

The Shallow Water Sailor

Number 101

Founder: John Zohlen

May 2002

The Bo'sun Chair

Just started reading *The Shipping News* by E. Annie Proulx. Under "Acknowledgments" the author makes a curious statement, "...without the inspiration of Clifford W. Ashley's wonderful 1944 work, *The Ashley Book of Knots*, which I had the good fortune to find at a yard sale for a quarter, this book would have remained just the thread of an idea."

Now why would a book of knots be so important to the writing of this Pulitzer Prize novel? Each chapter of *The Shipping News* starts with a knot from Ashley's book. Could it be that each knot has a hidden meaning that the author used as a basis for each chapter? You figure. Now the very first chapter is headed by this Ashley quote:

"In a knot of eight crossings,
which is about the average-size knot,
there are 256 different
'over-and-under' arrangements possible.....
Make only one change in this 'over-and-under'
sequence and either an entirely different knot
is made or no knot at all may result."

The quote brings many thoughts to mind. The sailor, who knows the importance of the right knot for the job at hand, can appreciate the complexity that the quote suggests, and can, in fact, verify that a single 'over-under' error will make an otherwise seaworthy knot into a worthless tangle.

The quote brings to mind the ages-old technology of sail and the critical importance of lines and knots in keeping the rigging aloft so as to get the ship safely home.

The quote, when taken broadly, can be saying something about each of our lives. It could suggest the importance of the 'over-under' choices we make at each critical moment in our lives and the care we must take to get them right. The right choices keep us safe and seaworthy while a wrong one throws us into a tangle and we go dashing against the rocks of a savage lee shore.

Now I need to read the rest of the book to find out what happens!

Let's practice those knots,



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Guenter Arlt

Early in the year Nick Scheuer received a call from Catherine Arlt giving us the sad news that her husband, Guenter, was killed in an auto accident on October 5, 2001. The Arlt's were on their way to visit one of their children in Dallas, Texas. The accident occurred in Dallas, just 45 minutes from their destination. The SWS members extend to Catherine, and the Arlt children, our heartfelt love and sympathy.

Nick Scheuer remembers a visit by Guenter and Catherine where they enjoyed a demonstration sail in Nick's Dovekie, **Pilgrim Pelican**. Guenter then purchased his Dovekie, **Sundowner**.

The SWS members who attended the Magnum Opus out of Little Current three years ago, will remember Guenter and **Sundowner** and Guenter's Klepper kayak.

Leo and Sandy sent the following note remembering Guenter:

The call came unexpectedly

He always surprised us by a phone call at unexpected seasons and times of the day. Nothing pressing to say, just a warm greeting to see how we were and possibly inquire about our sailing plans. Guenter was like that. So the phone conversation always lasted longer than intended and shifted into unplanned topics.

We met in the North Channel, as fellow Dovekie sailors, every day spending some time to share impressions, difficulties, and celebrating the simple achievements – such as how we got around that point, or what had to be done to make it through that current, or when did you reef.

Dovekie talk. Towing a Klepper gave Guenter a challenge that most Dovekie sailors would not accept.

His values were certainly mainstream SWS: not in a hurry; savoring the ever changing shoreline; relishing an intimate, close-up and personal relationship with nature; delighting in the magic that comes from sailing a small craft. Both **Sundowner** and even his decked-out van echoed his gypsy spirit.

We spent hours one unsailable day tossing around the political/philosophical issues others might avoid, “because you can’t change anything.” Sometimes it’s important to discuss what’s important.

Not infected with being politically correct, he told the truth. You knew that his comments were genuine.

So when told that we had a scary midnight encounter, Guenter was the detective we needed the next morning. He came over in his kayak, discovered bear-sign all around the shoreline near us, examined the tooth marks on the hatch, and thrilled us with stories of his bear experiences. Later he sent a video to prove it. He loved the wilderness.

It seems just a few months ago he called, the usual. It was great. Sandy and I talked of inviting him to a winter party we were planning – but he lived so far away.

The call always came unexpectedly

The pictures of Guenter on the last page were taken during the Little Current/Magnum Opus cruise three years ago.

The poem on the following page seems appropriate to remember Guenter.

When I Sail Away
By Elizabeth Clark Hardy

Sometime at evening when the tide is low
I shall slip my mooring and sail away,
With no response to the friendly hail
Of kindred craft in the busy bay.
In the quiet hush of the twilight pale,
When night stoops down to embrace the day,
And the voices call, and the waters flow –
Sometime at eve when the tide is low,
I shall slip my mooring and sail away.

Thru purple shadows that darkly trail
O'er the ebbing tide of the unknown sea,
I shall fare me away with a dip of sail,
And a ripple of water to tell the tale
Of a lonely voyager sailing away
To mystic isles where at anchor lay
The craft of those who have gone before
O'er the unknown sea, to the unknown shore.

A few who have watched me sail away
Will miss my craft from the busy bay;
Some loving souls that my heart holds dear
In silent sorrow will drop a tear,
But, I shall have peacefully furled my sail
In moorings sheltered from the storm and gale,
And greet family and friends who have gone before
O'er the unknown sea, to the unknown shore.

Pamlico Sound Cruise Planning

Ron Kilburn

If you are thinking of joining this cruise please give me a call to let me know you're going, and to ask for any information you might need. The cruise will cover the Neuse River, Pamlico Sound and Bay River. The dates are May 17th, 18th and 19th.

There is a ramp a short ways from my home which would put us in a good spot to get to the Sound, and up to the Bay River and its picturesque creeks with a stop in the fishing village of Vandemere. Then back down to the Neuse and more neat creeks.

We should shove off by noon Friday so we can do some nice cruising and get folks away Sunday afternoon.

My house is seven miles east of Oriental where there are two motels and two B&Bs. Contact me at:

Phone	252-249-3359,
FAX	252-249-0508, or
E-mail	mkilburn@pamlico.net .

May is a good time for cruising this area: well ahead of hurricanes, heavy thunderstorms and (usually) mosquitoes, with nice breezes and cool nights.

North Channel

Harry Mote

Those still on the fence about going on this year's MO to the North Channel (July 28 - August 10) might want to take a look at an article in the February issue of *Sail*, pages 83-86. I do not subscribe so I had to go to our local library to read the article. It's about a short cruise in single sailing/paddling canoes that begins and ends in Serpent Harbour and circumnavigates John Island, which is almost opposite Spanish, where our MO will launch. The sailors camped on shore. A map shows their route and where they camped. And there are some nice photos that show the beauty of this spectacular cruising ground.

Trailerable boats of any size can enjoy this trip, whether you prefer to sleep ashore or aboard.

I'll never forget Marty Cooperman in the Mink Islands on one of the Georgian Bay cruises. Marty was sailing a 14-foot dinghy, fitted out for single-handed, open-boat cruising with watertight storage compartments, two-piece oars and a "Conestoga wagon" cockpit tent. One spectacular night Marty decided to sleep under the stars up on a "rock." But he set up his cockpit tent beforehand, just in case. A rain storm in the middle of the night forced Marty to quickly retreat -- mattress and sleeping bag trailing behind -- to his boat. But he said it was fabulous while it lasted.

The McGuires, who cruise with their two children in the Dovekie **Puddle Duck**, usually sleep two ashore in a tent and two on board the boat.

So this area of the North Channel can accommodate just about any kind of small boat cruising. The scenery is spectacular, the water crystal clear, the water and air temperature moderate and it's about as close as most of us will ever get to wilderness.

February 10, 2002

By Paul Follansbee

It's February 10, about the time of year when my addiction to sailing goes into active withdrawal and I begin to cling to anything that reminds me of boats and water; old issues of MAIB, SAIL, SWS, books on cruising, boating columns in the Sunday paper (even ones, when I'm desperate, about power boats); any movie with a boat in it, but especially Riddle of the Sands and The Coot Club, all are eagerly devoured. Songs about boats, sea chanteys, even lousy ones, become enchanting at this time of year. My eyes seek out paintings and pictures, from Edward Hopper to Walter Elliot, and drink in the colors, the lines, and the curves. When the compulsion becomes overwhelming, as it has today, I even try to write about sailing, which explains the occasional articles with which I torment readers of SWS, MAIB, and occasionally/rarely, SAIL.

For me, writing, while it reeks of effort, is often what comes closest to reproducing, for a few moments, what it felt like, in what is now the distant past, to be on the water. And it is that feeling, however indescribable, that I miss.

There are some writers who describe the indescribable well, who convey precisely what it feels like to sail. Patrick O'Brian comes to mind....his lengthy description of the Surprise reaching into a chilled southeasterly towards the southern ocean, with albatrosses overhead, shouldering the beginnings of a cross sea, is incredibly evocative. Ransom, especially in his Swallows and Amazon series, is an expert at describing the kind of small and shallow water sailing most of us do. Joshua Slocum, as he describes leaving Nova Scotia, creates the sensation both of the beginning of a great voyage and what a good boat in a whole sail breeze feels like:

The day was perfect, the sunlight clear and strong. Every particle of water thrown into the air became a gem, and the *Spray*, making good her name as she dashed ahead, snatched necklace after necklace from the sea, and as often threw them away.

Makes me want sail, preferably somewhere far. Listen to Tennyson:

We left behind the painted buoy
That tosses at the harbour-mouth;
And madly dashed our hearts with joy,
As fast we fleeted to the south:
How fresh was every sight and sound
On open main or winding shore!
We knew the merry world was round,
And we might sail forevermore.

Or H.D. Folkard:

The breeze fills my sails, so adieu to the land!
My ensign's unfurled, I've the helm in my hand.
What sport is more pure, what pleasures more sweet,
Than the sail and the breeze when kindly they meet.

(Both of these poems are swiped from *The Mariners Book of Days, 2002*)

I realize, when reading these authors, that when I write mindlessly about boats and cruises, I am trying to capture in words that which has captured me...what it feels like on the water when, in Roger Rodibaugh's words, we "climb the wind." So the following is an attempt to capture a day on the water.

I am awakened simultaneously by the "scree" of an osprey, and a piercing dart of sunlight as it shoots through the main hatch and finds my right eye. (A problem, if you want to sleep late, with sailing Barnegat Bay is that while most of the day and much of the night, the breeze blows southeast, sometime before dawn the wind comes gently offshore, causing Swan to lie stern to the east, letting the early sun pour through the main hatch. Not only does this wake me up, but in short order the cabin becomes uncomfortably hot.) I groggily sit up, and hear the water ballast slosh...need to add a gallon or so to eliminate the sloshing. Debbie is trying to ignore the sun, and, at the moment, her bunk is in shadow. Mine, of course, is brilliantly lit. I roll my sheets and quilt and stuff them in a stuff bag, hanging it on a brass hook forward. Bent over I move sternward, to emerge, blinking, in the cockpit. Standing and stretching, I feel the welcome coolness of that gentle westerly. All around us is blue/green shallow water, surrounded by the low dunes of Island Beach state park to the east, and a couple of tiny sedge islands, brilliantly green, just one hundred feet to the south. An osprey nest, home of the offending osprey and its mate, is perched on a platform located on the island we have named after my brother, Andy. About two miles west is the New Jersey mainland...we're about parallel to Oyster Creek. The enormous stack of the power plant there mars the shoreline, but at night its lights are a welcome landmark. To the north is miles of Barnegat Bay; I can see all the way to the Route 35 bridge that crosses to Seaside. We're about six miles southeast of Trixie's landing, where we launched last night.

I notice with satisfaction that there is a heavy coating of dew on the deck. When I was a child, my father took us on six week cruises on a Bristol 27, ranging from City Island to Nantucket. Every morning, or so it seems to my memory, we would awaken to the sound of my father wiping down the dew covered decks with a towel. I used to think he was nuts to get up that early and wipe down the boat. Now I do it too, with pleasure. All that free fresh water. On hands and knees, running the towel across the deck, the sun is warm on my back and shoulders. The air is fresh and soft, seeming to penetrate more deeply into my lungs than air on land, so that even the automatic routine of breathing becomes a pleasure. Glancing up now and again, I become aware of seagulls, terns, and egrets. Peering over the side, I can see crabs scurrying on the bottom.

Finishing the decks, I return to the cockpit. Debbie is making progress below; I can hear her cutting cantaloupe and frying bacon. Suddenly hungry, I step below to heat some water for coffee. We eat in the cockpit, pointing out to each other the flight of an osprey, and watch two seagulls, in midair, fight over a crab. The seagull with the crab, tormented, finally drops its prey into the water. The poor crab can't sink fast enough, and both seagulls pounce on it again. The poaching gull eventually wins, flying off in triumph. I fight Debbie over the last piece of bacon; the irony is not lost on us.

By now the gentle westerly has faded, and there are only occasional zephyrs from a variety of directions. It's getting hot. I think about wading over to one of the islands....the water is only 18 inches deep, but I am too lazy. Cumulus clouds are appearing over the land...a hopeful sign. We read for a while, and then I feel the boat swing and head to the south. The flag on our stern begins to flap, and the air cools noticeably. The sea breeze is coming.

Happily I go forward and raise the sprit, then the mainsail. I've forgotten to release the mizzen sheet, so I've got to go back to the cockpit. While there I lower the port leeboard til it touches bottom; I leave the rudder up. Back on the bow I haul in the six feet of line we have out and raise the anchor. As

the mainsail flutters loosely, the boat begins to slowly move backward. By the time I get to the cockpit, the high bow has begun to fall off to port. I lower the rudder part way, and haul in the main a trifle. Swan begins to turn in a graceful arc as she catches more and more of the breeze. The boat gathers way and water begins to chuckle between the leeboard and the hull. This is my favorite moment. With the mainsheet in my hand I feel as though I'm grabbing a sailfull of wind; through the tiller I feel the boat respond. She heels just a bit and settles into a northerly course, a few hundred feet off Island Beach. The shore slides rapidly by; there are no waves so we feel as though we're on a rail. Debbie leans back against the cabin, with her quilting stuff on her lap, the sun lighting up her eyes.

Twenty minutes later we sail through the fleet of boats anchored at Tice's shoal. There must be a hundred or so. About half are sailboats. In vain I look for "interesting boats," meaning something other than your typical fiberglass cruising boat. No dovekies or shearwaters today. Harry doesn't sail much on the weekends...don't blame him...it's crowded on the bay on weekends, but that's the time I have, and on the shallow side of the bay it's not bad. Emerging on the other side of the anchorage, we jibe, lower the starboard leeboard, and reach back towards Barnegat. The wind freshens, it's maybe fifteen knots now. We're heeled almost twenty degrees and doing 5.6. As we get into "deep" water; i.e., 5 feet or so, the famous Barnegat Bay chop begins to build and we start bouncing. Heeled twenty degrees, the chine cuts the waves, so we don't pound; but being light, the motion over the 2-3 foot waves is quick. On this tack it's now delightfully cool, and the air is salty. I love the sea breeze. Barnegat Bay may be crowded, but I don't know anywhere where the breeze is better. Last night we launched Swan about six pm, and carried the sea breeze 'till sunset. We mostly had the bay to ourselves. The deeper blue of the evening sky, and the bright orange of the clear western horizon was stunning.

We've got that breeze again today. By three o'clock it may be blowing twenty. I hope so. Sure

enough, as we tack up towards the town of Barnegat, it's blowing twenty. I can tell because when I face the breeze my hat blows off. If we were going farther, we'd tie in a reef. But we're not, so we don't. Instead we bring her round for the six mile run home. Broad reaching now we're hitting 7.5. We're rolling a bit in the chop, keeping up with larger boats. We're in the channel that follows the western shore, so it's crowded with boats. As we pass Barnegat Inlet, it's like crossing a highway, as fishing boat after fishing boat plows past. By Forked River we begin to cut northeast across the bay to get out of the channel. Pretty soon the water is calmer, and there are fewer boats. Past the northern pavilion on Island Beach we round up and tack...it's blowing too hard for me to feel comfortable with jibing. Now we're heading due west southwest, crosswind and into the sun. Here where there's an eight mile fetch the chop is fairly steep and high, sometimes almost breaking as it crosses a shallow spot. It's great sailing, and we're flying. Debbie takes a dollop of spray; I don't mind at all.

In fifteen minutes we're in the lee of Berkely point, and wave to fishermen on the dock there. Heading into Oyster cove, bouncing the rudder on the bar as we enter, we prepare to drop the main; I want to try to sail up to the dock. Debbie says no. We point a bit higher. It's always gusty in here and we heel over sharply. We round up and Debbie drops the main. As we drift, I lower and start the motor, and we slowly put-put to the dock. We're lucky, there are no boats ahead of us. While Debbie holds us off the dock, I go get the truck. We get Swan on the trailer, hose her off, run the motor in fresh water, put on the sail cover, close her up, take one last look, sigh deeply, and head home, already thinking about next weekend.

I can't wait for spring.



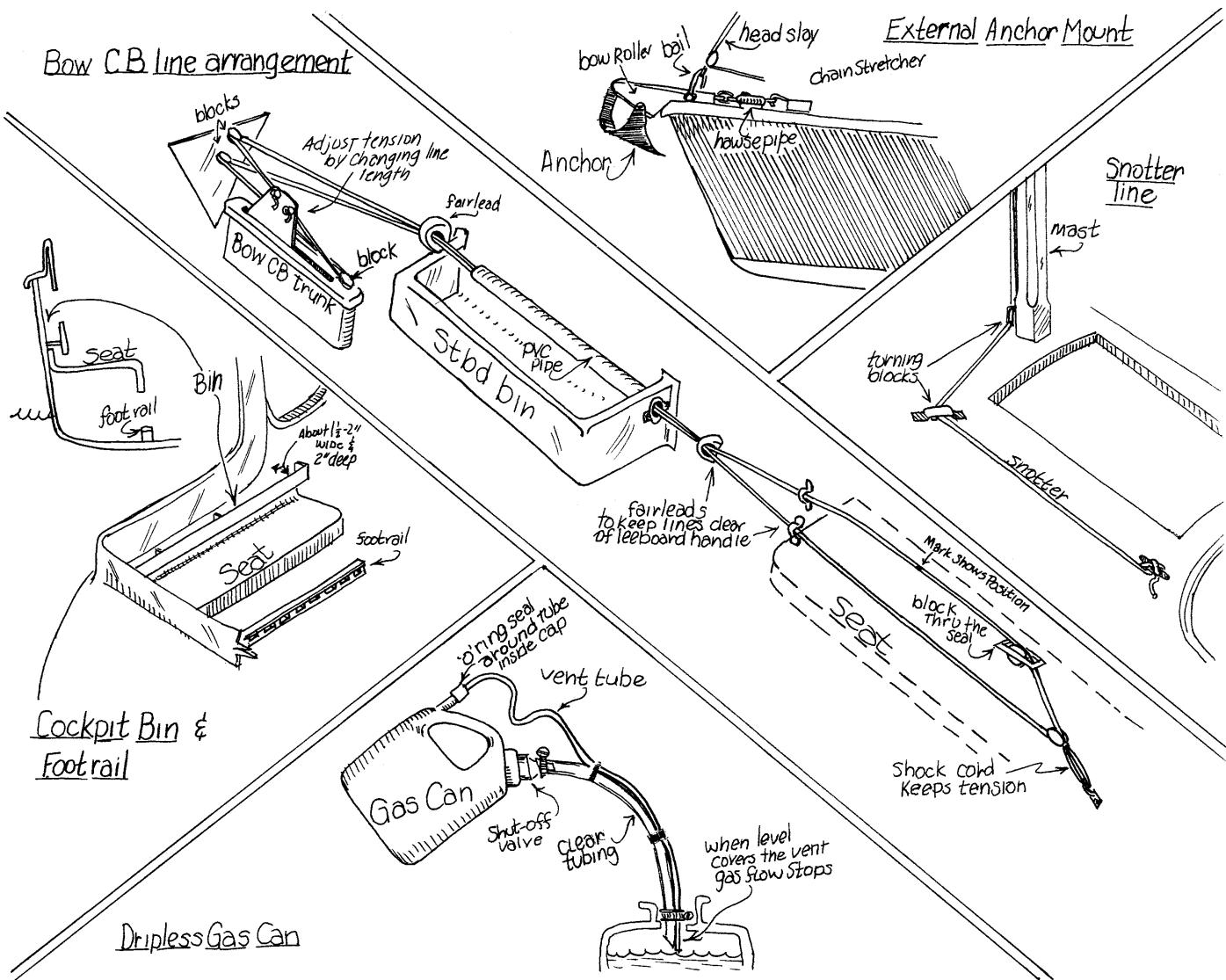
Dovekie Embellishments

Walt Elliott

As an engineer the phrase "messing around in boats" includes endless tinkering with my Dovekie. The following are some results of messing about that I've found to be useful. As I was in an apartment during my formative years of Dovekie ownership most of these were done with hand tools in the parking lot. Though homely compared to Leo's elegant work on **Waterbed**, all have served me well for many seasons.

1. *Slats that stretch across the bin lockers for sleeping.* Wood battens are sewn into two strips of nylon webbing at intervals of about 5 inches. Putting our Therma-rest mattresses on top of the battens we sleep under the deck. It's dry and well away from the head. On clear nights pushing back the hatch cover a bit lets us sleep under the stars. It rolls into a tidy cylinder that bungees under the overhead. Narrow plastic baskets screwed to the hull just forward of the ports are handy storage for things that we want in reach at night.
2. *Chart drawer under the quarterdeck.* This is a take off of Leo's wooden one. I use a metal basket from the hardware store. It's held up by bungee chord. It holds, in a dry place, all the navigation gear I want to have at hand from the helm.
3. *Foot rails under the cockpit seats.* This is a 1½" high rail made from notched pieces of teak sold as grating material. With shock chord, allows storage under the seats (bucket, water cask, tool box, gas can, etc.).
4. *Snotted led to the cockpit.* I used a cheek block at the bottom of the mast and another directly outboard on the deck. It snakes down to a cleat just forward of the cockpit. Allows the sail to be set, doused and adjusted from the cockpit. Indispensable for single handling.

5. *Bowports and topside oarlocks.* Used big (19"x5") aluminum ones. Besides keeping water out they're good for ventilation when sleeping under the deck. The screens fit on from the outside so I moved my oarlocks up to the main deck. This enables me to row standing up and facing forward. It took a year to find oarlocks with a long enough stem to make it work (Bristol Bronze).
6. *Bulkhead-mount compass.* A large Ritchie (7 1/2 in overall) cut into the aft end of the port bin is reasonable to see and out of the way.
7. *Stern drain.* My amidships drain was difficult to use so I put one in the stern about a foot forward of the rudder. On the inside it's a bronze garboard drain flange with a brass plug. This is met by a thru-hull fitting of the same outside diameter coming in from the outside. The thru hull stem was cut to fit. Besides bedding the fittings I heavily epoxied the hull foam core around the hole cut.
8. *Drains on the bin lockers.* If I store Dovekie at an angle that lets rain water in, it can flood the bins and I have a real mess! Drain plugs



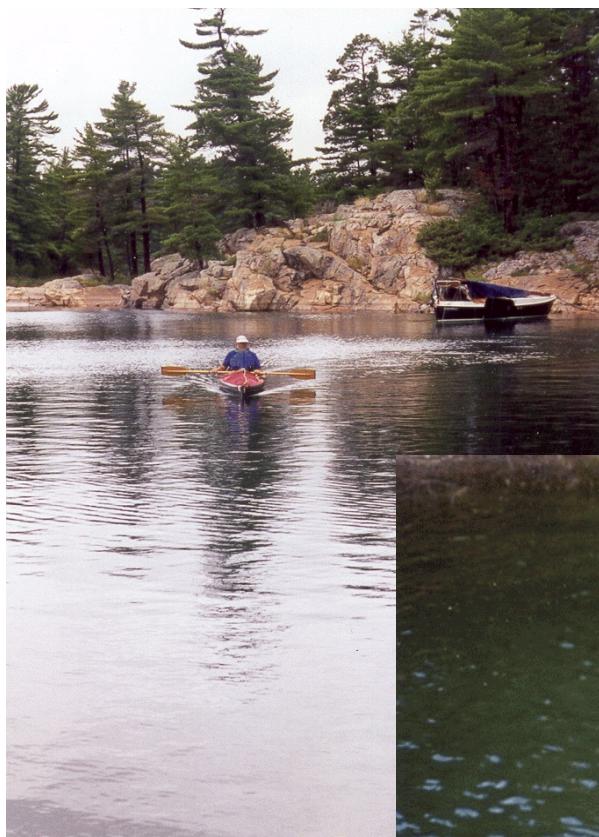
- prevent this and makes washing out the bins much easier. In the event of swamping it should facilitate bailing.
9. *Bow centerboard lines led to back the helm on a continuous loop.* This allows raising or lowering in an instant and setting positions in-between to balance the boat. I've steered with it from forward, lowering or raising the board to head up or fall off. It took a while to get the line arrangement right. Several small blocks are needed up in the bow. The lines then run through a PVC pipe just above the bins. Amidships fairleads keep it free of the leeboard handles. Back at the helm a there's a block thru the cockpit seat and idler block underneath on shock chord to keep the lines tensioned. Marking the line shows the board position at a glance.
10. *Hiking stick.* I use a telescoping stick fit into the underside of the tiller. I can steer from anywhere in the cockpit. In a knock-down it facilitates pushing the tiller to leeward. I also put in a "lock box" to hold the tiller in one place. With this arrangement I've sailed "hands off" for extended periods.
11. *Cam cleat for mainsheet.* I mounted it on the centerline of the aft coaming.
12. *Genoa jib.* A rash complication for a simple boat but I love it! Absolutely wonderful in light wind. It's about 80 ft sq and mounts on the mast a few feet above the headstay. I have cam cleat fairleads on tracks just forward of the roll bar. I use it most times I go sailing.
13. *A third set of reef points.* I don't intentionally head out in weather that needs this. But if caught, it can turn a bad day into a civilized one. I haven't used it to windward in a blow and don't expect to, but for reaching, and running it works well. Three reefs cause a big bundle of unused sail, so I lace it along the foot instead of having lines in the reef points.
14. *Fore and aft bins between the coaming bottom and the cockpit seats.* They're long, narrow and handy storage for the helmsman's stuff.
- This was a tedious project. I made mock-up of foam board and used it for a pattern. This took several trys. The bins are made of $\frac{1}{4}$ in "Starboard" polyethylene board.
15. *Dripless gas can.* My 3 hp Nissan had a small tank that would run out at inconvenient times. Hanging over the side with a jerry can was a guaranteed gas spill. I put a 2 foot hose on the can with a vent hose arranged so that it shuts off the flow when the level got near the tank top.
16. *Bow anchor roller.* Keeps a muddy anchor out of the boat. When single handed I usually don't have time to wash the anchor off before dashing back to the helm. Besides the roller, a chain stopper and "deck pipe" are needed. Since the roller device replaces the stemhead, the headstay block is mounted on a bale bolted to the roller assembly. The bale needs to be big enough to pull the anchor stock through. Required some grinding and drilling holes in the roller fixture.
- If anyone wants details on any of these projects my email is elliottmoore@att.net.

Dovekie for Sale

Bob Snyder is selling his Dovekie; here are the particulars:

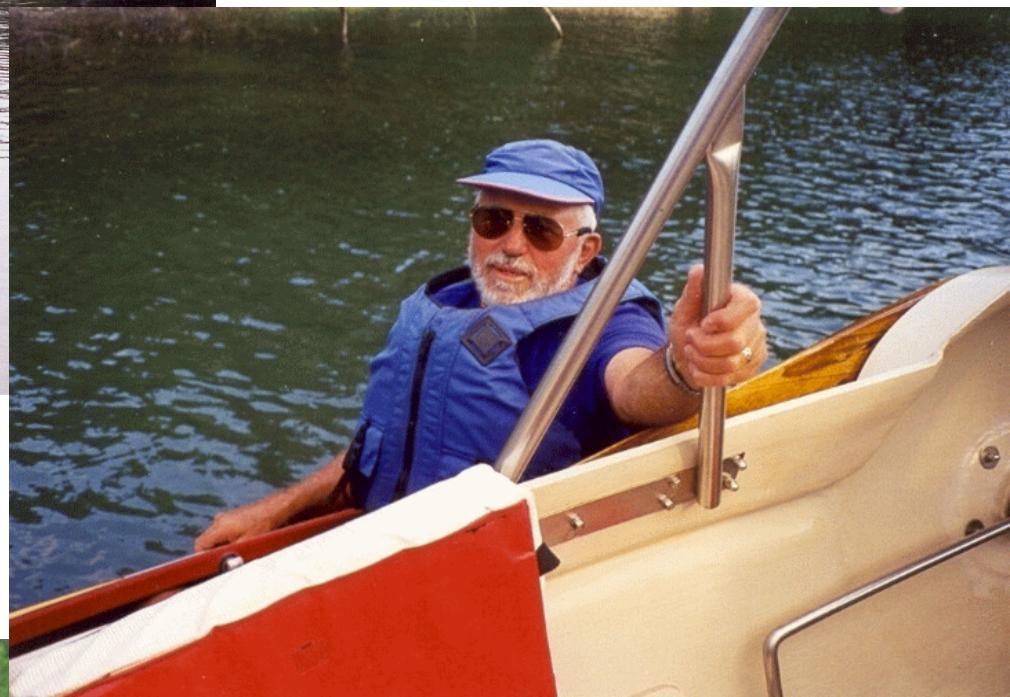
1984, Hull #101
Refinished wood spars
Extra sail
Almost new canvas
E&D motor mount
E&D galvanized trailer

Very good condition, asking \$5000, located in Schenectady, NY. Call Bob at 518-356-2265 during week days, or 518-393-9854 during nights and weekends.



Guenter Arlt Remembered

With **Sundowner** anchored in the shelter of a North Channel island, Guenter uses his Klepper kayak to visit among the Magnum Opus cruisers.



Guenter discusses the state of the world with Leo and Sandy.

We will miss you, Guenter.



Eight Bells
Winslow Homer
1887