

CIRRUS



About a dozen of these Fishers Island 31-footers were built, starting in 1927. There might have been more had not the Depression interfered, because the design is superb. Sid Herreshoff carried out this design by scaling up *Alerion's* half model once again (it had been done earlier by Nat to create the Newport 29s). But this time the boat was to be roomier with a drawn-out bow and stern for a more modern appearance. The result was still a racer/cruiser but with more emphasis on the latter.

Because the Fishers Island 31s were not all built at the same time, there were differences between them. Some — *Cirrus*, for example — were especially fancy with teak decks and trim, while others, set up more for racing, came out with lighter canvas-covered pine decks, mahogany trim and lower prices. All the hulls, however, were

double-planked. The original rig, as far as I know, was a low-aspect-ratio marconi sloop for all boats of the class. N. G. Herreshoff favored such proportions: short masts and long booms, big mainsails and little jibs.

Rigs of the Fishers Island boats changed with the times and with incentives from various racing-rule changes. *Cirrus* was given a yawl rig with a taller, overlapping head-sail and a shorter main boom. This rig has

been fine-tuned over the years until today it is about perfect in terms of balance and speed. But in spite of all the changes in her rig's proportions and the addition of a second set of spreaders, *Cirrus* still carries her original round, hollow mast with its spliced-loop standing rigging.

Other than retaining her original elegance over the years, *Cirrus* is remarkable in that she remained with a single owner for nearly half a century. Alan Bemis bought her in 1935 when she was only five years old and sold her only a few years ago. Today *Cirrus* remains, as she has for so many years, a kind of local institution on Maine's Eggemoggin Reach. Sue Drew and her husband Gene are the new and caring owners. Sue, enchanted as a child by the sight of the boat, arranged to buy her from Alan, and the Drews have thus assured the boat's future for many years to come.

— Maynard Bray



A Fishers Island 31, *Cirrus* has been a familiar sight on Maine's Eggemoggin Reach for decades.

LOA: 43'8"
LWL: 33'0"
Beam: 10'7"
Draft: 6'2"
Sail Area: 826 sq. ft.
Built: 1930
Owner: Mr. & Mrs. Thomas E. Drew III
Home Port: Brooklin, ME