

# *THE* CONCORDIAN

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A NEWSLETTER FOR LOVERS OF CONCORDIA YACHTS  
SPRING 2015, NUMBER 58



## **C. RAYMOND HUNT**

The Sailor Who Could See the Wind

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## NOTES

What a winter. As I write this, there are still drifts over the spar rack by the side of my house so I have not been able to pass the spars through the shop for their annual varnishing. Hope they melt soon 'cause I'm way behind.

It's been four years since I took over this editorship so perhaps it's time for an update and reassessment. First, I'm still having fun putting this together and I hope you are having as much fun reading it. I appreciate the kind notes that indicate that you do enjoy reading about the rest of the fleet. So let's keep doing it.

Second, I also appreciate the financial support you've made to the newsletter. When I took over, it was a money losing proposition with about one quarter of the owners supporting it and a rather large list of freebies being sent out. Now about three quarters of you support the newsletter with another fifty or so friends of the fleet subscribers.

I've tried to make the Concordian something you want to read and keep and therefore are willing to support. I've also gotten rather grumpy when shaking some of you down. Sorry. But it worked. So thanks.

I got an MFA in grad school, not an MBA, so dealing with money is at times foreign to me so if I misplace your check or don't cash it for a few months or forget to log your annual contribution, let me know and we'll work it out.

As I've said in the past, keeping the spreadsheet up-to-date is the hardest part of this job. But even that is getting better. The last issue had no copies returned as undeliverable and the recent mass email message had only one bounced address. If I still do not have your email address, send it to me! [jeide@meca.edu](mailto:jeide@meca.edu) Right now! Messaging you by email is so much easier for all of us.

But following that plea, thirdly, you may remember in my first issue I indicated that I'd like to move to an on-line interactive publication after the 75th. We can't do it. There are still a large number of loyal owners who do not use email, or even have computers. I have to respect these owners. I also have to respect the wishes of many more of you who want to read and keep the Concordian in a hard copy version. "My wife and I climb in bed and read the Concordian...." is one note I got. OKaay.... Whatever.

Next, send me your text submissions as an email. No Word doc. or pdf or attachment or anything other than an email. I can then format it in seconds and have it ready to paste up.

Send photos as an attachment in the largest file size you can. 300ppi or bigger. Bigger the better. I can handle it.

Finally, start chatting among yourselves to find a new editor. *Golondrina* will be going on the market in a few years and when she sells, I will no longer want to edit the Concordian.

## IN THIS ISSUE

As you can tell from the cover, there's a bit of looking back in this issue. And looking forward. At long last, a biography of Ray Hunt is nearing completion. Written by Stan Grayson, *A Genius at His Trade* looks at all his creations from sail to power and more. Hopefully Llewellyn Howland's introduction and excerpts from Chapter 13 on the creation of *Harrier* will entice you to seek out this forthcoming book. Backed by the New Bedford Whaling Museum, the book will be available this fall. Tied in with the publication of the Hunt book is a campaign by the Museum to raise funds for the purchase of the 1/3 scale model of a Concordia for their collection. Keep reading for all the details.

I first met Louie Howland at the relaunching of *Kestrel* and during our conversation, I asked about the original owners of our boats. What he began relating was too much to take in during that event so we made plans to meet for a much longer discussion. For this Midwest to New England transplant, I found this social and economic history to be especially fascinating as these elements came together to create our boats.

The cover photograph is of *Harrier* racing on Buzzard's Bay, from, *A Genius at his Trade*. Yan is at the helm, Ray is trimming the 'chute with Barbara to windward, Josh on the leeward cockpit winch, Sham on the house top and Kate either forward of the mast or below. The photo is by Norman Fortier, courtesy the New Bedford Whaling Museum. His photographs also accompany my interview with Louie Howland and his entire archive is housed at the Museum. You can see all his work at <http://www.whalingmuseum.org/explore/collections/database/search-photographs>

*The Sailor Who Could See the Wind* was Stan Grayson's working title for the Hunt book.

JOHN EIDE

•Thanks to the **W. & L. Howland Insurance Agency, Inc.** for underwriting a portion of the production cost of the Concordian. The W. & L. Howland Insurance Agency has been insuring yachts since 1936. They are located at 962 Kempton Street, New Bedford, MA 02740 and can be reached at: 508.992.7731 or 800.848.7731; or email [yachts@wlhowland.com](mailto:yachts@wlhowland.com)

•Thanks also to an anonymous member of the fleet for underwriting a portion of our production costs.

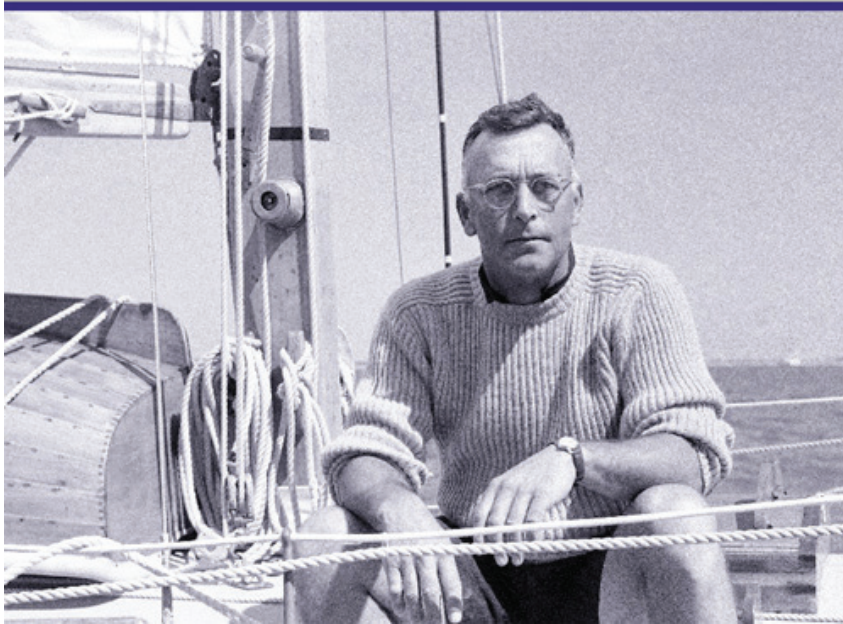


# A Genius at His Trade

## C. Raymond Hunt and His Remarkable Boats

Stan Grayson

Foreword by Llewellyn Howland III



The following is excerpted from Louie Howland's introduction to *A Genius at His Trade*, the soon to be published biography of Ray Hunt by Stan Grayson.

### FORWARD

The world of sport can be a place of unrelenting partisanship and unforgiving competition. Sometimes even winning is not sufficient for victory. Sometimes there is triumph even in defeat. In this marvelously readable biography of legendary 20th century yacht designer and racing sailor C. Raymond Hunt (1908 - 1978), historian Stan Grayson takes the full and fascinating measure of a largely self-taught American genius whose lack of formal education was both a gateway to invention and a continuing source of inner conflict and self-doubt.

Although Hunt was born and introduced to competitive sailing in Duxbury, Massachusetts, and earned his first yacht-racing fame in competition off Marblehead, his career as a yacht designer developed in association with lifelong Buzzards Bay sailor Waldo Howland. It was for Waldo Howland's father in South Dartmouth that Hunt drew the lines for the now famous Concordia 39-foot cruising-racing yawl. In the same period Hunt also designed Dartmouth summer resident Hendon Chubb's unbeatable big schooner *Victoria*, and the superlative small cruising sloop *Kestrel* for Dr. Harry Forbes of Naushon.

Hunt and his young family lived in Fairhaven while Hunt worked with the Wamsutta Mills on sail cloth development before World War II. He returned to South Dartmouth to live a few years before his death in 1978.

With his novel fin-keel 110 and 210 one-design sloops, Ray Hunt put competitive small-boat racing within reach for post-World War II sailors who could not readily afford conventionally designed and built daysailers. In the immediate postwar years, Hunt also began intensive development of advanced vee-bottom powerboat hulls that included the prodigious 42-foot, 46-knot flier *Sea Blitz* for Bradley Noyes in 1949 and the ever-popular Boston Whaler—and that led in time to the iconic 22- and 24-degree deep-vee hulls that remain a dominant worldwide force in powerboat design nearly sixty years later. Had Hunt been able to patent the deep-vee hull forms, his fortune would have been made. The patents were denied on a technicality.

Meanwhile and all the while, sometimes in boats to his own break-through design, sometimes in boats their previous owners believed were no longer competitive, Ray Hunt continued to compete successfully in sailing races locally, nationally, and internationally, both on- and off-soundings, against the world's top sailors. When Hunt, sailing the Concordia 41 sloop *Harrier* with his family as crew, swept the fleet at Cowes Week in the summer of 1955,

he seemed, like the Concordia class he had done so much to create, altogether invincible.

That Hunt was not invincible is a necessary and very moving part of the story that Stan Grayson tells so powerfully in *A Genius at His Trade: C. Raymond Hunt and His Remarkable Boats*. That recreational sailors and boaters and working watermen throughout the world continue to seek out and use boats designed by him is a tribute not just to his own genius, but to the vital knowledge and experience he gained during the years he sailed on Buzzards Bay.

The trustees, staff, and membership of the New Bedford Whaling Museum/Old Dartmouth Historical Society are deeply grateful to Stan Grayson for writing *A Genius at His Trade: C. Raymond Hunt and His Remarkable Boats*, and to C. Raymond Hunt Associates, to Ray Hunt's own family, and to many generous friends of the designer and the museum for their help in bringing this biography into being. The book is the third that the New Bedford Whaling Museum has published in recent years that relates to the yachting history of the South Coast of Massachusetts. But its concerns and appeal are truly international, and it does much to demonstrate how successive generations of sailors and designers contribute to the advancement of one of the world's most exciting and absorbing pastimes.

LLEWELLYN HOWLAND III

## THE SENSATION OF COWES

The following is excerpted from Chapter 13 of *A Genius at His Trade*, the soon to be published biography of Ray Hunt by Stan Grayson.

As always, Raymond had his eye on many projects during the first half of 1953. Perhaps the one that garnered the most notice was a new 41-footer designed under the auspices of Concordia for Henry “Harry” Sears, who was then vice-commodore of the New York Yacht Club and owner of a modified Concordia Yawl. Sears, who had made his fortune in investments and real estate, really was to the manor born when it came to yachting.

Harry Sears was born in 1913, and, by his early twenties, was racing in Marblehead—first as a sail trimmer aboard Charles Francis Adams’s Q boat and soon enough as skipper of his own Frank Paine-designed 50-footer. She was named, as all his boats would be, *Actaea* (sea nymph). These activities brought Sears into contact with Ray Hunt, while Waldo Howland met Sears and his friends through a network of business and then social acquaintances. “I took it as a real compliment,” Howland wrote in *A Life in Boats*, “when they invited me to join them for the 1938 Bermuda Race aboard the second *Actaea* [a 64-foot sloop built by Henry Nevins to

more official drawings of the 41 were prepared, Fenwick Williams’s name was added.

“It was the same genetic material as the 39,” said Llewellyn Howland III, who knows both boats well. During his college-years summers, Howland crewed aboard Sears’s new *Actaea*. Later he sailed on the Concordia 41 *Banda*, built for and originally owned by Eugene W. “Bill” Stetson, and then with George Hinman, who bought the boat from Stetson and renamed her *Sagola*. “Incidentally,” he noted, “George Hinman was a wonderful man. He never yelled as some did, and he was thoughtful about design. So was Stetson. Ray interpreted their input into his design work.”

Looking back on the early 1950s racing scene, Howland remembered: “You had the Owens cutters that were astoundingly fast in relation to the rules. That influenced Ray in the design of the 41. That’s really how the 41 was born. But it turned out the Owens were cheaters. They weighed less than the claimed spec and when that was discovered, their rating went up by 2½.” As one dramatic event in particular would soon prove, there would be no rating surprises for the 41.

**[T]he performance of Harrier was possibly even more remarkable because she was crewed by the owner’s wife and children.  
—Yachting World, Power and Sail, September 1955**

a Sparkman & Stephens design and later owned by Henry Morgan who renamed her *Djinn*].”

The war, of course, intervened in all this, but, after commanding a cargo ship and later the destroyer escort *USS Pillsbury* in the Pacific, Sears resumed his yachting with vigor. Recalling the postwar period, Howland wrote, “For Concordia Company in general and me in particular, *Actaea* and her skipper opened up a whole new world of opportunities. Over a period of 25 years, Harry included me on a goodly number of New York Yacht Club cruises, and he owned and raced during that period three different Concordia ‘yawls,’ each of which he sailed with sloop rigs.”

The first of these “non-yawls” was the Concordia 39, in which Sears had won the Navy Challenge Cup in her class on the 1952 New York Yacht Club cruise. Sears had removed the mizzenmast, lengthened the boom by a foot and a half, and added a bowsprit. Now, though, Sears began discussions with Raymond that soon led to the design and construction of an entirely new yacht. The Concordia 41 would be a boat

“The new design,” wrote Joe Gribbins in *Concordia Yawls: The First 50 Years*, “paid attention to the CCA rule and, by increasing waterline length, beam and freeboard, obtained a lower rating than the 39. . . . The new hull [Ray] drew up had a slightly higher freeboard and thus a slightly longer deck than the 39, greater draft of about two inches, which lengthened the waterline, and more weight in the form of heavier teak planking below the waterline and a few other structural modifications that would bring weight down in ways that worked around a rule that exacted a penalty of weight added to a ballast keel. On paper, this 41-footer promised to rate 28.2 versus the first [Concordia] *Actaea*’s 29.2

Raymond was aboard *Actaea* for one of her first races during the New York Yacht Club’s cruise in early August of 1953. This short leg of the cruise ran from Padanaram to Marion, a brief tune-up in which the new boat finished second on corrected time to Phil Benson’s Graves-built Shoaler named *Wassail*. She was sailed by Linc Davis, who had previously chartered her, and an experienced crew.

**Waldo Howland celebrated the win with a new Concordia ad.**

whose lines and dimensions were shaped far more by rating rules than the earlier Concordia Yawl’s had been. Reflecting the geographical reality then in effect between Hunt and Howland, the new boat’s drawings credited C. Raymond Hunt, Marblehead, and Waldo Howland, Padanaram. Later, when

*Wassail*, the smallest and least-expensive boat in the fleet, won three legs of the cruise and was the high-point boat at the time she departed the event. If anything, the performance only reinforced Raymond’s concept for a shallow-draft centerboarder.



As for the new Concordia design, John Ahern, summing up the 1953 season, reported: “Ray Hunt himself garnered other honors on the runs. He sailed aboard Harry Sears’s new *Actaea*, a cutter he designed. It didn’t win a major cup. But it finished first on percentage for the entire cruise, which hit ports all the way from New London to Bar Harbor.

The following summer, Ray would be aboard *Actaea* again during the Eastern Yacht Club cruise, winning the ocean race from Marblehead to Boothbay Harbor and the shorter race the following day.

On June 22, 1955, the *Globe* reported: “*Actaea* . . . beat out the bigger boats today for the Blue Water Bowl and top honors in the 446 mile biennial ocean race from New London, Conn. to Annapolis.” Waldo Howland celebrated the win with a new Concordia ad.

At some point, probably mid-to-late 1954, Ray Hunt decided to buy what would prove to be his only new, big sailboat. Selling both *Zara* and *Janet*, he ordered a new Concordia 41 to be built at Abeking & Rasmussen.

“Having a German company that he knew did quality work build his new boat,” said Hunt’s daughter Yan, “was quite an event for Pop.”

Needless to say, Raymond gave every detail of his boat’s rig careful thought, and the rig differed from that of other Concordias. With a hoist of 44 feet and a foot of 22 feet, the mainsail was larger than the usual, and a five-foot metal bowsprit/pulpit served as attachment point for the various jibs. Waldo Howland described some of the rig’s features in *A Life in Boats: The Concordia Years*. He noted that the mainsheet was “trimmed to the afterdeck and running backstays anchored at chainplates. (In a way, these runners were more efficient in achieving a taut headstay than were slides on tracks.)”

The opportunity for another Hunt family adventure of even grander proportions than the Bahamas voyage now presented itself. Raymond flew to Germany and, when the family arrived on the liner *Berlin*, he met them with a rented Volkswagen van. While the Hunts’ new boat was being completed, the family stayed in a hotel in the old village of Delmenhorst, south of Lemwerder in Lower Saxony. From there, they could make

### OH, I SAY . . . , read The Skipper magazine’s headline, WELL SAILED!

day trips to busy Hamburg, tour the quiet and lovely farm country around them, have lunch at the Weser Yacht Club, and occasionally check on the progress of their boat.

At 6:30 a.m. on the morning of July 13, 1955, the new 41 in her launching cradle was wheeled out of A&R’s construction shop onto the marine railway. As Raymond—wearing coat and tie, of course—watched,



Kate Hunt searching for the champagne bottle neck after the christening. See Concordian number 53, page 27.



Loading *Harrier*, in the Basin.

15-year-old Kate broke a bottle of champagne on the cradle. “I christen thee *Harrier*,” she said.

As soon as the boat was launched and her mast stepped, *Harrier* was moved to a dock area where yachts were tied up.

Now began the task of bending on the main and loading sail bags and cartons of provisions. A big yachtsman anchor was securely stowed in chocks on the foredeck, and the beautiful and useful lapstrake pram dinghy that accompanied each new Concordia was stowed. Eventually, *Harrier* was ready for departure. The first leg of her journey took the yacht down the Weser River to the North Sea and out to the island of Helgoland, 55 miles off the coast.

“We saw all kinds of ships sunk during the war that had yet to be removed,” Sham Hunt remembered. “We saw wrecked buildings and submarine pens.”

Helgoland, with its bomb-scarred naval base, had been returned to German control by the British in 1952, just two and a half years earlier. The island, warmed by the Gulf Stream, was then taking the first steps in the process of becoming the popular tourist destination it is today. *Harrier* then made the passage to IJmuiden, Holland, where a canal led inland to Amsterdam. In strange waters, Raymond kept *Harrier* well offshore of the German and Dutch Frisian Islands, a region of tidal channels and sandbars that extend far out from the land.

Only via passages—Gats—between the islands could mainland harbors be reached. Today, sailing directions warn: “These Gats should not be entered at night and it is dangerous to enter under fresh to strong onshore winds and it is even impossible to do so in stormy conditions. . . . Don’t trust a buoy in breaking seas.” These were the dangerous, wild places romanticized by Erskine Childers in his salty, pre-World War I spy story, *The Riddle of the Sands*.

After visiting Amsterdam, the Hunts returned to the North Sea and sailed down the English Channel to Dover, continuing to what is perhaps the world’s most famous yachting venue, Cowes. Here, to starboard as one enters the Fairway leading to the River Medina, stands the Royal Yacht Squadron’s fabled Castle. Close by are the grounds of Northwood House, where Queen Victoria had enjoyed summer visits and a private beach with Prince Albert and their children.

Everything about Cowes is outsize, including Cowes Week, which is actually eight days long. The Royal Yacht *Britannia* was on hand for the upcoming festivities, and the Duke of Edinburgh was there to compete in the International Dragon class in his *Bluebottle*. In 1955, 12 regattas were sailed, overseen by several different yacht clubs, and boats from seven different countries competed. Raymond had entered *Harrier*

in six races as well as the Fastnet Race, which follows Cowes Week. Having navigated from Germany to England through notoriously challenging waters with compass, charts, taffrail log, and his instincts, Ray Hunt felt not the slightest anxiety about racing for the first time in the strong tidal streams at Cowes.

“His attitude,” said Yan, “was always ‘whatever happens, we’ll take care of it.’”

What happened at Cowes in early August that year was somewhat unusual. Instead of cloudy skies, there was bright and pleasant sunshine. Instead of strong and often chilly winds, there were light or moderate breezes. The conditions had more in common with the East Coast of the United States than with England.

“For several years,” reported *Yachting World* in its write-up of that year’s Cowes Week, “the English summer has produced a high proportion of moderate to fresh winds and there has been a growing tendency to build yachts with small sail areas and to cut down the sail area of existing boats. A small sail area, if it is sensibly proportioned, earns a considerable reduction in rating and a yacht with this small area suffers only in light airs. Thus, with light airs for most of the week, some of our ocean racing yachts appeared to be in a different race from some of the foreign yachts. *Carina II* (Richard S. Nye) a 36 ft. 3 in L.W.L. yawl designed by Philip Rhodes and *Harrier* (C. Raymond Hunt) a 29 ft. 6 in. sloop designed by the owner, were both American, both big beamy yachts with large sail areas and they were both outstandingly successful.”

The magazine’s journalist quickly noted Raymond’s interest in sails and reported that *Harrier*’s welded-steel bowsprit “allowed her to set an enormous light weather synthetic-fibre spinnaker which the crew managed to keep full when most of the other yachts’ spinnakers were hanging in listless folds. The type of keenness which includes lying along the weather deck when the yacht is on the wind, and the beautiful set of her sails, undoubtedly helped in her success, but the primary reason was that she is the right type of boat for the conditions which were experienced at Cowes this year; a type of boat

Raymond bolstered his crew. The boat was joined by Jess Bontecou, his brother-in-law Reese Harris, and their friend Bill MacDougal. By now, *Harrier*’s success was such that Raymond found himself embarrassed. He was racing in Class III, for boats with an under-27-foot rating, and he asked the Royal Ocean Racing Club to be moved up to a larger class. The request was denied. Wednesday, August 3, brought a light-to-moderate northerly, and *Harrier* finished 20 minutes ahead of the second-place boat. Ultimately, *Harrier* won all six races in which she sailed.

OH, I SAY . . . , read *The Skipper* magazine’s headline, WELL SAILED!

It might be noted that the conditions at Cowes not only challenged Raymond’s light-air skills in an entirely new boat he had never before raced, but they also required him to somehow develop an immediate sense of the tidal currents in the Solent—the stretch of water between the mainland and the Isle of Wight—that were already familiar to the British skippers. The locals were so impressed by what Raymond had accomplished that they presented him with a clock and barometer. Its engraved plaque read: “This clock and barometer was presented to C. Raymond Hunt by the Solent Clubs Racing Association with his yacht *Harrier* during Cowes week 1955 when he and his ‘crew’ won 6 races in 6 successive days against more than 20 competitors each

When the Providence Journal recounted Hunt’s achievement on October 2, it reported that *Harrier* “went so fast and outsailed her British rivals so thoroughly that there were demands from some quarters that she be remeasured before the Fastnet. Obviously, someone had the idea that her rating was too low.” The request was deemed a waste of time by the official measurer of the RORC, but, on the day before the start of the Fastnet, the deed was done. In its article on the race in October, *Yachting* reported: “[T]he Island Sailing Club [Cowes] rocked with laughter when it was divulged that the final, ultra-official and completely authentic measurement by the granddaddy of all measurers had reduced *Harrier*’s rating from 25.52 to 24.78.” The Providence Journal noted: “You can imagine how many red

**“You can imagine how many red faces there were in some places. . . .**

***She’s a going boat and Hunt is a first-class skipper.”***

**The Providence Journal**

rarely seen this side of the Atlantic in conditions which we had not had for many years.

The racing commenced on July 30, and *Harrier* won her class by a 10-minute margin. The division of labor aboard *Harrier* had Raymond as skipper assisted by Barbara and Yan; Sham was responsible for the spinnaker and Joshua for the genoa. Kate was bow-lookout and lay to leeward of the genoa, calling out dangers on the crowded racecourse. On the following day, light winds prevailed once more, and *Harrier* won by eight minutes over the second-place yacht, which was considered a good light-air boat by British standards. *Harrier*’s third race was sailed in a light westerly and she finished 25 minutes ahead of the next boat.

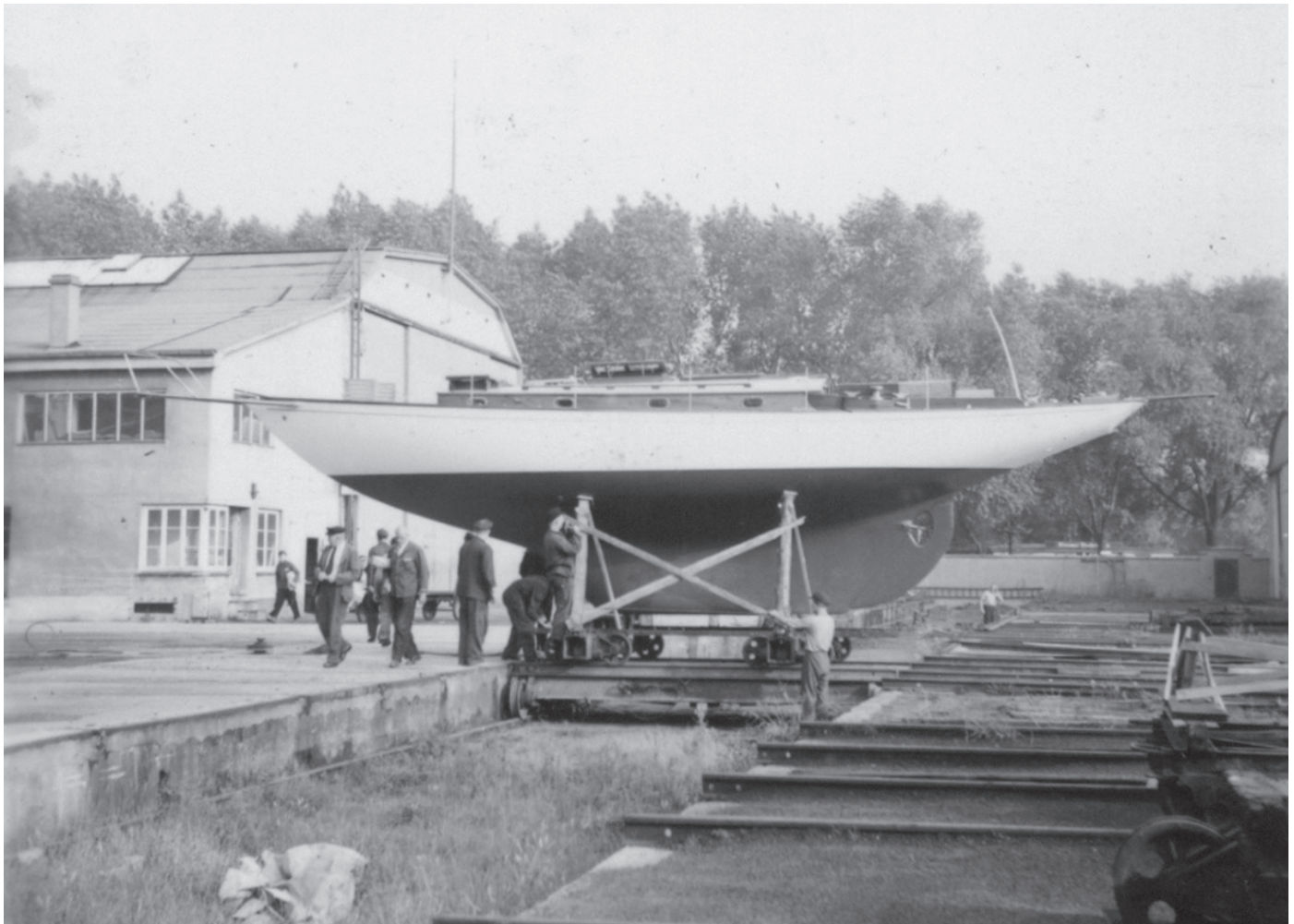
For the fifth race, and for the Fastnet that would follow,

faces there were in some places. . . . She’s a going boat and Hunt is a first-class skipper.”

There now remained the 608-mile race from Cowes to Fastnet Rock and back to Plymouth. *Harrier* was among a record entry that included 48 yachts. *Harrier*’s performance in this event threatened to be even more spectacular than her series of wins at Cowes. By the time the Hunts had reached the rock-lined coast at the Lizard at the tip of England, *Yachting* reported that she “had saved her time on *Carina* and all eventual placers. But the next day as she approached Fastnet Rock, *Harrier* suffered the failure of a turnbuckle for one of the portside lower shrouds. A crack in the casting of a starboard turnbuckle was also discovered.”

“There was no sea or wind to speak of when it failed,” Jess





*Harrier* ready for launch, at Abeking and Rasmussen

Bontecou wrote in *Concordia Yawls: The First Fifty Years*, “however, we had no replacement and had to drop out of the race.”

It was an ironic failure. Raymond had brought with him from the States the bronze turnbuckles that, it turned out, were poorly made. *Harrier* put into Kinsale, a port on the Irish coast, and replaced his boat’s problem fittings with what he told *Yachting* were “substantial looking galvanized turnbuckles.”

*Harrier*’s racing season was now over. While the needed repairs were being made at Kinsale, Barbara, Yan, Josh, and Kate went to London. They rejoined the boat in Plymouth and *Harrier* then sailed up the coast, exploring the Beaulieu River, where they went birdwatching. As always, Raymond was a close observer of nature. “He wasn’t interested, say, in warblers,” said Jess Bontecou, “but all the birds of the sea and how the seasons impacted their migrations—those were things that he made note of.”

Finally, the Hunts began making their way back toward Sweden, where *Harrier* would be loaded aboard a ship for the trip home. Their first leg was from Dover to the German island of Borkum in the North Sea, and it proved to be a rough, 310-mile, three-night passage. “It was the first time we all took Dramamine to help with seasickness,” Yan remembered. “Mother and Josh suffered especially, so this was a big help.

Pop never got seasick and he could stay awake and alert for as long as necessary. Normal humans just can’t do that.” *Harrier* passed through the Kiel Canal and sailed up the east coast of Denmark to Copenhagen, where the Hunts toured the city and photographed the imposing Gefion Fountain and Edvard Eriksen’s famous Little Mermaid statue.

Finally it was on through the Kattegat to Goteborg, Sweden, where Sham and Josh lowered *Harrier*’s colors for the last time. The yacht was hoisted aboard a ship for the voyage to New York and Raymond flew home to prepare for the ship’s arrival. Barbara, the children, and much of *Harrier*’s gear crossed the Atlantic aboard the Swedish vessel *Kungsholm*, whose white-jacketed crew serenaded Yan on her twenty-second birthday. A gale forced the *Kungsholm* to arrive 24 hours late, but Raymond and his sister Ruth were on hand in New York to meet the ship. Raymond and Barbara had now taken their kids on two cruises that delivered experiences and lessons that would last a lifetime.

STAN GRAYSON

All photography from *A Genius at His Trade*, courtesy Stan Grayson.

# NEW BEDFORD WHALING MUSEUM SEEKS SPONSORS TO SUPPORT RAY HUNT BIOGRAPHY, PURCHASE WORLD’S LARGEST CONCORDIA YAWL MODEL

The New Bedford Whaling Museum announces a major publication and exhibition initiative celebrating the life and work of legendary yacht designer and racing sailor C. Raymond Hunt (1908 - 1978).

In October, a richly illustrated and thoroughly researched biography of Hunt will be released. As a complement to the publication, the world’s largest scale model of a Concordia yawl will be purchased for the Whaling Museum’s permanent collection.

The marvelously readable 300-page, hardbound biography is written by historian Stan Grayson. The author takes the full and fascinating measure of Hunt, a largely self-taught American genius whose informal education was both a gateway to invention and a continuing source of inner conflict and self-doubt. It will feature beautifully reproduced plans and contemporary photographs from the Whaling Museum’s Norman Fortier Collection, Mystic Seaport, Hart Nautical Collection, and the Hunt family.

The Concordia yawl model is one-third scale, exquisitely and exactly built by Tom Borges, a local artist, sculptor and ship’s carpenter, in his New Bedford studio over the course of seven years. Begun early in 2003, Borges constructed the

model from scratch using Concordia plans together with his own meticulous drawings and measurements, taken at the Concordia Boatyard.



As the south coast of Massachusetts’ premier cultural institution, the Whaling Museum was established to foster an interest in the history of the “Old Dartmouth” region (now the City of New Bedford, Acushnet, Dartmouth, Fairhaven and Westport). Selections from its collection of Norman Fortier original photographs will beautifully illustrate the biography and companion exhibition.

To help underwrite the \$165,000 cost of this initiative, the Whaling Museum is seeking sponsors. Donors contributing \$1,000 or more will receive prominent recognition in the book’s benefactor section and on a plaque mounted with the Concordia yawl. More information and sponsor benefits can be found at <http://www.whalingmuseum.org/explore/library/publications/c-raymond-hunt>. May 15 is the print deadline for inclusion of

donor names in the book, so please inform us of your interest as soon as possible.

Contact Alison Smart, Vice President for Development & Marketing at (508) 717-6815.

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## LLEWELLYN HOWLAND III: ON THE CREATION OF THE CONCORDIA YAWL AND THE EARLY OWNERS

To understand the origins of the Concordia yawl, you have to know something about my grandfather and namesake, Llewellyn Howland. In the early 1920s he was made president of the New England Oil Company. He was charged with creating a refinery in Fall River to refine crude oil being shipped up from Maracaibo, Venezuela, in surplus World War I tankers. The tankers had been acquired by the oil company from its parent holding company at huge markups, which greatly enriched the investors in the holding company. The tankers did nothing to improve the bottom line for the New England Oil Company. Neither did the grounding of one of the tankers, named the *Llewellyn Howland*, on a ledge off Bailey's Beach, Newport. Crude oil from Maracaibo put at end to all swimming at Bailey's Beach that summer.

When the New England Oil Company failed, Grandpa was out of a job. He never worked in the corporate world again. What saved him was a substantial inheritance from a rich uncle—not a huge fortune, but enough to allow him to live well and to own a good cruising boat after years of making do with boats some of which were considerably less than good. (Grandpa referred to such boats as Whores of Babylon. Many used them. No one loved them.)

Ironically, this all happened just before the collapse of Wall Street in 1929, meaning that Grandpa had money to spend during the Great Depression, even as some of his fellow yachtsmen were jumping from office windows or selling apples on State Street. In fact it was a great time to be getting into the boat market. Grandpa had plenty to choose from and at low, low prices. He was also a thoughtful guy and a fine sailor—and a Buzzard's Bay sailor at that. He had inherited the plain style values (if not the religious beliefs) of his Quaker forebears. He believed in simplicity of form and function. He had no interest in owning a yacht that required a large professional crew. What he needed was a skipper who was willing to chamois the bright work, keep the boat in Bristol fashion, take it hither and yon, and do the heavy lifting. But Grandpa was in command. He was always in command.

The boat he came up with (after losing his beloved Colin Archer gaff cutter in the 1938 hurricane) was a perfect example of what an able, thoughtful, physically fit, upper-middle class Yankee yachtsman entering his 60s would consider building in the late 1930s. He was not interested in putting on the dog. The joy of sailing was to do it yourself. A boat under 30 feet in overall length was too small for extended cruising. A boat of more than 40 feet in overall length was bigger than Grandpa needed. So there you are.

But Grandpa went much further than most people would have. Others would have gone to John Alden and said, "Give me a 40-foot boat that I can sail." And John Alden would have said, "I'll give you a Malabar XI or an Off Soundings Yawl. I'm having them built in Maine. Good and cheap." And they would have been reasonable choices, too. But Grandpa wanted his own. He wanted to put his ideas into the mix of what was wanted and not someone else's ideas.

And that was really the genesis of the Concordia Yawl. Grandpa had a clear vision of what he wanted. He envisioned a stable platform that was fast on all points of sailing; that was dry, relatively speaking; that sailed more or less on her bottom; that was pleasing to the eye; and that was reasonably undemanding to sail and inexpensive to build. Ray Hunt and Uncle Wally knew what Grandpa was thinking. Ray was a very quick learner and Uncle Wally had already been converted by Grandpa, who was a very domineering guy. This is how the Concordia Yawl came to be. It was a seasoned yachtsman's intelligent and understated response to the social, economic, and sporting conditions of the 1930s.

Of course, Grandpa could have gone to Olin Stephens or S. S. Crocker or Frank Paine, or the great designer with whom he later became such a close friend, L. Francis Herreshoff. It is not as if Ray Hunt had been his only or even his most obvious choice to design the Concordia yawl. The point remains that Grandpa wanted to do it his way and not have someone else tell him how it had to be done. It was in that spirit that the Concordia Yawl was created.

Why Grandpa rejected Bill Harris's alternative proposal for the Concordia 33, I don't know. Grandpa admired Harris's work and the Concordia 33 is a really good boat. Grandpa has also loved owning the Colin Archer pilot cutter *Escape*, a heavily built double-ender fit to withstand North Sea gales. But my assumption is that Grandpa never forgot the windward performance of



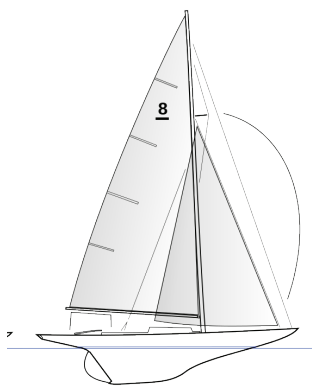
Tanker *Llewellyn Howland*



Captain Hardy rowing  
*Llewellyn Howland* out to Java



*Java*



8 Meter from the 1930s



the Paine-designed Eight Meter sloop *Balek* that he owned and raced with success in the early 1930s. Grandpa wanted a boat that was able and fast. He must have decided that the Concordia Yawl was a better boat for his purposes than the Concordia 33.

The Eight Meter *Balek* influenced Grandpa. So, I expect, did the one-design Ten and Twelve Meter classes that were designed by Starling Burgess to the International Rule and which were built by Abeking and Rasmussen in Germany. Grandpa was in the afterguard of one of the Twelves, *Waiaudance*, on her delivery run from Halifax to Long Island Sound in the summer of 1928, when she encountered gale force winds and heavy seas. With her long ends and tall Marconi rig, the boat seemed too lightly built to take this sort of punishment. Actually, she performed just as well as or better than a more conventional gaff schooner of the period would have in the same conditions, particularly in windward work.

The 1920s was the decade when fisherman-type Alden schooners and Hand schooners were the dominant American ocean racers. The belief was that you had to have a heavy, sturdy boat and rig if you wanted to be safe offshore. But it turned out that wasn't true. Burgess's staysail schooner *Advance* of 1925 was perhaps the first boat to demonstrate that a properly designed deep and narrow hull with a properly stayed tall rig could get you where you wanted to go safely—and quickly. The great Burgess staysail schooner *Nina* underscored the point by winning the Transatlantic Race and the Fastnet Race in 1928. Then, in 1930, the Olin Stephens-designed yawl *Dorade* began her remarkable ocean-racing career, winning too many races to count in the years since then.

A Concordia Yawl, when you study it, is a very shapely boat with a lot of meter boat elements. Ray Hunt had an intuitive understanding of what makes a boat move easily and fast through the water. The fact that the Concordia has moderate ends, but ends that are not pinched, is an example of her good design compromise. Not a negative compromise, a positive compromise. Some of the compromises may have been dictated by financial concerns. None were allowed to interfere with the integrity of Hunt's design.

The Concordia's yawl rig was a compromise, too, but a perfect compromise for the conditions that prevail on Buzzards Bay. I don't understand why the rig is currently out of fashion. I can't imagine not having a yawl. It makes so much practical sense. You want to anchor for lunch and a picnic, and you leave the jigger up to keep your head to the wind. Your full main is overpowered and you don't have time to reef. Proceed under jib and jigger and all will be well. And the mizzen staysail is one of the most useful and delightful light sails that ever was. As for the jigger's lee shrouds: they are better than lifelines and far handier than a watercloset for the male crewman seeking quick and convenient relief.

Most of the compromises that went into the design and arrangements for the Concordia were minor. None were onerous. To be sure, Grandpa disliked the through-hull fittings required for a marine toilet, but tolerated the existence of a proper head out of deference to his female guests. (He was a cedar bucket man himself. And proud of it.) He disapproved of running water on a boat, and self-draining sinks. Yet no one ever had to go without sweet potable water on *Java*, and the enameled bowl that was used for washing dishes was also handy for shaving on deck and had a dozen other applications. Grandpa had no use for portholes that open, because sooner or later the gaskets in portholes that open lose their integrity and begin to leak.

Other than a battery for the starter of *Java's* seldom-used Gray Marine auxiliary and a battery-operated binnacle light, *Java* was innocent of electricity. No incandescent lights in either the main or the forward cabin, or in the head. Oil lamps for riding light and running lights. No spreader lights. No GPS. No Fathometer. No RDF. No radio of any description whatever. Just a 24-inch lead pipe for laying off courses on a chart. But, oh! the wonderful smell and glow of a kerosene lamp at dinner time.

So much for Grandpa and *Java*. Now let me talk a little about Waldo Howland.

Ray Hunt was a genius. But so was Uncle Wally, in a very different way. He was not an innovator or an intellectual or radical in his world view. On the contrary, his reverence for tradition made him in some ways a reactionary. Who else but Uncle Waldo would have owned and operated the same dark green 1941 Plymouth Coup for more than half a century? Or built and owned the schooner *Integrity*? Who but Uncle Wally would regularly appear at New Bedford Yacht Club events wearing the blue serge yachting uniform with Seawanhaka Corinthian Yacht Club markings that had been tailored for his great uncle Matthew Morris Howland in Manhattan in the 1880s? I





could offer other examples.

But Uncle Wally was a genius with people. He knew how to listen. He knew how to encourage. He knew how, gently, but unerringly, to offer advice and criticism. And he knew how to sell. Lord, did he know how to sell.

A customer would present himself at Uncle Wally's Concordia Company office at South Wharf. "I wish to buy a Concordia yawl," the customer might say. "I understand they are very fast boats." And Uncle Wally would perhaps agree that they were fast boats, but might also mention that Carleton Mitchell's *Finisterre* had been winning a lot of races recently. And then, often as not, the customer would make his fatal mistake. "Well, I wish to buy a Concordia yawl," he would insist. "However, there are a few things about the boat I would like to change, beginning with the layout of the main cabin and forward cabin. Also the configuration of the cockpit...." That is a sale that would never get made.

But then a customer would present herself to Uncle Wally with a gentle smile and a strong handshake. And for whatever reason Uncle Wally would be moved to invite her to have a look at the new Concordia just in from Germany and now tied up at South Wharf. And even before Uncle Wally and this new customer had reached the float stage, Uncle Wally would have learned that the lady in question had started sailing as a kid in North Haven, and with her late husband had cruised extensively in a Fishers Island 31, and now she had grandchildren and it was time for a new boat...and the sales agreement would be signed that afternoon and the lady would store her new boat at Concordia ever thereafter.

But the purest test of Uncle Wally's sales genius was his ability to groom a potential customer over the years it might take for an inexperienced, but enthusiastic sailor to move confidently from command of a Beetle Cat or a 110 to a small overnighter to a more substantial, but outmoded cruiser-racer and, then, at last, to the Concordia yawl of his dreams. Uncle Wally knew people and he knew how to connect with them. But his greatest joy was connecting a caring and committed sailor with a Concordia Yawl. His greatest regret was selling a Concordia to an owner who failed to understand or appreciate the traditions of the sea and sailing that the Concordia embodied.

Uncle Wally was no snob or elitist. He had lifelong friends from a wide range of backgrounds. He made no invidious distinctions. He embraced the world. But Uncle Wally was no fool. He understood as few do the inner workings of the American class and economic systems. In this, he and Rod and Olin Stephens, also lifelong good friends, were very similar. And this is why, despite their mutual regard and personal friendship, they were sworn competitors on the race course and when it came to selling boats.

But in one respect Uncle Wally actually had an edge on Rod and Olin, because Uncle Wally has gone to boarding school at Milton Academy and college at Harvard. In the 1920s and 1930s, and earlier, both institutions had produced a disproportionate number of accomplished racing and cruising sailors. And at Harvard, Uncle Wally had joined the Delphic Club, whose early members included John Jacob Astor, 1888, J. P. "Jack" Morgan, Jr. 1889, owner of *Corsair*, and multiple representatives of Naushon Island's amphibious Forbes family. It was during his years at Harvard and as an active member of the Delphic Club that Uncle Wally's passion for ocean racing, and his career in the boat business, was born. That passion was obviously infectious, since a remarkable 14 members of the club have owned Concordia yawls over the years, and who knows how many members have raced and cruised on the boats?

Consider Uncle Wally in 1930s. He is white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, and a member by accident of birth of America's upper-middle class. His school and college mates, and now his sailing friends, come mostly from the same background, and mostly from New York and New England, specifically from Manhattan and Boston, though with a few from Philadelphia and points south and west for variety's sake. All of them have known and experienced what it was like to live in the glory years of the Roaring Twenties. All of them are now experiencing a greatly altered economic and social climate.

Uncle Wally's contemporaries have gone to schools like St. Mark's, St. Paul's, Groton, Middlesex, Choate, Milton. Most have attended Ivy League colleges, though not all have felt the need (or given their family's depleted fortunes, had the money) to graduate. There are great textile mills and manufacturing empires, prosperous law firms, and vast real estate holdings in their immediate past. But now, as the Depression grinds on, they must enter a profession or go into business at a time when the professions are overpopulated and underproductive and a shockingly high percentage of the American workforce is unemployed. It is a time of gross underutilization of



Waldo Howland

talent and skill. It is a time to go to the race track and bet on a dark horse. It is time to go sailing, if you have access to a boat.

Inevitably, some of this group drank too much, played too hard, or otherwise fell by the wayside. (Of course they might have done so even in a booming economy.) But the best of them bided their time and did the best they could with the tools at their disposal. As the clouds of war developed, dark, over the east and the west, some of the best of them became Naval Reservists. It is amazing how many subsequent Concordia owners were among this group, beginning with the owner of the first German-built yawl, Drayton Cochran. In part, it was a matter of noblesse oblige. But I believe it was also because these men had been bred to command and were hungry to do so, and war gave them the perfect opportunity to test their worth.

Uncle Wally wasn't one of the earliest Reservists. But he did become a naval officer. In fact, he was the first member of my Quaker family to serve in the military since the Howlands arrived in America in the 1620s. But while Uncle Wally never saw combat, such longtime Concordia owners as Henry Sears, Yale dropout, oceanographer, venture-capitalist, and owner of two different Concordias named *Actaea*, saw enough combat for a lifetime. I worked for Commodore Sears on his Concordia 41 in the summer of 1955 and I will never forget his account of being in command of the DE *USS Wesson* that was kamakazied in April 1945 off Motobu Peninsula. The forward compartments the ship had to be sealed off, along with the bodies of dead sailors, while the ship crawled stern-first to Kerama Retto for repairs. Sears said he would never forget the smell of rotting flesh and the days of uncertainty as to whether the vessel would make it safely back to base.

War destroys people. It also makes them. It helped make Concordia owners like Sears, Cochran, and my Uncle Wally effective human beings and useful citizens (some, no doubt, more effective and more useful than others).

The war was a common denominator for many an early Concordia owner. So was family money. Their fortunes may in many cases have been comparatively modest—or at any rate badly diminished by the Depression, World War II, and continuing high estate and income taxes. It is also true that early Concordias were relatively inexpensive by today's standards. But the point I am trying to make is that, even if they could have afforded a larger boat with a substantial professional crew, they chose to acquire a Concordia. They had come out of the war clearer in their understanding of their priorities and limitations. What they wanted to do was to get back to racing and cruising. They loved sailing. They loved boats. But they didn't want a professional or some guy living aboard to tell them how to run their boats. They had already commanded vessels. So again what they sought was a command of their own.

This was when the Concordia was really born as a class. It didn't happen right away, but when Harry Sears and Drayton Cochran put their names on Concordia yawls, their peers noticed. Their peers also noticed that the price of the first Concordia to be built by Abeking & Rasmussen was \$7,500.

Because my father, Llewellyn Howland, Jr., and Uncle Wally were partners and we lived within easy walking distance of South Wharf and Concordia Company's office, I spent a portion of pretty much every day of my boyhood as a bystanding witness to the unfolding story of the Concordia class. Having sailed as a boat boy under my grandfather's professional skipper, Captain Harold E. Hardy, on *Java*, I became a kind of utility Concordia fielder for the yard, sometimes assisting in bringing a new Concordia down to Padanaram from Boston after shipment from Bremerhaven; sometimes having a hand in the delivery of a boat to her new owner; often crewing on a Concordia racing in New Bedford Yacht Club events with an owner who came from away. The summer before my freshman year at college I served as professional on Harry Sears' Concordia 41, *Actaea*, which was then the smallest yacht ever to be flagship of the New York Yacht Club. We won the Annapolis Race that summer and several important races during the New York Yacht Club cruise. My sailing life since then has been one long anticlimax.

My Concordia lifetime list is actually quite extensive, as is the life list of Concordia owners I've had the privilege of knowing. It is even longer (by one name), if you include Philip Rhinelander, first owner of *Java*'s first sistership, *Jobisca*. Although I never met Rhinelander, he was not only a much-respected member of the Delphic Club which I later joined, but also of Boston's Tavern Club, of which I have been a member for more than 40 years. At one time the Rhinelander family appears to have owned whatever portions of Manhattan that the Astors (one of whom, John Jacob



*Actaea*



Astor '88, was a member of the Delphic Club) did not. They were also among New York's first shipbuilders and later produced Episcopal bishops and social butterflies by the score. But Phil Rhinelander was a solid citizen with a brilliant intellect. He later became a professor of philosophy at Stanford. Your typical, thoughtful Concordia owner.

Drayton Cochran, another Yale dropout and oceanographer, who ultimately owned, at least briefly, at least three and possibly four Concordias, including *Ina* and *Sly Mongoose*, was surely the godfather of the class. He was a great sailor and lover of the sea, as well as someone who grabbed life by both handles. He commanded a DE in World War II and in addition to Concordias had his own large ocean-going sailing vessels both before and after the war. They don't make them like Drayton Cochran any more and I doubt they ever will again.

Racing with Eugene "Bill" Stetson on his two Concordia 41s named *Banda* was a great privilege for me, as was racing with George Hinman on the exceptionally successful Concordia 41 *Sagola*. Like Harry Sears, both men went on to become deeply involved in America's Cup competition, Sears, who was at heart a fair and generous man, was afflicted with a sharp tongue and a terrible temper. Stetson and Hinman were exceptionally gifted helmsmen and tacticians, as well as models of quiet, considerate, and effective command.

Jack Parkinson, owner of the widely travelled Concordia 39 *Winnie of Bourne*, later became a good friend of mine and even wrote a book for me when I was an editor at Little, Brown. But I never actually sailed with him and stupidly turned down his invitation to cruise on *Winnie of Bourne* along the Dutch coast in the summer of 1956. Jack was another near Harvard contemporary of Uncle Wally's who had gotten an early Reserve commission in the navy. Jack survived both hurricanes and typhoons while in command of a DE in the later stages of the war. He went on to write fine histories of the New York Yacht Club, the Seawanhaka Corinthian Yacht Club, and the Cruising Club of America. His autobiography, *Yarns for Davy Jones*, should be required reading for every Concordia owner.

Yet another product of the Naval Reserves was Eugene Sydnor of Richmond, Virginia, on whose Concordia I used to race quite often. Gene was a nice guy and he certainly loved sailing. He brought to Buzzards Bay the mannerly conduct of a Virginia gentleman. Unfortunately, his ability to win races did not match his desire to win, which meant that his hopeful flights up from Richmond on a Friday night were often followed by regretful flights home following the end of racing on Sunday. I, too, desired to win. After awhile, I am embarrassed to admit that I transferred my allegiance to skippers with better records than Gene's.

And I must mention Dan Strohmeier, owner of two immortal Concordia yawls named *Malay*. Dan's father, a celebrated secondary school headmaster named Bertram Strohmeier, ran the summer camp at Nonquitt in South Dartmouth that I attended for several happy summers. That was in the late 1940s, and son Dan was already becoming well known in New England waters for his success as an S Boat skipper. Then in 1954, Dan, sailing the first of his *Malays*, won the Bermuda Race, which made him a near god in the eyes of the Howland family and other Concordia owners. But it was a bittersweet victory for me. A few days before the start of the race Dan had hailed me at the New Bedford Yacht Club. He said one of his crew had dropped out. Would I care to race to Bermuda? For no particularly good reason I said I couldn't. In my long life list of regrets, this tops them all.

Just a couple of more names and I will stop. Col. Arthur Herrington and his Concordia yawl *Auda*. If Col. Herrington's name means nothing to you, I urge you to Google him. Meanwhile, I will offer you a clue as to his identity. I expect you've heard of the four-wheel military vehicle known as the Jeep? Well, the English-born American industrialist Art Herrington designed and built it. Along with who knows how many other military vehicles, not to mention Harley Davidson motorcycles and superlative Marmon automobiles. The friendship between Uncle Wally and Art Herrington makes one of the happiest chapters in the Concordia story. My own opportunity to cruise with Herrington lasted only a week, but I've been dining out on it ever since. He wasn't a million laughs. He was something much more extraordinary. He was a great man. Great men own Concordias.

So do great women, among whom I would mention *Thistledown's* Alida Milliken Camp, one of Uncle Wally's dearest friends from Milton Academy days on to the end. And *Crisette* and *Sea Hawk's* Rose Dolan of Philadelphia, Paris, and the world. And *Crocodile's* Eleanor Batchelder Crocker. And *Matinicus's* Elizabeth Meyer.... May the list never end.

The Concordia yawl owed many of its enduring qualities to the vision of one man, my



Sheila, the first A&R yawl



Winnie of Bourne



Malay with her Bermuda Race Crew



*Harrier, about to jibe.*

grandfather Howland, and the design skills of two others, Ray Hunt and Waldo Howland. It unquestionably enjoyed its first success among a very small and homogenous group of East Coast yachtsmen who shared a common ethnic, social, educational, and economic background and many of the same tastes and ambitions as recreational sailors. At a certain point in the history of the class, however, the exclusive, almost self-excluding nature of the ownership began to change. That change seems, happily and properly enough, to have corresponded to changes in the composition and dynamic of the American population as a whole. And so it continues to change and evolve. Not nearly fast enough for some of us. Perhaps too fast for others. But healthy and positive change nevertheless.

What has not changed is the complex way in which a potential buyer becomes a Concordia owner—or, as the case may be, a former Concordia owner. I say complex, because in fact there is nothing simple about such a transaction. Even the money that must change hands to make a sale possible is possessed of mystery: it represents an estimation of worth and value that only very few human animals would be capable of making, much less being willing to make. Even a person of enormous wealth might find the ownership of a Concordia extravagant, foolish, or downright aberrant. And even sailors from modest, perhaps non-sailing backgrounds and with modest incomes and financial expectations may find --as many have--the will and the way to make the boat an important part of their life's journey.

From which there emerges a wonderful paradox. Concordia owners form an inherently exclusive group—a club or fellowship to which only 102 individuals or partners any one time can belong. But it is not some malicious discriminatory body that excludes on the basis of creed or color, income or level of education. Rather, it is a group whose members elect themselves. It is a club that redefines its membership requirements each time a Concordia changes hands.

To new members of the Concordia club, past and current members bring their own experience of ownership, their own crochets and idiosyncracies, their own list of do's and don'ts, their own dreams and ambitions as sailors. To past and current members, new members bring new perspectives, new prospects, new hopes, new horizons.

Very much a creature of his own time and place, my grandfather Howland could never have foreseen how many lives the Concordia Class would touch and shape, how many dreams these boats would inspire, how many challenges and how many rewards they would offer their owners and their crews.

LLEWELLYN HOWLAND III

I interviewed Louie Howland at his house in Jamaica Plain on a cold day in March, 2015, as we sat among his books, prints, photographs and models. My questions were few but pointed while his responses were broad, deep and highly animated. What's printed above is but a small part of our conversation. John Eide



# NO ORDINARY BEING: W. STARLING BURGESS, INVENTOR, NAVAL ARCHITECT, POET, AVIATION PIONEER

by Llewellyn Howland III

The long-awaited, fully illustrated biography of an authentic American polymath.

Few twentieth-century Americans lived a more creative, event-filled, and often conflicted life than the Boston-born aviation pioneer and yacht designer W. Starling Burgess. Orphaned at twelve, Burgess received his first patent at nineteen, left Harvard, and, following the suicide of the first of his five wives, published a book of poetry at twenty-four. Among his children was the celebrated author-artist Tasha Tudor.

Burgess was a personality of enormous charm, physical courage, and energy. He was also, as his son lamented, “a child who will not face hard facts, but will hide from them and will love the person who shields him from them.” The tension between his personal and professional life had consequences both disturbing and tragic—and provides answers to questions, and insight into events, that cover the entire span of the twentieth century. Here, at last, is a book that cover the entire

fascinating career of a genuine native polymath.

An editor and antiquarian bookseller, Llewellyn Howland III is a frequent contributor to *Wooden Boat* and has written several books, including *Yachting in America* (with Gerald Morris), *On the Wind* (with Calvin Siegal), and *The New Bedford Yacht Club: A History*. He lives in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts.

No Ordinary Being was published by David R. Godine, Publisher. The above blurb was taken from the Godine web site. David, as we know, is the owner of Fabrile.

The book has become a best seller with only a few copies remaining, I'm told, at the WoodenBoat store and the Mystic Museum shop. Better get your copy pronto.

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## TYPE

I was a tiny bit disappointed to read in Louie's book that Burgess did not design the typeface Times New Roman which I chose for the body text of the Concordian. For some reason years ago I was led to believe he had designed it so I thought it only appropriate for a newsletter devoted to the most beautiful class of wooden boats to use a typeface created by a yacht designer.

I should have known better. I taught down the hall from one of the 25 top type designers in the world. Mark was, and still is, obsessed with type and I've followed the progress of some of his designs which have taken years to bring to fruition. He

started his most recent award winning typeface before I retired seven years ago. Something as readable as Times New Roman is not a design that one would casually toss out between drawing fast boats.

While on the subject, and in case you're interested, the headline type is **Gill Sans, regular, bold**, and light, which was very popular in the 1950s, the heyday of Concordias. The masthead is set in Adobe Myungjo Standard which comes closest to having the light, airy feel of the moon, star and cove stripe.

JOHN EIDE

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## BATEKAS

If you didn't see it, *Soundings* ran a short article, with photos, by Dieter Loibner in the January 2015 issue about our Batekas, *Small wooden boats, big follies...or not*. Loibner covers the history of the Batekas as well as mentioning Doug Adkins' restoration of his for *Coriolis*, Jeff Makhholm building a new one in his living room for *Arapaho* and Dan Smith building one for *Eagle* with the aid of his sons.

You can download the article here: <http://www.soundingsonline.com/boat-shop/on-sailboats/293063-small-wooden-boats-big-follies--or-not>

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## CLASSIC BOAT

Kathy Mansfield's article in *Classic Boat* on the history of our boats published in conjunction with the 75th Anniversary is now available on line. She covered the Castine and ERR races and the article includes many great photos.

Go to: <http://www.classicboat.co.uk/articles/concordia-yawls-american-classic-built-in-germany/>

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## RESEARCH

Hank Bornhoffs forwarded the following information which is helpful for anyone wanting to do some research in the A&R records.

For a complete list in numerical order of all hulls built by A&R, you can download this: [https://www.abeking.com/uploads/media/Yardnumberlist\\_01.pdf](https://www.abeking.com/uploads/media/Yardnumberlist_01.pdf)

If you are searching for a specific boat by name or number, you can use this: <https://www.abeking.com/Yard-numbers.55.0.html?&L=1>





## ACTAEA

### No. 17 Palatka, FL

*Actaea* spent the fall and winter of 2014 on the hard for her annual maintenance. She received new paint for her housetop, deck, topside, and bottom. I wanted to go with a hard antifouling bottom paint instead of an ablative but decided to go with a hybrid, Interlux Pacifica Plus. We will see how it does. She also had her house and cockpit stripped to carry a new dark look. I'm liking it so far.

In 1954 *Actaea* had a staysail added making her a cutter. This year I added the mast tang but have yet to try it.

*Actaea* made it back in the water in time for one of the biggest race events in St. Augustine FL, Race Week 2015, of which she place 1st, 3rd, and 1st in class overall. She is a very fast boat. We also entered the Lipton Cup in New Smyrna Beach, FL, where she place second overall in her class but would have gotten first if the first place boat would have been in the proper class. Filing a protest was recommended by the yacht club and hopefully *Actaea* will come out on top.



One of the improvements is a new Doyle mainsail that makes all the difference in the world. She currently sails with her 50+ year old genoas and reacher which is a testament to the sail material and maker.

TONY HARWELL



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## EAGLE

### No. 92 Islesboro, ME

We're looking forward to another great year of sailing the Penobscot Bay area. Last summer Robin and I (and two dear friends) had a great experience bringing *Eagle* back to Maine after leaving her in South Dartmouth for the previous winter, but this season we look forward to a simple start to our year by sailing from Rockport to Islesboro. Our goal is to spend time rediscovering some of the best sailing waters in North America and to explore some of our favorite harbors north and eastward to Bar Harbor.

We had no large maintenance projects this past winter. I didn't install a feathering prop, nor did I extend the height of the mast, and my plans to reconfigure the hull in light weight cold molded perfection fell through, so look for us to slog through the water in light winds at this year's ERR, enjoying the beauty of the moment, only wishing to stay in the pack of my fellow Concordians.

Our two sons understand that no one is to marry, divorce, die, or go into labor during those three days.

DAN AND ROBIN SMITH



## WINNIE OF BOURNE

### No. 11 Darien, CT

It was a sparkling blue morning off Nantucket with a fresh breeze. On board: Jeff Gonsalves, Juan Corradi and his wife Christina - fresh from their completion of the 2014 Newport to Bermuda Race on their Concordia Yawl, *Westray*, and myself. *Winnie* was participating in the Classic Yachts division in a NYYC race from Nantucket to Hadley Harbor. She was in her final starting sequence on starboard tack just short of one minute from her start. Our competition, David Wray's Hinckley *Nirvana* and Halsey Herreshoff's New York 40, *Rugosa* were both to weather and astern.

We first saw *Dragon*, a Swan 48 on port tack over our starboard bow (Racing Rules of Sailing, RRS 10<sup>1</sup>). We were on a converging course at an upwind angle bow to bow. *Dragon* was not in our division and should not have been in our starting box (RRS 24.1<sup>2</sup>). When the boats were about 30 feet away *Winnie's* only choice to avoid contact was to head off the wind turning to her port away from *Dragon* (RRS 14.a.<sup>3</sup>).

Inexplicably *Dragon* turned down and accelerated towards *Winnie*. At that point *Winnie's* fate was sealed. *Dragon* withdrew from competition acknowledging fault (RRS 44.1b<sup>4</sup>).

*Dragon's* bow penetrated deep into *Winnie's* starboard forward quarter. The penetration extending from below her waterline and into her deck beams. The penetration measured some three feet wide at the top and six inches below. The only question at that point was not whether she would sink, but where. In the few minutes of her life that remained we continued sailing on starboard tack, keeping as much of the hole above water as possible while attempting to rig the working jib down the hullside over the hole and started the engine heading for shallow water. Attempts to cover the gaping hole were unsuccessful and she went down in about nine feet of water on a soft sandy bottom just outside of the channel between the breakwaters inside the entrance to Nantucket Harbor.

Following our distress call immediately after impact we were plucked from the water by the Coast Guard's Nantucket Station, just as the boat settled beneath us on the sandy bottom.

Our insurance carrier was informed and they made

#### 1. RRS 10 ON OPPOSITE TACKS

When boats are on opposite tacks, a port-tack boat shall keep clear of a starboard-tack boat.

#### 2. RRS 24.1

If reasonably possible, a boat not racing shall not interfere with a boat that is racing.

#### 3. RRS 14 AVOIDING CONTACT

A boat shall avoid contact with another boat if reasonably possible. However, a right-of-way boat or one entitled to room or mark-room

(a) need not act to avoid contact until it is clear that the other boat is not keeping clear or giving room or mark-room(.)

#### 4. RRS 44.1 TAKING A PENALTY

(b) if the boat caused injury or serious damage or, despite taking a penalty, gained a significant advantage in the race or series by her breach her penalty shall be to retire.

arrangements for a salvage barge to reach us from New Bedford. The salvage barge was operated by John Roy and towed by Charlie Pierce on the New Bedford tug *Jaguar* (fresh from her accompanying the restored whaler *Charles W Morgan*). Crewed and assisted with Concordia Company's venerable Steve Lima, the barge arrived around 1500 the following day, Saturday.

Slack tide was around 1700 and ideal for salvage. On either side of slack there is a strong current of between two to two and a half knots. The window for salvage was small. It would have taken place that afternoon were it not for



interference from Nantucket's town leaders. They directed the harbor master to forbid the salvage operation that afternoon. Nantucket's party of the year – fireworks and Boston pops – was scheduled that evening and the Town leaders did not want the unseemly and “hazardous” presence of a salvage barge and tug. The salvage operation had to be postponed for 24 hours.

The additional 24 hours made a bad situation even worse as if that was possible. *Winnie* was effectively sand blasted inside and out by the sand borne current. What the sand didn't do, 55 hours of immersion in salt water did. As a final insult the extremely fine sand found its way into every possible and imaginable space within the hull. A sad coda to a sad event.

The following day, Sunday, divers went down and placed slings fore and aft. She was slowly raised allowing the water to escape. As her attitude on the bottom was at an angle of something short of 45 degrees it was necessary to halt the lift and reset the slings. To facilitate this, a temporary patch was set, allowing *Winnie* to correct her trim. The slings were reset and the lift completed. To make her secure on the barge the popits were welded to the deck. *Winnie* made her return to Buzzards Bay that afternoon aboard the barge *Conrad Roy* into New Bedford Harbor where she was floated once again the following day and hauled out by Brownell and trailered over to the Concordia Boatyard.

Many hours of excavation by the Concordia crew ensued, transplanting some of Nantucket's fine sand over to Padanaram. The insurance claim dragged on and three estimates were solicited as requested by the insurance



carrier, including Concordia Company, Buzzards Bay Yacht Services and Rockport Marine of Rockport, Maine. After much deliberation, the decision was made to bring the boat to



Rockport for the rebuild where she now is well on her way to her former glory. Initial launching is expected in mid-May and a summer of sailing the waters of Penobscot Bay is planned. An update of the restoration and rebirth of *Winnie of Bourne* will follow in the next edition.  
J. ARVID KLEIN

Photo of Winnie sunk by Seth Willhauer  
Above photo by Jim Powers, *The Inquirer and Mirror*, Nantucket

## No. 104 Whangarei, New Zealand

I received the following from Doug Cole:

John-

I almost got a photo of hull 104 but at least we have a report by my good cruising buddy, John Kennell, with whom I sailed to Tahiti this time last year.

Doug

“Before we left Whangarei, I inquired about Mark Webby and was directed to a boat house next to Riverside Marina. No sign of Mark, and I’m sorry I didn’t have my camera with me, but inside was a Concordia. It looked good, quite a work in progress, but was in the water, really nicely faired topsides and bright cabin sides, which were unfinished. Looked like he was still working on the interior, and there was no sign of a rig. It’s going to be beautiful when finished. Perhaps you and Margie can look him up when you are in NZ in October. The guy I was talking to said Mark lived outside of town.”

## FLEETWOOD

### No. 20 Kiel, Germany



I’m sorry. Unfortunately I don’t have time to write an article for the spring issue. Nevertheless, these photos are self-explaining.



For now it’s done. *Fleetwood* is back on the water. I’m happy.

To be continued next winter...  
KERSTEN PROPHET

## SUMMER RACING SCHEDULE.

Castine Classic Race, July 30  
Camden to Brooklin Feeder Race, July 31  
Eggemoggin Reach Regatta, August 1  
Corinthian Classic Yacht Regatta, Marblehead, August 8, 9.  
Opera House Cup, Nantucket, August 16  
Museum of Yachting Classic Yacht Regatta, Newport, September 4 - 6.  
Google each for more info or to register.

Restoration continues. I am thinking we will re-launch late Summer or early Fall. The excitement of getting closer has given me some great motivation and inspired long days and evenings of work on the boat.

I completed all of the frame repairs. It ended up being an almost complete frame replacement. I might have only around ten original frames left. Because the new frames are bigger than the originals, and laminated, I felt I could remove most of the sister frames that were added over the years. The related screw holes were filled with wood dowels and epoxy.

I also replaced part of the stem. Most of the stem was in great shape but there were weak patches in the cutwater (that part of the stem in front of the bearding line). My stem is in two pieces. I believe most, if not all, the Concordias have two-piece stems. There is a lower part that attaches to the keel timber and an upper part about 8 feet away. I removed the cutwater of the lower part at the bearding line and epoxied new oak in its place.

Next, I had to replace seven plank ends on the bow. My planks are in very good condition except for six or so inches on the ends touching the stem of these seven. I decided to scarf and epoxy on new ends rather than replace entire planks. I made this decision mostly because good planking stock is really hard to find. Even with its age, I think most of my old planking is better stuff than the new stock that is available.

Because I am epoxying these ends on, it really is still one solid plank. Before the days of epoxy, one would never “short plank” like this.

In the stern, I had to replace some planks entirely. Instead of using butt blocks, I decided to scarf and epoxy these to the existing planking. Effectively, I now have some planks that run the entire length of the boat. These replacements are teak. I used teak because, serendipitously, there is a major teak importer in South Carolina. Although it was more expensive than Mahogany, I could not find any suitable Mahogany near me. Because I didn’t need much, it was cheaper to buy the teak locally rather than ship Mahogany. For the curious, I got it for

about \$20 per BF and it is tight-grained Burmese teak—really nice stuff. Yes, I am scarfing and epoxying different species but G/Flex epoxy supposedly will do it. It will be something to keep an eye on.

With all the frame replacement, I had replaced almost all the screws below the waterline and maybe one third of those above the waterline. The screws above the waterline were in pretty good condition but, where the frame replacement went

above the waterline, I replaced the screws above the waterline. When I got done replacing frames, I still had about 300 more screws to replace below the waterline for a total of approximately 2,500 new screws. An equivalent amount of new bungs had to go on and I just finished replacing these and cutting them flush.

Just recently, I hammered a layer of rust off the cast iron ballast, cleaned it with phosphoric acid, and then I faired and sealed the surface with epoxy and fairing filler. Under that 1/8 inch layer of rust, the cast iron ballast seems really solid.

There are a host of miscellaneous small tasks remaining such as reinstalling the engine, reworking some of the electrical systems, and

refinishing the deck. For now, I can get away with limited repainting and re-varnishing inside the cabin. The remaining big job is to fair, re-caulk, and repaint the hull. That will be left for last because I need to swell the planks prior to re-caulking and will have to maintain some humidity under the boat after I do re-caulk to insure it does not dry out again.

I guess I am tempting fate to predict a launch date but I will take the risk. August 31, 2015 (my birthday). I know most of you will be starting to think about the end of your sailing season in August but we still have great sailing days going well into December.

CHARLES THOMPSON





## CORIOLIS

### No. 82 Seattle, WA

*Coriolis* enjoyed an active year in 2014 and is happily headed into a 34th season with us. She was wooded and lovingly re-varnished last spring, escaped a scare with fire in the boatyard and successfully cruised for several weeks in Desolation Sound last September. She suffered alarming but non-critical alternator and battery charger failure but returned safely to sleep the winter away under her full canvas cover at the Seattle Yacht Club on Portage Bay in Seattle. Hers is a life of balanced contrasts: salt water spring to fall and fresh water fall to spring, tethered to a mooring in summer and nestled in a slip in the winter, lying north in relative wilderness for half the year and a real city dweller during the other half. She seems to accommodate all contrasts well. She will return to West Sound on Orcas Island in early June as we look forward to time aboard again during the summer and fall.

Because *Coriolis* has been with us for so long, we have behaved like so many other Concordians in trying to think of small additions to make her more suitable to our needs. This is surely in the tradition of the class and is approached by most owners with a clear eye to not intrude into the soundness of the original design but only to make additions which are in keeping with the classic character of the yachts and developments in devices. There are some owners who disapprove of any changes and one of my dearest Concordia friends sees any change or addition as an affront to the spirit of Ray and Waldo. I am sometimes in trouble with him but I like some enhancements like a hot water tank and pressure shower in the cockpit. There is nothing better than an outside shower after a day of salt spray or a brisk swim. To ease my conscience and placate my classically correct friends, the tank and nozzle are very well hidden. One thing that I have wished for and have finally fitted is a bench vise. It is often said that no real



yacht should be without the necessary clamping provided by one of these for cutting a bolt, gluing a repaired item or just holding something securely to work on it. The problem aboard our boats is where to put it so that it is accessible, can rotate in a way which accommodates different needs and isn't in a spot where it poses a hazard with its sharp corners and handles. I decided to create a removable unit and have fitted it snugly into the sides of the storage bin in the forward cabin after the lid is lifted. It fits tightly and could even be screwed down if necessary. The vise and its base can be used and then removed

for storage out of the way. A medium-sized unit seems just about right and pictures before and after the installation appear below. So now *Coriolis* is a real yacht and my dearly departed pal George Moffett can be proud of me.

I also wanted to add a special shelf for fancy cocktail glasses, one that would be attractive and also provide a secure spot for the crystal vessels and maybe even a decanter. My bride did not completely approve of this excess focused on libations with the attendant risk of glass breakage but I



persisted. The resulting shelf with room for eight glasses and a beaker is shown and it is placed on *Coriolis* to starboard of the mast on the shelf above the chest of drawers. Almost every Concordia is slightly different and this location will not exist on every boat but I enjoy the sparkle and invitation of the glasses and if you do too I'll bet you can find a spot. The base is yellow cedar with the holes drilled and radiused and the four feet are designed to raise it up enough to keep the glasses secure. The decanter stopper is tied down with a leather lanyard and there is a leather cover which can be secured over the whole fixture in heavy weather. Thus far it has been a success.

Despite changes to the Pacific Northwest Fleet, Concordias are still here in the West and thriving.

DOUGLAS ADKINS

## NEW OWNERS - WELCOME

Marc Villa, Chilmark, MA. *Feather*, no. 29.  
J. Stephen Weeks, Pocono Lake, PA. *Lara*, no. 48.  
Leif Arntzen, New York, NY. *Polaris*, no. 71.  
Josh Dennerlein, Westfield, NJ. *Phantom*, no. 93.  
Roger Kirby, Brooksville, ME. *Sea Hawk*, no. 101



As a newcomer to the Concordia fleet, I bring a whopping 15 to 20 minutes of sailing experience over the last 50 years.

That's about how long it took Brodie MacGregor and me to bring *Harbinger*, the 39-foot yawl I had just purchased, from her mooring to Barden's Boat Yard in Marion, MA, for haulout last August.

Call it kismet: It was at Barden's (where my father was working just after World War II) that I learned (quite by accident) to swim.

Thus began a transformation for *Harbinger* (now named *Lara* and undergoing a nearly completed restoration) and myself (from retired newspaperman to doting husband of a drop-dead gorgeous boat).

I had heard of the iconic Concordia yawls when I was a kid kicking around Biscayne Bay Yacht Club in Miami, FL, and occasionally crewing on Jacobo Cabassa's SORC-winning *Larry*, *Chemung* and *Jolie Madam* during the 1950s and early 1960s.

22 But I had never seen or set foot on one until early last summer when, 12 years into a landlubberly retirement, an advertisement in *WoodenBoat* magazine led me to correspond with Stuart MacGregor at Concordia.

There were several false starts (Paul Haley actually surveyed three boats for me) before my "dream date" with *Lara* in Marion in mid-June. My whirlwind romance culminated two months later when, with help from Stuart and his father, I bought her.

*Lara's* survey was clear: she was suffering from "iron sickness" and she needed new floor timbers and keel bolts, along with a dozen or more sister frames and new frame ends at the very least.

But *Lara* is drop-dead gorgeous and I am smitten. That haulout at Barden's last August began her metamorphosis.

From Marion, she rode on the back of a truck to Maine. And there, at Traditional Boat, LLC, the boat yard operated by John Flanzer on his 200-acre farm in Unity, she has been undergoing what some call the 50-year Concordia rebuild.

In addition to correcting her more serious problems, John has replaced a half-dozen or so bottom planks, repaired or replaced all her through-hull fittings, refastened some of her bottom, rebuilt her cockpit and built her a new rudder. All with the precise workmanship of a cabinetmaker.

He has installed new plumbing with a pressurized water system and is rewiring the 12-volt electric system and adding a new 110-volt shore-current system, including an inverter-charger.

Belowdecks, *Lara's* galley and head are being completely renovated, including a custom electric refrigerator. The Concordia berths in the main cabin have been replaced with settee/berths with removable seat backs and extra-dense custom corduroy cushions. The pipe berths forward are being replaced by a custom double berth to port and an escritoire to starboard.

John has installed a Raymarine EV-1/ACU400 autopilot and we are replacing the aging plotter and radar with a fully integrated system from Raymarine. A Lewmar electric windlass and custom bronze anchor roller have also been added.

And so, although *Lara* is my bride of some eight months now, I still have "sailed" her only those few minutes with Brodie. That will all change this summer when she hits the waters of Penobscot Bay. I can hardly wait! It's a wonderful feeling, after all these years, being a part of this great fleet.

STEVE WEEKS

## TRADITIONAL BOAT LLC UNITY, MAINE

*Lara*, a 1957 39 foot Concordia Yawl, came to us in part for replacement of her iron fastened floor timbers, her keelbolts and the remaining iron fasteners in her backbone. Her floor timbers from the forward end of the mast step to the front of her engine bedlogs were through bolted to the wood keel with iron (presumably galvanized steel) bolts, three per floor timber. Because these yawls were built with a floor timber for each pair of frames, this amounted to the replacement of seventeen floor timbers.

The floor timbers were fractured vertically at the location of the iron bolts. Often these fractures were through and through (photo 1). The wood adjacent to the iron bolts was severely affected with iron sickness, exhibiting the characteristic weak black, friable, charcoal-like, petrified appearance and consistency radiating out from the fastener (photo 2). Distant from the iron, the oak of the floor timbers was intact with no evidence of deterioration or structural compromise.

We lowered the ballast keel in order to be able to through bolt the new floor timbers (photo 3). The Concordia's keel bolts had heads on their bottom ends. After cutting off the top nuts we drove the bolts down enough to cut off the heads, then pressed them up with a hydraulic jack. Some bolts which traversed a significant amount of deadwood could not be removed without boring around them. The keel bolts were severely corroded, in some cases with almost no shank diameter remaining (photo 4). The Concordias have lifting bolts with eye nuts which were used in shipping them from Germany. These are larger in diameter than the others and sloped fore and aft towards each other. As we removed the keel bolts, we replaced them with temporary steel rods in order to maintain alignment and provide a degree of safety against the ballast tipping.

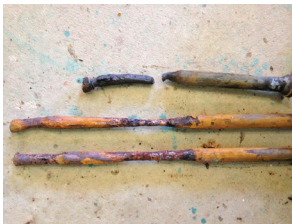
The floor timber bolt heads were counterbored into the underside of the wood keel. Those over the ballast could be removed from below once the ballast was lowered. Their holes were drilled out to a larger diameter to remove the surrounding iron sick wood. Those over the deadwood, were bored out of the wood keel from above with an elongated hole saw which could surround the bolt heads. This boring also removed the damaged wood surrounding the iron fastener. The floor timber



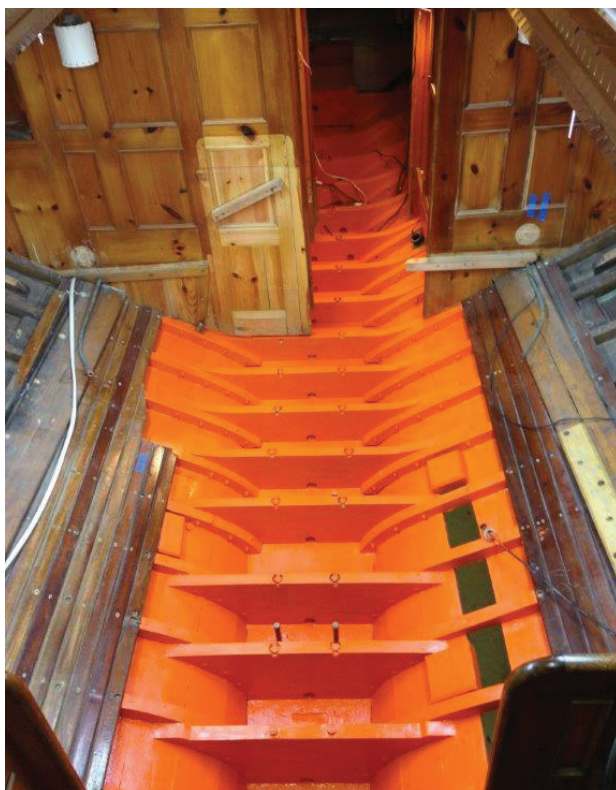
1 2



3 4



5 6



7

bolts were severely rusted throughout with little residual strength. Bolt holes were filled with white oak dowels glued with polyurethane adhesive sealant (3M5200).

Concordia's floor timbers from the mast step region to several timbers aft of it have wings which extend up along the frames to which they are bolted (photo 5). The original winged floors were sawn out of oak with variable degrees of sweep if any, resulting in short grain run out weakness, yet they remained intact. The new floor timbers were built as composites of laminated white oak winged tops and sawn bottoms. Each floor was patterned in 1/4" luan plywood. With the winged floors, patterning of the top of the floors was necessary because the sloped sole margin boards landed on the top of the wings. The laminates were sanded cross grain with coarse sandpaper and wiped with alcohol prior to gluing. Each laminate was wet out with clear epoxy before applying a thickened epoxy laminating mixture (West System 403 and 406 fillers) (photo 6). The wings of the new floor timbers were extended to the bilge stringers in way of the mast step, and about half way to the stringers aft of the step. Chalk was used for a final tight fit (photo 7).

It is well known that ferrous metal fasteners are a leading cause of the demise of older wooden yachts, perhaps second only to the rot caused by rainwater. The damage to the wood surrounding the iron fasteners in wooden vessels historically was known as nail sickness. We say that the boat has iron sickness or is iron sick. The numerous chemical reactions which result in the damage to the wood have been described in detail by Baker.<sup>1</sup> The exposed portion of the fastener acts as a cathode forming hydroxyl ions (OH<sup>-</sup>), and the buried shank of the fastener acts as an anode, forming ferrous (Fe<sup>++</sup>) and ferric (Fe<sup>+++</sup>) ions. The ferric ions react to form iron tannate dye which gives the characteristic black color, and also to form rust. Iron ions catalyze reactions which degrade cellulose and wood. As this localized galvanic reaction continues, chloride and hydroxyl ions migrate into the crevice between the fastener and the wood. The hydroxyl ions react with the iron ions to form insoluble iron hydroxides, thereby removing the hydroxyl ions from solution and creating an acidic environment. The acid hydrolyzes the cellulose of the wood destroying it.

The case we present in *Lara* is an example of extensive iron sickness requiring the replacement of seventeen floor timbers. Had the floor timber bolts been replaced with bronze ones decades ago, the floor timbers would still be in good condition. Evidence supporting this is the fact that the remainder of the floor timber oak not adjacent to the ferrous fasteners was in good condition, as were all of the floor timbers elsewhere in the vessel which had been fastened with bronze bolts or drifts. The use of the word sickness brings to mind the old adage "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." This certainly is true with iron fastened wooden yachts. Iron or galvanized steel fasteners should be removed before the surrounding wood becomes compromised. We advocate that they should be removed from any boat as soon as they are discovered, if the intent is to preserve the vessel.

JOHN FLANZER

1. A.J.Baker, Degradation of Wood by Products of Metal Corrosion, USDA Forest Service Research Paper FPL 229, Forest Products Laboratory, Madison Wisconsin



## A CONCORDIA IN CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE

I occasionally swap books with a good friend from St. John, in the Virgins, and when I opened her most recent care package, the top book had a sticky note on the cover that read: “You’ll know why I sent this after reading the first line.”

After the eye passed over, the shivering Concordia yawl *Bliss* was picked up and tossed sideways down into a trough. For a moment in the dark that had been a brilliant noon two hours earlier Eliot saw a light on the horizon and knew it was the light at the top of his own mast. The light flickered and went black, and there was nothing but the white noise of the storm. The wooden yawl shuddered deep in her timbers, and Eliot was catapulted from the cockpit and landed chin first on the deck and heard his molars shatter. Weightless for a moment as *Bliss* dropped, Eliot again cracked down against the deck like a fish. The bow rose up the face of a mountain of water and Eliot fell headfirst toward the wheel. His heavy arms locked in the spokes, and his Adam’s apple crunched on mahogany, and he was upside down, bare feet to the sky. *Bliss* paused at the crest before her bow came down hard, hurtling Eliot backward through the companionway onto the teak floor below, where he rolled in a soup of seawater and motor oil and caulking.

That is the opening paragraph from *Will You Say Something, Monsieur Eliot?* one of ten short stories in *Scar Vegas And Other Stories* by Tom Paine. *Bliss* is lost at sea after encountering a hurricane and Eliot in the end dies.

I was curious about how Paine knew Concordias and why he allowed one to be lost in a storm so I traced him down and asked. I told him I was the editor of the Concordian and that anything he had to say about Concordias might be published and that I was not responsible for your reactions. What follows is what I got from him.

JOHN EIDE

Hi John,

You are a lucky man to own a Concordia. I guess I used that yacht in the story because it was the most unique and historical boat I could think of, and only a certain type of person would own a Concordia.

Now the sort of humor: when I say ‘only a certain type of man’... in the story, Eliot is, oh, an arrogant, type-A, Waspy, Wall Street self-made guy. You’d like him and hate him if you were not from his world, and maybe even if you were! So when I stuck him on a Concordia, it was, to me, a bit of characterization. He was, in short, a prick.

Anyway, I lived on St. John most of my adult life. I was editor of the Tradewinds Newspaper there in the late 80’s, and then in the 2000’s returned with my wife and daughter to start and run The St. John Sun Times (2004-2007).

If you were off Hansen Beach<sup>1</sup>, then you knew Les Anderson and his beautiful little green *Penelope*? Based on a Block Island design? THAT beauty, and Les Anderson, first introduced me to the world of wooden yachts, and those unique people who love and care for them. I think it was the first time I learned of doing something for love, for art, for beauty... as the care and feeding of these yachts was so over the top. And then Les taught me a little about the history of these yachts... anyway, I came to admire the crazy people who understood wood. As a young writer, it was a lesson in craft and caring and obsession.

I admit I have a love hate relationship with the guy on the Concordia. Eliot was based on my Princeton roommate, who became a master of the universe on Wall Street, while I headed off to the dream of fiction and some poverty. Ha. I drowned him, as you see in the story. Ha. Jealous.

Best to your readers.

Cheers,

TOM PAINE

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1. *Golondrina* was moored off Hansen Beach for many years in the ‘80s. JE

## STROUTS POINT WHARF COMPANY

We continued to work on *Streamer* this winter with sister frame replacement plus nine more port and starboard the length of the horn timber. To accomplish this we removed the cockpit seats and outboard bulkheads. We are now reinstalling with as much of the original wood as possible.

The exhaust system needed replacement so we removed the engine, rebuilt the injectors



and cleaned it up. While the engine was out we replaced the cockpit drains and installed seacocks.

The hull was wooded completely and the ballast was sandblasted to bright steel and epoxied. We found five areas of bad planking and scarfed in new sections. She has had the cotton reefed from the boot top down and we are beginning to recaulk. After hull paint the remainder will be general yearly maintenance.

CYM HUGHES



## YANKEE

### No. 37 Liverpool, NY

Stewart, the helm-dog is a Brussel's Griffon, a breed not often found here, but a great boat companion. Stewart absolutely rules *Yankee* and loves a good windward reach. Seen here with support from his Aunt Kay.



I am very happy to see spring approach, since the past winter here in Upstate New York has been insufferable. Last week, when I went up to check on *Yankee* and bring home some shell blocks for varnishing, I found the snow piled up to ten feet outside her storage shed. Once inside, I boarded the boat and ventured below, only to find the cabin's temperature an arctic three degrees above zero!

We're already making plans for summer sailing.

But first there's all that brightwork to re-coat, bottom to paint and a hundred other annual chores. If spring ever does arrive.

Stewart and I can't wait!

I spotted a small patch of bad wood on *Yankee's* aftermost cockpit coaming (near where A&R nameplate is mounted). I'm now in the process of scarfing in an approximately six inch by four inch, one inch thick, teak graving piece, cut across, angular, to follow the natural grain as much as possible, to (hopefully) reveal only a hairline difference once epoxied in place, stained and varnished. This should completely replace the old rotted wood (just a bit larger than one inch in round area, about one-inch inside the starboard coaming).

I think, of course, it would not be very practical or necessary to replace the entire coaming plank. The fresh teak graving piece I'm installing should more than safely replace, fill and then some, the old cancerous area.

Delaying this work has been due to the cruel, cold upstate weather here. Just can't get this and so much other work done on the boat. The routine stuff is already behind schedule. Even in *Yankee's* modern steel storage building, the temps are in the low 40s--just too low for me to comfortably get things done.

Isn't it sort of ironic, that in springtime, after long winters of storage, when we're so busy fitting out and prepping our boats and ready for launch, that it seems we alas, discover some accursed, bad, stinky soft wood? Always in spring.

Yes. Such revelations seem to come in spring. But Concordian people always overcome them!

JAMES M. COSGROVE

## ABACO

### No. 102 South Portland, ME

My very big Random House dictionary has twenty-eight meanings for the word love. That should be enough, right? However in the lists of meanings in the types of love, there are no specific listings for classical music, opera, cars or boats. For me I fell in love with these things at an early age. Maybe, in the strictest sense, one cannot fall in love with inanimate things! Oh well, let's just call it lust because I lusted for them long before I could pay for them.

I have had a string of boats over my brief eighty-five years. From a home made raft that I put together to lie on and float through the bogs in front of my grandparents home in Black Point, Connecticut, I would spend the day floating up and back with the tides and observe sea life in crystal clear water two feet below. By the way, my parents didn't hover over me on any of my excursions. A few years later I would often rent a rowboat for a dollar a day to go fishing.

Fast forward a bit and I bought my first sailboat, a twenty three foot Eastward Ho, that would sleep four tightly. Not love of boat but love of sailing. After the addition of another child I bought a twenty eight foot sailboat which filled my needs and pocket book again but without true love. I began to look for a boat that pleased my aesthetic eye and also would be a great sailer. I lusted for, but could not afford, a Concordia Yawl and I haunted the yard in Padanaram regularly but realistically my pocket book was not as big as my eyes. Then Waldo Howland called and told me of one that had out of the water for three years and under repair after going up on the causeway during a storm. It had been sister framed because of the damage but still needed much cosmetic work and not worth the time and money to bring it back.

I was ecstatic so I bought it and my eldest son and I sailed it home, stripped it to bare hull inside, sanded, painted and varnished for two years. When we brought it back to the yard to show it off Waldo went over her with a keen eye. He disappeared and then several hours later he returned with a picture taken many years earlier during her, *Rusta IV's*, racing career. On the back of the picture he had inscribed a note, "It is grand to see the old girl back as a goldplater again!" After years of love and copious quantities of work those words coming from Waldo was and is the finest compliment anyone could say about my number one Concordia.

Years later my oldest son began to have wanderlust for women and I couldn't maintain her alone so sadly I sold our boat. I was about to buy a glass boat. Then, the night before, I got a call from a broker in Camden wanting to know if I was interested in a truly new and lightly used Concordia with a diesel. Chip and I were up at oh dark thirty and set off on a four hour trip to see the boat. He chided me all the way up to the yard in Stonington, ME, "Dad, be reasonable, you sold *Woodwind* because I am leaving. Don't do this. You can't maintain this boat alone and Tad (Don, junior) is too young,

When we got to the yard, he started his inspection in the bow and I in the stern. When meeting in the middle about an hour later we stopped, looked at each other, and burst out laughing. After another two hours of inspection we got in the car to go home, nothing was said for about one half hour while we mulled over what we had just inspected. Then he said, "Let's stop in Camden and make a deal, and don't try to dicker too hard, I just love that boat!"

For the next nine years Chip would come home or I would sail the boat to where he was and we would lovingly give her a spring facial; a whole family project. While sanding the beautiful tumblehome sides I would have to look around the yard to make sure no one would see the expression on my face; pure joy!

This boat was so pleasing to the eye and to work on that it became total love for me, not lust, because she belonged to our family. It was beyond measure to have my bride, the love of my life, and my children love her as much as I did. By this time my youngest son, Tad, began his life-long love of this wooden wonder.

Now, for the last time, fast forward many years and Tad came to me with the idea of buying a burned out Concordia, considered a "total" by the insurance company. Now it was my turn to drag my feet and point out all the reasons he should not buy it. But, love for this beautiful siren called a Concordia Yawl runs deep in our DNA suppressing all logic and reason. He next surprised me by telling me he already owned it. I knew he was a fine finish carpenter yet my heart sank the first time my eyes saw it.

Two years later, with a new cabin top, cabin side, new decks, new bridge deck, floor timbers, keel bolts and deadwood bolts and replaced ribs, I am willingly and happily involved. I even work on *Abaco* though these old bones creak now and then. It is my opinion that the boat will be better than at any time since new. Everything so far has passed the most critical test of inspection by knowledgeable yachtsmen and boatbuilders. Tad and his wife Cheryl both love the boat and have put thousands of hours into her restoration.

Now mister Random House, what were those twenty eight definitions of love? Here are mine; wife, children, family and last but not least the only nonbreathing, living family member, a Concordia forty foot yawl! Long may she be the object that is lusted for and loved as these three in our family.

Finally, the same dictionary tells us that the word concordia refers to the ancient Roman goddess of harmony and peace. Who wouldn't love a goddess?

DONALD LIPPOTH, SENIOR

## Full circle.

It was 1967 and I had just turned five. My brother was 14. I spent most days roaming the boatyard for I wasn't much help on the boat. I occasionally spent half hour or so working on the boat until he got tired of watching me so he'd find me a job that I couldn't pester him on. Soon, I would just sort of drift off and disappear in the boat yard. As I grew up my jobs went from filling the seams with compound to actually sanding in preparation for paint.



I was beginning to admire the long graceful overhangs of New York 40s and 50s, the Malabar schooners and of course the Concordia yawls. Their lines were certainly more graceful than our Eastward Ho. A few years later I was lucky enough to have my father buy one of those beautiful Concordia yawls.

Now, 47 years later, I'm the proud owner of a 39. My father, now 85, says he's half the man he used to be, but he's certainly more active than most 65-year-olds I know. So in a way he is like me when I was five. He doesn't have the stamina he used to have and it's not that he becomes bored but he actually becomes physically tired and has to wander away to rest. Sometimes I'm sure that he feels that he is a hindrance to the progress of *Abaco's* completion for sometimes it seems that more work gets done when I'm not helping him or he's helping me out. That may or may not be true but one thing I know for sure, like when I was a boy in the boat yard my father was happy to have his boys working with him whether we were a hindrance or not, as I am today relishing the moments that we are spending together. Sometimes I might get on his nerves and vice versa but these times will always be remembered locked in time when I see what we accomplish together. So I wouldn't have it any other way. Being able to work with your dad/family at this stage of our lives I am lucky to have a siren calling so that we can spend this time together. I am also most lucky to have an understanding wife/partner who can deal with the testosterone in the shed and can give it right back to the misbehaving boys.

DON (TAD) LIPPOTH, JUNIOR



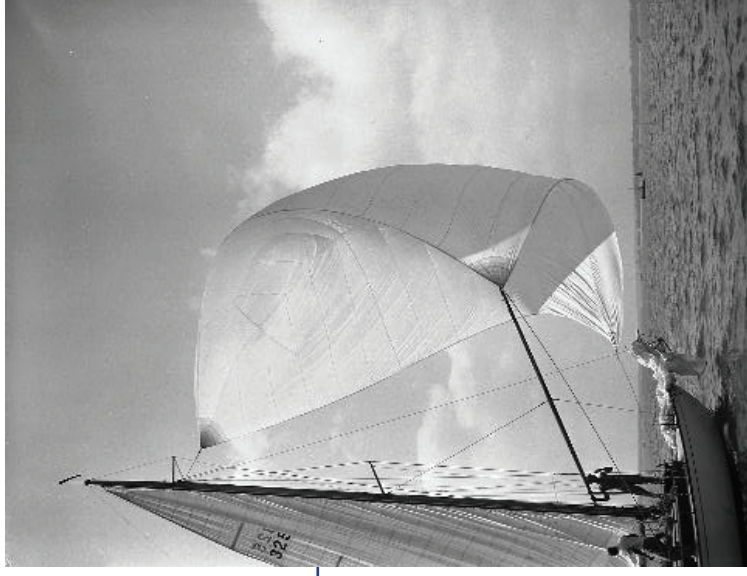


A few more Norman Fortier photos.  
 Clockwise from the upper left:  
 Java on her mooring;  
 Memory;  
 Sumatra;  
 A New Bedford YC Race;  
 Niam.



# the Concordian

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Ray Hunt. New Books. Old Photographs. Early Owners. A Chat with Louie. More.