



SCUD

A Herreshoff Bar Harbor 31

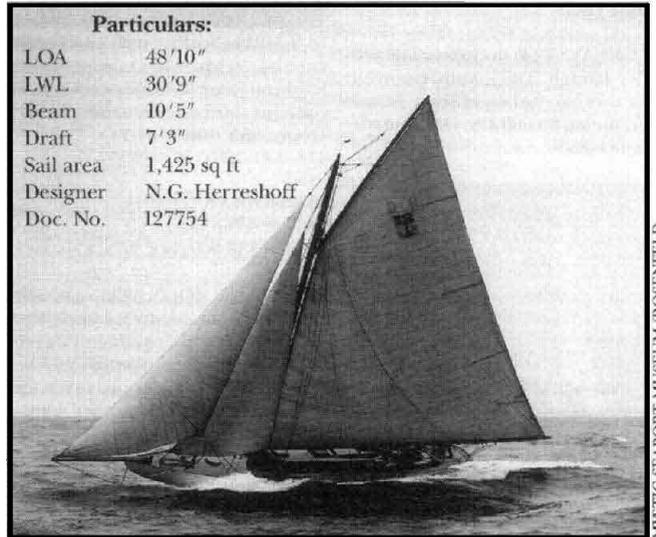
by Maynard Bray

The great AMERICA'S Cup defender RELIANCE justifiably dominated the yachting scene in the season of 1903, as well as the contemporary newspapers and periodicals. Thus the fleet of 13 identical sloops of the Bar Harbor 31' class pretty much escaped notice, even though they measured nearly 50' overall, and were designed by the same man who conceived RELIANCE and built her in his same Bristol, Rhode Island, shops. The Bar Harbor class never really had the level of publicity it deserves; that kind of coverage went to the somewhat similar New York 30s which came out two years later and raced virtually under the noses of the yachting press. They're wonderful boats, nonetheless, and exceptionally built—as time has demonstrated.

Double-planked and diagonally strapped (with bronze) hulls and decks are one of their secrets to longevity; durable woods and nonferrous fastenings are others. At least four BH-31s survive today, even though they are nearly 100 years old. One still sails, in fact, and looks as good as she did when new. Her name is DESPERATE LARK. You can read about her and her sisters in WB No. 45, and there's a great photo of LARK's main cabin on the cover of WB No. 84.

Another of the BH-31s is SCUD, built in 1903 as hull No. 603 of the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company, Bristol, Rhode Island, the 12th hull in the 592 class. Although SCUD is in tough shape, having been out of the water and out in the weather for many years, she should end up looking like DESPERATE LARK. Bruce Avery of Noank Marine Service in Connecticut rescued her just in the nick of time, and she's inside a shed now. SCUD, which, incidentally, is this yacht's original name, needs the full treatment—a complete overhaul that has become the specialty of McClave, Philbrick & Giblin in dealing with aging Herreshoff-built boats. This would involve at least all new frames and floor timbers, and a new deck—which is the standard treatment. Sometimes the backbone and planking can be repaired and reused, but sometimes that's impractical. In any event, when a Herreshoff boat has undergone an M, P & G overhaul, it's about as close to original as is possible—and just as strong. (I didn't intend this to be an advertorial for M, P & G, but because SCUD is located near their eastern Connecticut shop and because I know their work so well, recommending them for this job seemed too compelling to pass up.)

The Bar Harbor 31s are long-legged creatures, which is sometimes a cruising disadvantage, but that big chunk of low-slung lead ballast gives them enormous sail-carrying ability. Their original double-headsail sloop rig measured 1,425 sq ft. But with such a slippery hull shape, these boats sail smartly with only three-quarters of that amount,



The rebuilding of SCUD (right), a 1903 Herreshoff Bar Harbor 31, would require as much work as a scratch-built boat, but the result would be a rare piece of yachting history. The photo above is of one of SCUD's sisters in the heyday of the Bar Harbor 31 Class.



and convert neatly to the more easily handled yawl, which is DESPERATE LARK's present rig.

In any event, you'd probably want auxiliary power, in which case you'd discover that an engine fits nicely under the self-bailing cockpit. Other than the rig and an engine, these boats work out surprisingly fine just as they were designed. They sleep six: two in the main cabin pilot berths, two in quarter berths, and two more in the fo'c's'le. The galley is forward abreast of the mast with an enclosed toilet room opposite to port. Steering is by tiller. It would be a shame to encumber this sensitive flyer with a wheel.

Herreshoff boats, as many *WoodenBoat* readers are aware, have long been my passion, and it's taken a good deal of restraint to not have featured one in the two years that "Save a Classic" has been running. With SCUD's availability, however, the inevitable has arrived. Let's hope this exposure helps find her a good home. 

For more information, contact owner Bruce Avery, Noank Marine Service, Spicer Ave. Noank, CT 06340. Phone 860-536-0221.

*Send candidates for "Save a Classic" to Maynard Bray, *WoodenBoat*, P.O. Box 78, Brooklin, ME 04616.*

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