

GOOD OLD BOAT



THE SAILING MAGAZINE FOR THE *REST* OF US!

October 2008

Newsletter supplement for subscribers

How much do you *need*?

by Karen Larson

Life's lessons can be learned any time and any place. They usually sneak up on us and appear as a revelation. No matter what the lesson, I've noticed that it has a practical application in our sailing lives.

Sometimes the lesson comes while sailing. But a recent revelation came to me while I was pedaling my bicycle. A quick mental leap took me from there to the boat and to life in general.

It occurred to me that the \$35 Jerry spent for the bike several years ago at a yard sale had been a very good investment. Pedaling is my favorite form of exercise when the weather cooperates. Would I have any more fun if the bike had cost \$45 ... or \$145 ... or \$1,450? The simple truth is that it would not.

Our good old boat, a 1976 C&C 30, cost us \$25,000 17 years ago. Could we have any more fun if we had purchased a bigger boat, or a newer boat, or a more expensive boat? I don't think so.

We have certainly received our "money's worth" in every way. We haven't had to worry about reducing her investment value if we drop a winch handle on deck or if we decide to proceed with yet another one of Jerry's sometimes-flaky and sometimes-inspired experiments. We can modify, re-rig, and re-

configure to our heart's content. She's paid for and she's not for sale. Our modifications are made for our safety and comfort ... and not with an eye to her resale value.

I read these words recently in something that was going around the Internet: "The richest person is not the one who has the most, but the one who needs the least."

That concept summarizes the essence of good old boat ownership: no matter what boat you own, there is just as much fun to be had when sailing, and the anchorages are just as beautiful. The important thing — the real wealth — comes of finding satisfaction and happiness in the experience.

See you in Annapolis

The good old crew will be in Annapolis at the boat show, October 9 to 13. We've been told that we'll be in the same place we were last year but with a new location number: AB-3. We're never certain about our spot at a boat show until we arrive and have the booth firmly in place. But never fear: we'll be at the show somewhere and we'd love to say hello. We'll have a few incentives for resubscribing at the show and other goodies for sale at "boat show prices." So please look us up if you're there.

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- Hughes 31 review
- The influence of the early workboats

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- Sewing dinghy chaps
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- Living without a fridge

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- This is where I belong
- Spirit of Christmas
- 5200 forever

What's more

- Simple solutions: Prevent varnish from drying out
- Quick and easy: Simple sail-tie system; Vents for a shrink-wrapped boat; Don't lose your glasses

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In the news

We've lost two giants

As this newsletter went to press we learned of the deaths of Peter Duff and Olin Stephens.

Peter Duff: 1936-2008

Peter Duff, co-founder of Edey & Duff, Inc., succumbed to Parkinson's Disease on August 30. Edey & Duff are the builders of the Fatty Knees dinghy, Stone Horse, and many other fine sailboats. Peter was known for his innovative ideas and his willingness to take chances on "modern" materials. David Davignon of Edey & Duff tells us that "Change was a fact of life in the company and Peter was never satisfied as he sought better ways to design and improve hardware and methods on his boats."

Donations in Peter's name can be made to the American Parkinson Disease Association <<http://www.apdaparkinson.org>>.

Olin Stephens dies at 100

Naval architect Olin Stephens died on September 13 at the age of 100. With his brother Rod and yacht broker Drake Sparkman, he founded Sparkman & Stephens in 1929. In 1931 they raced the company's 4th boat, *Dorada*, to win the Transatlantic Race. Stephens was 23.

Over the next years, Olin and S&S produced a record six America's Cup winners, including *Ranger*, *Columbia*, *Constellation*, *Intrepid*, *Courageous*, and *Freedom*, as well as designs for more than 2,200 boats. He also designed day boats such as the Lightning and the Blue Jay classes.

During World War II, Olin designed boats for the U.S. Navy. During the same time, his brother, Rod, helped design the infamous sea-going truck, the amphibious DUKW.

Olin retired in 1978 to take mathematics courses to help

teach an engineering course at Dartmouth College. At the age of 93 he wrote his autobiography, *All This and Sailing Too*, in which he said, "I was lucky. I had a goal. As far back as I can remember, all I wanted to do was to design fast boats."

Sailing bloggers

In the April 2008 issue of this newsletter, we mentioned six sailing bloggers we were aware of. There are dozens more by now. We'll list a few below. If you've started a blog about your sailing or maintenance and refit projects, please let us know and we'll spread the word.

- Vineyard Haven sailor and artist Elizabeth Whelan's site is: <<http://soapboxdujour.blogspot.com>>.
- Georgian Bay sailor Doug Hunter's site is: <http://web.mac.com/dwh5/Sweetwater_Cruising_blog>.
- Iowa sailor Jeff Mau's Paceship 26 site can be found at: <<http://paceship26.blogspot.com>>.
- See the story of Ruben Gabriel and *Sparky*, his Pearson Electra, on their 2008 singlehanded TransPac challenge (complete with dismasting): <<http://rubenandsparky.blogspot.com>>.
- Craig Leweck and his popular Scuttlebutt online news has its own blog: <<http://www.sailingscuttlebutt.com/blog>>.
- Captain Dave writes about his cruise in *Raven*, a Cape Dory 36, at: <<http://raven-cd36.blogspot.com>>.
- John Allison writes about his cruise in a Hanse 461 at: <<http://www.yotblog.com/swagman>>.
- Tillerman, who says he's a grandfather who sails a Laser, has this motto: "Cheat the nursing home, die on your Laser." His blog address is: <<http://propercourse.blogspot.com>>.
- Bruce and Jan Smith write about their Caribbean adventure at: <<http://brucesmithsvoyage.com/blog>>.

Calendar

The 39th Annapolis Sailboat Show

October 9-13, 2008

Annapolis, Maryland

Good Old Boat will be an exhibitor at the 39th Annapolis U.S. Sailboat Show, the largest show exclusively featuring new sailboats. Come see us in Booth AB-3.

Go to <<http://www.USBoat.com>> for detailed directions and more information.

Ninth Annual Good Old Boat Regatta

October 11-12, 2008

Annapolis Md.

Sponsored by *Good Old Boat* and hosted by Shearwater Sailing Club, the ninth annual Good Old Boat Regatta is open only to boats of some maturity — those designs whose first hull was built before 1975. It is a celebration of the old solid boats and the laid-back, fun-loving people who sail them.

For more information on this great event, contact Alfred Poor (apoor@bellatlantic.net) or Charlie Husar at 410-266-6216, or go to <http://www.goodoldboat.com/resources_for_sailors/sponsored_regattas/2008_GOB_regatta.php>.

Second Annual Glen-L Gathering of Boatbuilders

October 25-26, 2008

Guntersville, Ala.

The 2007 Glen-L Gathering of Boatbuilders was such a success, another event is planned for October 25-26, 2008, again at Lake Guntersville, Alabama. Both events are organized and carried out by the members of the Glen-L Boat builder Forum <<http://www.Glen-L.com>>. Everyone is welcome to attend this free event. Bring your boat, finished or not, or even ready-made. You don't have to be building a Glen-L design; last year's attendees had built Stevenson, Bateau, <<http://rubenandsparky.blogspot.com>> and Bolger designs as well. More information: <<http://glen-l.com/gathering/the-gathering.html>>.

Looking for

Mystic Island cutter plans

I'd like to know where I can get plans for my boat. I bought it in Maine in 1986. It's a 27-foot Mystic Island Cutter. It was built of cedar planks on oak frames in 1948 by Franklin Post of Mystic, Connecticut. I was told that the designer was Pete Townsend.



Arnold Lucas
5907 Willow Oaks Dr., Apt. E
Richmond, VA 23225
804-233-9133

Staysail schooner

I have a 1937 hard chine, 45' LOD 56' LOA 12' beam 4'7" draft, triple-planked of old growth Douglas fir, staysail schooner, built in California. I am trying to research why it is what it is. There is virtually no information on any such design, with the exception of Harry Pigeon's boat (quite different).

I have not yet had the opportunity to take her out in heavy weather. I keep getting conflicting opinions from all the old shipwrights in my marina about her seaworthiness, due to the hard chine and shallow draft.

The construction of my boat is extremely heavy; there is virtually zero rot of the wood or deterioration of the fastenings due to a heavy tar that was applied between the triple planking. It still has the original good-running 1930's Detroit diesel 2-71. The boat was built in the 30s by Joseph Uhl, and reportedly designed by Deeds. Nobody has ever heard of either man.

Can anyone help? Any comments, opinions, or advice would be greatly appreciated.



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Steve Dolmer
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Poacher redux

I have come across the October 2007 issue of the *Good Old Boat* newsletter, in which the history of the Poacher 6.4 was sought. It was designed by William Richardson with input from his brother Angus. It was a partial copy of the Freedom 40; that was the inspiration anyway. Manufactured in Liverpool, UK, it is thought the molds made their way to the USA. One was given a keel and turned into a min tonner with some success!

Richard Jarman
richardjarman@blueyonder.co.uk

Mystery Philly boat

These photos, below, are of a good old boat I found in a boatyard in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. No one knows what it is. Help?

Joe Staples
jssfly@msn.com



Marshall Sanderling

I am in the process of refurbishing a Marshall Sanderling and am looking for photos or diagrams. I need to replace the cockpit floor. This is not a 22 with an inboard.

Robert Welch
rwwelch@optonline.net

"Read me a story"

Remember how much you enjoyed having someone read stories to you when you were a child? Your taste in reading material may have changed since then but not the pleasure of hearing a good story read aloud.

If your life seems too hectic to read the nautical books you enjoy, let us read them to you. We're producing some of your favorites — like Joshua Slocum's *Sailing Alone Around the World* and Dave and Jaja Martin's *Into the Light*. Our sea stories are sure to take the drudgery out of a long commute, cause an exercise session to melt away (almost) effortlessly, or make a moment of quiet relaxation even better.

Order MP3 CDs or download MP3 files to your computer for use with an iPod or another MP3 player

Let us read you a sea story tonight!

Nautical Audiobooks
www.AudioSeaStories.com

Why my old boat is good, part 2

Here are more stories from readers about what makes their old boats good

The Gift

Growing up in eastern Idaho, I had nothing to do with sailboats beyond seeing them on vacation brochures until I first sailed at the Naval Training Center in San Diego. I joined a sailing club on the training base and, after a two-day course, I could check out one of their 14-foot Lidos. I took two of my roommates and sailed into Neverland until nightfall.

The trouble was, we were “supposed to be back in two hours.” If you’ve ever been to San Diego Harbor, you’ll know why we did not want to go back to the base.

When I attempted to check out a boat the next weekend, they confiscated my certificate and kicked me out of the club. But I had discovered a love that would last a lifetime.

After the ‘Nam years, I married, opened a machine and welding shop, flew airplanes, and was involved in politics to the point of becoming the mayor of my small town, St. Anthony, Idaho. But sailing was always in the back of my mind.

Scanning the “for sale” columns in the paper, I found a 14-foot Glenwood and, after a five-hour drive, she was in my yard. What a beautiful boat! After capsizing many times and some rudder adjustments, the boat became more upright than sideways.

One day, a customer was admiring my little boat and asked if I wanted a San Juan 21 he owned. It was only a 15-minute drive, but I was greeted with a sorry sight. The tires were flat because the boat was full of water from years of melted snow and rain. The hull was crushed against the trailer tire on the port side and the forward cradle had punched through the hull, shattering the spar.

After changing tires and cutting trees around the site to remove the hulk, it was on its way home. I hung the mast and rigging in the rafters of my woodshed and put the boat in storage.

I read *Good Old Boat* articles for five years before it became apparent that this good old boat might come back to life. All the rigging was there, so why not? I bought glass and resin, and four months of part-time work later, it was ready for sails. After looking in the *Good Old Boat* ads, I found and purchased sails.

Sailing on the lakes and reservoirs of Idaho and Montana has been a dream come true. Being a born-again Christian and considering the almost-miracle nature of the boat’s revival, her new name is *Born Again*.

Roy Parker

The boat, the dog, and me

My good old boat, *Rum Blown*, is a Beneteau First 345 built in 1985. It is accessible, which means I don’t need a step or series of steps to heave my 76-year-old frame from the dock onto the deck with considerable, albeit diminishing, ease. Also, there is no obstruction between the helmsman’s seat and the forward part of the boat, which I find important since I singlehand most of the time.

The layout below has two aft cabins, a convenient and workable galley, and a nav station. With settee berths on either side, and with folding leaves on the saloon table, there is clear passage from the cockpit all the way to the V-berth. There is an abundance of locker space onboard.

The boat, as it came from the factory in France, is complete and comfortable in all respects, including standing headroom throughout. Access to the engine is very good and available by removing panels in the aft cabins on either side of it and/or by removing the companionway steps. Similarly, the essential mechanical systems are reasonably accessible except for the electronics, which were done on this side of the Atlantic and, although accessible, look like they may have been done by a chimpanzee under the influence of LSD. They would require a major refit before embarking on any extended passage.

The boat sails well on all points of sail, and when on the wind she points like a bird dog. Off the wind she is stable and graceful. If going wing-in-wing, she will continue to do so as long as the helmsman is paying attention.

Rum Blown is graceful and attractive, both at dockside and (I am told) on the water. When your boat is attractive, accessible, well-laid-out, and a pleasure to sail . . . what more do you need, other than an attractive and attentive companion? Of course, my dog provides the last component.

Murray Eades

Small package, great performance

I own a 17-foot O’Day Daysailer 3, bought in 1993 and still in excellent condition. I sail on Round Lake in Hayward, Wisconsin, either solo or with my granddaughters as crew.

If I had any complaints about the boat, it would be that the roller furling is sometimes hard to maneuver when furling. The other item is the pintle arrangement. The clip (or pin) is difficult to remove after a day of sailing. But these are minor inconveniences when compared with the joy of a day’s sail, and the thrill you experience when the wind becomes brisk. We often will set a plan for the day, picking out points far and wide, and try to make for these destinations no matter how the wind is blowing, or from what direction.

The only disaster I’ve had occurred when a sudden surface wind knocked the boat over and I could not release the mainsheet quickly enough, causing the boat to turn turtle. I managed to jump clear and scramble up onto the boat’s bottom. Luckily, neighbors are always around, and they helped me to right the boat. I pulled on the daggerboard; they used a motorboat to pull on a line that was tied to a side cleat and ran under the boat. I don’t need to go through that again in the near future.

There is not enough room to sleep overnight in this cabin but having the boat at my summer cabin, safe at its mooring, lets me get a good night’s sleep on shore.

I have had several larger boats, in the 30- to 36-foot class, that I sailed on Lake Michigan. I feel that sailing on a smaller boat, though, on a pristine lake under a clear sky, with the sun shining down and a good 12- to 15-knot wind blowing, is the most rewarding sailing a person can have.

Robert Antonio



Book Reviews

The Partnership, Voyage of Entr'acte by Ellen and Ed Zacko

(Pumona Productions, 2008; 103 minutes; \$29.95).

**Review by Karen Larson
Minneapolis, Minn.**

Step back in time to a day when sailboats were simpler and our own needs for cruising comfort were more in line with camping. Talented musicians Ed and Ellen Zacko met, dropped out of the New York symphonic rat race, finished out a sailboat hull, learned to sail, and set off cruising in 1981.

Then they told the story of their travels with a slide show that evolved into a multi-media production. (Remember the term? It meant having two or more projectors fading slides in and out. It was the end of the click, click, click presentation.)

The Zackos' narrated slide presentation was so popular they continued to show it as the years moved along and technology changed. That show, now available on DVD, while faded and dated, still entertains and informs. These days, it also offers a view backward in time.

Called *The Partnership, Voyage of Entr'acte*, Ed and Ellen's presentation is a romance set to music as this couple travels through the Bahamas, the Caribbean, the Azores, Portugal, Spain, the French canal system, the Mediterranean, the Canaries, West Indies, and home again four years later. All this was accomplished on the *Nor'Sea 27* they built from a bare hull. (That part of the adventure took an additional three years.)

The best part of the story is that Ed and Ellen are still cruising, still meeting interesting people, and still stopping to smell every rose along the way. They had just left the Galapagos for the Marquesas as this review was written. And they're still sailing the same *Nor'Sea 27, Entr'acte*. Encore, Ed and Ellen!

The DVD is available from Pomona Productions, 2312 Maplewood Dr., Culpeper, VA 22701, or from their website at <<http://www.enezacko.com>>.

Endless Sea by Amyr Klink
(Sheridan House, 2008; 272 pages; \$19.95).

**Review by Michael Maxfield
Gatesville, Texas**

Isn't it funny how good moods are so often the product of what we perceive internally when we accomplish simple objectives, not of what we actually see outside? Can this be true even when it's freezing, a huge mountain of ice is floating off your bow, and 50-foot waves are hitting your boat from all sides?

Endless Sea by Brazilian sailor, author, and businessman Amyr Klink, tells the story of Amyr's 1998-99



singlehanded circumnavigation of Antarctica. For five months and 18,000 miles, Amyr sailed below the Antarctic convergence in *Paratii* — the 50-foot aluminum boat he called his “big red truck” — dodging icebergs, weathering freezing storms, and enduring the worst the South Sea could throw at him.

As Amyr takes us along on this cold and lonely expedition, he shares with us his views on topics ranging from weather to geological formations to renaming places and streets after dead men. Such discourses, though not an integral part of the story, flow into it with such smoothness and offer such insight into his psyche that the book would be much less without them. In addition, the book includes many facts and interesting trivia about the early Antarctic explorers, great and small. This adds real depth to the book.

One of the most intriguing aspects in the book was Paratti's Aerorig mast, an unstayed 80-foot carbon-fiber, 360-degree rotating mast in the shape of an inverted cross, supported only at the deck and keel. The 42-foot-single-piece boom is pierced by the mast — off-center, extending about 17 feet fore and 25 feet aft of the mast — and is raised 7 feet off the deck. This unique rig eliminated nearly all the lines and hardware normally cluttering up the deck of a sailboat, reducing them to one single controlling mainsheet. In Amyr's words, “miles of lines and almost a ton of complicated hardware that had once cluttered the deck were now gone.”

Amyr spent “months of sea trials chasing squalls, making abrupt maneuvers, over-canvassing, and stressing the mast as much as possible.” He tells us that “While the twins [his toddler daughters] drank from their baby bottles on the same deck that had once been covered with a mess of lines, I made full circles under full sail, with never more than three or four fingers lightly touching the helm.” The Aerorig impressively surpassed these accomplishments during Amyr's 18,000-mile circumnavigation.

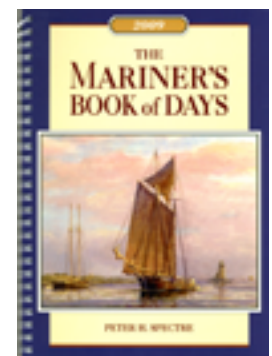
Other than the 46-page land log — written by Amyr's wife Marina — which I thought rather dull, as log books typically are, I found this book interesting. Just watch out for the icebergs!

The Mariner's Book of Days — 2009 by Peter H. Spectre
(Sheridan House, 2008; 56 pages; \$14.95).

**Review by Wayne Gagnon
Antigo, Wisc.**

If you need an appointment book to organize your life, and who doesn't, *The Mariner's Book of Days — 2009* is worth looking at. If you're a maritime aficionado, and since you're reading this in *Good Old Boat* you more than likely are, it's worth having. If you love nautical lore, facts and figures, historical anecdotes, etc., it's practically indispensable. But if you're all of the above and, like me,

can't wait to dazzle your friends (or bore them to tears) with your Cliff Claven-esque gift of “little known facts,” you'll find this book as necessary to your life as a lawyer is to a politician.



The book is laid out week by week, Monday through Sunday, as most datebooks are. When opened, the left-hand pages contain passages from a variety of authors and literary works, plus excerpts from the logs of ships, yachts, or fishing vessels, dating from the 18th through the 20th centuries. There are also reproductions of line drawings, most of which depict nautical scenes. Certain pages have a definite theme. For example, the week of October 12 contains several facts related to Herman Melville.

At the top of the right-hand page there is a short passage from a book or poem, then below that a space to note each day's appointments. In addition, there is a historical event noted for each particular day. We learn that on October 18, 1851, *Moby Dick* was first published, which is why the left-hand page for that week is devoted to Melville.

If there is anything negative about this book it's that it is simply too pretty to clutter with personal scribbling, especially if your handwriting looks like mine. But that aside, *The Mariner's Book of Days* — 2009 is a wonderful way to keep your life organized while giving you an arsenal of worthwhile information to keep life interesting. It would also make a great gift for someone interested in things poetic, nautical, or both.

Alone Against the Arctic by Anthony Dalton
(Heritage House Publishing Ltd., 2007; 188 pages; \$17.95).

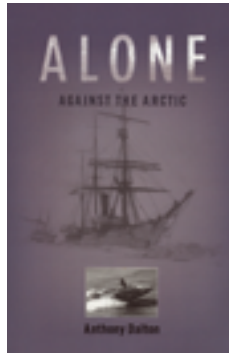
Review by Milo Feinberg
New York, N.Y.

One man, one boat, lots of ice, and lots of chutzpah. *Alone Against the Arctic* is the tale of Anthony Dalton's 1984 attempt to make a solo transit of the Northwest Passage in a small inflatable.

Although Dalton never succeeds in even reaching the passage, he does discover the unforgiving nature of northern waters and the cold justice of the Arctic. He expertly infuses his own story with accounts of other Arctic explorers and earlier expeditions that traversed the same landscape. The book includes photographs of these earlier expeditions alongside pictures of his journey. Dalton writes a compelling page-turning story and describes his difficulties and his mindset in great detail. He gives the reader an acute sense of how he copes with his frustration, his indecision, and his mistakes.

Dalton encounters many difficulties — a capsized early on, uncooperative weather conditions, and the closing of a small window of opportunity (open water exists only for a brief period of time — or at least it used to!) to complete his journey. He ends up stuck at a small outpost waiting for fuel, and his descriptions convey the bleakness and remoteness of small communities such as Nome and Point Hope.

Dalton's voyage would be easier for the reader to track if he had included more detailed maps. Although he accurately tells the reader about his course, and the landmarks, it is frustrating not to be able to look at maps that show exactly how he is progressing; too much is left to the readers' imagination. The book designer's or publisher's decision to make the photographs tiny is also unfortunate.



The writing style sometimes breaks into flowery prose that is perhaps not ideally suited to an adventure story. But they are infrequent enough that the reader is able to steer clear of them and continue along the path of an engaging narrative.

If you like adventures along the lines of Shackleton's attempt to cross Antarctica, you will find this story entertaining. Although Dalton's expedition is limited in scope — one man in one small motorboat — he is up against some rather formidable and unfavorable circumstances and lives to tell his tale.

A Sound Like Thunder by Sonny Brewer
(Ballantine Books, 2006; 269 pages; \$23.95).

Review by Jeff Carlton
Birmingham, Ala.

Have you ever wanted to leave everything and just sail away? Not for fun or adventure but for life and survival? What if you had a sailboat ready to go, money, no ties, and the love of a beautiful young woman? This is what Rove MacNee, the main character in Sonny Brewer's *A Sound Like Thunder* was facing.

The story opens with Rove standing on a dock looking out on Mobile Bay. *Distant lighting flashed in his eyes.*

To the southwest, somewhere between Dauphin Island and New Orleans, was his father, Captain Dominus MacNee. Controlled by drink, lust, and rage, he would soon dock and bring home his usual mayhem. He could take his time as far as his son was concerned.

Behind the dock and up the hill was the Magnolia Bay house. Within its walls was Rove's mother, Lilian. Who knew where her loneliness would take her?

In the young man's chest was a heart that was about to come off its mounts because of Miss Anna Pearl Anderson and her not-so-subtle affection. Besides being the prettiest girl around, she had a love for sailing.

Beyond the dock and up the bay was Fly Creek and his very own 25-ft. wooden sloop. He had spent two years refurbishing this gift and was now ready for the final touches. When he sighted down the deck and beyond the bowsprit, his despair lifted.

The boy's hands held his dripping mullet net. He couldn't control his world but he could toss that net. *The lightning was getting closer. The thunder was in his ears.*

And in Rove's mind he heard Joshua Slocum telling all young men contemplating a sea voyage to go. More and more, his response was, "Why not?"

Many of you would enjoy this book. There is hull repair while moored, cast net instructions, and a shakedown cruise. Anyone alive will remember that first kiss. Set in the mid-40s, Brewer captures the unrest of a nation on the brink of war. This is a story about a family coming apart. This is a tale of hope borne by the waves and driven before the wind. Hope indeed floats.

I have read Slocum, Melville, Jones, and London, each once. I have read *A Sound Like Thunder* three times. Maybe it is the fact that, some years back, my life flew apart, causing me to want



to sail away. Like Rove, there was peace for me on the water.

I found this book by accident. Nothing about the title will naturally attract a sailor. It made me wonder if something like “The Captain’s Son” would have gathered more nautical attention. But I realized that *A Sound Like Thunder* is the only title for this book. Any son of a captain is bound to develop a weather eye. Rove MacNee heard both the freezing north’er in his mother and the fevered hurricane in his father. If there is such a thing as a weather ear, this young man had it.

Boat Green: 50 Steps Boaters Can Take to Save Our Waters by Clyde E. Ford

(New Society Publishers, 2008; 224 pages; \$16.95 U.S.; \$19.95 Can).

Review by James Williams
Mountain View, Calif.



This is not a relaxing afternoon read, nor will you want to read it cover to cover. But you’ll find some chapters informative and you may end up more aware of your impact on the maritime environment.

Years of concern over maritime pollution inspired Clyde Ford to write *Boat Green*. He appropriated his maritime environmental awareness model from ecologist Garret Hardin’s indispensable 1968 essay, “The Tragedy of the Commons” (<<http://dieoff.org/page95.htm>>). Like Hardin, Ford sees our environment being jeopardized by short-term selfish interests versus long-term group interests — the common good.

In five sections and 50 very short chapters, *Boat Green* aims to meld environmentalism and boating, to encourage boaters to become “boat green” and operate their vessels in such a way as to protect the maritime environment. Section one sets the stage, discussing eutrophication, the process whereby soil erosion and runoff from fertilizer and sewage add excess nutrients to water and stimulate excessive algae and other plant growth that saps the oxygen from water and creates dead zones. Ford cites the 2003 Pew Ocean’s Commission report (<http://www.pewtrusts.org/our_work.aspx?category=130>), which delineates the 36 dead zones within U.S. coastal waterways, and the world’s other very highly impacted regions, such as the eastern Caribbean, which suffers greatly from boaters dumping their waste directly overboard. The highlight of this section is Ford’s brief discussion of Hardin’s essay and of folksinger Pete Seeger’s building of the S/V *Clearwater* in 1966, which inspired both the cleanup of the Hudson River and enactment of the 1972 Clean Water Act.

Sections two and three address vessel operation and maintenance. The chapters comprise very familiar ideas for *Good Old Boat* readers. Ford is informative about biodiesel use and storage, is cautionary about ethanol use, and introduces direct fuel injection outboards, electric outboards, and diesel electric inboards. His coverage of electrical systems — solar power, wind generators, and batteries — and his chapters on gray water, recycling, using the marine head, keeping your engine tuned, and not spilling during oil changes are rather basic. I found useful his chapter on polymer bilge socks and oil-eating bacteria for keeping your bilge clean and his chapter on E-paint as a substitute for copper bottom

paints, but almost all of these topics find better coverage in other books and articles.

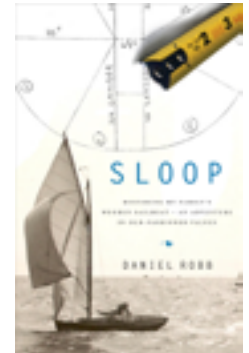
In his last sections, Ford addresses pets aboard, marine wildlife, and protecting the ocean bottom (anchoring). He suggests boaters “leave no wake behind,” which reminds me of the popular myth that Native Americans never really impacted the environment because they “walked softly across the earth.” It’s an important idea, but perhaps a bit romantic. More practically, Ford gives readers a way to calculate their carbon footprint, figuring carbon credits, and buying them. Finally, he offers ideas for community involvement: creating an environmental committee at your yacht club, hosting a boat green event, adopting a nearby waterway, working with local marinas, and so forth.

Boat Green is a useful but not a very polished book. Nevertheless, Ford is to be commended for his advocacy for the marine environment we all rely upon and enjoy.

Sloop: Restoring My Family’s Wooden Sailboat — An Adventure in Old-Fashioned Values by Daniel Robb

(Simon and Schuster, 2008; 336 pages; \$25.00).

Review by C. H. “Chas” Hague
Des Plaines, Ill.



Daniel Robb is a carpenter, actor, teacher, an expert on the Transcendentalists, a sailor, and shipwright. He is also a wonderfully skilled writer, all of which makes his book, *Sloop*, a great read.

Daphie is a Herreshoff 12-½, built in 1939, which had been sailed by generations of Robbs in Buzzard’s Bay off Cape Cod. He came across her, sitting abandoned on a trailer in his cousin’s yard. Needing something to write about, he towed her back to his place and spent 16 months restoring her — removing the bottommost planks, replacing the frames, refastening, scarfing out the transom, painting, varnishing the spars, and finally sailing her around the islands that stretch southwest from Woods Hole.

This is not a how-to-do-it book, but one will learn a lot about restoring a 60-year-old wooden boat. Rather, the restoration is how Robb tells the story of his family and the people who live on the heel end of Cape Cod. He does not just use a screwdriver to reassemble the bronze fittings on the sail — he uses his grandfather’s old wooden-handled screwdriver. (As a man with a basement full of tools from four male antecedents, I understand.) He doesn’t tell us what brands of Dacron or epoxy he used to replace the canvas on his foredeck, but we learn about Art Burgess and Dave Ash, men who have been building and restoring wooden boats for 50 years and told Robb how to go about it. He describes the steam box he built to make his new frames flexible, but that’s not as interesting as the discussions with the locals describing all the different kinds of boxes they have built. There’s the lady at the church thrift store who will not sell him a teapot to use as a steam generator, and the counter at the chandlery in New Bedford, where a simple question about copper rivets becomes a boatbuilder’s support group meeting.

This memoir could have been clumsy, but in Robb’s hands it is not. It is as smooth as the water of Hadley’s Harbor — a funny, interesting, and educational book.

Mail buoy

Getting back aboard

I read the article “How to get back aboard” by Doug Hunter in the August newsletter Mail Buoy and want to contribute.

As I mostly sail singlehanded, the problem of how to get back onboard, should I ever be unfortunate enough to fall overboard, was one of my concerns also. Last year, I decided to put this to the test by going overboard while at anchor in a calm bay. My jackstays — 1-inch-wide webbing — run fore and aft from the aft end of the coachroof to the mooring cleats in the bow on either side of the coachroof. I usually wear an automatic lifejacket with a built-in harness (I wore a plain harness for the test) and clip on to the jackstays by an elastic safety line fitted with Gibb safety hooks at either end.

I went in just in front of the shrouds to find out if I could get back aboard unaided. The answer was a very convincing *no way*.

First of all, the safety line was not long enough, even at full stretch, to reach from the jackstay, up over the top lifeline, and down to the water level, so I was left hanging partly in and partly out of the water. I could just about reach the gunwale with one hand but because of the tension in the safety line, I could not lift myself high enough on one arm to release the Gibb safety hook attached to the harness with the other arm. I could not pull myself back on board (my arms gave out trying) and I could not move toward the stern swim ladder because of the shrouds. Even if I had gone in aft of the shrouds, it seemed unlikely the safety line would have gone over the stanchions. As the jackstay ended at the aft end of the coachroof, it would have been impossible to move farther aft to the swim ladder anyway. Remember, this was all done while anchored in a calm bay!

I had crew on this occasion and they unclipped me from the jackstay while I heaved myself up with both arms to relieve the tension on the safety line. If this had been for real, my life jacket would have auto-inflated and made the situation even more difficult. The thought of this happening alone and in a seaway with sharks about [Note: *Or in water so cold that it's life-threatening. —Eds.*], was not one to dwell upon!

As a result of this test, which I strongly recommend anyone try under similar circumstances so they know the limitations of their current recovery system, I am fitting a wire “jackstay” running outside the lifelines and shrouds from a strong point just ahead of the transom. From there, it will go up to the shrouds and then down to a strong point on or near the stem-head. Using it will mean unclipping and clipping on again on either side of the shrouds when moving fore and aft, but this is the safest area in which to do so (apart from the cockpit) so it is not a major concern.

The new jackstays will release from the shroud attachment under the strain of my body falling overboard or being dragged along in a seaway and will provide an unobstructed and slack line all the way back to the stern ladder while keeping me attached to the boat. Because of this slack, anyone attached will not be pulled up and down with the motion of the boat and, if the boat is still sailing, the person who is overboard, even if unconscious, will slide back to the stern.

At present I am working on the best way to attach the new jackstay to the shrouds so that it can be used as an additional safety line when moving about on the boat, yet will release when subjected to a shock load or sustained drag of more

than 100 kilograms or 220 pounds. Simply tying it to the upper shroud with a suitable breaking strain line seems an obvious KISS method but other suggestions are welcome. The final amount of slack in the new jackstay also has to be determined. If I have too much I might not be able to pull myself to the swim ladder if the boat is still sailing.

David Runyard

It wasn't always so

In the August newsletter there was an article by Phillip Reid, “Sailing and Stuff,” in which he complained about modern advertising techniques. Well, it wasn't always so!

On page 152 of the wonderful book *Room at the Mark* by Robert C. MacArthur, there is an interesting counter-observation to his thesis. *Yachting* magazine of some 85 years ago is described thusly: “As we turn the pages, we are struck by how terribly old a 70-year-old magazine looks. The only color is on the cover — and always a reproduction of a water color or painting, never a photograph. The pictures inside are all black and white. Rarely do we see a woman in any of them. There are no sports clothes; except for the few who wear blue blazers and white flannels, everyone sails in regular street clothing. Often wearing neckties too.

“The advertisements are also all black and white, and there are none for sailboats or sails. Sailing yachts, large and small, are all custom made. And sail makers, if they advertise at all, do so only in their own localities. After awhile, you realize that the ads contain no toothy, bosomy blondes in bathing suits. You vaguely remember that it was once possible to sell merchandise without the use of sex appeal. It was a different world.”

Would Phillip really and truly like to return to the good old days of black and white and no bikinis? I doubt it!

Jim Hildinger

Phillip responds

Pootie never wants to go back. He wants to go forward, into a future better than either past or present, in which equally skilled mixed-gender crews happily sail nicely restored good old boats in beautiful places. Naked. Onward and upward.

Waterspouts

On Monday, August 11, 2008, we watched from the sunroom of our home as an immense waterspout developed in the waters of Barnegat Bay, on the New Jersey shore. It was halfway between the mainland and Tices Shoal, an anchorage close to Island Beach State Park, on the other side of the bay.

Waterspouts are a rare occurrence in these waters, and to make the event even more unusual and spectacular, three smaller waterspouts were spawned, one to the south and two to the north of the first immense spout. The four spouts were in the sky together with little horizontal movement for about 15 minutes. If they



had come onto land they would have been tornadoes.

There are two types of waterspouts, the tornado waterspout and the more common clear-weather waterspout. In both cases, the characteristic spinning motion is formed by updrafts in the center that remove air from the core. The winds intensify as air rushes in to replace the lost air in the core and this air begins to rotate as it moves inward. At the same time, just as in a land tornado, the low-pressure in the center sucks up things from the surface — in the case of waterspouts, water.

A tornado waterspout forms beneath a super-cell thunderstorm, and that day we had a severe frontal passage accompanied by thunderstorms. The tornado waterspouts are different from the common or clear-weather waterspouts. In the northern hemisphere they rotate counter-clockwise with internal speeds of up to 175 mph. The tornado waterspouts can easily overturn recreational boats or wipe the mast off a sailboat, making this type of waterspout dangerous to anyone on the water.

Fair-weather waterspouts are also formed by a pocket of rising air, but the vertical air movement occurs when cold air, associated with a cumulous cloud, is heated as it passes over warm water. Because these clear-weather waterspouts need a large difference between water and air temperatures, they most commonly form over warm water, such as the waters of the Florida Keys. In fact, when we have been sailing in the Keys, we have seen many of these clear-weather waterspouts and, once, there were three in the sky at the same time, remaining in one location and lasting a long time. They were on the Gulf side of the Keys and we were sailing on the ocean side, and we hoped it would remain that way. This type of waterspout is not nearly as violent or threatening as the tornado waterspout.

The Barnegat Bay tornado waterspout was unusual. As far as I know there is no record of waterspouts ever being in the bay before. But a catalyst is warm water, and this is the time of year when the water in the bay is the warmest — 80 plus degrees.

Our neighbors, who live in the house that is shown in the photo, were in their boat out on the bay at that time, returning from a trip. They said, “We saw an unusual disturbance in the water, like thousands of fingers pointing up through the surface. Then a dark funnel descended from the clouds and a funnel rose up from the water at the site of the disturbance, and they met.”

It is characteristic of the early formation of waterspouts that the water surface where the spout will form will have what has been described as “a circle of dark water.”

So if you're out sailing, and you see a circle of dark water or “thousands of fingers coming up from the water,” it might be a good idea to take the sails down and head in the opposite direction.

Don Launer

Surely this doesn't happen to you . . .

Why not ask for submissions from real good old boat owners paying for our sins in the hole. . . the cave . . . whatever you want to call it. It's all fine to celebrate the beauty of boats and their settings — we should always do that. And then there's the central reality of what we're willing to go through to get to that: the hours crammed into impossible places in impossible positions somehow doing impossible things despite their impossibility.

All of us DIYers describe it when we write, but I think we should see it — I think we should see each other frozen forever in agony because we'll know in a more visceral way, perhaps, that we're not alone, that this is what it takes for everybody. And that it really does hurt.

I moved 7 tons of rock by hand into my backyard last week, and I am in far, far more pain for having replaced my steering cables over the last two days than I ever was from that. I want to see photos with faces contorted in pain, sweat dripping into eyes, blood dripping off fingers, large people upside down, arms with only three joints bent six ways.

I think some people need to document this agony and let us see it. They can get their kid or a friend or a spouse to get the right shot.

Phillip Reid

OK, we're herewith asking all you fellow sufferers to send us proof of your suffering. We're not sure exactly how you'll get the photographer in that cramped space with you, but if you have a funny shot of life in the bilge, the cockpit locker, the V-berth, behind the engine, and other tight spaces, please send them in. If we get enough to post them online, we'll do it. And we'll start with Phillip's own image. When pushed on this, he said, “Remember, photos of butts are a billion-dollar industry. We're just putting our own stamp on it is all. I realize people will have to go to a little trouble to help invent this new art form. Art is worth it. And I'll put my own butt where my mouth is. (given my recent experiences astern, that may be more of a literal prophecy than I intended).”

Watch the TP

We recently bought *Carema*, a very nice Lugar Tradewind 26 from the original builder, who built her in 1976. The boat needed a little TLC but sails great.

My nephew, 5-year-old Brandon, loves to be on the boat and we are teaching him to sail. Our daughter, 11, loves to be at the tiller, especially in high winds, and she loves to heel over!

Teaching kids to sail has been fun and we look forward to many more sailing days with them. One tip for sailing with kids: watch the amount of toilet paper they use. Nothing is worse than a broken head when two kids are aboard!

Brenda Rogers

Inadequate wood

I've done quite a few boat improvements using wood, epoxy, and two-part linear polyurethane paints, and after several years of watching these creations age in the real world, here are my observations and cautions to those considering similar projects:

First, for a combination of strength, reasonably light weight, ease of construction, adhesion, and adaptability to the weird shapes on a boat, I think the wood/epoxy/linear polyurethane paint combo is hard to beat. It has none of the three primary drawbacks of Starboard polymer (my other favorite): heaviness, poor adhesion, plus it's not strong enough to be used structurally.

I think the key to success or failure with this method is the wood used. It needs to be really, really dry, and really, really well-sealed. If it's at all green, or not well-sealed, contraction

and expansion due to moisture will crack the rigid epoxy-paint shell, letting in more moisture, and rotting it out from the inside. It also needs to be free from flex for the same reason.

I built my sea hood out of several layers of ¼-inch marine plywood laminated with epoxy, then glassed over on both sides with epoxy and cloth, coated and faired with epoxy, and painted with Imron. It only has one little hairline crack about 1½-inches long, but I need to get after that before it leads to a real problem.

I built my companionway boards the same way, minus the fiberglass, and I'm pleased with them too.

I built my helm seat out of 1-inch poplar from the home improvement store, and after five years of use, it may or may not be repairable; it's cracked all over and going soft in places. I don't think this wood was adequately seasoned. I won't use it again.

Phillip Reid

Curious about rocks

I was curious to know if the photo of the aid to navigation pictured on page 7 of the May-June 2008 issue is the pile of rocks I pass on my way into and out of Black Rock Harbor in Bridgeport, Connecticut? I enjoy the magazine!

Bill Maloney

We asked the photographer, Andrea Wheeler, who tells us it's Buzzard's Bay, Massachusetts, not Connecticut.

“Last tack” — maybe not so tactful

I must comment on your Last Tack column by Karen Larson in the Sept/Oct 2008 issue of *Good Old Boat*. There are many people, me included, who enjoy messing about with cars. I am sure many owners of good old boats do also.

I have been messing with cars since I was 12 (48 years ago). Later, as a college student in the late '60s, I found I could not afford to have the dealer work on my \$300 '57 Porsche (those were the days!). I bought a shop manual and started doing as much work myself as possible. I have been messing with cars ever since, although the newer they get the less an amateur mechanic can do. These years of messing with cars has given me the confidence to tackle boat projects later in life.

In 32 years of owning sailboats from 12- to 32-foot, I have done all my own work, including maintenance, upgrades, mechanical, electrical, fiberglass, rebuilding an Atomic Four and everything else a boatowner does (except canvas). The majority of my boat friends are also car people. We don't put vinyl graphics on them but we do put on nice wheels and paint jobs. Admittedly, *Footloose*, our Morgan 323, gets much more attention and use than my '67 Volvo. I consider the Volvo my second summer toy.

I mean no disrespect when I say I think you express most women's views of messing with cars. My wife would agree with you 100%. In our family, we both love our good old boat but only I have a fondness for our good old car. For the most part, and I know some exceptions, messing with cars is a guy thing. It is not as much fun as messing with boats, but it is still fun.

Alan Kelly

Karen replies

I've learned my lesson, Alan. I heard from quite a few readers who disagreed (some rather strongly) with my position. So I think it's time to change my position, like any good politician! I don't mind being called a woman or typecast as one. I fit the pattern. No offense taken. Read on.

Missed the boat

I'm afraid you missed the boat on your article about people and cars. Not everyone feels that way. As a car guy as well as a boat guy, I *love* my little '04 Miata, named “Ruffy” (which is on the license plate).

I actually miss it when I'm away, keep it immaculate, and intend to drive it until I'm too old to shift the 6-speed. Ruffy goes a happy and fun 2,000 miles per year and gets put up for the winter, just like my boat. You've gotta admit it's cute!



Lenny Reich

Elitist and narrow-minded

I found your article on cars very elitist and narrow minded. I enjoy messing about in cars — and many other things. Most boaters I know — especially sailors — have one-track minds.

I divide my time and labor among many things — the 1964 Choey Lee Frisco Flyer; antique outboard runabouts; 12 cars, 30 to 60 years old; showing purebred Russian Wolfhounds; and several other things. *Dragon Lady*, the Choey Lee sailboat, demands far more than it's share of time and labor.

To quote you, “. . . shipshape is a term that has no equivalent when it comes to automobiles.” I painted and rebuilt most of our cars over 30 years ago and most are still in presentable condition. There is very little maintenance, unlike *Dragon Lady*, which demands constant sanding and varnishing.

Part of your problem with cars is no doubt due to disdain for cars that deserve it. I drove one of my Triumphs virtually every day for 24 years and 300,000 miles and loved wringing it out on back roads. All of our family has had years of driving enjoyment from our MGs and TRs. Buy something you can be proud of and enjoy driving.

Len Renkenberger

P.S. Choey Lee Frisco Flyer looking for a good home — make that any home.

Apologies to Chevy

Just got the latest [magazine] and it's as good as always . . . but I did go out to the garage and apologize to the Chevy on behalf of sailors everywhere.

Bob Norson

One more

There are, in fact, some of us out there who not only name their road vehicles but actually apply vinyl name graphics to their “transoms”!

David Laing



Another (too) close encounter

In the June newsletter, Moshe Tzalel responded to Jerry Powlas' article in the January Good Old Boat, “The Big Boat

Rule.” He’s written again about another close call between his 1,000-foot freighter and a sailboat.

Earlier this summer we left our unloading port in Indiana, heading north into a light wind in intermittent drizzle, with visibility around 4-6 miles. Not bad. While inside, I plotted a target, sailing east at 5 mph across our bow, with a very small CPA. A moment later we popped out of the rain and saw a 35-foot cruiser-racer (a J-boat?) intending to cross our bow, port to starboard.

Switching off track mode but staying on autopilot, I instructed the wheelman to make a 10-degree course change to port, giving the boat a good 1-mile CPA and putting him safely on our starboard bow.

Taking a moment to log something, I looked up and there he was, a mile or so away to starboard, but he had tacked and was now once again on a collision course, heading west!

Turning right to pass behind him would risk a close-quarters situation if he chose to tack again. Taking his decision-making out of the loop, I told the wheelman to take her in hand and make a sharp turn to port, the “Burns Harbor” (luckily in ballast) shaking under our feet at 20 degrees of rudder, and finally leaving that poor excuse for a sailor a half mile on our starboard side, where he promptly tacked again for no apparent reason.

One thing: if you want to assume your right of way as a vessel under sail according to the Colregs, you must, as stand-on vessel, *maintain your course and speed*. You may not frolic around while the power-driven vessel tries to avoid you with might and main!

And another thing: In giving sailing vessels the right of way, the Colregs assumed a three-mast, full-rigged ship meeting a similar sized steamer. For such a ship it would indeed entail a lot of work to trim yards and change course., compared with merely spinning the wheel on a steamer. But for a 35-foot sailboat meeting a 1,000-foot freighter on a lazy Saturday afternoon? I am not so sure the same logic applies.

Jerry agrees

Yours is the other side of the coin, and I agree with your analysis that they can’t keep tacking around if they are the privileged vessel. When I was on the *Newport News*, it used to shake like that when we put the rudder over hard and ordered full power (all ahead Bendix) when we were being engaged by shore batteries. This often happened in very shallow water, which made her shake even more.

The rub I find with the Colregs is that it is suicide to hold course and speed as the privileged vessel if the burdened vessel is not going to accord you the right of way. When I went from 22,000,000 tons to 4 tons, I had a hard time coming to grips with that. The frustration during that period was what gave rise years later to the article I wrote.

Thanks for not killing that ditz. He may be a reader. Just in case he is, he can read your take on it.

Awww, thanks, Greg

The current issue of GOB reads both as varied and detailed, something that must be hard to accomplish as an editor. By that I mean that there is a variety of instructional feature, boat-specific and usual info. I dove straight into the painting articles (timely for the work I’m doing restoring

my 1974 Luger), then rationed out my reading of the D&M and Tanzer, then rationed out my reading of the D&M and Tanzer and the other articles. The styles among the different writers are effectively varied, too, going from somewhat technical (“Seakindliness”) to feature journalism (“Sailing Opportunities”) to witty (“A Paint Job”) to completely narrative (“Telegram”).

The variation in topic and style has the effect of making the magazine feel larger than it really is, and makes reading it a fuller experience (perhaps the editorial analogy of Cardwell’s *Sailing Big on a Small Sailboat?*).

I wanted to mention that because I know how it can be tough to see how a completed issue appears from the other side of the desk. I’m looking forward to January 09!

Greg Byrd

Scammers and spammers

Subscriber Tim Nye, wondering what the scammers really have up their sleeves, so played along to find out. He researched and documented the process and wrote about it. He’s offered valuable insight that we have posted on our website at <http://www.goodoldboat.com/resources_for_sailors/sailing_classifieds/scammers.php>.

Editors

Ten years of memories

How you ever chose our boat for the first cover shot, I don’t know. But we are very proud to have been chosen and have enjoyed reading the magazine cover to cover many times over the last 10 years. It was truly a good idea, Karen and Jerry, and you two have kept to the original intent without caving in to crassness or out-of-context advertisements.

Jan and Larry Demers

Legal notice

This avows and certifies that the check for my subscription renewal has been mailed this day (August 8, 2008). I will excuse and forgive no interruption and/or gap in the delivery of my one and only magazine. In the event of an interruption, my legal firm, Sueim, Billem, and Runne, is poised for all necessary moves and motions to insure said delivery.

Barry Marcus

Website sale

Enclosed is my check for another year of *Good Old Boat* — the best boating magazine on the market.

I listed my Pearson Triton, after owning it for 36 years, on your website. It sold quite soon to an Army lieutenant stationed in Afghanistan!

Earl J. Lewis

Good for the heart

I have been a long-time visitor to your magazine’s website.

In August I had open-heart surgery. One of the magazines brought to the hospital by my son to pass the time was *Good Old Boat* (issue 61). I want to thank you for that most enjoyable copy. You will never know just how important it was to receive it. All I can tell you is that when I saw it, I could feel new-found energy surge throughout my body, and I knew I was on my way to healing. Keep up the excellent work.

Bruce Grecke

GOOD OLD BOAT

7340 Niagara Lane North
Maple Grove, MN 55311-2655

Change Service Requested

Note: This went to subscribers with email addresses in early October. If you're getting this by mail, either you've requested a printed version or we don't have a current email address for you. We'd much rather send this by email. If that works for you, please contact us with your email address: (mark@goodoldboat.com).

Excerpts from *The Practical Encyclopedia of Boating*

by John Vigor

Engine Oil

Simply checking the oil level warns of engine trouble

If you know nothing else about your engine, you should at least know where the oil dipstick is. Checking the oil level is one of those simple tasks that brings great satisfaction. It makes you feel like a professional, even if you don't know the injector from the alternator, and it seems to be one of little engine rituals (like polishing the gear-lever knob) that wards off bad luck and breakdowns.

The experts say you should check the oil every time before you start the engine, but most of us think that is taking caution to excess. Once a day should be enough if the engine is running normally.

First, look at the level of the oil on the dipstick to check that it's within the limits. If it is low, add oil as necessary. If it seems to be getting low more often, check your exhaust for blue smoke. A lot of blue smoke indicates that your engine is burning oil, probably because the piston rings have broken or become stuck. Worn valve guides will also let oil into the cylinder.

If the oil level is higher than it was the last time you checked, you've got trouble. When oil in the crankcase starts to rise, the most likely culprit is a leaking cooling system. In a diesel engine it could also be fuel finding its way in from a leak in an internal fuel line or from a blown transmission seal. Wherever it is coming from, the extra fluid is going to cause trouble and no amount of gear-knob polishing is going to cure it, so call in professional help.

Next, look at the color of the oil on your dipstick. When you first put it in, the oil is an attractive golden brown, but marine engineers say there is only one color for engine oil that's been used for a few hours — jet black. If it later turns brown or milky, it's another indication that the oil is being contaminated with water or diesel fuel. A soft white goo on the dipstick betrays water in the oil of either a gasoline or diesel engine. Do not run the engine. A mechanic's diagnosis is needed immediately.

John Vigor's book, The Practical Encyclopedia of Boating, is available from the Good Old Boat Bookshelf for \$29.95; 352 pages (hardcover).

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