

Summary

I am an experienced and highly motivated yachtsman with strong technical and practical skills. My background includes yacht maintenance and repair, pilotage, celestial navigation, and extensive cruising including both single handed and fully crewed sailing, the latter as crew and captain. My skill set includes rope work, canvas work including sail repairs, electrical systems, diesel engines and drive trains, underwater fittings, and rigging.

Academic

Master of Business Administration, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario
Bachelor of Education, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario
Bachelor of Science, York University, Downsview, Ontario

Formal Training & Certification

Canadian Power and Sail Squadron (CPSS) certification, Basic Boating.

Canadian Power and Sail Squadron (CPSS) certification, Advanced Pilotage.

Ocean Navigator Seminar, Celestial Navigation, two weeks at sea sailing from New York to Bermuda and thence to Boston.

Sailing Highlights

The Start — 1984

In January, 1984, I purchased new a Drascombe Lugger with delivery in the spring of that year. The Lugger is a 19 foot open boat with a steel centre board, and gunter yawl rig. She is reminiscent of the British and Canadian Navy's Montague Whaler that had inspired her designer. For me, this brought back some fond memories of the bit of sailing I had done in Sea Cadets many years earlier. During the next two years, I taught myself to sail using this most capable vessel.

Sometimes alone, but most often with one or other of my wife or daughter, I made many excursions from Toronto around the west end of Lake Ontario. These would be day trips, or overnight stays at another club or anchorage camping under the cockpit tent. As my skill and experience improved, I began to understand the real capabilities of the boat and would venture forth in some quite atrocious weather. Passages of seven or eight hours were the norm.

Lake Ontario — 1986

After two years of such sailing, I was keen for a vessel with a lid on it and a few more ropes to pull. The original Cornish Crabber was designed with exactly this in mind. In January, 1986, I purchased a new Cornish Crabber, Mk. II, with delivery in the spring of that year. The Crabber was 24 feet LOA, displacement 5,200 pounds, with a heavy steel centre board, an inboard 10 horsepower Yanmar diesel engine, a tiny galley equipped with a small two burner gas cooker with grill, and a beautiful as well as powerful gaff cutter rig.

For the next eleven years, this boat was the delight of my life. The spruce spars, mast, gaff, boom, and bowsprit, received coats of fresh varnish every spring. The diesel was pampered with high quality clean fuel, frequent oil changes, and the best possible maintenance regimen. The sails were transported to a sailmaker, Andy Soper¹, every Autumn for a check and preventative maintenance.

¹ Andy is a sail maker of great skill. He learned his trade as an apprentice in the loft of Jimmy Lawrence in Essex. He spent his time fitting sails to Essex Smacks and Bawleys. Now, he runs a one man sail loft in Kingston, Ontario and numbers among his clients several traditional sail training vessels rigged as Brigantines and Schooners.

Intense study and much practice gave me a great appreciation for the gaff cutter rig. It is, without doubt, one of the finest small craft sailing rigs yet invented. I mastered its intricacies and could easily single hand the boat in any weather on any point of sail, and serve up tea in the process. The staysail was a standard hanked on sail; the jib was set flying from a traveller ring run out the bowsprit; the jack yard topsail was set in the traditional fashion with halyard, sheet, jack stay, and tack downhaul; the main hoisted with both throat and peak halyards could be fine tuned to a great degree.

In this boat, I cruised the length and breadth of Lake Ontario from early spring to late autumn. Outings included a short two or three day cruise most week-ends and a two or three week extended cruise each season. Initially, this was done with my wife and daughter. However, after the end of my marriage in 1990, I sailed on single handed.

Bermuda — 1989

After teaching myself the theory of celestial, or astro, navigation² using Dutton's, I decided that a practical course would be helpful to further my skill. Accordingly, I participated in two, one-week seminars taught by the Instructor/Staff of Ocean Navigator, a popular magazine with a strong theme centred on traditional navigation techniques. The seminar was held aboard *Westward*, a steel 250 ton staysail schooner owned by the Sea Education Association, aboard which we sailed from New York to Bermuda and thence to Boston. In addition to participating in the seminar, we students also acted as a ship's crew in three watches under the direction of the master and three mates. In addition to standing a normal routine of watches, we students participated in a daily routine that started at dawn with a round of star sights, a morning classroom session punctuated by a morning sun sight, a noon sight for latitude, an afternoon classroom session again interrupted for an afternoon sun sight, then finished with an evening round of star sights for another fix. After two weeks of such a routine, I had fully mastered the practical application of celestial navigation.

United Kingdom — 1991

In an effort to broaden my sailing experience, I undertook several trips to the UK during which I chartered and/or crewed aboard a small variety of sailing vessels. These included:

- a one week charter in April 1991 aboard *Lorne Leader*, a Brixham Trawler built in 1892 and based at Craobh Haven near Oban;
- a subsequent two week charter in October 1995, again aboard *Lorne Leader*;
- a one week charter in October 1995 aboard a Hooker sailing in Galway Bay to the Aran Islands;
- two weeks crewing in August 1996 aboard *Revel³*, a Rival 34 based in Oban;
- a further two weeks aboard *Revel* in August 1997.

With the exception of the excursion in Galway Bay, all of the above trips involved sailing in the Hebrides. The geographic limits of my experience in that area extend from Harris to County Down, Ireland; and from Oban to Watersay in the Outer Hebrides.

² My undergraduate studies towards a B.Sc. degree included much advanced mathematics. The details of spherical trigonometry necessary to understand the how and why of celestial were relatively simple material.

³At the time, *Revel* was owned and sailed by Mike Bolton of Oban. Mike, a long standing member of the Royal Cruising Club, was a consummate yachtsman of considerable skill and experience. When I crewed for him, Mike was getting on in years and needed a bit of foredeck muscle to assist with the running of the vessel. During the four weeks I sailed with Mike, we almost never used the engine and spent every night in a secluded anchorage in one or other of the many sea lochs to be found amongst the Hebridean Isles. Sadly, Mike succumbed to a stroke a few years ago and is no longer with us. I consider my time sailing with him as the greatest honour and privilege of all my years at sea.

Living Aboard — 1998

In the Autumn of 1998, I purchased my current boat, a Niagara 35 designed by Mark Ellis and constructed by Hinterhoeller Yachts in 1979. She was a bit of a fixer-upper, even more so than I had imagined at time of purchase.

In 1999, I moved aboard *Saorsa II* and continued to live aboard the vessel in Toronto for the next six years.

Since purchase, I have invested much time and substantial funds into refitting *Saorsa II*. The work done includes:

- complete refinishing of the underwater sections with an anti-osmosis epoxy barrier;
- a new engine, propeller shaft, propeller, and related systems;
- complete re-wiring of shore power and all 120 volt AC circuits;
- complete re-wiring of the mast and the majority of other 12 volt DC circuits;
- replacement of the head, holding tank, and all related plumbing;
- replacement of all the original gate valve through hulls with marine sea cocks;
- replacement of all running rigging;
- a new suit of sails;
- complete re-build of the rudder;
- addition of wind vane self-steering;
- upgrade of all ground tackle;
- re-build of the cold box and installation of new refrigeration system; and
- installation of propane fireplace style cabin heater.

All of this work, with the exception of the rudder re-build and the new sails, was done by me.

In October, 2004, my wife and I purchased a house and moved ashore. Paradoxically, this led to more time spent sailing and I now regularly single hand *Saorsa II* on extended summer cruises around Lake Ontario.