

An A-1* Collection: Selecting for the Center for Wooden Boats

Introduction

- Scope of project

The library on which I will be focusing is located at the Center for Wooden Boats (CWB) in Seattle. The adult collection contains approximately 1400 titles related to traditional sailing techniques and boat craft. Though composed mostly of nonfiction monographs, it also has some fiction and a sizeable number of charts, schematics, and periodicals. Members may check out books, though nonmembers are welcome to reference the books in the library. Many of the members are building or maintaining traditional wooden boats, and need to use the library to access fairly technical reference information about the construction maintenance, or historical purpose of their vessels.

The mission of the library prioritizes meeting these practical, applied needs. It considers itself a “living museum,” engaging members directly with historical craft. Thus, I have selected a core body of reference works on applied traditional wooden boatcrafting techniques. The mission of the library would also extend to works needed to navigate the boats once they are built; celestial navigation, oceanography, and the like. While I will attempt to address basic skills, safety, and nautical law, a comprehensive treatment of sailing skills is beyond the scope of this project. I will focus primarily on those works which relate to the creation and maintenance of the physical boats, and only secondarily on the expertise needed to sail them. The library also has a supplementary mission to provide recreational nautical materials, especially for rainy Seattle days when sailing or building in the open-air workshops is

* “A1: This term, which is in general use to signify first-class or excellent comes from the highest insurance rating awarded by Lloyd’s Register of Shipping” (Blackmore, 2009).

impossible. I will select a few purely recreational books, but will also try to ensure that the reference materials I choose will prove entertaining for the casual browser.

There are a few limitations at CWB which have influenced my choice of materials. The library has only one public computer with no printer, and has just begun to develop an OPAC. Since the library has never had any electronic resources, there is no policy regarding the use of this computer. Suddenly introducing a large number of electronic resources would increase demand on this single computer, creating conflicts between a person needing protracted use and another simply interested in checking the OPAC. Therefore, I am limited in the number of electronic resources I can select. Thankfully, since many members will want to physically bring library sources into their workshops, an electronic resource which can only be accessed inside is of limited use. Print will be largely preferable. However, some resources are best in an updatable format, and CWB does have an interest in offering remote access to certain resources for its members. Therefore, I will have to consider carefully the type and probable use of the electronic resources I select.

- This bibliographic universe

I was surprised by how much diversity exists in the bibliographic universe of traditional wooden boatcraft. I began by considering only one type of reference work – books of boat plans and schematics. Since most users are amateurs engaged in the construction or recreational use of traditional wooden boats, it seemed to me that their primary reference need would be to consult such plans in order to get started or to address a problem. I did not see how traditional dictionaries, encyclopedias, or bibliographies would be of use. However, my search has shown me that the needs of this population are actually much broader, and that much more quality literature is being produced, than I had realized. In order to use and understand traditional boat plans, an amateur will need the information contained in several other kinds of reference work. There is a proliferation of dictionaries

of nautical terms; encyclopedias of boats and boating history; how-to works on boat maintenance, repair, and navigation; almanacs; and even the occasional bibliography. (Few bibliographies stand alone, however, because nearly every reputable nautical reference work includes a fantastic one in the appendices.)

The bibliographic universe of traditional wooden boatcraft has not undergone any major changes in recent years. A steady trickle of books on the subject has been released over the past several decades. Yet because the subject inherently concerns older methods and materials, the currency of a publication is not much of an issue. The methods have not undergone any modern revisions, although some of the tools and prevailing wisdom may evolve.

As I stated previously, CWB has limited use for electronic resources. This is an issue not only of CWB's capacity, but of the type and quality of electronic resources available. Print references are generally more complete and reliable in this universe. For example, I did not find a highly credible and comprehensive dictionary or glossary of historical sailing terms available online, even for a fee. However, updatable resources, such as almanacs, have a large online presence, as even print versions rely on an online supplement. The most sophisticated freely available sources are of a social-networking nature. Despite having an old-fashioned hobby, wooden boatbuilders have a vibrant online community. The need for community discourse cannot be satisfied by traditional print.

In short, this universe contains dictionaries, encyclopedias, building plans, manuals, bibliographies, and almanacs. Print resources are generally the most authoritative and useful, but electronic resources meet some needs that print cannot. In general, currency of materials is unimportant; I will note in the process summary when a topic is excepted from that rule.

Process Summary

- Discovery Process

I began this process by trying to get a sense of the universe, without looking for specific titles. For another project, I had discussed the mission and collection goals of the CWB library with the director, Dick Wagner. I also spent time in the library perusing the existing collection. From these two experiences I learned the basic types of building techniques and boats which are popular at CWB. This allowed me to gauge whether or not materials I located complemented the library's needs and values.

Since talking to the people around CWB had been very helpful, I looked enhance my understanding through a different type of contact with the community: personal blogs and forums for boatbuilders. Personal blogs often discussed sailors' favorite books. In Captain Richard Rodriguez's popular blog at bitterendblog.com, the captain discusses a conversation with a friend who has a particularly impressive nautical library. He writes, "During dinner we talked of boats and passages, rumors and innuendos. I asked our host John if he could take but one reference on his next trip, what would it be? His answer, 'Chapman's'." Such an endorsement from an actual user is a powerful selection tool. I found other works from an online nautical hub (<http://www.dropanchorhere.com>). While this site is not an excellent source in itself – there is no information about who maintains it, how reliable its information is or where it came from, how current it is, etc – it provided an overview, and pointed me toward other important and reliable sources.

Armed with a few key titles, I began searching WorldCat and LoC Authorities for appropriate subject headings. Headings such as "ship building" were too general, yielding far too many materials, most of which were about more modern boats. Ultimately, I came across a few of the right level of specificity: Wooden boats--Design and construction--Handbooks, manuals, etc. and Wooden boats--Design and construction--Amateurs' manuals.

This was my first encounter with the problem of finding the right level of specificity, which became the major challenge and consideration of this collection. Because the library is small, with limited resources and a highly specific mission, I committed to finding books which focus only on traditional wooden boats. A large, reliable, popular resource – even one which might be considered a classic for an owner of a modern boat – would be too expensive, bulky, and difficult to use if only some of its information concerned wooden boats. However, many items which focused only on wooden boats were detailed instructions on how to build one and only one type of craft; these were too specific. The difficulty in finding subject headings of the right specificity foreshadowed the difficulty of maintaining this balance for the rest of the process.

By scanning the set of results under these subject headings, I was able to gauge which publishers appeared repeatedly. The major ones were WoodenBoat, Adlard Coles Nautical, Hearst Marine, and McGraw-Hill. I visited their websites. Hearst Marine appears to be defunct, as there is no mention of it on the Hearst website and it has no recent publications. McGraw-Hill is too large for its website to give me much of a feel for my specialized community. Adlard Cole's Nautical, a subsidiary of A & C Black, was somewhat helpful, but its books have greater availability in England; furthermore, many of its publications were more relevant to modern boats, and could not be sorted by subject on the website. However, WoodenBoat was extremely helpful, offering a number of very appropriate titles. Also, I recognized this name from the CWB library's shelves; WoodenBoat publishes a very prominent eponymous magazine. CWB does not have the resources to buy serials, and issues of this magazine are frequently donated to the library, so I did not consider a subscription; however, they are clearly an important publisher in the world of wooden boatcraft, and I considered many of their books.

The publishers' websites began to widen my perspective beyond books of plans. For example, I realized the importance of books about boat maintenance as well as building. The Adlard Cole's

website also opened me to another possibility: the almanac. The homepage featured a notice that an online almanac once sponsored by A&C was no longer available due to a licensing problem with the company which provided the interface. I had not considered an almanac previously, yet it seemed an absolutely essential resource for anybody who intended to put a boat in the water. I wondered if this was outside the scope of my collection, but I ultimately decided that information which is absolutely necessary in order to sail the boats – basic safety information, for instance, and now basic weather and almanac information – would be included. After all, what would be the point of building a boat if it could not be sailed at all? While I would still not include advanced sailing information, access to a basic almanac would clearly be necessary.

I wondered what other genres of reference information I might have overlooked. Therefore, when I began looking through review sources, I began with very general search terms such as “boat,” and browse searches in the recreation category. While this meant much time spent wading through irrelevant results, it was well worth it. Especially in CHOICE reviews, I discovered many types of reference works I had not considered. They were not well-represented on the shelves of CWB, which has historically collected very haphazardly and largely through donations, and I had not seen much reference to them in popular blogs. I suppose this is not surprising; most sailors and boat builders would probably not consider blogging about a dictionary, even a particularly good one.

My findings fell into several categories. The first, dictionaries of nautical terms, immediately presented itself to me as essential. Many of the histories, plans, and recreational books in the CWB library use arcane or regional boating terms not likely to be found in a standard dictionary. I found several possibilities here, as in most of these categories; the way I chose between them will be discussed in the following section on the selection process. Secondly, I found encyclopedias of ships from various time periods and places around the world. An encyclopedia could offer a more in-depth explanation of

a particular type of boat than a dictionary, and would ideally contain illustrations. Also, it would be a wonderful discovery tool for members to access at least very basic information about a wider variety of historic boats than the library could otherwise provide, as it cannot possibly accommodate an individual monograph on each type. I envision this having a dual use: as a reference source if an unusual boat name is encountered in other reading, but also as an enjoyable place to browse. Finally, I found a few bibliographies. These were the most problematic, as they were frequently very out-of-date; in the case of a bibliography intended to give access to contemporary writing, currency does hold some weight. In general, freestanding bibliographies seem to have been replaced by suggested reading lists included in other, larger reference works.

In review sources, I also found some items with unique subjects. For example, I discovered a book of historical documents and an atlas of famous shipwrecks. I will hope to represent at least one or two rare but interesting subjects/formats in my final collection, as they are generally not duplicated by other local libraries. These also have high entertainment value.

The books themselves were my final discovery tool. When I had a good sense of which items were key and which others I might want to select to round out the collection, I went to the shelves of the library. As expected, I did discover more items of each type nearby my chosen sources; as hoped, I found that none of these surpassed the ones I had already vetted. They tended to have poorer content and extremely dated appearances which would not attract a recreational browser perusing the shelves. This helped increase my confidence that I had made good decisions thus far, and had a fairly comprehensive grasp of what was available in this universe.

As noted previously, many of the books had surprisingly good annotated bibliographies and suggested reading lists. Not only is this a bonus for the collection, it was a wonderful tool for me as well. A few books were cited repeatedly and described as being absolutely essential, guiding my selection

choices. In many cases this affirmed choices I had already made, but these recommendations also led me to examine books I would have otherwise disregarded for being too old or too general.

- Selection Process

By the end of the discovery process, of course I had found many more good books than I could add to my collection. All of these had good reviews, appropriate and useful content, and at least a basic level of physical attractiveness; yet I needed to narrow them down. I set several major criteria for evaluating the resources, in order of importance:

1. Quality of content. While none of the works I was considering for inclusion had inappropriate or poor content, I did find some distinctions when directly comparing similar items. For example, one dictionary might have much more thorough definitions than another. This is a negative criteria, meaning that good content will not merit the inclusion of a book of the wrong specificity or redundant format; rather, comparatively weak content will be grounds for elimination.
2. Specificity. A resource exclusively about wooden boats will trump one about boats in general (too broad) or a specific type of wooden boat or construction technique (too narrow). Resources must be appropriate for my audience.
3. Format. I wanted a balanced collection of dictionaries, encyclopedias, almanacs, and how-to books; within how-tos, I wanted to include information on how to build, how to maintain or restore, and at least some basic safety and legal information (how to sail). However, a work in a format I need which does not match the specificity requirement will not be selected, unless it has some strong overriding merit.
4. Physical factors. These include ease of use, such as a good index and helpful appendices; clarity and usefulness of diagrams and illustrations; quality of the physical item (will it last,

or will it need to be replaced frequently? Will it stand up to damage from salt and water?); and general attractiveness.

For dictionaries, I was deciding between four items: Blackmore's *The seafaring dictionary: Terms, idioms and legends of the past and present*, Jeans' *Ship to shore: A dictionary of everyday words and phrases derived from the sea*, Parry's *Aak to Zumbra: A dictionary of the world's watercraft*, and Rousmaniere's *The illustrated dictionary of boating terms: 2,000 essential terms for sailors & powerboaters*.

Jeans' dictionary is the classic work of this type. Other resources with bibliographies mentioned it frequently; CHOICE called it "highly recommended" and used it as the standard by which to compare other nautical dictionaries; according to Books in Print, Library Journal considers it "one of the best dictionaries of sea terms ever." It is also an attractive book, with an illustrated cover and heavy paper. Entries are long and narrative, and bold headings in their own column are easy to locate. It is nicely cross-referenced, with a section explaining its organization to users; it also has many interesting appendices and a very well-rounded annotated bibliography. On nearly all counts, it would be excellent for my library. Therefore, it was a difficult decision to choose not to select this book. In fact, this was probably the most difficult cut I made in the entire process.

Jeans' book simply does not meet my second criterion: it is not the right level of specificity for my very specific audience. Even if I had space to select multiple nautical dictionaries, I think doing so would be a disservice to my users; they would not necessarily know which was the right dictionary for their particular query, and, as recreational users rather than scholars, would be unlikely to then check a second dictionary. Therefore, it is important that I select the one which is most likely to have the terms

of greatest use to my audience. According to the preface, Jeans was an English teacher, not a sailor. His interest is primarily in tracking the ways nautical language has informed common English conversational phrases, such as “bail out” and “the coast is clear.” While interesting, these terms are not well-suited to an amateur sailor and boatbuilder trying to make sense of a set of plans for a 200-year-old style of boat, or to a reader unfamiliar with a term in his highly technical nautical adventure. Despite the high quality of this book, therefore, it is not right for my core collection.

After this decision, it was easy to eliminate Rousmaniere’s dictionary. Although I was unable to lay hands on a physical copy of this book, I examined its content through Google Books. It is not as attractive as Jeans’, and definitions are not as thorough. The illustrations are a nice touch, but do not appear any more frequently or with higher quality than in the other dictionaries. All of the dictionaries were quite impressive in their ease of use, with wonderful sections on how to use the book, sufficient cross-referencing to deal with the many complications of nautical language, and interesting appendices; this one was also good, but did nothing to stand above the others. Its one advantage seemed to be that the author is a sailor himself. However, while this made the terms more relevant to other sailors, it also kept them from being ideal for my audience. According to CHOICE, “The language of boating is fluid, in more ways than one, and Rousemaniere has made every effort to keep this dictionary’s language alive. Much of the newer terminology is derived from current boating and sailing magazines and from the author’s active participation in boating.” In short – the terms are weighted toward the modern. My users, while not entirely cut off from the modern, have a greater need for the arcane.

The best choice, then, was Blackmore’s dictionary. Published in 2009, it is the most current; yet it also has the heaviest emphasis on ancient language while not ignoring the modern. In the preface, Vice Admiral J.A. Baldwin Junior identified the audience for this work. “The Seafaring Dictionary is a

representative (but by no means exhaustive) overview of naval speech and maritime matters. It is intended to give enjoyment to readers and browsers, provide a source of reference for people who want to understand nautical speech and customs, and even be helpful to professional seafarers who cannot always be familiar with the vocabularies of today's specialized maritime occupations, let alone those of bygone age." By straddling the cusp between casual readers and active sailors, this book seems to have been designed specifically for my audience. The content is also strong. It has a large number of terms: "over 9,000 entries," according to CHOICE. The entries on lore and legend are long enough to have an interesting narrative, appealing to casual browsers, and the many tables and appendices in the back are informative and relevant for the active sailor. Though not illustrated like the other dictionaries, it is still a durable volume, and ranks higher on the more important criteria.

Parry's item, while still a dictionary, is an entirely different creature. It is not of nautical terms, but of indigenous small boats from around the world and throughout history. In this, it borders on becoming an encyclopedia. It is not, however, because it offers a fairly short description of each craft, with a limited set of information. "Each of the 5,600 entries includes the country where the vessel was constructed, its primary function, period of operation, visual appearance (many illustrated with drawings by the author), means of propulsion, crew size, dimensions, and alternative names and spellings," according to CHOICE. This book may be the only way to learn about many of these very localized small historical crafts. Because CWB considers itself a "living museum" dedicated to preserving traditional wooden boats and techniques from around the world, this item fits perfectly into the collection. The quality is high: American Libraries named it an Outstanding Reference Source. It is well-organized, with many cross-references to compensate for the issues of multiple spellings, colloquial terms, and names from non-Roman alphabets; it has a lovely section explaining how to use and navigate the book and its appendices. Rather than a traditional index, it has a geographically-grouped one;

readers can use this to seek out all of the watercraft from a specific area. It also has a nice selection of suggested readings. Because this item meets my criteria and clearly does not duplicate the function of my nautical-terms dictionary, I will select it as well.

There were two interesting encyclopedias, McGrail's *Boats of the world: From the Stone Age to medieval times* and Paine's *Ships of the world: An historical encyclopedia*. Even more so than with the dictionaries, these were all high-quality resources written by very credible authors; they were well-reviewed, easy to navigate, and extremely beautiful. My selection process was very similar to that of dictionaries as well – meaning I did not choose the item which at first seemed to be the best. McGrail's encyclopedia received higher reviews; CHOICE named it an Outstanding Title and called it a “remarkable tour de force.” It was also published more recently, although that was not much of a consideration; I doubt that traditional Roman boats looked much different in 1997 than they did in 2004. However, the scope of McGrail's dictionary was not quite right. By ending at the medieval times, it excluded many of the boats and techniques which my users deal with directly. While price is not generally one of my criteria, this was the single most expensive item I considered. I selected the slightly less lovely but significantly more relevant Paine. Because Parry's book borders on the encyclopedic, I do not want to select two more encyclopedias. Ultimately, I decided that McGrail is too large an expense for something that is not an exact match for my needs.

In how-to books, I began with what I originally thought would make up the bulk of my collection: books of boat plans. However, upon examining the physical books, I discovered something quite surprising. Despite titles which seem to promise sets of complete instructions (*How to build small boats*), very few do. I eliminated the large group of books which describe in detail how to build one particular craft (*How to build the shellback dinghy*) or focus on only one technique (*How to build glued-*

lapstrake wooden boats). The goal of CWB is not to have everybody build the same boat, but to help people explore the rich heritage of small handmade wooden boatcraft. Books which appear to offer complete plans, such as *Fifty wooden boats: A catalog of building plans* are actually catalogs which direct the reader to purchase full building instructions from the publisher, often in the form of one of the too-specific books. Others are general construction manuals which do not include specific plans at all.

While I did still select the best of the few full-plans books, *Gardener's Building classic small craft: Complete plans and instructions for 47 boats*, I realized that these were less important than I had originally thought. There is not much merit in providing free access to boat plans. Anybody who intends to actually build a boat is prepared to spend a fairly large sum of money on materials; buying a plan is the least of his expense. For such a major investment of their time and money, users will want to make sure they are building precisely what they want; therefore, they are likely to buy their own plans anyway. It is more important to offer books which help them decide which types of plans will meet their needs. Therefore, I selected a set of *WoodenBoat* catalogs, whose plans are reputable and easy to procure, as a discovery and decision-making tool for users.

On the other hand, general books on building techniques and boat maintenance took on a much greater importance than I had originally considered. The complete boat plans I examined assumed a familiarity with many techniques and tools; yet my amateur builders are unlikely to have this full skill set available to them. Even experienced builders need a reference on a new technique from time to time, especially if they are trying a new style of boatbuilding. There are many, many books of this type. I eliminated those which had received essentially no attention in the form of reviews; one volume with a promising title, *Wooden boats: Restoration & maintenance manual*, never even received a user review on Amazon, much less from a professional review source. Again, I eliminated those which were out of

scope. Many general works on building and maintenance techniques are too broad or too modern, with large portions of the text discussing issues in fiberglass and metal. I am interested only in wood.

Also, many of these books were eliminated based on physical factors. Although techniques from the 1970s are still perfectly useful, photographs, illustrations, and layouts from that period look dated and unattractive. If two books have similar content, as many of these books do, why not select the one that someone will actually want to pick up off the shelf? Also, these books are more likely than dictionaries and encyclopedias to actually be taken into a workshop. They will get wet, salty, and dirty. Durability is therefore important, and the newest publications also tend to have the best bindings and paper. The best book on maintenance was easy to spot; it exceeds the others in all categories, and in addition is quite popular. When I looked up each of these books on Amazon, I discovered that regardless of which book people originally searched, most ultimately purchased this volume. It is Trefethen's *Wooden boat renovation: New life for old boats using modern methods*. In boatbuilding, the best-quality, newest work with the most appropriate level of specificity was Rössel's *The boatbuilder's apprentice: The ins and outs of building lapstrake, carvel, stitch-and-glue, strip-planked, and other wooden boats*.

The classic books on boatbuilding techniques are Chapelle's *Boatbuilding: A complete handbook of wooden boat construction* and Steward's *Boatbuilding Manual*. Both are older works; Chapelle is frequently reprinted from the 1941 original, and Steward is on its 4th edition since 1973. I had originally eliminated these books because of their general nature; while both treat wooden boats extensively, they are not limited to wood. Despite this, the Chapelle is considered by many of the other authors I have selected as "must-have item in every wooden boat library" (Trefethen, 1993). It seems that, by nearly unanimous community opinion, this book is essential. Despite my qualms, it seems I cannot avoid putting this classic on the shelves. Although Steward is more relevant specifically to small wooden

boats, my collection is becoming too heavily biased towards general building and maintenance manuals. As it seems to be considered less essential by the wooden boat community than Chappelle, and even the most recent edition looks very dated, I will cut it. Furthermore, I have already selected many of the books that Steward recommends in his bibliography; hopefully this means that the most essential areas of his content are already covered.

Although print is very important for this library and its users due to technology constraints and portability concerns, some resources function much more effectively in a digital form than in print. The first of these is the almanac. A digital almanac can be updated frequently, and can simplify use through an interactivity print can never offer. Also, a user may wish to consult an almanac from home or remotely, while wooden boat plans are mostly useful on site. Whereas the library could not allow members to remove its only copy of a paper almanac and take it on board, the digital resource can be used by many. There was no question of which is the best online almanac of the moment, though it took me some time to find. The navy's digital information is only a supplement to its print almanac; the previous online leader, Reeds Almanac, was recently shuttered; and no information on the creator or reliability of information is available for most user-created almanacs.

Wiley's Nautical Almanac online is free, from a reliable publisher, and makes use of the interactive features through a fantastic interface. It can be downloaded, so even an onboard computer which sails beyond the range of an Internet network can access it. As one previously-skeptical blogger praised it, "the online almanac is a great reference....[W]ith the demise of Reeds Online earlier in the year, this one looks like having solved the problems. Wiley already owns a lot of the data, and no doubt sees this as a way of raising its own profile. And with all this free information, they might just have achieved their goal" (unknown, <http://www.sailers.co.uk/index.php/equipment/217-free-online->

[nautical-almanac-from-wiley](#)). He also lauded the interface and noted that the project leader has been a reputable almanac editor for many years. While this is currently the best option by far, it is still in Beta. Problems may be found as use increases, or Wiley may simply fail to expand and update at a sufficient rate. It is also possible that at some point Wiley will begin to charge for updates, although as of now it has announced no plans to do so. Therefore, while at the moment there is no other online almanac I would select, the library will need to stay in touch with changes in the online almanac world.

I found the link to the review which led to me this almanac from another site, [woodenboatblogs.org](#). (In fact, I found nearly all of the online resources and some of the print ones I considered through links, recommendations, and posts on or linked from this site.) This site offers a dimension that print can never address: social networking. WoodenBoatBlogs helps wooden boat aficionados set up and maintain personal blogs, then connects them into a network. Members can read and comment on others' posts, which will display in a feed on their home page. They can also search through archives to see if anybody else has ever encountered the issue that currently concerns them. Furthermore, the site maintains forums where bloggers can pose questions, post boat plans and photos/descriptions of their current projects, and recommend resources to each other. Not only is this site a fantastic portal to other wooden boat resources on the web and in print, it connects the small and dispersed community of wooden boat builders across the country to each other. This is a unique resource, and one that I would very much like CWB to promote.

Despite the fact that both of these online resources are "free," I am still counting them as part of my collection. This is because, in order to be useful, they will require the library to put resources into promoting them and training users. Though CWB does attract a variety of people, those who have the extra time and money to build a boat are often middle-aged or older. They may not know how to use an

online almanac, or have no experience with social networking or online communities. They may feel intimidated by these resources. While I believe these technologies are simple enough for any member to learn to use, CWB should offer training and encouragement.

Finally, there were a few resources which did not fall neatly into any of the above categories, but were important or interesting nonetheless. Some were clearly must-haves. The 2009 edition of the “boater’s bible,” as nearly every resource with an annotated bibliography called it, Husick’s *Chapman Piloting and Seamanship*, does not pertain directly to boat-building. However, it is the authority on essentially everything that happens once the boat is in the water. This more than addresses my need for a bit of basic safety and legal information; and furthermore, the consensus appears to be that no nautical library of any kind could be complete without this volume.

The other one-off item I could not resist was Pickford’s *The atlas of shipwrecks & treasure: The history, location, and treasures of ships lost at sea*. It is the most physically attractive item I reviewed, and its subject is perfect for recreational reading as well as referencing. It is also the only atlas. Its specific benefits are noted in the annotation.

Other items were secondary, and I was torn over whether or not to select them. Part of the issue was that many of these unusual works are difficult to find and not available for preview on Google Books or Amazon; therefore, I was unable to examine them. *Restore your wooden boat: how to do it, by those who’ve done it*, edited by Grayson, is a short, attractive, recent publication which shows several people’s boatbuilding projects. While some technical issues are discussed, the book is largely of a social, personal nature as each builder explains the history of his project and boat, and some of the most interesting moments in its restoration. I liked this book very much, but it is not good as a reference source, as only a

few technical issues are addressed and it lacks an index. I hope that the social nature of this book will be surpassed by the actual social interaction provided by Woodenboatblogs. Another item is a DVD entitled *A passion for wood Restoring & maintaining wooden boats*. Another, Spectre's *Wooden ship: The art, history, and revival of wooden boat building* is almost exclusively photographic, with little text. Finally, there was only one stand-alone bibliography which merited serious consideration: Toy's *Adventurers afloat: A nautical bibliography : a comprehensive guide to books in English recounting the adventures of amateur sailors upon the waters of the world in yachts, boats, and other devices and including works on the arts and sciences of cruising, racing, seamanship, navigation, design, building, etc. from the earliest writings through 1986*.

I chose not to select the DVD for purely logistical reasons; there is nowhere to watch it at CWB, and if it were to be taken home it would likely be stolen rather quickly. Also, as I was not able to watch it and found no reviews, I cannot attest to its quality. The photographic book I rejected on the grounds of scope: it might be nice to have in the library, but it is not a reference work. Furthermore, if somebody at CWB wants to look at a range of traditional wooden boats, he has only to walk out to the dock.

I was unable to lay hands on a copy of the Toy, but CHOICE gave it a positive review. It also commented on the useful indexes and concise annotations. As Toy was an academic librarian, I expect the organization of the bibliography to be clear. Furthermore, this book matches the scope of the library perfectly. For any land-bound sailor wondering what to read on a stormy day, this is the perfect reference. Though it is old, published in 1988, many of the fiction and nonfiction adventuring books in the CWB library are quite old as well. Many of the classics of this genre, such as Joshua Slocum's *Sailing alone around the world* and Erskine Childer's *The riddle of the sands* were published around 1900. Since no updated version of this bibliography exists, it seems silly to discard it for being out of date.

Annotations

Blackmore, D. S. T. (2009). *The seafaring dictionary: Terms, idioms and legends of the past and present*.

Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co.

With over 9,000 alphabetically arranged entries, this dictionary provides a fascinating overview of nautical terms modern and historical. Tailored more to practicing seafarers than Jeans' classic *Ship to Shore*, this dictionary has something to offer armchair adventurers and active sailors alike. A strong system of cross-references and indices, supplemented by a helpful introduction, makes this dictionary easy to navigate despite the complications of nautical language. Appendices range from the practical (tables of nautical signals) to the fanciful (a glossary of sea monsters.) More than just a supplier of dry definitions, this dictionary is a source of entertaining anecdotes, colorful history, and enjoyable speculation.

Chapelle, H. I. (1994). *Boatbuilding: A complete handbook of wooden boat construction*. New York: W.W.

Norton

Reprinted from the classic 1941 text, Chapelle is still essential today. John Gardener calls it a "must-have item in every wooden-boat library," and Brooks and Hill, authors of *How to build glued-lapstrake wooden boats*, deemed it an "essential inhabitant of any boatbuilder's bookshelf." Meant for the amateur boatbuilder with some basic carpentry skills, this book covers the essentials of building a wooden boat, from choosing and reading a plan through finishing techniques. Hand-drawn line illustrations are frequent, clarifying details with a personal touch. Though more modern texts with more

attractive formats and better indices have been published on the subject, this timeless text remains indispensable.

Fifty wooden boats: A catalog of building plans. (1984). Brooklin, M.E.: WoodenBoat Publications.

As the first and largest of the trilogy of WoodenBoat's catalogs, this citation represents the selection of the full set. Each boat is featured in a full-page illustration with an annotation describing its use. These catalogs are a useful discovery tool for boatcrafters unsure what to build next, offering a brief yet clear introduction to a wide variety of small wooden boats. Full building instructions from the reputable publishers of WoodenBoat magazine are available for purchase from the website. These softcover books will not hold up to water damage, but at only \$13.00 a volume, they can be replaced.

Gardner, J. (2003). *Building classic small craft: Complete plans and instructions for 47 boats.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

One of the few books of plans which also contains full sets of explicit building instructions. This volume combines two of Gardener's well-known works, *Building Classic Small Craft* and *More Building Classic Small Craft*. Plans are supplemented by B&W photographs and line drawings. Published after the death of the author, a master builder and long-time Associate Curator of Small Craft at the Mystic Seaport Museum, this book also features an "in memoriam" section. Includes an index and a bibliography organized by chapter. While this book does include short sections on tools and reading plans, beginners will need to supplement them with a book which explains general techniques in more depth, such as Chapelle's or Rössel's.

Husick, C.B. (2009). *Chapman Piloting and Seamanship 66th Edition.* United States: Hearst Communications, Incorporated.

The book Peter Jeans called the “nautical bible,” this may be the most essential reference for any sailor. “The leading reference for both power and sail boaters for nearly a century,” according to Books in Print, it has sold millions of copies. Extensive information on nautical laws, etiquette, navigation, and safety is highlighted by 1500 color charts and illustrations. While it does not contain any information on how to build or maintain a boat, it is the most authoritative and comprehensive resource for anybody who ever hopes to put one in the water.

Nelson, P. *Woodenboatblog.com*. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.woodenboatblog.com>.

The ultimate in social networking and web portals for wooden boat enthusiasts. This site will assist even the least tech-savvy in setting up a personal blog to discuss his boating projects, and automatically network it with the blogs of others. Forums, message boards, and a live feed of comments allow users to share boat plans, photographs, and tips; to recommend web and print resources; to answer each others’ questions; and to join into a nationwide community of boatbuilders.

Paine, L. P. (1997). *Ships of the world: An historical encyclopedia*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Compiled by a former editor of Sea History magazine, this encyclopedia covers over one thousand historical (and even a few literary) ships from ancient Rome to the present day. Its stated goal of capturing and conveying the unique character of each boat gives this encyclopedia uncommon personality. Yet it is also easy to navigate; entries have consistent structure, the index offers access to both articles and illustrations, and a section of timelines allows users to seek chronological information on archaeological finds, innovations in maritime technology, important voyages, and disasters. An extensive bibliography, a short glossary, and an insert of color pictures are nice additions.

Parry, M. H. (2000). *Aak to Zumbra: A dictionary of the world's watercraft*. Newport News, V.A.:

Mariners' Museum.

This dictionary/encyclopedia hybrid furthers the discussion of the “ethnography of the boat” by placing it in its “economic, social, cultural, and geographical context” (Parry, 2000). It provides essential information about indigenous working watercraft built by local craftsmen from around the world and throughout history, and in doing so may be the only major source which describes some of these lesser-known boats. It is heavily cross-referenced to account for slang and colloquial terms, variations in spelling, multiple names for the same item, and non-Roman alphabets. It is conveniently indexed geographically, and includes a useful section of selected readings. Called an Outstanding Reference Source by American libraries. A unique addition to CWB’s “living museum.”

Pickford, N. (1994). *The atlas of shipwrecks & treasure: The history, location, and treasures of ships lost at sea*. London: Dorling Kindersley.

A nautical browser’s dream. This atlas is extremely attractive, with large glossy pages, full 2-page layouts, and text interwoven with color photographs. Part 1 details major shipwrecks individually; Part 2 is “a comprehensive survey of more than 1,400 shipwrecks around the world. These include some of the earliest known wrecks as well as ships that sank in the twentieth century. All the wrecks are plotted on a series of specially devised maps, showing the depth at which they lie. Detailed shipwreck listings provide information about the type of ship, the route that it took, the cargo that it carried, and whether it has been salvaged” (Pickford, 1994). It is colorful, bold, easy to use, and informative. CHOICE called it “purely enjoyable,” I cannot imagine a sailors’ recreational library passing up this confection.

Rössel, G. (2007). *The boatbuilder's apprentice: The ins and outs of building lapstrake, carvel, stitch-and-glue, strip-planked, and other wooden boats*. Camden, Me: International Marine/McGraw-Hill.

The preface states that the purpose of this book is “to provide an introduction to and survey of the whole range of wooden boat building.” It is not meant to walk readers through building a particular plan, but rather to guide them in any technique or plan they may choose. Rössel brings the same

comfortable, conversational tone as in his previous book, *Building small boats*, but applies it to a greater range of traditional styles and techniques. Copious sizeable and detailed B&W images accompany easy-to-read page layouts. Less intimidating than Chappelle because of its tone and usability, this book assures amateurs that anybody can build a boat. Includes several helpful appendices.

Toy, E. W. (1988). *Adventurers afloat: A nautical bibliography : a comprehensive guide to books in English recounting the adventures of amateur sailors upon the waters of the world in yachts, boats, and other devices and including works on the arts and sciences of cruising, racing, seamanship, navigation, design, building, etc. from the earliest writings through 1986*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press.

For any land-bound sailor wondering what to read on a stormy day, this is an ideal reference. With resources hand-picked, annotated, and indexed by a librarian, this bibliography will help him find just the right book. Though older, no updated bibliography has replaced it; as most classics about voyages in traditional wooden boats were published before 1988, this is not a major concern. As many other nautical reference books include bibliographies which contain modern publications yet neglect the realm of recreational literature, this selection does not create a gap, but fills one.

Trefethen, J., & Trefethen, C. (1993). *Wooden boat renovation: New life for old boats using modern methods*. Camden, Me: International Marine.

Whether you have purchased a fixer-upper or simply need to maintain the boat you've built, a good maintenance manual is irreplaceable. Accessible, comprehensive, and attractive, this one has it all. It addresses many practical concerns, even how to go about building a budget for your renovation project. Interesting and diverse page layouts are complemented by clear line drawings. Trefethen's experience with boat renovation informs his writing, and the result is a tone and format much more accessible than

Chapelle's for the beginner, and just as relevant. This clear, insightful text takes the intimidation factor out of approaching what might otherwise be a daunting project.

Wiley Nautical Almanac. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.wileynautical.com/view/0/almanac.html>.

In the wake of the closure of the most prominent online Almanac, Reed Online, Wiley has launched its own free downloadable almanac. It is head and shoulders above any other currently available online almanac, with its nicely designed interface, credible and reliable publisher, and downloadable format. Since Reed folded due to a licensing disagreement between the owner of the content and the owner of the interface, having both provided by one party, as in Wiley's new almanac, is appealing. Though still in beta, this is by far the most comprehensive, credible, and usable almanac currently on the web, and has been well-received thus far.