
The Shallow Water Sailor

Number 71

Founder: John Zohlen

October 1998

The Bo'sun Chair

These last two months have been very productive for the Murphy's with two great events. On August 29th our youngest son, Bryan, was married to his Melissa. What a great wedding! Married in the William and Mary Chapel on the college grounds in Williamsburg, VA. Reception at a southern plantation on the upper James River (appears to be very nice SWS waters). Honeymoon in Australia. The most memorable event was the best man's (older brother Kevin's) toast. His remembrance of growing up as kids was so emotional that the Groom broke down in tears. We got it on video. We were happy to see our youngest daughter Carolyn at the reception. She didn't know whether she could make it as she was 8 1/2 months pregnant at the time!

Needless to say the second great event was Carolyn giving birth to her first (our fifth grandchild). September 14th, 7:31 PM, baby boy, 7lbs 9oz, 20" long. Nicodemus. Mother and child doing well. As I write these words Virginia is acting as the "mid-wife."

In between all these events we even got a great sailing weekend in! See the Wye River cruise write-up.

I'm planning on getting out the 1999 roster in the December issue, with all the information I have received from the questionnaires you were kind enough to fill out. I hope it will be useful for contacting people and setting up cruising plans. I also want to encourage all members to plan on sending materials in for publication. What about that very best sailing picture? Send it to me and I'll scan it in and send it right back.

Remember, fall is for sailing,



In this issue.....

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Wye River Cruise - Labor Day Weekend 1998

Roster

Dave Graves in *Saffron*, a Dovekie

Dana Gunnison in *Happy Pappy*, a Sea Pearl 21

Ron Kilburn in his Sea Pearl 21

Dean, Mary, and Damon Meledones in *Blue Heron*, a Shearwater

Jake Millar in *Shore Bird*, a Dovekie

Ken and Virginia Murphy in *Sanity*, a Bay Hen 21

John Zohlen in *Zephyrus*, a Dovekie

Virginia and I spent our very first night aboard the *Sanity* on the Wye River, that was 12 years ago. We've been on the Wye dozens of times since, but we still find ourselves anchoring in new creeks and coves. See the chart of the Wye on page 71-3 and you'll see for yourself why the Wye has such interest for the sailor.

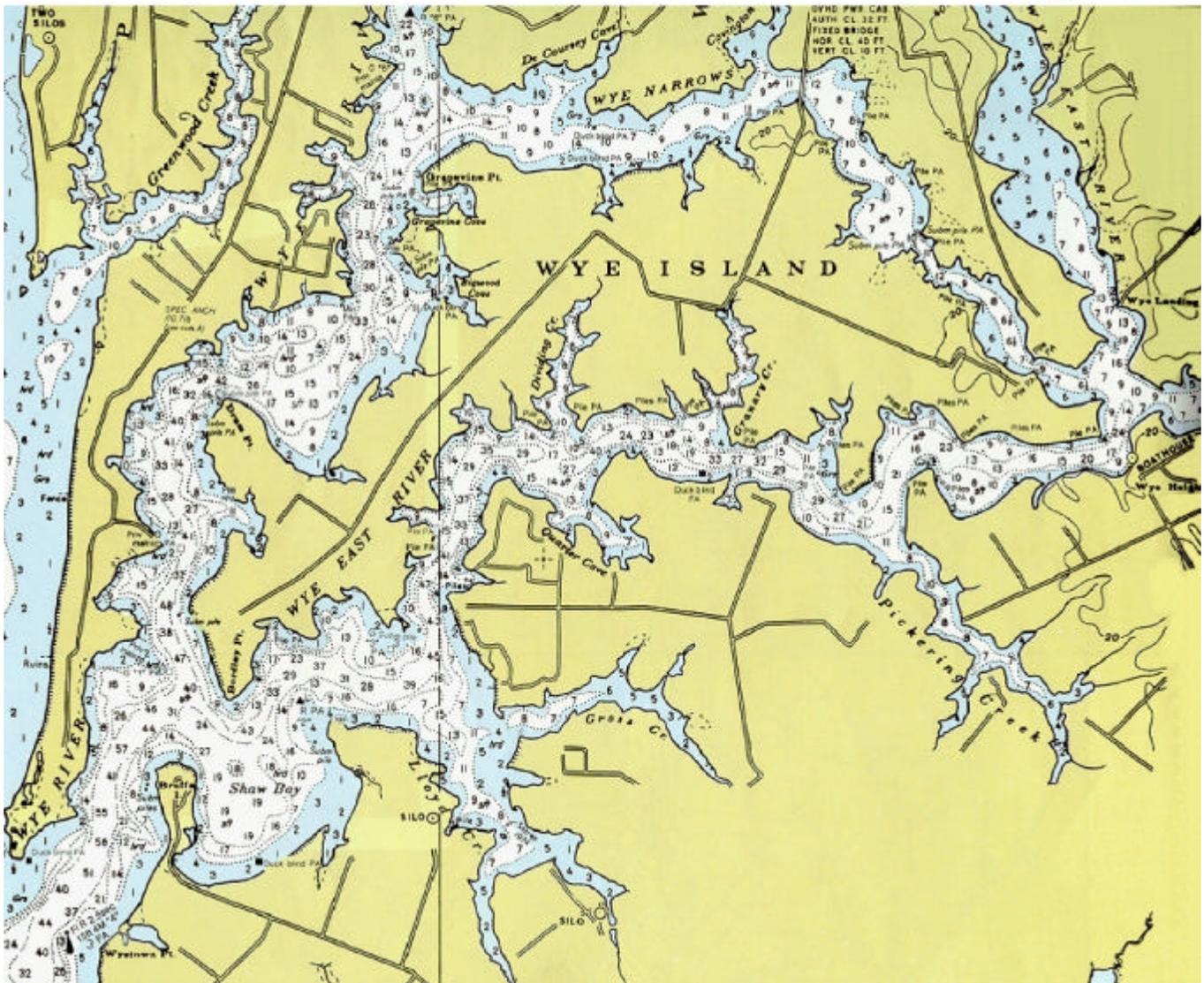
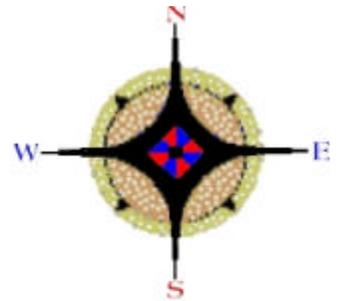
What made it even better, this cruise, was the discovery that John Zohlen had special knowledge of the Island itself. He spent 1993-94 leading a Maryland Conservation Corps crew of teenagers. The crew had worked on Wye Island making paths, bridges, and animal habitat improvements. The Dividing Woods on the island is home of the Delmarva fox squirrel, an endangered species. It makes its home in old growth forest. John's crew built nesting boxes for the squirrels. Most of the Island is State property and as such there are nice spots you can stop and walk around.

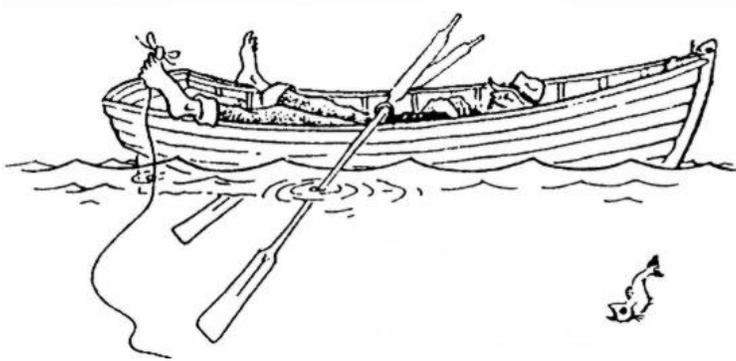
For this cruise the SWSs came from a number of launch sites. Virginia and I launched on Friday at the Shipping Creek ramp on Kent Island. This is a nine mile sail in the open waters of Eastern Bay to get to the mouth of the Wye River. This can be a great sail on the 10k breezes associated with highs during the Chesapeake summer. If the wind kicks up to 20k, Eastern Bay is nasty, and can be too lumpy for small, flat bottoms like the Bay Hen. Dave arrived just as we were leaving the ramp. Both the *Sanity* and the *Saffron* had a nice sail to the mouth of the Wye. The Shipping Creek ramp requires a county permit, easily obtained at the Blue Heron Golf Course near the ramp. But all MD counties seem to discourage the use of these ramps by out-of-staters by charging high fees for multi-day use.

John Zohlen put in at the Wye River Landing which is right on the Wye. John was our safety valve in the case Eastern Bay became nasty. Wye Landing is at the right-center edge of the chart. This ramp is very busy on weekends. The Wye is famous for especially large blue crabs because of its perfect brackish waters and Wye Landing is the perfect ramp. John did the right thing by launching in late afternoon on Friday when the crabbers were home cooking their catch. I had promised to meet him. So *Sanity* left *Saffron*, with us motoring to Skipton Creek (off the chart near Wye Landing) to meet John and Dave sailing to Woodland Creek just a mile south of the mouth of the Wye River on the east shore of the Miles River.

Skipton Creek turned out a little noisy as it was close to the busy Route 50. Some early morning crabbers added to the noise, complaining that "one of the sailboats did not have an anchor light." But otherwise a delightful moonlit night. Saturday was the day of hide-and-seek as we used the marine radio to communicate. The day before, Ron's home town, Oriental, North Carolina had just got hit by 10" of rain and lots of wind from Hurricane Bonnie. But Ron had somehow gotten away from it all (we in Maryland were not touched at

Wye River Cruise - September 4 - 7, 1998





all). We suggested that he launch at what John calls Maryland's "best kept secret" the ramp in the busy town of St Michaels. Some how that particular ramp is never crowded and there is no requirement for a permit (yet). So we directed both Ron and Jake (the out-of-staters) to use that ramp (they had no problems).

Meanwhile all were on the water including Dana (he launched from Shipping Creek), except the Meledones (they were to

launch also from Shipping Creek, but in late afternoon). Slowly we all began coming together.

The *Zephyrus* and the *Sanity* sailed out of Skipton Creek passing a significant colonial mansion on the south shore at the Creek's mouth. Large stately lawns with a herd of black sheep. The four posted house most likely is the famous colonial mansion - "Wye Heights."

Just a little way out into the Wye East River the *Sanity* suffered a peak halyard block failure. My rivet job, using aluminum pop rivets apparently was not strong enough for the tension received at the peak of my gaff sail. John helped out by towing us to Quarter Cove where Virginia and I anchored while John found the rest of the sailors. I struggled to make a jury rig repair but got all tangled up in the Bay Hen's standing rigging, and made the right decision to focus attention on my wife and the wonderful sight of Dovekies and Sea Pearls coming into view. They were coming down wind with the two Sea Pearls showing their stuff by spreading their colorful wings ... coming downwind wing-on-wing. What a pretty sight!

Six boats rafted up. We got down to serious sailor talk lasting several hours at the end of which Virginia suddenly realized she was the only woman among six men. I guess she's not used to going two hours without the mention of kids or shopping. We broke out some wine to drink a toast to our youngest son, Bryan, who was just married in Williamsburg, VA. Finally the Meledones showed up and so Mary balanced the female/male ratio a little. But soon it was time to have dinner and to break-up the raft. Quarter Cove has a nice bite, that is protected, for a very quiet night.

On Sunday we broke away from the group as they busily tacked back and forth across Shaw Bay. As we called goodbye to Jake, he called back about what a great time he was having, playing with his boat and listening to the baseball game ... life is good. So Virginia and I motored all the way back to Shipping Creek under the Bimini cause it was starting to warm up. So for "the rest of the story" I'll have to depend on the others:

Jake Millar's Input

Hi Ken,

Glad to hear you and Virginia had a safe trip back to the Shipping Creek ramp. After you left we all sailed on to Grapevine Cove, it was kind of slow going (unless you were in a Sea Pearl!). Once we all got tied up John gave a walking tour of the woods adjacent to the cove which included the history of Wye Island and information on the beautiful wooded area we were walking in. Some of the oaks were 150-200 years old and well over 100 feet tall. Knowing some of the history of Wye Island and about people's efforts to preserve it as a natural refuge made me appreciate how rare a place we were visiting.



After our hike we moved the boats out into the cove to try to find a little more breeze (Dave left to sail back to Shipping Creek on Kent Island). We rafted up alongside the Meledones' Shearwater for an hour or two. John spotted a large adult bald eagle which perched on a branch not 50 yards from us, what a sight! That was the first time I'd seen an eagle that close.

Shortly after that we split up and found our quiet spots for the night. I couldn't seem to get to sleep, I don't know whether it was the full moon or the mosquitoes, but I decided to stow my gear and sail back to St. Michaels. I pulled up the anchor about 1 AM and quietly rowed my way out of the cove. Out on the river there was a steady breeze blowing straight up river (what else!) so I fired up the outboard and motored up to Drum Point where the river widened a bit and would give me more room to sail. Not knowing how much wind I would find out on Eastern Bay I put my PFD on and began tacking out the Wye towards the bay. The wind was 10-15 out of the SW and once out into Eastern Bay I had a great sail up the Miles.

It was a beautiful night to sail. The full moon reflected off of my sail and lighted the way up river for me. About 4:30 I started hearing the sound of engines, watermen heading out to work their trot lines - not used to seeing someone out on the water this early they shined spot lights on me in curiosity. The red and green flashing lights marking the entrance to St. Michaels were visible in the distance and about 6 AM I reached the first marker as the sky started to lighten. I sailed into the harbor about 6:30 and had to work my way through about 200 boats anchored in the harbor. The sails came down right in front of the Maritime Museum and I motored the rest of the way up the creek to the ramp. I was loaded up and on the road by 7:30 and home to NJ by noon, ready for some well deserved sleep!

John Zohlen's Input

From the log of Zephyrus for the September 4-7, 1998 Wye River Cruise:

Mary would have called it a "sweat and swat" weekend. And it certainly was that. Temperatures for the four days were in the mid-nineties. The humidity seemed just as high. The flies were bothersome on Saturday and the early morning mosquitoes were there to greet you as the dodger was turned back for the new day. Needless to say, Mary knew all this in advance and therefore decided not to come. I, nevertheless, did go cruisin' and enjoyed every minute of the time on the water. Seeing old sailing friends, observing nature and reliving history, both near term and long term, made all the inconveniences small in comparison to the enjoyment of "capturing the day". Different perspectives I suppose. The Wye Rivers and Wye Island brought this all together.

You cannot help but be impressed with the history of the area. Four miles from Wye Landing you pass by the Wye Mill. The mill was producing flour for Washington's army while camped at Valley Forge in 1776. Half a block down the road is the Wye Oak. The oak is four hundred years old, the oldest known white oak in North America. Wye Island (three miles wide by six miles long) was settled by a signer of the Declaration of Independence, William Paca. It was a station on the underground railroad in the mid 1800's. Wye Island is now a Maryland Natural Wildlife Management Area.

I spent some time working on Wye Island in 1993-94 with a Maryland Conservation Corp crew of ten disadvantaged teenagers. Circumnavigating the island during the weekend gave me opportunities to see where we had planted sea grass along the shoreline, cleared a path through a woods, built canoe put-ins for a youth camp, set out bird and animal habitat and planted trees. The trees and grasses had grown and prospered. I thought about each of my crew members from five years before and wondered if I, and their MCC experience,

had made a difference in their lives. Had they also grown and prospered like the trees and grasses they had planted? I hope so.

The high point of the cruise for me was Sunday night about 7:00 PM. Five boats had been rafted close to shore in Grapevine Cove on the northwest corner of Wye Island. We had just finished enjoying a social hour in the Meledones' big Shearwater cockpit. It was about time to break up the nest for supper when I saw a large bird fly into a tree along the shore. He was about a hundred feet away. I said to myself: "A great blue heron does not have a white tail and a white head with a yellow hooked bill! It must be, yes it is, an adult bald eagle!" It landed in the tree and looked at us. We got out our glasses and cameras and for ten minutes enjoyed watching a magnificent bird survey his/her domain. What a gift from God! Eventually the eagle took off, probably looking for supper. We did the same. At 8:30 PM each evening the full moon came up over the trees and illuminated the surroundings as if it were daylight. I sat in the cockpit each night for an hour or so just absorbing the tranquility. Life is good!

The water's surface surrounding Zephyrus in the early mornings and just at dusk became alive with fish. Bugs settling on the watch were snapped up in a wink. This lasted only fifteen or twenty minutes each day. It was fascinating to watch. Like watching popcorn pop. Saturday evening Dana pulled a small fishing rod out of the bilge on his Sea Pearl. A few casts later he hooked a small yellow perch. The fish was promptly released to return to the chore of eating bugs. Throughout the cruise we saw heron, egrets, kingfishers, gulls and terns. No osprey though. They must be beginning their annual migration to Brazil. It is a sure sign of fall approaching when they and the humming birds leave. Unfortunately, it will be April before they return.

I left Ron at the Wye Narrows on Monday morning. I turned left towards Wye Landing to find my van and recover. Ron turned right to go back down the "front Wye" and start his journey back to the St. Michael's ramp.

There was no wind and the forecast was for another scorcher of a day. Originally Ron had planned to spend an extra day in the area. His parting comment though, was that he thought it probably would be better to be stuck in an air conditioned car in traffic heading back to North Carolina than spend another day baking in the sun. As much as I had enjoyed sailing with him and the others, I had to agree with him.

Input From Others ?

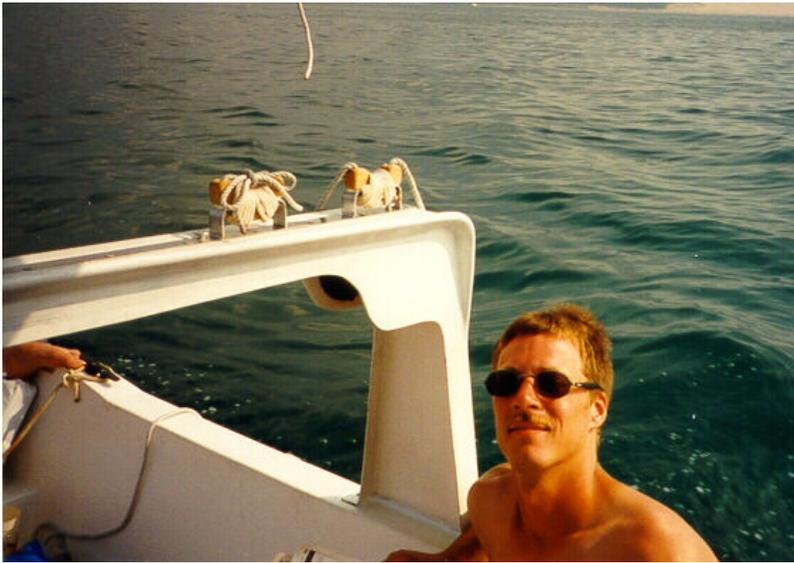
I hoping for input from other participants. I know that Dave wants to chronicle his impressions of Sunday that was capped off by a night sail across Eastern Bay. I hope to get some pictures too.

Finessing the Rain

Nick Scheuer

On Kentucky Lake last fall I volunteered for the cockpit berths and got wet the first night out. Not that I was soaked; but if the Skipper can feel cold water with his toes in the sleeping bag, that's way too wet!

Multiple problems were evident. I'd noticed them before, but nobody had ever bunked under the leaks before. First, the ROSEMARY's cotton duck dodger is a little shy about extending over the forward edge of the gallows, especially at the corners, if it gets wet, or even just damp from dew. Second, the center portion of the dodger extends upward from the gallows toward a pair of bows over the sliding companionway hatch instead of downward to the deck as on Dovekie and early Shearwaters, and so it never makes an adequate seal against the leading edge of the gallows. And finally, the gallows sag a bit in the middle. Though I'm sure the



The Rosemary's Gallows
Modification Enhanced By
Moby Nick's Son David

Dodger Installed
Note rainproof fit...
now bring on the
wind and rain!



Grandson Robby
Payback time! Put away the
fiberglass and epoxy. Get
out on the water and collect
those memories of a
lifetime.

boat never floats dead level at anchor, the idea of rain collecting on a surface prone to drain into the cockpit rather than over the side was repugnant to this former plumbing products designer. What in the world to do? Well, how about extending the forward edge of the gallows so that the dodger can easily overlap, even if shrunk, and to reach upward enough to seal against the dodger where it rises over the companionway, and also provide a gutter which won't puddle. The thought occurred that to pull all of that off with just one simple lump of unobtrusive fiberglass the designer might have to be holding some pretty good cards.

One unsolicited advisor in the Rockford Yacht Club questioned the viability of queen-size berths under canvas. A couple of others suggested I rework the canvas instead of messing with the hull, but I'm much more at ease with fiberglass. This was no time to be learning a new game; just go with the strong suit.

The extension is styled to appear as though it came with the boat. That's important. I started by deeply roughening the gel-coat approximately two inches down and back from the top leading edge of the gallows, and down both sides about two inches lower than the extension would reach. This promotes sound adhesion for the new fiberglass. This is also the point of no return. The Moby One has been here before, however, and this time he figured he was holding enough aces. Then a softwood core in three sections was glued onto the gallows using five-minute epoxy, one of my favorite materials. The straight section was cut with a table saw and rounded with a table router, which is just a hand-held router I've mounted under one of the side extensions on the table saw so that I can use the same fence. The curved, tapered end cores were roughed out on a bandsaw and then hand carved into final form. The quantity of wood to be carved depends upon how creative one can be with a bandsaw.

I bowed the long straight core slightly when gluing it in place in order to promote proper drainage, port and starboard. Then the glue line was generously filleted all around with Bondo, another favorite material. It's like clay, only better, for cars and boats at least. Actually, I would've used WEST epoxy filled with microballoons for the fillets but I ran out of epoxy earlier, when repairing the forward hatch hinges.

Structural strength comes from two layers of fiberglass sheathing the core; first woven fabric, then mat. Years ago I would have used two layers of weave, but I've heard that alternating fabrics is somehow better. However; one caution here; narrow ribbons of mat, about five inches in this case, are all too easily pulled apart when wet out with resin. Woven fabric can stand some pulling to get it where you want it.

After grinding and sanding everything fair, I primed it white. This will do until we weather substantial rain that drains over the side entirely. The Moby One would consider "substantial" to mean the state colloquially termed in the Midwest, "like a cow pissing on a flat rock". Then, and only then, I will paint it again with color-matched semi-gloss white enamel.

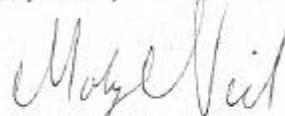
The higher lip on the gallows necessitated one-inch risers be fitted to each of the spar chocks. These are white oak, bonded to the stainless steel with 3-M's 5200 urethane bedding adhesive, then lashed with cotton clothes line, providing padding as well as backup for the adhesive.

It wasn't until the gallows extension was complete that the dodger could be brought out and fitted for a test. There had been way too much fiberglass dust all over the boat earlier. I had been concerned at the outset that the slight increase in perimeter dimension might require darts of canvas be added to the side flaps where they meet the combing. No sweat, everything fit just fine. The ROSEMARY wins this hand.

The corner lips look rather nice, and the prospect of staying dry next time it rains is very satisfying. I like the open air aspect of the cockpit berths.

If anyone wants to try this on their boat, but feels the information furnished is not sufficient, give me a call.

Faire Winds, Y'awl,



Moby Nick

More Renewal Messages

Chuck Raynor would like to hear about different types of boat designs and ideas for fixing up boats. Adding features, etc. [Ed. Seems like the “ideas for fixing up” is the most frequent request, I need help here folks.] How about the auxiliary boat used for fun with your main boat. Dinghies for example. Chuck just had an Adirondack boat builder build a Adirondack Guide boat. This boat was designed in 1904 for use by guides in the lakes of upstate New York. Its 15' 6" long. It has two rowing stations. It will carry three people or two plus a heck of a lot of gear. It is of red cedar strip construction with decks and trim of cherry. The whole boat is finished “bright.” Its covered with six ounce glass cloth set in epoxy for strength and durability. The glass doesn't show. The boat looks like an old fashioned varnished canoe. It rows like it was on ball bearings. This boat make a terrific dinghy. When you anchor you can have fun rowing. The boat only weighs 55 pounds so when you are towing your main boat, you can put this one on the tow vehicle roof.

Guenter Arlt has returned home from a long vacation into the Voyageurs National Park in Minnesota. He now is planning an extended cruise with the Dovekie and Klepper folding kayak to Kentucky lake! [Ed. Guenter, give us the lowdown on these trips of yours, they sound exciting!]

Replumbing the Nissan

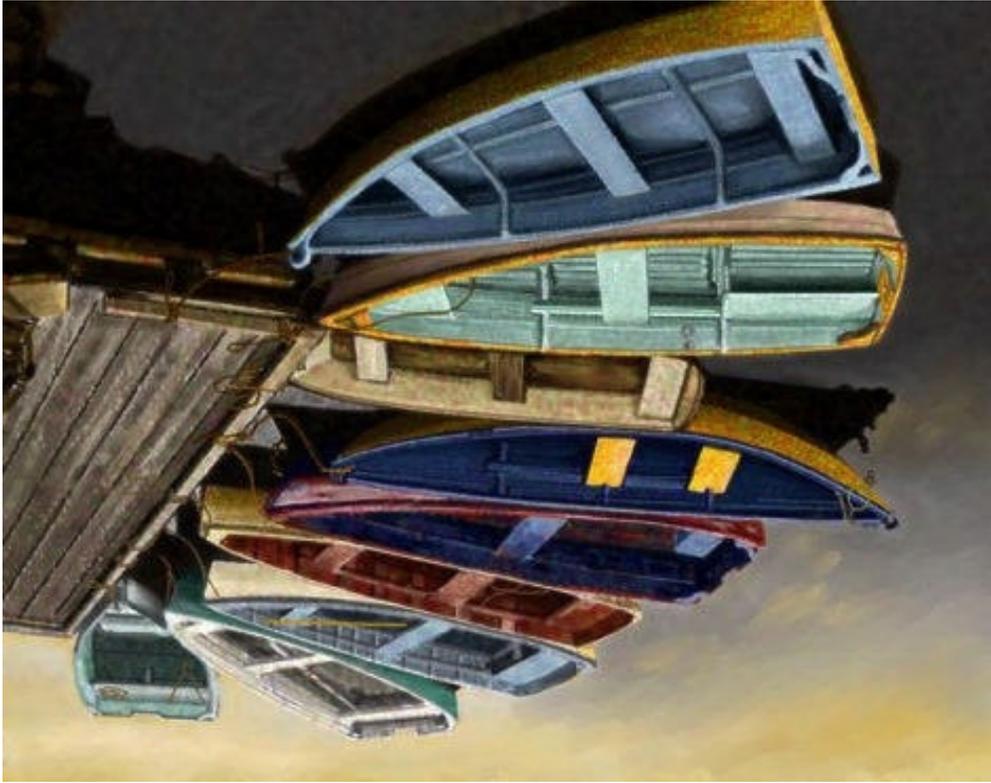
In response to Jack Minot's question about converting his Nissan engine to an independent fuel supply, Richard Sheperd writes that Jack needs to contact the Nissan Industrial Equipment Company at PO Box 161404, 2900 Datsun Drive, Memphis, TN 38186-1404. Their phone number is 901-396-5170. They can supply a vacuum powered fuel pump, probably thru a dealer. Rich converted his Nissan 3.5 and it works very well, now going on 10 years. There are plastic closures for the old fuel tank cap and fuel valve apertures.

Dovekie of Sale

Jack Minot's Dovekie is up for sale, Hull # 151. Both hard and soft hatches, back porch, Nissan 3.5hp long shaft and all the updates which came with the boat, i.e.; fiberglass lee boards, bow centerboard, crew seats, easy reefing, aluminum spars. The boat is a medium blue with white sail. The sail is in excellent condition, 1991 load rite tilt trailer, full fitted winter cover. Boat is located on Long Island, New York 1hr out side of NYC. Asking price is \$6,200. Phone (night after 7pm) (516) 377-0306 or Day (9 to 5) (212) 891-0725 or Mydovekie@AOL.com



*Bobbie Moore and Walt Elliott have moved!
Their new address is:
2 Rainbow Heights
Portsmouth RI 02871
Drop them a line!*



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