

Wood and Water

The Oarlock and Sail Wooden Boat Club Newsletter

Oarlock and Sail Wooden Boat Club is a Registered Society in the Province of B.C.

Purpose of the club:

- To create the opportunity for people interested in small wooden boats to get together to socialize and exchange knowledge.
- To develop the small wooden boat community.
- To bring together resources to assist in the future development of a wooden boat centre,
- To foster interest in, enjoyment of and construction of small wooden boats.

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The Oarlock and Sail Wooden Boat Club was at the Vancouver Boat Show in February!



Club member, Trevor Mills, works on an oar as part of the club's demonstration exhibit at the boat show. The Wooden Boat Alley was a popular event at this year's boat show. In addition to Oarlock and Sail Wooden Boat Club boats, The Wooden Boat Alley featured the work of professional boat builders like David Bradford and Mark Reuten. Silva Bay Shipyard School, The Vancouver Wooden Boat Society, Britannia Heritage Shipyard, and The S.S. Master Society were also present at the boat show. Wooden Boats really made an impact this year in a way that we haven't seen in a long time. Hopefully, this is the beginning of a new trend.

The View From the Tiller

By: Gerry Stensgaard

As I write this, the season has just barely turned to spring, and already the odd warm day is enticing us to dust off our small boats and make them ready for the water. As nice as it is to put the cold weather behind us for a while, we can still look back with satisfaction on Oarlock and Sail's activities during the winter of 2003-2004:

- Our monthly meetings featured interesting and informative presentations on the "Bluenose", catboats, the recovery of a Basque Chalupa from Red Bay, Labrador and Colin Duffield's trip to Newfoundland.
- For one meeting, we enjoyed a guided tour of the Maritime Museum's "hidden treasures".
- In our more serious moments, we held our AGM and elected a new board of directors, and discussed the Museum's relocation and expansion plans. In the latter context, the membership decided to support the Museum's initiative, and voted to purchase a "plank".
- We had a great Christmas/Winter social with wonderful food, conviviality and homemade music.
- Oarlock and Sail was front and centre in the inaugural "Wooden Boat Alley" feature at the Vancouver International Boat Show. There was much public interest in the wooden boat display, although this so far hasn't been reflected in new memberships.
- The stalwarts working on the Diablo project persevered until they were "frozen out" of the Heritage Harbour boat shed. At that juncture, attention was shifted to the Vogler restoration, which is progressing nicely.

Looking ahead, it has been decided to put Diablo on hold for now, in favour of a concerted effort to get the Vogler finished in time for the Wooden Boat Festival in August. We may also do some volunteer work for the S.S. Master Society in refurbishing the tug's lifeboats. Note that all members are welcome to participate in club projects. Projects are a good opportunity to learn by doing...all you need to do is show up. Saturdays are the principal working days for group projects.

Finally, a gentle reminder that April is membership renewal time (unless you joined the club during the first three months of the year). Dues remain a real bargain at \$20, which may be remitted at the meeting or mailed in. A complete list of coming events is provided elsewhere in this newsletter.

See you on the water!

Gerry Stensgaard
President, Oarlock and Sail Wooden Boat Club

Heritage Boats on the Sunshine Coast

by Larry Westlake

The hearty, plodding bark of the old cast-iron one-lung Wisconsin engine in this 14-foot clinker "Putt-putt" boat beats the pulse of another time. At full throttle, it is as anachronistic as the relatively sedate progress it makes.

These craft were once common in this area. Sunshine Coast Museum Curator, Bee Jackson, owned one in the late 1970's, and operated it out of Egmont. Until just over a decade ago, Smitty's Marina had a whole rental fleet of them.

Few of these boats now remain in active service, though they can still be found scattered about the coast in the hands of private owners who still covet them.

The boat featured in this article was purchased by Bruce Pollock at Davis Bay in 1997. He took it to Vancouver for repair and restoration, where he used it for a few years as a day-tripper and fishing skiff. Recently, he donated it to the museum.

Bruce's interest in these boats stems from the fact that he grew up in the Gibsons area, and his first job at 13 was for Harry Smith of Smitty's Marina.

The boat is said to have been built by the Turner Boatworks of Victoria in 1951. The Davis Bay Anglican church used it for fundraising activities for several years. This boat is part of the history of the Sunshine Coast, and so it is a pleasure to see it back now to stay.

Last September I took part as the Sunshine Coast Museum & Archives of Gibsons brought this recent acquisition to Porpoise Bay for a "check-out run."

After a bit of tuning-up and readjustment of the carburettor, we cruised out and around Poise Island and back to the dock. Curator, Bee Jackson skippered and Museum Vice-President, Mike Clement served as first mate.

I went along as mechanic and kept sharp eyes on the bilges, engine, transmission, steering gear, and other vital components, diligently noting areas of concern for further maintenance or safety upgrades. The boat is in very good condition, in most respects.

This boat is one of many in the Museum's collection that is kept in protective storage. Sadly, it is not usually available for public view.

However, on May 23rd, the Sunshine Coast Museum is hosting a Small Wooden Heritage Boat event, where this and other craft from the museum's storage will be on proud display.

In addition, privately-owned vintage small boats, and some recently built versions of traditional types will also be featured. The outdoor display will also include vintage engines, both outboard and inboard.

Interest by exhibitors has already exceeded the Museum's original expectations.

Mark this date on your calendar! Sunday, May 23, the long weekend. This is a rare opportunity to view some of the hidden treasures of the Sunshine Coast.

Throughout the year, The Sunshine Coast Museum is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10:30-4:30. It is located at 716 Winn Rd. in downtown Gibsons. Admission is by donation.

Some Of What You Will See At The Sunshine Coast Museum On May 23

Photos by Mike Clement and Larry Westlake



Museum Society Vice-President Mike Clement with the Turner fishing skiff at Porpoise Bay public boat launch.



The 1951, 4-horsepower Wisconsin cast-iron one-lunger came complete with the original manual.



Bee Jackson steering and Larry Westlake watching the shaft spin.

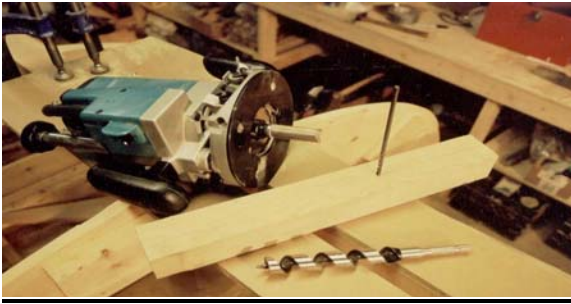
Coming Events – Oarlock and Sail Wooden Boat Club

- April 21 – Vancouver Maritime Museum Annual General Meeting. Come out and support the OLAS members on the VMM board.
- April 22 – Our monthly meeting is on the fourth Thursday for this month only. We will tour the VMM storage building wherein the Museum's small craft collection is housed. Our guide will be James Delgado, executive director of the Museum. OLAS membership renewals are due at this time.
- May 20 – Monthly meeting featuring Jan Bellamy on painting and varnishing techniques.
- May 23 – Gibson's Museum heritage festival. OLAS member Larry Westlake's version of a hand troller (adapted for modern construction methods) will be launched during the festival.
- June 17 – The June meeting is our annual midsummer float-in on Deer Lake, Burnaby.
- July 3, 4, 5 - Lake Union Wooden Boat Festival, Seattle.
- August 26 – 29 – Vancouver Wooden Boat Festival, Granville Island.
- September 10, 11, 12 – Port Townsend Wooden Boat Festival.

Further details concerning the above, and notification of other events, will be promulgated via e-mail and/or the club information line (604-664-7551) as information becomes available.

Cutting the Painless Centerboard Slot

By Mark Reuten



For the first time boat builder, walking up to your nice, newly constructed and hopefully water-tight hull and plunging a circular saw blade through the middle of it can be a very intimidating task. Here is a method that can help you to do a clean and successful job.

You can do this either before planking, with the backbone on the mould or after planking if you prefer. The latter may require some careful clamp re-adjustment to hold the router jig. I'll describe this later, but after planking, you will may have to use screws and plug a few extra holes in your hull.

The method I'll describe here is heavy in the power tool dept, but I know you tool geeks are just itching for an excuse to expand your arsenal.



The tools you will need:

- Drill, or brace and bit.
- An auger or spade bit that is 1/8" smaller than your slot width. (A bit the same size as your slot could be used instead but greater accuracy is required.)
- A 3/16" dia. long body twist drill bit.
- Circular saw
- Router
- Template router bit (a patterning collet and straight bit could be used instead)
- Flush trim bit if your slot is much deeper than the reach of your template bit.
- A chisel for fine tuning the slot ends
- Two 6" strips of plywood with very straight edges, about 2' longer than your slot

Cutting the Slot:

First, do a careful layout. Check your lofting and plans for the termination points of the slot, bearing in mind that your drawing probably calls for the trunk posts to pass through the slot. Mark a centreline as well as the slot width on the outside of your keel. Use the centreline to determine the centres of the round holes to be bored at either end of the slot. It is recommended that you run a piece of masking tape down each side of the proposed slot tight to your width marking, to help prevent tear-out when you start routing.

Next, you need to make a simple drilling guide. You are going to need a block of wood about the size of a 2x2, 12" long. Size isn't really important, but accuracy is. Using the 3/16" drill bit, you want to drill a hole square to the surface of this block. I draw layout lines across the face and down the sides and use a drill press to do the drilling. You could drill by hand and then square layout lines off the hole instead. The goal is to create a guide block that you can clamp in place

on your keel, and guide your drill bit where you want it to go.

Now back on to your keel. At the center marks of your proposed trunk termination holes, make a small starting hole using the lead spur of a spade bit. This bit will provide greater accuracy as it will not easily drift off your marks the way a twist bit is prone to do. This starting hole is only 1/4" deep as its purpose is to hold the tip of the 3/16" pilot bit as you get the guide block squared, plumbed and clamped. Take your time and use shims and wedges to get the guide block set up accurately. This may take a little more effort if your keel has rocker to it.

Now go ahead and drill your pilot holes. Remove your guide blocks and using your auger or spade bit, you can bore the larger holes. The lead-spur on either bit will follow the pilot hole. Be gentle as you approach the bottom of your hole to prevent breakout.

Make a plunge cut using your circular saw 1/8" inside of your width-marks. Do not try to cut beyond your bored holes. You will have to finish up these cuts with a handsaw. You should now have a rough hole with about 1/8" material left to remove to hit your marks.

Now we need to make a simple router jig. This consists of two lengths of straight edged plywood about 1/2"-3/4" thick arranged parallel to each other with a distance equalling the finished width of your slot. The ends of these pieces are fastened together with small scraps of ply screwed to the top of the lengths. If you are using a patterning collet instead of a template bit, you will have to set these pieces farther apart to coincide with the difference in diameter between the collet and router bit.

Align this jig now over your rough slot and fasten it in place with clamps or screws. It can be fastened straight down to your keel even if the keel has rocker.

Using your router and template bit, clean out as much material as the bit allows. Once you have run it around your jig, you can remove the jig and run it just into the slot to gain extra depth. This last suggestion will not be possible if you are using the collet method.

Now set up the flush trim bit in your router and run it from the other side of the slot to clean out the last of the rough material. If this is not possible then you can do it by hand with a sharp paring chisel, using the clean portion of the slot as your guide.

The last task is to finish up the ends of the slot using a chisel unless you have drilled your first holes with a bit the same size as the slot width and flush to your end marks. Bear in mind if you do this, you are working with a smaller safety net and the whole purpose of this exercise was to cut this slot with minimal worries about inaccuracy of the finished product.



The author, Mark Reuten, (standing behind the canoe) talks to an interested patron at the Vancouver Boat Show. Mark's company is Nomad Boatbuilding. To the right, standing behind the Beven skiff, is David Bradford, of Alder Bay Boats.

Two Men, A Wooden Boat And Not Much Else!

By U. B. Kairfol

Two men decided to go fishing one summer evening on a large remote interior lake. They had just finished eating a large dinner during which they had enjoyed a few drinks.

The homemade plywood boat easily accelerated out into the bay under the power of an aging 20 hp Chrysler outboard. On the far side of the lake, at the mouth of the river, they slowed down and started to troll. One of the men, the one who owned the cabin, claimed he had caught a nice trout near there a few days earlier.

Intent on their fishing, they did not notice the approaching storm clouds. The wind was coming up fast. One of the men cursed when he knocked over his drink as he grabbed for his cap when it blew off. Within no time, the chop had built up to white caps and little bits of spray were making it a wee bit wet for the men. Just as they decided to quit fishing, the motor suddenly stopped.

Cursing, the man who owned the boat, lurched to the stern and proceeded to pull on the starter cord. Nothing. Cursing again, he tried a second time. Still no luck. After checking that there was some gas, he gave it another pull, but again the engine refused to start. Off with the motor cover, and more curses as he poked away at the engine.

Meanwhile, the other man came to the slow realization that they could possibly be in some danger. The wind was blowing them down the lake and already their cabin was just

a small speck in the distance. Soon, it would fade from view due to the increasing distance and the failing light. Then the rain started.

The man working at the engine was having no luck, so the other man looked around for a paddle or an oar. None were to be found. Casting his eyes about the boat again, he realized that they did not have any life jackets either. They were at least a half a mile off the nearest shore, and it dawned on him that neither he nor his friend was a strong swimmer.

No other boats could be seen anywhere on the water. The waves were building still higher. This lake, like many others in B.C., had few cabins along its shores, and all that could be seen in the dying light was the dark outline of the trees on the steep mountainous shores. The wind continued to howl down the lake and the waves continued to build. The men were soaked to the skin from the combination of the rain and the spume from the waves.

Growing a bit frantic now, one man grabbed the engine cover and attempted to desperately use it as a paddle. His friend stopped fiddling with the engine long enough to demand angrily what he was doing. He had been too distracted with the motor to fully take in their situation, but as he looked about, he too began to realize their plight. Both men knew that the lake could get very rough at times, and this looked like it might be one of those times.

Not having much luck using the engine cover as a paddle, the one man suggested they tear up the wooden floorboards and use those

as paddles. The other man, whose boat it was, argued that he had just spent several days varnishing them, and he would be damned if he would use good floor boards for paddles.

After arguing about what they should do next, they tried the engine again. Miraculously, it started and they did make it back to the cabin, but by the time they reached the dock, they were nearly hypothermic from the cold wind and the soaking rain.

So, how many rules did these men break? Well, to being with, they went out in a boat after consuming alcohol. As if this wasn't bad enough, they continued to drink while out on the water. Perhaps because of this, they failed to take notice of the change in weather. Neither man possessed a Pleasure Craft Operator Card or had taken a boating safety course. The boat was not equipped with life jackets, paddles, oars, throw rope, bailer, fire extinguisher, or sound device. They also had no cell phone, or radio. They had not notified anyone of their plans, including where they were going and when they planned to return. Since nobody knew where they were, rescue was not likely to happen for them until it would probably be too late. The waters of our fine province are often very cold, and even in summer it is possible to quickly succumb to hypothermia.

Sadly, this is a true story. The lesson is obvious. When going out on the water, always practice safety. Check that you have all of the necessary gear and check that everything is in good working order before you leave shore. Drinking and boating don't

mix. Always leave a travel plan with someone indicating where you are going and when you expect to return. These two men were lucky, but it could have ended differently.

So enjoy yourself on the water this summer, and always be safe.

U. B. Kairfol is a wooden boat enthusiast who lives in Horsefly, B.C., where she guides, traps and writes for a living.

April is membership renewal time!
I wish to renew my membership in the
Oarlock and Sail Wooden Boat Club.

Name (Print)

Address

City

Province

Postal Code

Phone

E-Mail

- I am enclosing \$20.00 for one year's full membership dues.
- I am enclosing \$15.00 for one year's associate membership (available only to persons living outside of the greater Vancouver area). Associate members will receive three newsletters annually.

Signature