



One Boat – Ten Stories

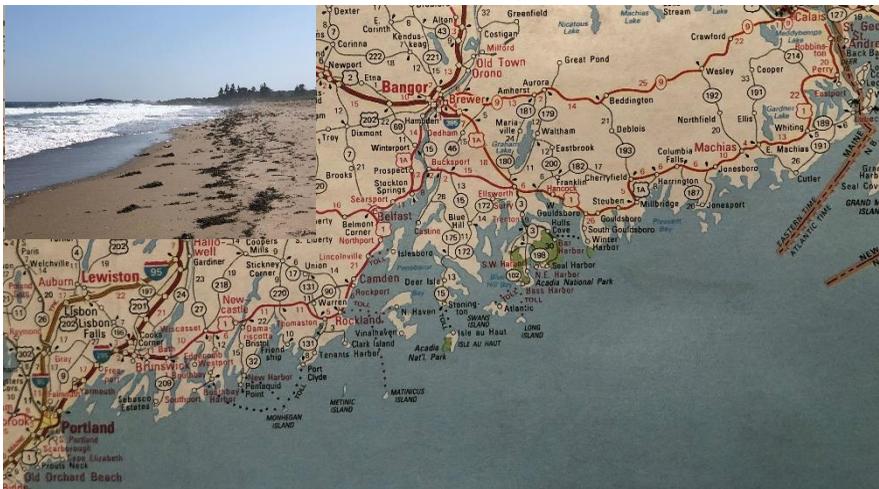


22 Tuesday

Sailing Maine, USA: Blueprint 113 William Roesner

The Maine coast runs from southwest in a northeasterly direction, with prevailing summer breezes in the same direction, which explains why Mainers call traveling up the coast “going down (wind) east.” The state got its name from early settlers who primarily occupied the islands, referring to the Indigenous populated mainland as “the Maine.”

North of Boston, coastal New Hampshire and southern Maine share the same low-lying, sandy beaches as southern New England, with a few settled village harbors. Not until Portland, on Casco Bay, is encountered the beautiful, rugged, rock-strewn and pine-forested coast that by car you get occasional glimpses of as you proceed “Downeast”. These drives inspired me to get a boat to experience this stunning coast and its islands.



Nicholson 31 Association

“The classic blue water cruiser”



Between graduating from MIT and my first job in Boston, I learned to sail. Another decade passed before buying a 23ft racer-chaser. Four years later, Elizabeth and I longed for a larger boat, a quality vessel, big enough to stand up in, to venture “Downeast”; Elizabeth determined we bought a new boat. The vessel needed to be one we would keep for a long time and, if our ambitions grew, would take us anywhere, not just to Maine. 41 years later, I still sail that vessel. We decided on the Camper-Nicholson 31. We placed an order in the fall of 1981 which Elizabeth, married to an architect, named **Blueprint**. It was finished in Gosport in early 1982, delivered by ship to NYC, and subsequently trucked to Robinhood Marine, Georgetown Island; our homeport for the past 41 years.



After her commissioning followed 18 wonderful summer seasons cruising Maine on *Blueprint*. (In January 2000, after a prolonged battle with breast cancer, Elizabeth passed away. After her death, feeling life was short, I decided to get away from Maine for a while. With a trans-Atlantic crossing and cruising in Europe, three sailing friends joined me for the mid-June 2001 passage. I cover this European trip in “My *Blueprint* for a Life Afloat: Camper Nicholson 31-113”, *Nicholson 31 Association Newsletter*, April 2021, 17-25. In 2006, ten days after motoring onto the half sunk Dockwise ship I backed *Blueprint* off it for a delivery cruise back to Maine; the last ten years with my Maine-loving first mate, Carol Clark.)

A Nicholson 31 is perfect to cruise Maine waters. Its coast is about 250 miles “as the crow flies,” but there are 3,500 miles of in-and-out coastline (5,500 miles as measured by satellite). It is beautiful, rugged with hundreds of harbors, rivers, gunk-holes and anchorages. Home to abundant wildlife - dolphins, seals, whales and seabirds. The waters also contain millions of lobsters and the pots, which a Nic 31 is well designed to avoid.

Cruising starts east from Portland, on Casco Bay, a shallow ledge-filled body of water, challenging the best of navigators. Past Georgetown Island and the Sheepscot River, is beautiful Boothbay.

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Further east is Muscongus Bay, festooned with islands and thousands of floating colorful lobster pots; I’ve caught just one in 35 years. Past Muscongus Bay lies the expansive Penobscot Bay with its picturesque homes and lighthouses, such as that on Southern Island and Owl’s Head. It is separated west from east by a myriad of islands including Islesboro, Vinalhaven and North Haven. On the Bay’s west shore are colorful, attractive old mainland harbor towns of Rockland, Rockport, Camden, and Belfast. The Bay is bounded to the east by Deer Isle and a cluster of islands called Merchants Row. Some are dotted with granite quarries mined to supply Boston and New York for a couple of hundred years, but today offer a multitude of remote, wild, and quiet anchorages. On Deer Isle’s south coast is the busy lobster-fishing town of Stonington.

Past Deer Isle lies Swans Island, where in early August is the fabulous 3-day Sweet Chariot Music Festival. The island has ferry service but no public accommodations, which means sailors (and the occasional motorized vessel operator) are the only Maine visitors who know about the festival. It starts daily in late afternoon as folk musicians cruise through Burnt Coat Harbor in a small square-rigged vessel for the evening performance.



Northeast of Swans is the primary destination of Maine sailors: Acadia National Park, the home of the famous American yacht builder Hinckley in Southwest Harbor, the yachting center Northeast Harbor and Somes Sound, the only fjord on the US east coast. These are on Mount Desert Island as well as places like Thuya Gardens, to explore, or Cadillac Mountain, to hike or climb; far east and 1,527 ft. high it is the first place in the US to see the sun rise.

Cruising Maine, always in sight of land, at least when its notorious fog doesn’t set in. The state’s four centuries of nautical history stimulates the imagination of those who travel her waters. For ambitious American sailors and visiting voyageurs alike, coastal Maine’s extraordinary beauty earns it the title of America’s primary cruising ground.

Nicholson 31 Association

“The classic blue water cruiser”



Amended following the death of Her Majesty *Queen Elizabeth II*

Ten Stories

16 Friday

Ownership Since New:

Dolly V 092 Alex Moore

17 Saturday

Nic31 Design & Development:

Michael Wright

18 Sunday

Argentina or bust:

Darteign 098 Eric Witheridge

19 Monday

***Funeral of
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II***

20 Tuesday

Atlantic Crossing:

Misty Ord 047
Jack Gifford & Alice Pr at

21 Wednesday

Cruising UK: Liberty Jane 095
Michael Wright

22 Thursday

Sailing Maine, USA:

Blueprint 113
Bill Roesner

23 Friday

The Future:

The boat & Association
Ian Stone

Boat Show – Association Day

24 Saturday

French Passages:

Michael Wright

25 Sunday

Upgrades:

High Spirits 022 Ian Stone

Cruising Ireland:

Seal Morning 013
Mitch Cameron-Mitchell

Find them at: <https://www.nicholson31.com/>



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