



The Wizards

In a southern New Bedford location, barely a half mile from the original Beetle site, lays an unpretentious, yet productive workshop. "The Shop," as it is referred to, is the place where the Clarke father and son team create, maintain and restore boats, amongst other creations and 'fix-sations.'

In years gone by, Bob and Bobby Clarke have designed and created sail and power boats as a hobby. One sail boat, *Last Dance*, was 42' in length. Another vessel, *Tap Dance*, now located at the Fairhaven Shipyard, calculated out at 39' and is adorned with a teak interior! A speed boat, *Fast Dance*, can get an individual from Fairhaven to the Vineyard in less time than it takes to have a pizza delivered.

The Wizards' (a term coined up to describe the team's ability to fix just about anything) most recent, and probably most special project, was the restoration of a much neglected Beetle Cat. Both men sailed Beetles in their youth and have favorable memories of both individual and group sailing adventures in the

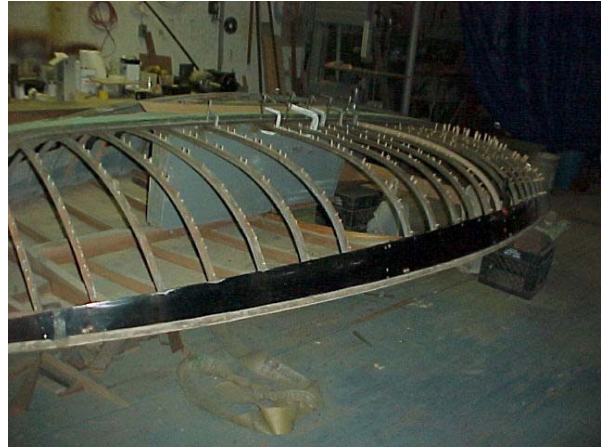
waters of Buzzards Bay.

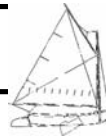
Wizardry is what was needed from the onset of rebuilding, to completion. Ribs were broken, planking was patched, the skeg was separated from the hull –and- the stern was even cracked and spliced together with another board! Of course, the boards were discolored and paint was peeling inside and out. To their dismay, Team Clarke discovered quite an interesting surprise when progressing with the Beetle's planks: they were loaded with sheetrock screws. What a challenge! Each screw had to be dug out, one by one, until all fifteen hundred or so were replaced.

In order to remedy the need for straight boards to become bent, the duo researched how to create a steam box, and did! They also invented their own rotary disc sander with a salvaged shop vacuum.

It takes approximately one hundred forty hours to construct a new Beetle Cat. In contrast, the Clarke's resurrected sailboat summed up over five hundred hours over a period of five months this past spring and summer. Their efforts were well worth it!

Kathy Smith





The Catboat Era In Newport, Rhode Island A Book Review

In August of 2005, at the New England Beetle Catboat Association Annual Regatta, I was handed a copy of John Leaven's book The Catboat Era at Newport, Rhode Island, for review. It was a pleasure to read, and I enjoyed this book very much.

The documentation of facts from 1897 through 1907 was extremely good. Dates, builders and the location of all the builders along the Newport Harbor shoreline made for some very interesting and detailed reading; a virtual genealogy of Catboat history. However, I thought that much of this, although well chronicled, was at times a bit too repetitious and a little boring, although probably necessary for the style in which the book was written. It is very good reading and very informative to people

Decorating Ideas

Have you ever wondered what to do with an old Beetle Cat that is no longer useable? Bill Riley of Barnstable on Cape Cod did—he hung part of it on the wall of his house. The Beetle Cat wall hanging, and the Riley's house, was featured in an article in the May 2005 issue of Cape Cod View magazine, titled "House for Sail".

Mr. & Mrs. Riley moved to the Cape from Rome, NY and, while redecorating a small home they purchased, they were given an old Beetle Cat. Bill took the aft end of the boat, refinished it and hung it on the wall of their family room. According to the article, it is a great "conversation igniter".

like myself, who also enjoy sailing and racing Catboats, large and small.

It is very evident that John Leaven spent a tremendous amount of time and effort in his research of documentation. His compiling of notes and old stories as to the origin of presently existing boats and how they survived the years truly brings out his love for these beautiful wooden Catboats. I likewise share his love for wooden Catboats, having grown up in a Beetle Cat. I still own this boat which has just passed her seventy second season. She, like me, no longer sails or races. She and I have reached retirement, but I have no intention of giving her up! Boat and man eventually become one and this is very evident in

Bill's wife Judy named the boat GONE A-RYE, which relates to her nickname, Ry, for her husband. Bill says the boat is no longer in the water, so it has gone awry. It certainly is a unique use for the venerable Beetle Cat Boat.

John's story about Catboats; how they became an intricate part in the way of life in Newport in the late 1800s and early 1900s, not only in Newport but all along the New England coast.

John Leaven brings out the versatility of these boats: from working active fishing boats to elegant competition racing and pleasure craft—and- the effects of different rigs. I did enjoy reading this book and Judy Lund did a marvelous job putting everything together and shepherding the material through publication. It certainly required a great deal of effort on her part. The old photographs were a particularly pleasing aspect of the entire book. Thank you Judy, it was all worthwhile. This book brought about some wonderful reading.

Jim Kittredge

Roy Terwilliger

Passing Of The Mantel

As of this newsletter, you have a new Editor for THE BEETLE SHEET. I have enjoyed very much putting together all the articles and announcements focusing on our favorite little boats, and it has been such fun to read every word on details of maintenance, mini-voyages, helpful hints and so forth, not to mention keeping up with the racing statistics of all of the yacht clubs. The most satisfying, however, was getting to know a lot of you through this medium as well as attending the various meetings and regattas along the way. I leave THE BEETLE SHEET in the very capable hands of Kathy Smith, your new Editor, and I hope you will give her the same support you all have given me. The new address which she has set up exclusively for the newsletter is: thebeetlesheet@yahoo.com. I wish you all fair winds, kind following seas, and safe



