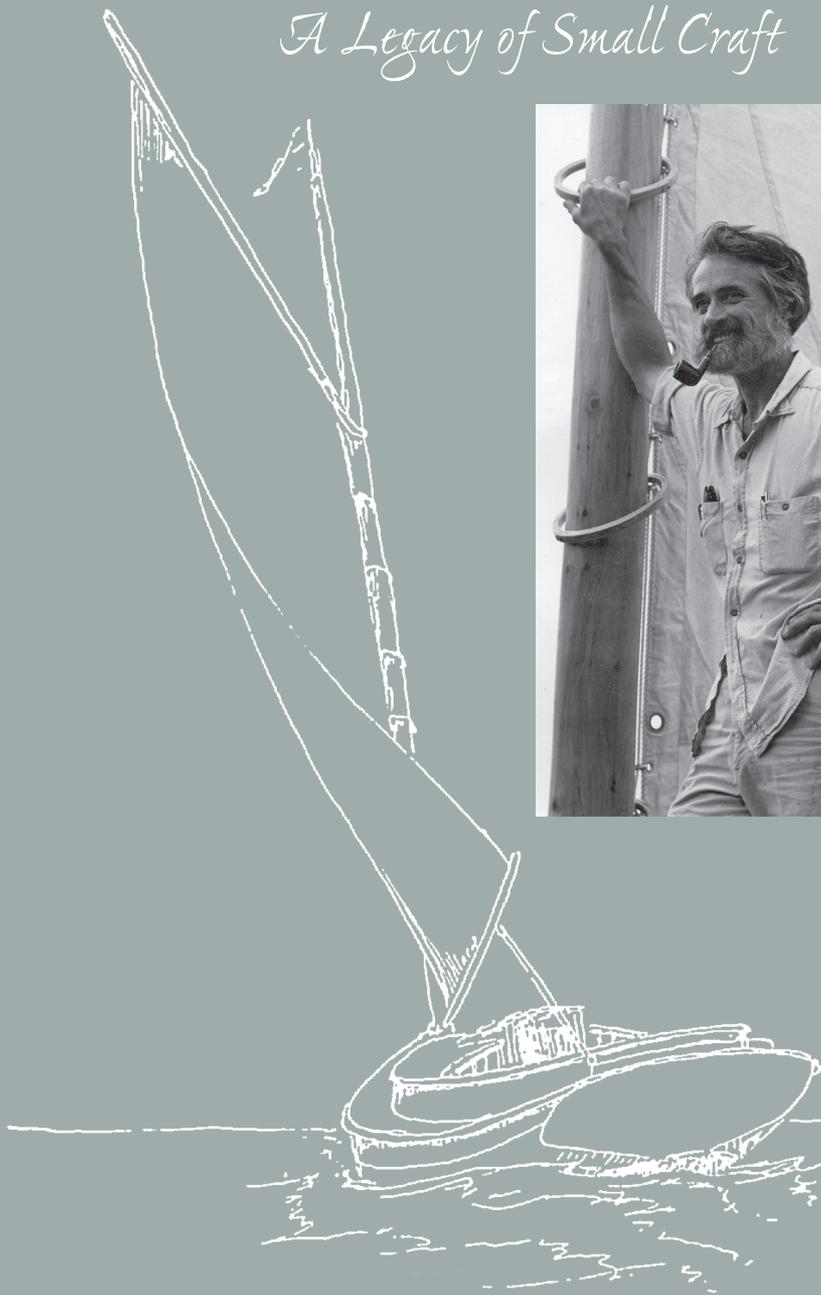
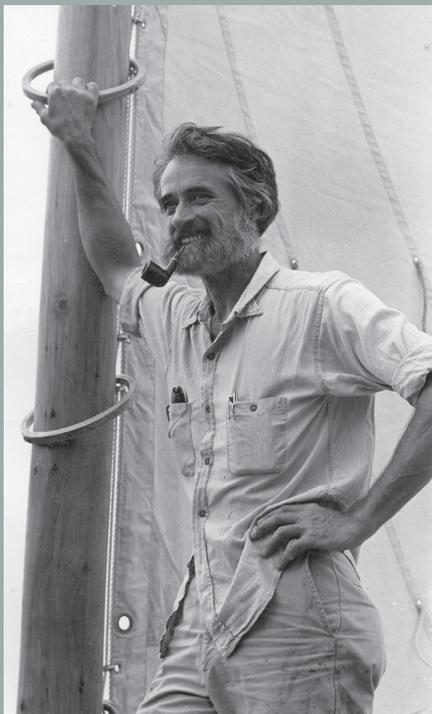


ROBERT H. BAKER

A Legacy of Small Craft



Anne W. Baker

From the back cover:



“Pete” Baker’s warm, witty book tells why Bob was an inspiration and guide for so many of us in the museum small craft restoration field. He set high standards for us with his designs, draftsmanship, and restoration projects. Bob Baker will now get the wider recognition he so richly deserves. —Peter T. Vermilya, Curator Emeritus of Small Craft, Mystic Seaport Museum.



The late Bob Baker inspired many of us with his passion for and knowledge of small working boats, and he left a legacy of lovely drawings. His and his wife Anne's (aka "Pete") rescue and refurbishing of the 83-foot derelict motor yacht *Kalmia* is a good yarn as well—of Bob, Pete, and their young family "living their dream." Before she, too, died, Pete Baker wrote up her late husband's story. It's a great one and includes many drawings and photos. —Maynard Bray, technical editor of *WoodenBoat* magazine and a co-founder of OffCenterHarbor.com



Robert Howe “Bob” Baker (1927 - 1983) Designer - Builder - Historian - Craftsman

When Robert Baker was born in November of 1927 he had a lot to live up to; but instead of following his families path, Bob arrived to put his own, very opposite, talents to their greatest use - his love for traditional working craft - the working man’s boat.

Beginning with childhood summers spent on the bays and marshes of Westport, MA, Bob would find derelict boats, drag them home to study, repair and then experiment with on the Westport River.

By age 16, Bob had filled a workbook, with over 200 designs and sketches: prams, skiffs, sharpies, smacks, dinghy's, sloops, ketches, schooners, square riggers, whaling boats, steam boats and tugs.

By the age of 22, Bob had been hired to teach mechanical engineering at St. Georges school, in Middletown, RI where he designed boats for the students to build and then learn how to sail. The Puddleduck, an 8’ pram, followed by the Sprite, a 12’ dinghy, were very successful

Working at St. Georges filled a need, but Bob’s interest in the working man's boat - their design, construction and history - had taken priority and it wasn't long before his knowledge of boats was noticed by groups such as Mystic Seaport in CT, WoodenBoat Magazine, the Rockport Apprenticeshop in ME, the New York State Museum in NY, the New Bedford Whaling Museum in MA, and the Bath Maritime Museum in ME.

When Bob died in 1983, he left a legacy of extra-ordinary work — beautiful boats and boat designs, a large collection of documents, research notes, photos, sketches, and plans. A momentous amount of valuable and historically important information.

{As of 2012, Bob's personal collection is housed at Mystic Seaport Collections, Mystic, CT. These items are available, on-site, for anyone interested in viewing them. Plans will be available for purchase through Mystic Seaport Collections shortly.}

In 1999 Mystic Seaport dedicated their annual John Gardiner Small Craft Workshop to Bob to celebrate his life and work. "Bob", they wrote, "was a man, who had a truly significant impact on Mystic Seaport, its Water Craft Collection, and on many people through the inspiring example he set."

Jon Wilson: Founder of WoodenBoat Magazine commented:

Bob loved things traditional, and taught others to love them, but he was not bound by tradition ... His unfailing eye for proportion and detail was thus the object of considerable admiration for all who knew him.

Bob spent his life with boats, sailing them, drawing them, restoring them, and, whenever possible, taking lines off them. His plans and drawings are a reflection of his love and understanding of design and of the sea.

Before her death in 2011, Anne W. "Pete" Baker completed a manuscript telling the story of Bob's life and his love of boats. The book, titled *Robert H. Baker - a Legacy of Small Craft*, will be available in print in early Fall of 2014.