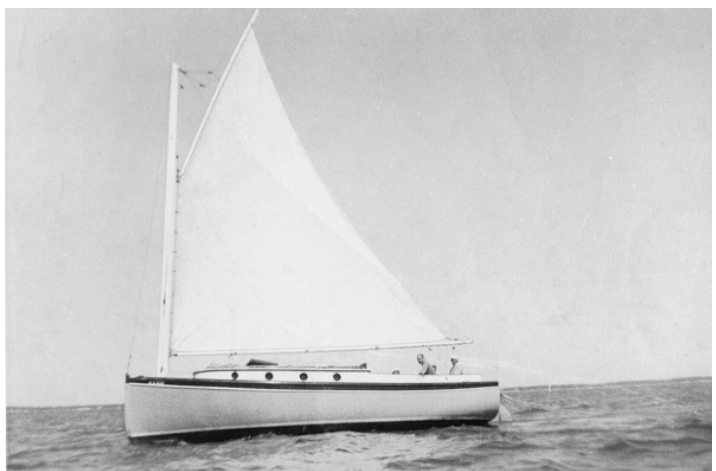


Blue Goose – an octogenarian’s memories

At 88 yrs of age, the memory is a bit leaky, like an old boat’s, so please excuse me if I can’t get all the past into good focus. I was born 88 yrs ago, in 1928, in Taunton, MA. The place? – not where most births take place, this one was in a workshop, that of The Brown Boat Co. Not exactly Cape Cod, but close, and since I spent most of my life on the Cape starting a few yrs later I’m considered a Cape Codder by my family. Since I was just an infant, I can’t recall anything about my birthplace, The Brown Boat Co. doesn’t show up in any search: and I don’t know who my first owner might have been. It’s just a wild guess, but perhaps someone contracted my build, and with the stock market crash of 1928 he couldn’t pay for me and Brown’s lodged me for a few yrs.

Sometime in the mid-1930’s Spaulding Dunbar, of Chatham, bought me. Francis Spaulding Dunbar (1906-1991), was designer of sail and power boats and founder of the Mill Pond Boat Yard (1938) in Chatham, MA. He is best known for his traditional cat boat designs as well as well as number of cruising ketches. Many of these boats featured tandem centerboards, an innovation for which Dunbar was also well known (1). The Atwood House Museum in Chatham had an exhibit featuring him in June, 2013. He and his wife were my guests as live-a-boards when the “Great Hurricane of 1938” hit. They hopefully went ashore during the tempest, as the tides were extremely high, and Stage Harbor gets hammered by SW winds. We all survived, and the Dunbars gave birth to a son 2 weeks later.

Spaulding Dunbar owned me from the 1930’s to the late 40’s I think, then Charles and Millie Kimball kept me in Stage Harbor in the 50’s. Their son is John Kimball, who still lives in Chatham, and is about the age of my present curator. The Kimball family and their friends took good advantage of my spaciousness; John remembers many outings, with recollections of the pipe berths and wood stove with which his Mother became well acquainted.



Charles and Millie Kimball in Stage Harbor, ca 1960



John Kimball, berths and chest of drawers at the mast, ca 1955

His family sold me to David Morgan of Chatham, we sailed there for a few years before I was exiled to Florida.



Florida, ca 1970

His son, Charles, secured my release and return to Chatham in 1978, where I languished in his barn for a decade as he did some planning toward my restorations. After little progress he sold me in 1990 to Captain Tom Harper, who had gone to high school in Harwich, but was then living in North Carolina after a career in the US Navy.

He had Pease Bros. spend 3+ years giving me a complete rebuilt/refit. (2) Pease Boatworks now occupies the same facility in Mill Pond, Chatham, that Spaulding Dunbar created. I received many new ribs and planks, garboards, transom, cockpit, decks. A new engine, tanks and head were installed. My cabin was stripped, gutted, and rebuilt.



New stem



engine installed

On August 22, 1993 I finally splashed again, at Stage Harbor Marine, and Capt. Harper loaded me with 17 people; friends and family, plus Tom Ennis who had sailed with me and the Kimballs some 30 years earlier. I had no mast or ballast at this time, so we just motored out to Harding Beach Point and back. A year later I finally received the mast, and Capt. Tom bent on that ratty old sail, after it had some repairs. At least we could finally sail again, but I let him know that such rags weren't proper for a lady with all new underpinnings, and in July 1995 I got new threads. I enjoyed summers in Stage Harbor with the Harpers, and 3 or 4 more winters with the Peases while they continued my below decks refurbishment. In Aug. 1995 I took Capt. Harper, with Brad and Mike Pease, to the Nantucket Antique Boat Race. I was one of the smaller boats, next to some lovely schooners, and we spent most of the afternoon with one reef, watching the others ahead of us race on.

In August 1998 I was "trundled" by truck to Beaufort, NC. I had only spent about 3 weeks in the water there before Hurricane Bonnie made her appearance in Beaufort. She managed to saw through my 3 anchor rodes and I was cast ashore against a concrete bulkhead.

(pix & more text incl hurricane repair in 98)



In 2014 Al and Pat Parker bought me from Captain Harper, who lives in Burlington, NC, but has a house in Beaufort, NC

(1) sailboatdata.com

(2) peaseboatworks.com
<http://chathammag.com/?p=824>