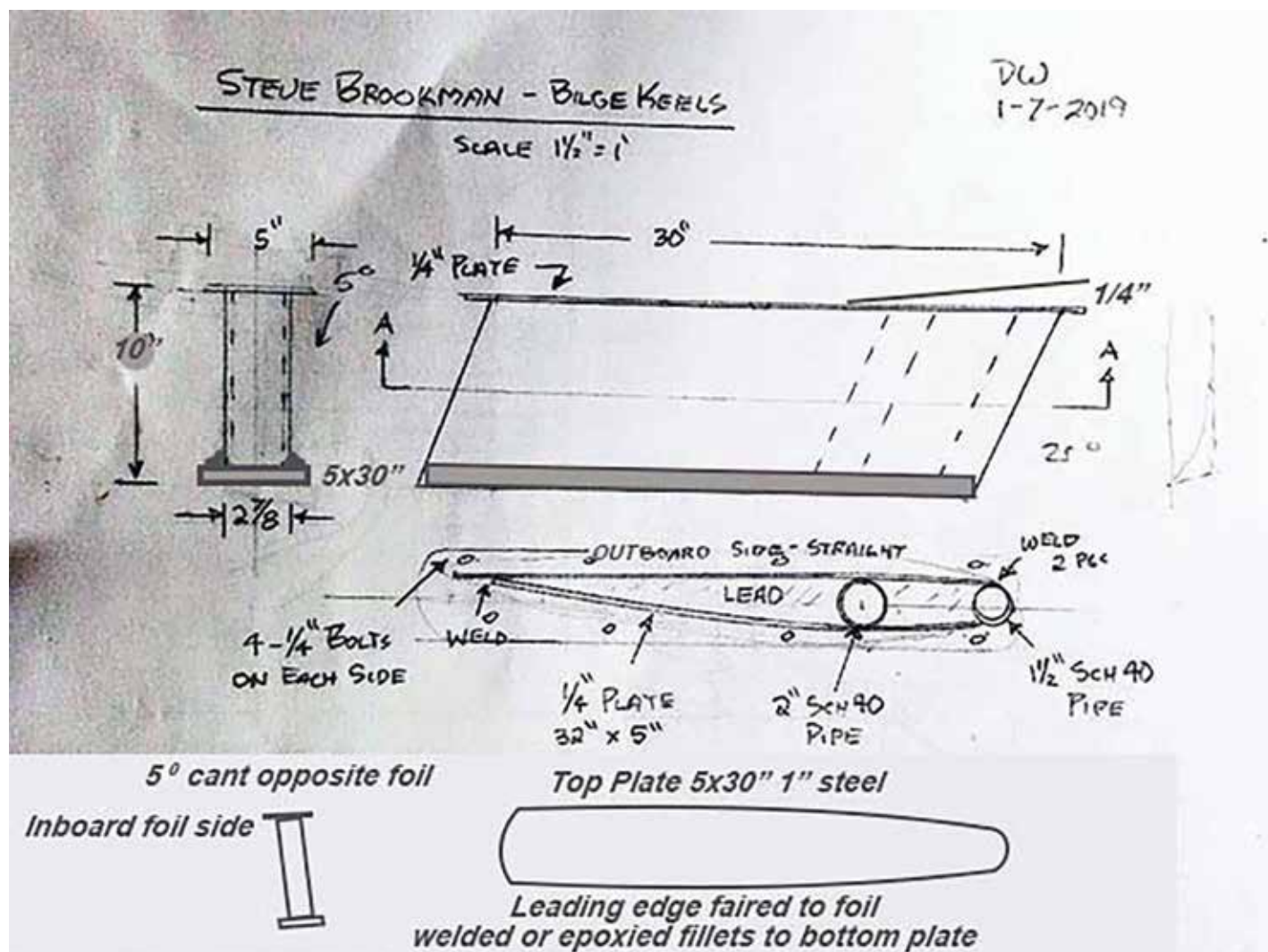


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*Molds up, laminated stem being fitted.*







*Bilge keel schematic, drawn by David Wyman.*

next year he drew plans for Sjogin III, a 19' open daysailer, trailerable with a centerboard. At 1,800 pounds with a 1,200-hour estimated build time that seemed more aligned with my abilities.

About that time, I hung up my airline captain's hat, retiring, and Susan and I moved to Blue Hill, Maine. Our first day there, standing on the shore of Blue Hill Bay, we watched the tide retreat to reveal the muddy bottom across the entire north end. That brought to mind how the boats across the pond handled their tides: bilge keels. Knowing Paul was from England, I asked why there were so few bilge keels over here, and what about putting them on his SIII? With an 8' beam and firm bilges it seemed an ideal candidate for them. He wasn't sure but said why not go ahead and find out. I searched for information on bilge keels on the internet and in forums and contacted designers and builders who have used them. With the help of David Wyman, we came up with a design that I thought would work using welded mild steel, with the

inboard sides cambered and Bolger-ish, 1" steel end plates. Filled with lead they would provide most of the estimated ballast required.

To get the appearance closer to Russ's boat, I stretched it 10 percent to 20'6" LOD (Length On Deck) so it could have a small cabin resembling Sjogin's. I'm not sure how cruising with Susan and two large dogs will go, but having shelter and bit more room should help. As long as I had that extra length, why not see if I could fit that neat looking gaff yawl rig Paul drew for SII? Paul had drawn essentially the same sail areas for both SII and SIII, despite the difference in displacement. When asked, he said he drew what Sjogin had for SIII versus what he thought it should have. This should prove to be a lively sailor.

I spent quite a few hours with David at his home crunching the numbers to see how these modifications would affect the stability and seaworthiness. David is an old school engineer, no CAD or computers, just his trusty planimeter, a hand calculator, a pencil, and some paper. I hadn't used or thought





*Hull, glass and epoxied with outer stem  
of laminated black locust.*



*Primed, stem carved.*

about those formulas for almost half a century, so when David was pleased with the calculations so was I! This is the first Sjogin III to be built—no real-world data—so there is a lot to discover.

Just a few more modifications: I opted for a barn door rudder similar to my melonseed, instead of a drop down (simpler, one less moving part, if less efficient). Rather than keel stepped I wanted the mast in a tabernacle, although when I decided to do that, I was only aware of the concept not the details of raising and lowering a mast that way. Something else on the long list of things that I will have to learn if this will be a success. All in due time.

Looking at plans and equations is one thing, but I needed to feel more comfortable with this project so I made a couple of models. I carved a hull to help visualize placement of the bilge keels. I made another model mimicking real-world construction, little planks over molds, to get a feel for how the parts would eventually go together. You can learn a lot from models—and at no cost—using scraps from your shop.

About the same time I was contemplating this project, *WoodenBoat* published a couple of articles about an engineered marine plank made from sustainably harvested pine in Finland called Vendia. Building a boat is material intensive, and I tried to keep my ecological footprint in check. Another nice aspect of working with Paul Gartside is his philosophy of using locally sourced and sustainable products when possible. Vendia got good reviews and I decided that it would be the way to go. Pricing was comparable, shipping, of course wasn't, and it took me a while to figure how to get it here. (I can tell you how *not* to have it shipped!) The planks eventually got here (first—and I believe only—time in the US), shipped directly

from Finland to Portland, Maine. It was briefly detained by US Customs while they inspected this new wood import. I find it surprising that as of this writing there is still not a US distributor.

Once I finally made the commitment to start, I was fortunate to be assigned to make molds during my volunteer time at WoodenBoat School's alumni weeks. At least I was starting the project knowing what I was doing. After that it was pretty much learn as I went.

Lofting went well; Paul draws nice lines. I don't recall making any corrections, which made me wonder if I was doing it right. The molds were cut and placed on the strongback, and battens indicated that all was fair, so I was on the right track.

Everything was so much larger than what I've dealt with before. The first piece taken off the lofting was the 10' highly curved laminated inner keel. How to shape that 9" wide chunk of vertical grain Doug Fir? With another set of hands, I would have used the bandsaw; being solo I opted for the power plane, which did the job. Once the inner keels were on, it was Vendia time! I found it a joy to work with. First, it was so much easier to deal with planks rather than 4x8 sheets. Next, it worked like pine, smelled like pine; two cross veneers were the difference. I only discovered a few tiny pin sized knots during the entire build.

I got myself into a bind right at the start as my estimate for planking was a bit off. Vendia comes in various widths and lengths, in millimeters, which I converted to inches in a spreadsheet. I ordered the planks based on measurements I took off the lines plans, plus a fudge factor. When lining out the garboard, I was an inch short using the planks I had





designated! Since stretching was not an option, I was into my extra material on the very first plank. That didn't leave much for future errors, as a reorder would take months, not to mention the expense.

Once installed, the garboards got a layer of Dynel and epoxy for abrasion protection. After the garboard, the other planks required two scarfs each, which I did in place. No jigs; just power planed until close. I then worked my way down through my plane collection.

The boat shed that came attached to our 1900 farmhouse (one of the reasons we bought this place) is 35' x 18', with a dirt floor and high roof, ideal for boatbuilding, but has no heat or insulation. Our home also came with a small, detached workshop, somewhat insulated. It had a small Fisher wood stove that I could easily supply with enough kindling to keep the shop toasty. I retreated there during the cold months to build parts for the boat (spars, blocks) and laminate the bowsprit, etc.

When spring arrived, it was back to planking. I knew that the two pointy ends would require some fineness and a lot clamps. I managed to get the Vendia to bend on both ends without steaming. Draping the plank ends with hot wet towels and using a variety of clamps and jigs, they were coerced into place. An unnerving part of following Paul's instructions was for lining out the planks: "Make them eye sweet." A lot of time was spent bent over looking between my legs trying to visualize that sweetness, while only a few feet away.

I opted to glass the exterior planking for added strength, once again, as encouraged by David. After all, Vendia was a new product and being pine, rather soft. So each plank got a layer of six-ounce cloth with coats of thickened epoxy.

Next were the outer stems which would be laminated

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*Patrick and David after the flip.*



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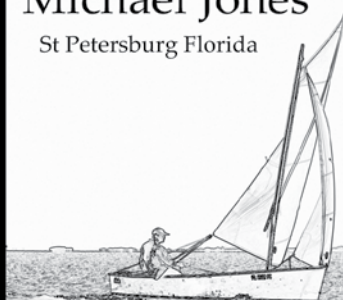
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black locust. I have a love/hate relationship with that wood. It is very hard, rot resistant, and when oiled or varnished takes on beautiful golden hue so that some call it America's teak. However, it's not a straight growing tree, and its grain goes where it wants. Finding clear pieces of any length is a challenge, as is planing.

I laminated the first eight veneers in place using twenty-two waxed 4" deck screws. Seventeen of those came out, but I broke the heads off of the other five...argh. Several days were spent scratching my head and ordering tools. An extractor didn't work, but two plug cutters later, black locust is tough stuff, eventually I got them out and repaired the damage. Once cured, I got the stem off the hull and used it as a jig for the other eight veneers. For the stern stem I avoided the deck screws, instead made a jig from the lofting, and had fun bending it to shape and carving it to eventually fit close enough to epoxy tolerances.

I married the two stems with almost straight slices of VG (Vertical Grain) doug fir. This is where I made the commitment to the bilge keels and deviated from Paul's centerboard plans. I wouldn't need his 9" wide outer keel, so I opted for 5" with a slight bevel.

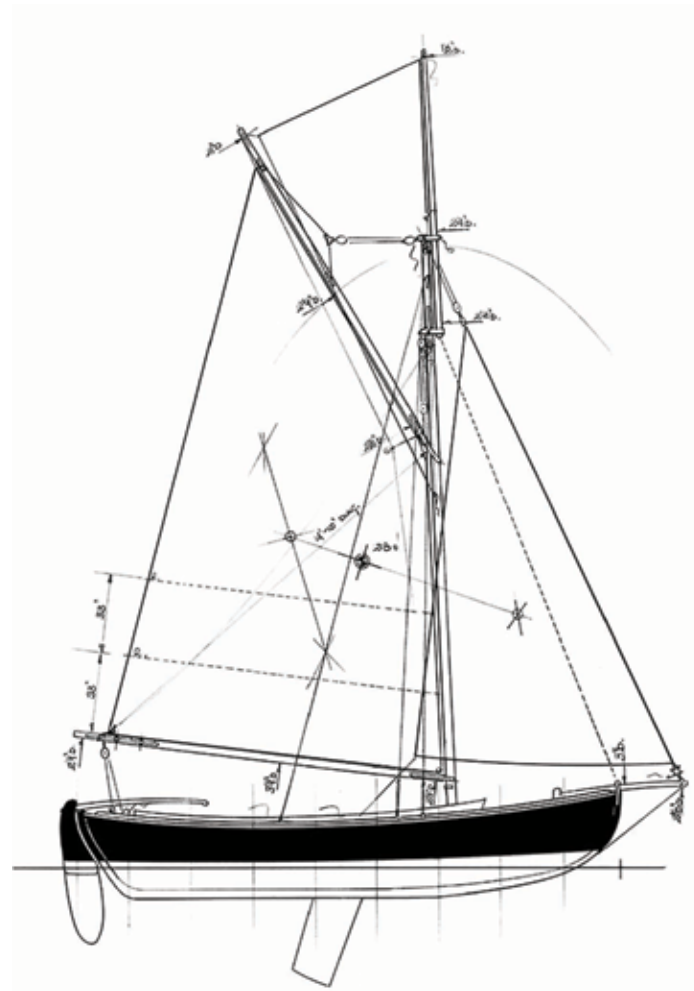
With the outer stems and keel on, planks epoxied and sanded a few more times, it was time to throw some primer on. Another "got-ya" that David caught was that since I changed the rudder design, I should change Paul's keel profile, or I'll be catching lobster buoys. Sure is nice having a boat designer for a friend.

It was really starting to look like a boat, but it was still upside down. You can only look so much; then it's time to move on. David Wyman, once again, came to help and advised on the turning. I recruited a good friend, Pat Fanelli, from WoodenBoat School, and my wife, Susan. It wasn't as scary as I had been anticipating. Once over, now it really looked like a boat—a very beamy, bowl of a boat!

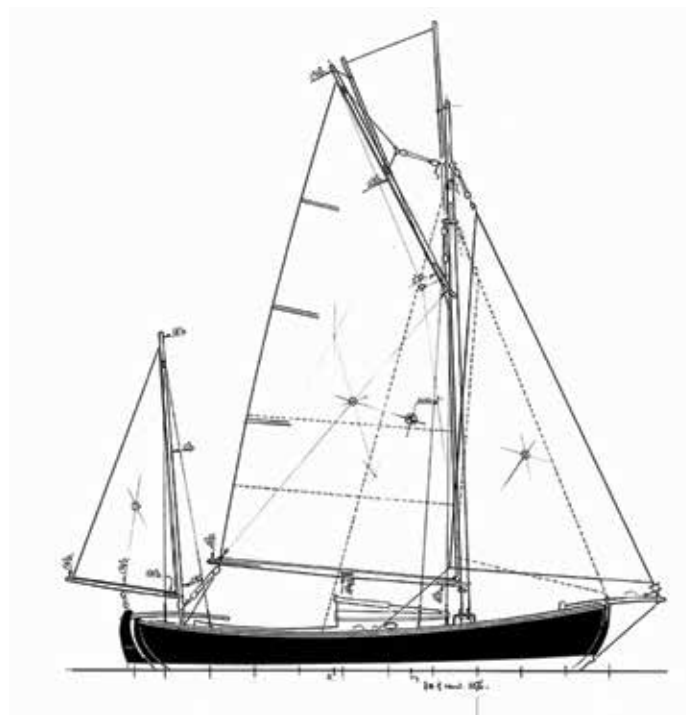
Next up...the interior: floors, frames, bulkheads...

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*A big bowl of a boat. Laminated black locust backing plates for the bilge keels. Without a CB there is a lot of open space.*



*Gartside's gaff yawl rig on Sjogin II.  
I used this rig on his Sjogin III hull.*

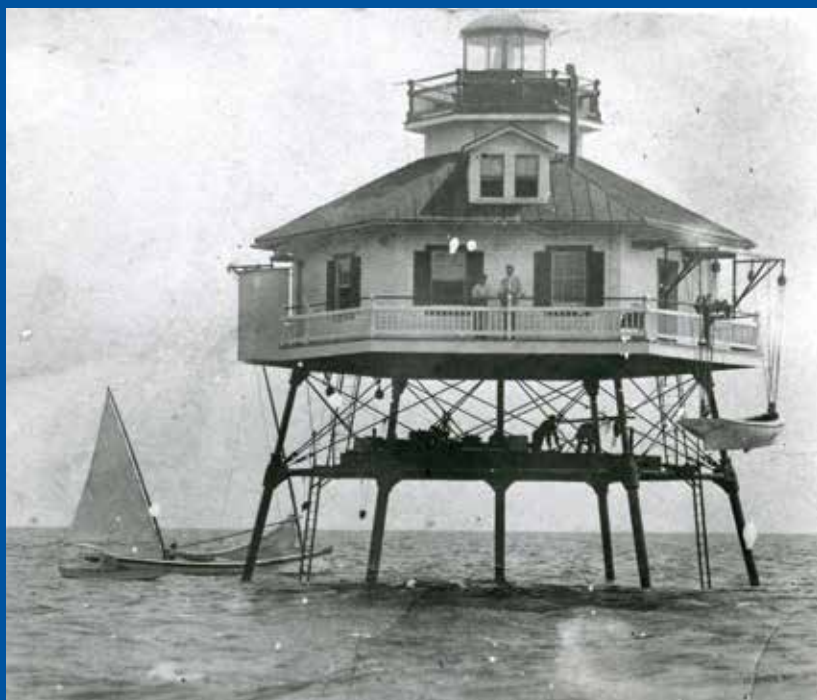


*Sjogin III sail plan as designed. The hull was stretched 10%, cabin added, bilge keels in lieu of CB and rudder redesigned.*





# DRUM POINT LIGHTHOUSE “KEEPER’S BOAT”



*Part 1 in a series by Mark C. Wilkins, Curator of Maritime History and Boatwright, Calvert Marine Museum*

If you were stationed on a screw-pile lighthouse during the late nineteenth century, you'd need a boat to go ashore, get groceries and the mail, and visit the doctor, friends, etc. Most screw-pile lighthouses had two pairs of davits that would take a couple of boats—usually one large and one small boat. This boat served as the “minivan” of the late nineteenth/early twentieth century. It was originally powered by oar and sail but eventually gave way to an inboard gasoline engine.

When I took the job as Curator of Maritime History in 2018, one of my responsibilities in the department was to oversee the Patuxent Small Craft Guild, which was led by the CMM (Calvert Marine Museum) boatwright George Sargent. George brought to my attention a well-worn and dog-eared folder that had a multitude of correspondence, notes, and images—it was labelled “Keeper’s Boat.” Thus, I inherited a very interesting project that was begun by my predecessor, Richard Dodds, and George. Contained in the folder were correspondences between Richard and the US Coast Guard historian—the latter put forth the opinion that these boats were likely based on North Carolina Shad boats, with some modifications. Also, there was the notation that they were likely built by local boat shops in southern Maryland and Virginia—apparently not necessarily to uniform standards

(initially). There were also a couple of photos in the folder which yielded a wealth of information: the boat had a fairly plumb stem, was apparently gaff-rigged, and had a small sprung stump bowsprit. The shape of the sheer was readily apparent, as was the fact that it was not a lapstrake boat. It also had a very unusual transom shape, which was to be the subject of much discussion and sleuthing in terms of how to best build/plank a boat with this shape.

I contacted the Smithsonian’s Ships Plans division and ordered a couple lines, construction, and sail plans for Shad boats. I also researched various books on these boats. They had a number of interesting features—perhaps the chief of them being that some of the boats were framed with grown crooks of white cedar! However, I found other drafts of US Lighthouse Society tenders that showed a more production-oriented boat that followed more traditional methods of construction—i.e., steamed white oak frames with white cedar or cypress planking. There were no plans for a “Keeper’s Boat” as such—ours needed to be around twenty-two feet, based on the distance between the davits and where the falls would need to be hooked on the boat.

Armed with several plans, photos, and verbal instructions, George and I asked Al Suydam to build an initial half model

---

**Top:** Drum Point Lighthouse, late 19th or early 20th century. The “keeper’s boat” can be seen suspended from the davits in the upper right-hand side of the image. Note the system of tackles and gears used to raise and lower the boat. Also, the lighthouse apparently has a second set of davits and falls opposite the ones seen in use by the keeper’s boat.



of a proposed keeper's boat—sort of a rough draft. George and I studied it, and we decided a second model was needed, as the quarters needed to be a bit fuller to make her sail well and also to transition to that odd transom shape. The second model I asked to be built ribband-on-bulkhead style so we could study the run and lining off of the planking. Theoretical models/hulls are fine as a thing in and of themselves, but this hull form would need to lend itself to carvel planking. After the second model, I felt there was enough information to draft a set of lines, which I did, adding some modifications to the body sections and again that very skinny transom. George also did a set of lines, and between the two of us we came up with the offsets to loft the boat. The stem and some of the keel and deadwood were roughed out at this time, I believe, as were the molds.

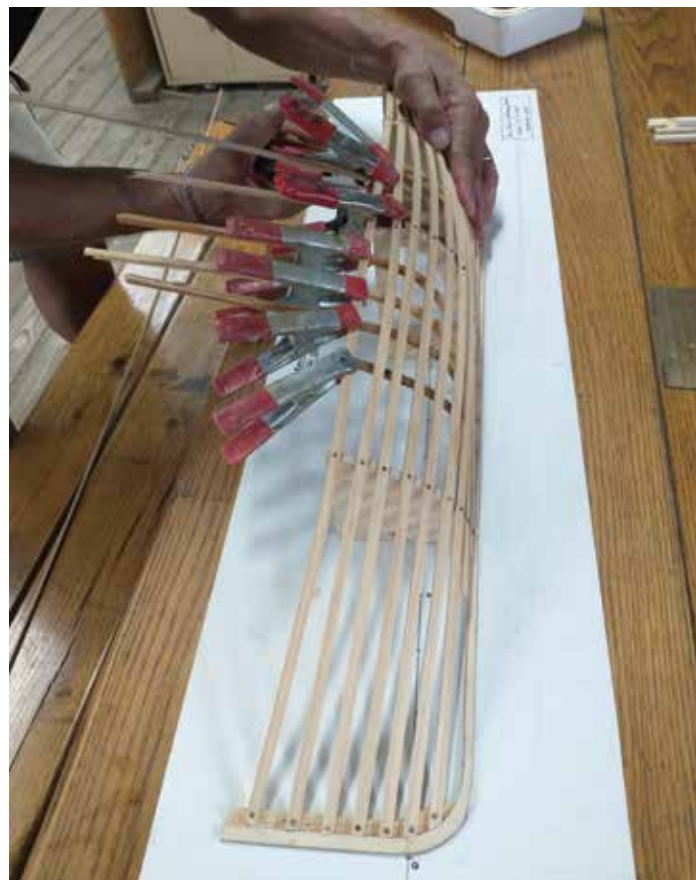
At around this time George decided—after forty-three years of dedicated and talented service to the Calvert Marine Museum—to retire. George began the boatbuilding program at the museum by taking a first stab and building a log canoe in an empty field—so goes the soundbite: one man, one ax, one log—the first boat to be built at CMM! Interested

persons gravitated towards his efforts, and the result was/is the Patuxent Small Craft Guild. After three-hundred-odd boats, George decided it was time to go. One of the most succinct and humorous parting words from George (said at the beginning of his career, in an ebullient and enthusiastic manner), “Oh boy, another wooden boat that needs restoring!” was, at the end of his career (said in a weary tone): “Oh boy... another wooden boat that needs restoring...” The key is in the inflection. We were all sad to see George go. He is missed, but he does occasionally stop by to say hi—which always brings a smile to everyone in the boat shop.

Based on my background in wooden boat building, among other things, I asked to take on George's job—big shoes to fill for sure. Leadership readily assented and, given my passion for wooden boats and boatbuilding, I found this to be a great fit. And so it happened that I found myself in the position to continue the work George and I had begun along with the talented and ever cheerful Patuxent Small Craft Guild members. Brian Forsyth, the Guild's president, did a fine job fitting and bolting together the stem and was half-finished roughing out the rabbet. And so work resumed—the keel,

---

*Pictured is the batten on bulkhead model made by Al Suydam which served as a point of departure for the lines drawing of the keeper's boat. We added some scale steam bent frames to show the public how the actual frames would lay inside of the ribbands.*




---

*The white oak keel received a worm shoe on the bottom which is being bedded in tar in this image in preparation to assembling.*

*The mating surfaces have been primed in red lead before applying the tar. Guild member Mike Grey is seen in this image.*







*The finished stem, keel, centerboard box, deadwood, and sternpost bedded and bolted in place. The string represents the waterline and this was used to level the boat so that the waterline was parallel to the floor.*



*The centerboard box was made from two slabs of Cypress that was beaded on the bottom and let in to the keel. The bedlogs were bedded in 5200 and through bolted with bronze rod that were threaded at the ends to receive washers and nuts. After tightening, the thread protruding from the bolts were peened over so that the bolts can not work loose. The nut and washer on the bottom of the keel were given a wisp of cotton caulking soaked in red lead to prevent leaks.*

keel shoe, and deadwood were bedded and bolted together. We built a super beam running the length of the shop that would accept the bracing for the molds. The keel was blocked up so that the waterline was level. Next step was to build the centerboard and centerboard box. This was made from tongue and groove cypress, which is strong yet rot resistant. The planks were drifted with bronze rod to insure a stiff and well-supported centerboard box. The centerboard itself was made from white oak and was similarly drifted. We routed out two pockets using a dovetailing bit, and poured molten lead into same. We then chucked it in the harbor and sure enough: it sank—bingo! The centerboard pin was machined from bronze rod and featured threading on either end to ensure that the leather washer, bronze washer, and nut would seat perfectly on the face of the centerboard box and give us a watertight seal. We lined the hole for the pin in the centerboard with a bronze bushing. Finally, the transom was fitted and bolted to the sternpost. This concluded setting up the backbone. Molds, ribbands, and frames would form the next chapter in the construction process.



*The white oak transom is being test clamped to the sternpost. This was made up from white oak tongue and groove planks that were then drifted with bronze rod.*

## SMALL CRAFT IN MOTION

A new feature Video Page is coming to TSCA.NET this fall. The page will feature short professional videos from our partners, in addition to our member boats on Chapter Messabouts, solo voyages, camp cruising, under construction, maintenance tips, and even some of the

events that happen on the other coast, from coast to coast. Members are invited to submit links to their videos for inclusion on the page. Watch the TSCA Facebook page for the launch announcement.





# BLUE HILL MARITIME HERITAGE FESTIVAL



*By Steve Brookman. Photos by Michael Perch.*

It was a busy day in Blue Hill for the Downeast Chapter on Saturday, August 13th. There were well over five hundred visitors enjoying a fun summer day by the bay, and, yes, the weather did cooperate. There was nonstop boating as David Wyman, our dockmaster, kept our boats full of visitors, many new to boating. Blue Hill Community Rowing introduced folks to coastal rowing with their St. Ayles Skiff. Mary and J. R. Krevans had their *Dublois Street* dory sailing or rowing all day with visitors of all ages. Our chapter also offered rides on a variety of boats: peapod, skiffs, prams, dories, and a canoe. While on shore there were more boats on display, including Gardner Pickering's (Hewes & Co.) *Caledonia Yawl*, John Hartmann's *Jewell*, Paul LaBrie's *Cape Split* peapod, and many more. Paul also manned the TSCA desk and kept Paul Gartside company while Paul did book signings. Clint's Chase Small Craft joined us this year, and he brought a small fleet of his CNC boats. Jim Nelson, Maine author and tall ship rigger, was very popular demonstrating traditional rigging throughout the day.

A maritime festival would not be complete without sea shanties, and we had a full slate of musicians performing at the park sculpture overlooking the town wharf. The park and wharf were at capacity with marine-related museums and organizations, each bringing their own specialty such as touch tanks, a kiddie pool, and a rope-making machine. A real



crowd-pleaser was a puppet show featuring larger-than-life-sized *Wizard of Oz* characters. Seafood, homemade ice cream, and donated spring water kept the crowd fed and hydrated.

Everyone had so much fun, we may have to do it again. Since Blue Hill Bay is tidal, and it's nice to have water for a boating event, we have to change the date to catch the tide. So circle August 19, 2023, for the next one.

Visit the Festival website for more info: [bhmhf.org](http://bhmhf.org).









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We enjoyed TSCA member Ron Breault's *Ash Breeze* story on the building of his lapstrake tender, *Teer*.

Now Ron's introducing us to his restored Dolphin 24 and telling the rest of this ongoing story in his book *Voyaging with Marionette*. Together we single hand sail the New England coast from Old Lyme, Connecticut, to Brooklin, Maine. We participate in some successful racing with great crews and meet some very interesting people along the way.



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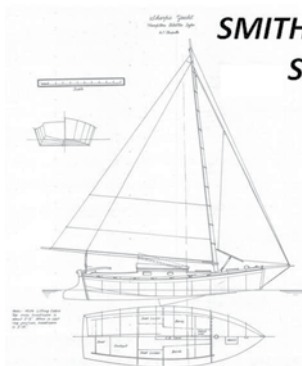


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# BABY CAPTAIN

Finn Shaw (22 months) as Captain in Catboat *Obadiah*.  
 Pete Peters is the supportive grandfather.



# 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 \$2,000 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:

[tsca.net/john-gardner-fund/](http://tsca.net/john-gardner-fund/)



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

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# JOE'S SAILING SKIFF

## AND THE SIMPLICITY OF HIS SINGLE LOOSE LEE BOARD

*By Ben Fuller*

When someone whose last job was running the Philadelphia Naval Yard's boatbuilding program builds a little skiff, it's worth taking a close look. In the late 1940s, Joe Liener saw one of Fenwick Williams 18' catboats being built, took a few measurements, went home, drew up his own, and built it in the basement of his Salem, New Jersey, house. Rather, he made all the parts and assembled the boat outside. *Buxom Lass of Salem* needed a tender, so Joe built her a simple cross planked skiff, 10' long, 4' wide. As the saying goes, the devil is in the details; and Joe's details have lots to show us.

It's a sailing skiff, without a centerboard and only a single hardware-less leeboard. It uses a rope lanyard to keep the board in place. You stick it down ahead of the rowing thwart where the water pressure keeps it against the side of the hull. The lanyard keeps it from folding it under the boat. The lanyard is knotted, goes through a hole in the center of the rowing thwart then through a hole in the board where it is knotted again. Sailing it, you wait until you are on your tack, making leeway, then slide the board into place. Tacking, the board floats up; move it over and stick it down again. If you are in a place where you need to short tack, you drop the sail and get out the oars. But for a long tack, the single board works just fine.

Look at the photo: the board is about 3' long, parallel sided where it contacts the boat, then tapered fore and aft. The tip is about 12", and it was probably a piece of five quarter stair tread, knowing, cheap, strong, and available, all things Joe liked.

But the skiff has many other carefully thought out details.

For the rig, the small balanced lug sail has reef points with a tack line spliced in, so it's always to hand. The halyard running through the deck combines with the tack-to-mast lashing to keep the boom tight to the mast. By running the halyard through a under deck turning block then aft to belaying pin, Joe didn't have to go way forward to set or douse the sail. A single part main sheet led under the riser provides enough friction to hold, and it takes just a second to transfer it when tacking or jibing.

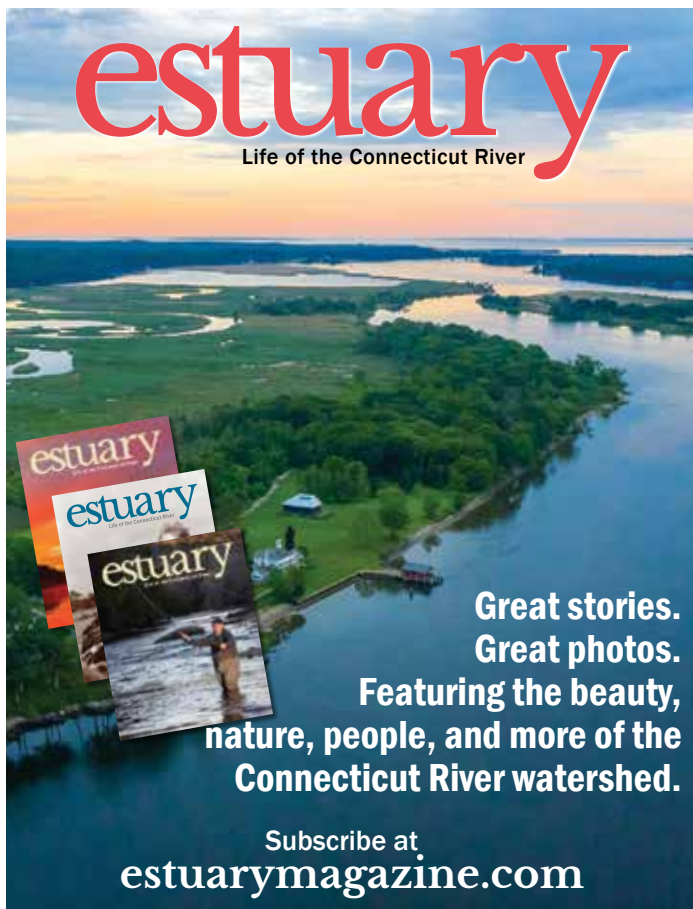
Joe solved the problem of keeping his sweater or lunch dry in a flat bottom skiff by putting a removable tray under the seat resting on the chines. The central three boards of the stern seat are cleated together underneath and can be lifted out for access to the tray or painting under the seat. Access under the seat for painting on a little skiff is always a problem. I thank Joe for this solution every time I refinish the interior of my Good Little Skiff.



You don't really need a rudder on a skiff this small. I rarely use my rudder sailing, just use weight shifting and an oar, something I learned from Joe. Here he set an oarlock off center for steering and sculling where the offset to the right lets you face forward while sculling with your right hand.

Joe's skiff has simple building details like elegant long toed knees. Angles were cut on top of the chines to let water drain. The stem head is simple, nicely shaped as is the transition to narrowed part of the stem below the sheer line. A rope for a fender has a short splice creating a mini bow pudding. And of course, Joe painted the Catboat Association logo to show she was tender to his catboat.





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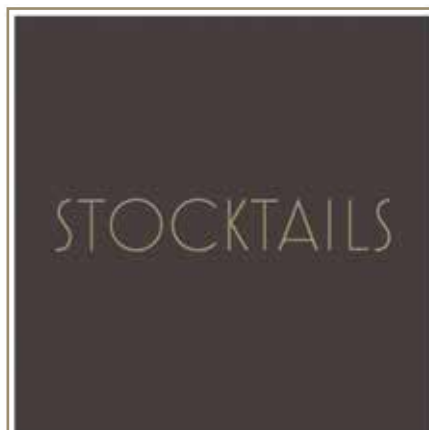
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# BILL RUTHERFORD'S STROLL THROUGH THE WOODENBOAT SHOW



**Left:** The River was busy all weekend. Here, a classic New Haven Oyster Skiff catches up to a flat-bottomed skiff being rowed two up with a third oarsman waiting in reserve. Note Old Glory flying above the Oyster Skiff's sail. The Flag flies from an old Schooner mast flagpole at the Holmes Street intersection with Route One. The Catboat to the left of it is returning downwind to the Seaport's Boat Livery.

**Below:** Steve Jones's son brought this in all the way from the South Seas. Note the raked masts and perfectly furlled sails. Dory-men Matt McKenzie and Ben Fuller slide by on their early morning row.





**Above:** Medium-sized boats along the floating docks near the South Entrance range from furniture boats with gleaming varnish to tugs to a Bahamian Dinghy. All exquisitely done.

**Below:** A 1920 Fred Goeller design with a brand new hull courtesy of the International Yacht Restoration School results in a perky sixteen-footer with the traditional Catboat two-to-one beam ratio so you have an eight-foot cockpit in which to entertain friends.

**Above:** This is a swing bridge, pivoting on a pier in the middle of the river. Kids (of all ages) love to wait beneath it as an Amtrak train roars across above your head. Note the rails sticking out which have to lift up and lie down in perfect alignment as it closes. Likewise, the overhead electric power lines which must connect to run the trains on this section of the Northeast Corridor.

**Below:** This was one of two actively running steam powered boats. This ancient design really moved when out on the river in late afternoon. And surprisingly quiet...







**Above:** Everything from the long Sardine Carrier Grayling to 1920s Cabin Cruisers—a mix of Power and Sail.

**Below Left:** It doesn't get much more salty than this! A true work boat, complete with sliding rack for traps. So salty, just looking at it makes your eyes rust.

**Below Right:** And let us not forget to visit the Seaport's Boat Livery with its special collection of traditional small craft.

No charge to take one out, so pick your favorites and do some comparison tests. Here John Gardner Small Craft Workshop participants Liz Blackwell and daughter Charlotte back out with their wheels aboard on their way to the Isham Street car-top take-out. Charlotte is eyeing the Beetle Cat, Fisher Cat, and Lawley Tender for future reference for next year.



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## PRES. MESSAGE

*continued from page 2*



home to a fleet of traditional Greek Sponge boats along with shrimp boats and other commercial fishing boats. All wooden boats, of course with the Sponge boats, were being built right along the river. Learning to sail, operate power boats, and repair them was a part of life. Sea Scouts provided a more formal education in navigation and seamanship. My wooden boat carpentry skills were refined working at Clearwater Bay Marine Ways, the home of Clark Mills, renowned boat designer/builder and member of the National Sailing Hall of Fame. While my career has been as an independent contractor working in boatyards on larger vessels, my avocation is smaller traditional boats. The combination of aesthetics and functionality is a constant joy, whether sailing, building, repairing, or rigging. After forty years it is time for me to “get back to where I once belonged”: small boats with no pretense but with simplicity afloat as a goal.

By the time you read this, many of you will be reaching the end of your sailing season. Here on the West Coast of Florida we will hopefully be feeling a cool breeze and better sailing conditions. We have made our plans for attending the Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels, Maryland, September 30–October 2. The TSCA is again helping to sponsor the event, and our table will be right next to the check-in table, so stop by and say hello. Look for *Freddie the Cat*, our latest acquisition, a 12½' catboat designed and built by Bob Treat forty years ago. I am looking forward to seeing old friends and making new ones.

Enjoy your time on the water and in the shop.

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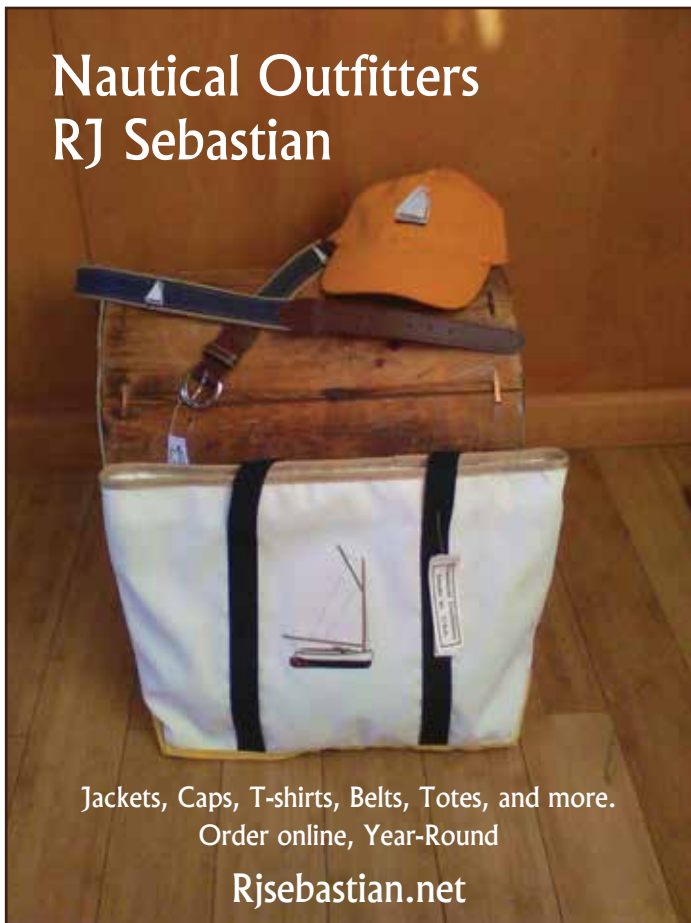


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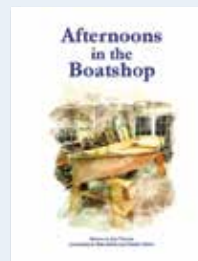
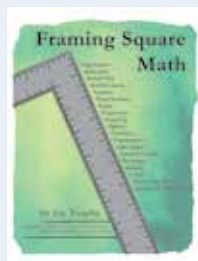
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## The Ash Breeze

Winter 2022 Volume 43 Number 4

**Editorial Deadline: November 1, 2022**

**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.*

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