



The Story Behind Marina Floating Homes Barnhill Marina

Alameda, California
Richard Boland.
2022

The Barnhill Marina story began November 17, 1966 when A.V. Barnhill and his wife Gloria signed the Grant Deed to purchase "Alameda Marsh Land" from Ed and Vera Thrall and Oliver and Phyllis Meek.

There was a large one-story floating home berthed on the west end of the marina and Barney, Gloria, Shelly and Kelly moved in.

Cyril Strom and his wife were the only other family living in a floating home built on a boat hull with the house on top when Barney became the owner.

From the date of purchase until late 1968 Barney built docks and brought in an assortment of floating homes...

RECORDING REQUESTED BY
AY130219
RECORDED at REQUEST OF
Title Insurance & Trust Co.
At 9:30 A.M.
NOV 17 1966
OFFICIAL RECORDS OF
ALAMEDA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
JACK G. BLUE
COUNTY RECORDER

Name: Mr. A. V. Barnhill
Street: P.O. Box 696
City & State: Fremont, Calif.
200
MAIL TAX STATISTICS TO:
Name: SAME AS ABOVE
Street:
City & State:
Affix I.R.S. \$
UNITED STATES
POSTAL SERVICE
DOCUMENTARY
NOV 17 1966
80 CENTS

Grant Deed
THIS FORM FURNISHED BY TITLE INSURANCE AND TRUST COMPANY

FOR A VALUABLE CONSIDERATION, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, E. L. THRALL and VERA THRALL, his wife, and OLIVER W. MEEK and PHYLLIS H. MEEK, his wife, hereby GRANT(S) to A. V. BARNHILL, and GLORIA M. BARNHILL, his wife, the following described real property in the City of Alameda, County of Alameda, State of California:

PORTION of Tract #32, as shown on the map of "Alameda Marsh Land as Partitioned by Suit #8923", dated July 30, 1900, described as follows:

COMMENCING at a point on the Peralta Grant Line, said point bearing south 40° 51' east, 74.36 feet from point #166, of said Peralta Grant Line; thence south 26° 14-1/2' west, 106.93 feet to a point on the right of way line of the Southern Pacific Company; thence in a northerly direction along the arc of a curve to the left, with a radius of 408.6 feet, a distance of 99.13 feet to a point on the Peralta Grant Line; thence north 40° 52' west, along said line, a distance of 33.01 feet to the point of commencement.

Dated September 30, 1966

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF Alameda } ss.
On September 24, 1966, before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for said State, personally appeared E. L. Thrall and Vera Thrall and Oliver W. Meek and Phyllis H. Meek and they acknowledged that they executed the foregoing instrument and acknowledged that they executed the same.

ROBERT M. NIELEBECK
Notary Public
Alameda Co., Calif.

Title Order No. 02-115176

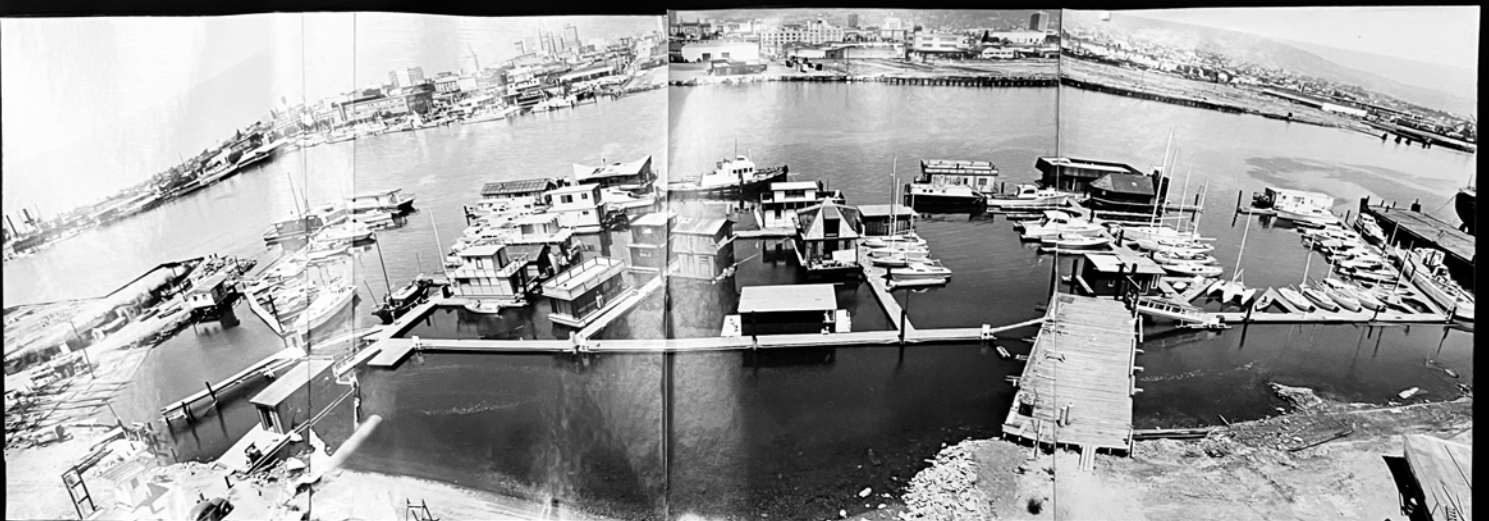
ORIGINAL DEED FOR BARNHILL MARINA



BARNHILL MARINA, 1966



BARNHILL MARINA, 1967



The floating home story with Richard Boland and Lenny Farrauto begin when I returned home to San Francisco from Active duty at Fort Ord in 1966. My current girlfriend, Lucy Bozeman, suggested I visit a friend of hers, Tom White who was living on a floating home/houseboat in Oakland opposite Coast Guard Island. The floating home that Tom was in was a 2 bedroom with bunk beds, 800 square feet including a front and upper deck, a kitchen or galley, living room, one bathroom and a fireplace. He was looking for a roommate. I jumped at the chance to be Toms roommate and my life changed directions the moment I moved in. Living on the water, on a houseboat seemed to be a million miles from my home on an Illinois farm.

The houseboat was built by Bud Pollard and Bob Minton and was berthed in front of two restaurants off the Embarcadero in Oakland. I spent days on the upper deck making appointments for the evenings work and time sailing a Sunfish sailing around the Estuary. In the evening I drove my small convertible around the East Bay selling Life insurance to homeowners for Family Life Insurance Company. I had to force work time away from the houseboat. I didn't want to leave.

The attractions for a single guy living on a floating home went beyond a peaceful, tranquil, relaxing lifestyle. A friend of mine liked the setting and referred a newly formed group to consider my home for a party location. The co-ordinator called me to set a date...for the new organization called the SFL. I had no idea what that was and didn't ask for more details. The day before the party date the event co-ordinator called again to see when they could bring the mattresses on board. Mattresses???? What for I thought? Besides I'm berthed in front of two busy restaurants...- No way will mattresses be carried down the dock in front of a crowd of diners. So, after closing 2 am on the morning of the party...two guys were carrying mattresses down the dock like ants with bread for their nest. It all seemed to make sense...it was probably for some spiritual gathering...sitting around being spiritual.

I had a blind date that evening for the party. Soon my home was filled with 20 or so strangers...sure enough all sitting around on the mattresses neatly organized on my floor in front of the fireplace. About 20 minutes into the evening...Tom and Ginny, the event leaders got up and removed every item of clothing and hung them in my closet. Within 15 minutes my date and I were the only ones fully clothed.

The group was the "Sexual Freedom League" and my floating home was their premier first gathering.....1966.

In December of 1967 I was at Alta Bates in Berkeley repairing a rodeo injury and on the evening news my houseboat was featured. She had been blown off its Oakland dock onto Coast Guard Island in a bad storm. I connected with Tom White. who had temporarily moved elsewhere and on release from the hospital I moved back on board at a new berthing location. the 5th Ave. Marina in Oakland. The home Oakland dock was torn up and not available and this was the only ready berthing option for the owner. There was a fireplace and no wood. and enough electricity for lights but not for a heater and the propane tank was empty. Not a fun time for recovery in the winter.

Sometime after in 1967 Bud Pollard and Bruce Westphal, the floating homeowners organized with A.V (Barney) Barnhill to tow the houseboat to Alameda to Barneys new marina project. Barney did the towing in a small work boat with a towing post in the center. There were maybe 6 or so floating homes there at the time. some of them built by Bud Pollard and Bob Minton. Bud and Bobs home were all of foam floatation with the house exterior walls angled out from their base.

Barney had prepared a berth for this houseboat at the east end on the outside of the marina. It was a perfect location. Plenty of lines for tie up, plenty of electricity and a great view of the Estuary. Tom moved back in, and we were set.

Keith Iverson, one of Bud and Bobs customer had also just moved his floating home in and was a part of the welcoming. Barnhills Marina was also a boat yard...with a rail haul out at the west end. Barney had boats hauled for repair and painting...and when he was not doing his regular work of building tilt up concrete buildings...he was working at the boat yard and marina. Barney seemed to enjoy the houseboats and owners, the marina under construction and the boat yard activity. He lived in his own floating home with his new wife "Muzzy" Balbina on an outside berth...west end.

I came close to an involuntary departure from Barnhill Marina. The SFL was again looking for a party place and asked if my floating home was ok at the new location. I quite frankly did not see an issue and said OK. The guests arrived and were led down the dock to my home. The party was in full swing so to speak. I heard a knock on the outer wall. It was Barney standing on the dock. I went out to meet him... He was not smiling and told me if I did end this party immediately, he would cut the god damn lines holding the house to the dock. We both stood there for a moment looking at each other when we both noticed the house was moving in the water and not from rough seas. At that point I said, "absolutely of course Barney" and I went in to tell all on board to go home. I don't recall every speaking about this with Barney again and there were no future parties on my floating home at Barnhill. Later, on several occasions Len and I with diving gear on would swim under Barneys houseboat and would make scuffing noises or bang on the wood part of his pontoons. He finally figured it out...and we seemed to be on his good side going forward. One occasion Barny invited Len and I go sailing with him...It was a great day with Barney...he loved to be out on the water. That was my longest day and last time sailing.

On the land side, in front of the concrete silos I noticed a guy (Ed Major) working on building a hull for a houseboat.... wood frame, plywood and a new material called "fiberglass". Each day he would make some progress...and occasionally I would offer to help him with various parts of the project. Ed was a project manager on the new Bart rail system between Oakland and San Francisco and I assumed he knew what he was doing. He was ready to start the fiber glassing the hull bottom which was simply laying on the ground. He needed help...Ed had a 5 gallon can of resin with a small cap opening and bottle of catalyst. His instructions to me were to add an unspecified amount of catalyst into the resin can and stir. I followed his instructions exactly...but while stirring from the small opening...smoke or steam began to come out of the can. The can began to harden...and at that point I had a solid rectangular can of solid resin. I called Tap (Taylor and Art Plastics in San Leandro who was the area supplier of fiberglass products and got a better explanation of how to mix the two ingredients. From then on, the resin went into an open buck- et...with a measuring cup for the correct amount of catalyst and the application to the cloth began. No one mentioned wearing rubber gloves...or Acetone for hand cleaning. If ever resin ever fires off under your finger nails....you will remember both.



BOTTOM PORTION OF ED MAJORS BARGE, 1967.

Ed turned over the hull bottom with a crane and finished building the sides and top deck...He invited me to join to help with launching his project at night and at high tide . I had met Lenny Farrauto, my future building partner at party's I had on board in Oakland. and invited him to join the event. With Lenny in his Corvette providing some light from his headlight Ed started his launch rolling the hull forward on 55-gallon drums. He was pushing the hull in the water with a truck. Midway through the launch it cracked...in the middle. but the hull continued to slide into the bay. leaking from the start.

After the launch Ed had to depart the project. a car accident I recall and somehow, I got further involved with the leaking hull (barge) keeping it afloat with a pump. I was sitting on the deck one day...watching the water pumping out and Barney came by. He solemnly looked at what was going on. and said "Richard, you're not going to build anything on that are you?" Since repair was still an option in my mind. Barney helped me tow the barge with his workboat over to the concrete headways 1-4 next to his marina and at high tide we blocked it up to see what had happed during the launch. The break was unrepairable and all Eds and my efforts were wasted. The barge continued to sit on blocks on the concrete ramps for an unknown time.

Rich Clark was building a catamaran behind the silos and needed lumber and plywood to build a shop. Barney gave him the materials from the barge if he would clean the entire barge off of the ramp. Rich tore it apart and used lumber and plywood. Barney liked people involved with building and Rich fondly remembers Barney being a great landlord and a friend. He rented the building space for Rich to build for \$25.00 a month including electricity. Rich went on to build his own floating home on pontoons which still berthed at Barnhill. One of the owners of his home wrote a newsletter for the Barnhill floating home association which is still available.

Rich recalls a story about Barney asking a tenant at that time not to park in a certain space...twice...and the guy decided to try Barney a third time. this time Barney drove his forklift thru the van, picked it up and moved it to the new parking spot. Needless to say, he did not come again.

The story I recall around that time...was about the lunch truck stopping by Barneys job site...Barney asked him not to return. The next day he did return, and Barney proceeded to pick up the lunch wagon with his forklift and moved it off of his job site. I understand the lunch truck did not return.

At some point during all of this I decided I wanted to give "building floating homes" a try. Insurance selling was not interesting...so why not. Understanding I was not a carpenter and had only built a small portable corn crib for a FFA project in high school I understood my limited personal contribution to this. I spoke to Lenny Farrauto, whom I had met at a party or two and who at time was an engineer at the Electric Boat Division of General Dynamics. maker of submarines. Len was also not a home builder and he represented to me that he really didn't know how to build any part of a floating home.

Bud and Bruce needed to haul out their floating home to repair the storm damage and therefore Tom White and I had to move out for a week or so. The present Rodeway Inn on Webster Street Alameda became home. I called Keith Iverson who had done some drawing for his own fun to come visit. I wanted Keith to draw up a sketch of a floating home...20' x 40' one story with canvas enclosures on the deck. Basically, it was what I was living on. Back on-board Len and I decided to give the "building idea" a try. There was a huge, deserted building on the Pacific Marina next to an 8-story apartment building under construction. There was a two-story office building between the apartments and the shop. The vacant shop building was filled with debris from the last user. The property owner, Dwayne Titus, was occupying a large red brick building nearby working on modular homes. He agreed to rent us 1/2 of the Pacific Bridge building for I recall for \$300.00 per month...probably a handshake deal. Svendsen's Boat Yard had been in the building as a part of his operation and was moving to his new location at the Alameda Marina. His "in the water" haul out equipment was next to a large restaurant named "The Galleon". The Galleon was 200 yards from our new shop.

David Case, an airline pilot was next to Svendsen's getting a sailboat ready for a long cruise. Tito Rivino was building small sailboats in his shop 100 feet from our new shop. This Oakland Yacht Club was upstairs in the office building. The other half of our shop was empty when we moved in... but later rented by Dick Backus. who started his own floating home building business, a competitor at the time. The Caravel apartments, now called the Panomar apartments, were under construction. They would build a floor and jack it up to build 7 more stories of apartments that way. In the nearby area hundreds of concrete forms that were left over from WWII houses. These buildings were housing for the workers at Bethlehem Steel during WW II. Bethlehem Steel was in a huge red brick building, a quarter of a mile west, now torn down and replaced by 3 similar looking structures.



PACIFIC BRIDGE BUILDING. OUR SHOP.

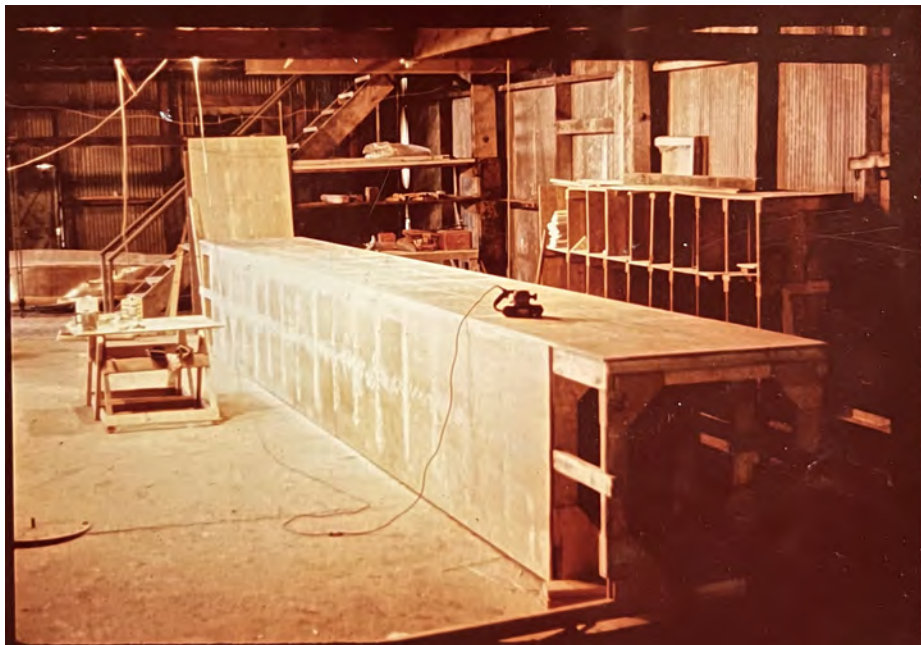
Neither Lenny nor I had any money, so I borrowed \$500.00. Len has a few dollars and a pay-check. We scraped together some additional cash and moved into the shop without any equipment or tools, we cleaned up the concrete floor. Lenny drew up the plans for two pontoons and the floor/deck for a 20 x 40' platform. I ordered lumber from a close by yard in Oakland and organized the other items needed to get started that included Weldwood Plastic Resin Glue, Galvanized wood screws from Proper Tighe in Alameda, Eandi Metal in Oakland fabricating the steel plates we bolted on each corner with a holes drilled for the galvanized tie up rings We bought some basic tools, a compressor, nail guns, saws, drills, sanders etc. from Markus Hardware in Oakland and Pagano's Hardware in Alameda. West Marine was just getting stated in Alameda and we were also underway with Marina Homes.

At some point I placed an ad in the SFO Chronical. "Houseboats built to order" I received 1 call...- from a bait shop owner, Ken Martin at the Locke Lomond marina. I had Keith Iverson sketch of the proposed exterior and a floorplan layout to present to Ken. Ken wanted a combination bait shop and residence and liked what he saw. He had a burned-out tugboat hull with no house or deck. Only the charred frames and planking remained. He offered it in trade plus cash for his floating home order. We agreed to the trade but had no idea how we were going to complete this project.

We met Jerry Cruitt, an architect living nearby. Jerry signed on and agreed to do a working drawing based on Keith's sketch. So now we then had a plan.... a deposit and a burned-out tugboat hull and unbridled energy to get started.

I visited Lester Stone at Stones boat yard during this process to discuss my project. His yard was on the East side of the Park street bridge and I asked for any pointers he could share with me about building pontoons or barges. His only comment I recall was "Richard, you can't ever make any money building wood boats" and good luck with your project.

Len and I bought a book on "carpentry" and proceeded to slowly build the pontoons based upon Lenny's design for framing. Somehow the lumber, glue, ring shank gun nails, galvanized wood screws, wood preservative, Bondo, and fiberglass came together as two finished 4 x 4 x 40' pontoons with Len and I providing the labor.



PONTOONS UNDER CONSTRUCTION, MAY, 1968



PONTOONS UNDER CONSTRUCTION, MAY, 1968



RICHARD BOLAND, MAY, 1968

The pontoons were finished inside the shop and turned over. We moved them outside the shop and placed the floor joists 2 x 10" 2' on center in the pre-built plywood slots we had designed into the pontoon. They were glued and nailed to the gusset plates and now were ready for the flooring.

At some point Len and I realized we had no idea how to build the house...We ran an ad and hired a carpenter...Bill and ordered the lumber per Jerrys specs. Bill was a good teacher but a slow builder...Len finally decided he could do this as well We let Bill go. Len and I took over the framing task and Jerry provided some guidance. We found sub-contractors: Jal Vue for win-downs and sliding doors in Oakland, Markus Hardware for interior doors and tools, Bud Townsend, B and B Electric for electricKen Martin came by a few times to check on progress and at the end of the project approved his new home. Barney and Muzzy would occasionally come by with words of encouragement.



FIRST HOME UNDER CONSTRUTION



There was one major unresolved issue. How to get the house to the water?

I thought this would be simple matter ...bring in a crane or two and lifting it over the bank to the water. I called Sheedy Company to come to look over the situation. Their agent simply said "I'm sorry we can't do this" Your houseboat is too wide, too heavy, the soil is not a solid footing next to the Estuary and you're too far from the water.

So, there she sat...almost finished and on land.

After some research I called Troust House moving company in Concord. Ralph Troust, the company founder, and owner came out to look over the options. He could no doubt move the house...but said we needed a ramp to roll it down. He would work with us and call when we had a ramp. How do you cut a ramp moving many yards of dirt to gain access to the Estuary in Alameda in 1968?

I didn't know of any reason that a ramp could not be built...laws, codes etc. I located a dirt contractor with a Cat dozer and excavator and asked him to dig out a ramp approximately 60' wide from our driveway to the water. We needed to extend the ramp as far out into the water as possible. The deal included that he starts on a Saturday morning early and finishes by Sunday night. The work went well and by Sunday we had a ramp of dirt and mud. We knew Dwayne, the property owner, came by every Monday morning and went home on Friday afternoon. This time when he came by on Monday morning after the job was finished...he stopped his car and looked at the project for a few minutes. Len and I were standing in the shop waiting for a reaction. We were relieved when he simply drove on to his shop located in the old Bethlehem building ½ mile away.

We then proceeded that week to form up two ramps 5' wide each and 20' overall width from the driveway to the water...we finished at the lowest tide point.

The next Sat. morning the concrete trucks arrived and Len, Jerry, and I plus anyone around poured concrete 5 1/2" deep with rebar. We used a fast-curing mix (Pozzolan admixture) for the part poured at low tide. Mission complete...again the owner drove by on Monday morning and again stopped and looked at our work in progress and drove on.

Ralph Troust returned and with steel tubes 2' long and 6" diameter...long beams, jacks, and years of experience he jacked the home up, sat her on the beams and moved the house sideways to line up with our new ramp. He cut with an axe tapered ends on the leading edge of each beam and placed them under the pontoons. Then he pushed the house forward...I recall Len and I moving the steel tubes as they rolled out the back of the beams and bringing them forward to continue the forward movement. Once on the ramp he had a steel cable from each corner from our tie up rings back to his tow truck to hold us back as we progressed downhill. The unknown at that point waswould the house lift up from the water as we went forward for the last few feet...or would the pontoons fill up with water and she would sink at the end of the ramp? .

Every inch forward was with more tension on part. As we moved to the end of our new concrete the water level was getting close to the 2 x 10" rub rail and the top of the bow deck. I signaled to Ralph to release the line to his truck, and we would then push forward. The last steel roller was in the mud as she lifted off the beam. Almost in sync and she was floating. There were about 20 plus watching this. one taking a movie of it which I have. We let her sit in place for some time...to see if she was really going to stay floating. Either I or Barney then towed her to a berth next to the old Svendsen's dock to begin to finish up some details



RICHARD UNDER PONTOON



TROUST MOVING TO LAUNCH



RICHARD BOLAND MOVING TUBES



LENNY CHECKING LAUNCHING



READY TO LAUNCH



RICHARD AND LENNY PREPARING TO LAUNCH



THE RAMP

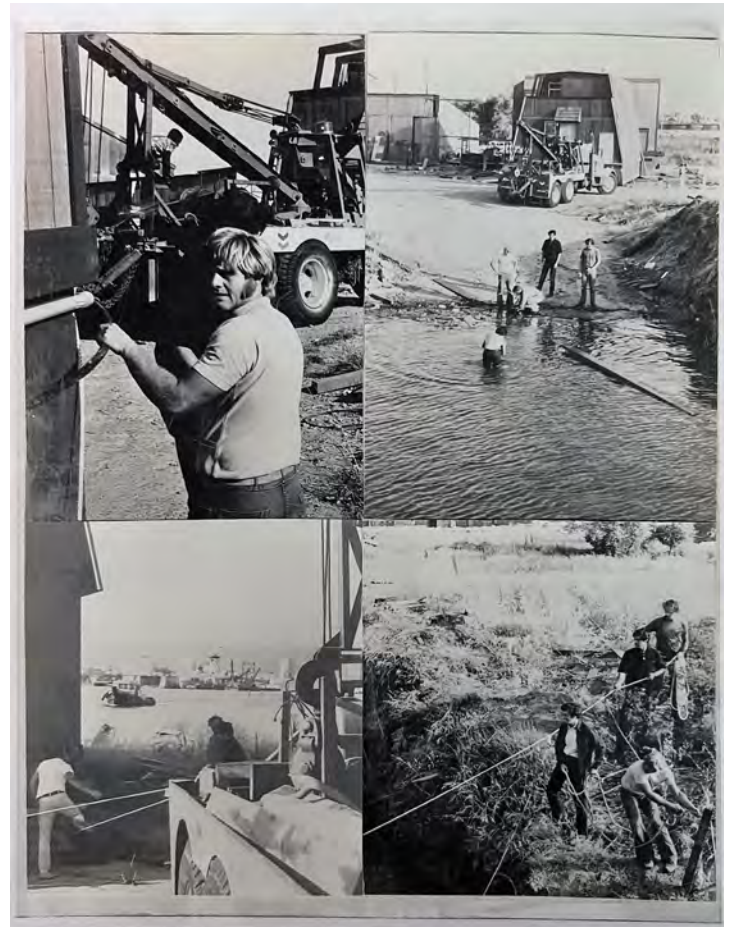


RICHARD, RALPH TROUST AND LENNY

John Seaborne did the towing and I remember riding on the upper deck while underway to Ken berth in Lock Lomond Marina...with tears running down my cheeks...I guess from relief and pure joy of getting this impossible project finished. Barney and Mussie waved as we went by. The Lock Lomond Bait shop was eventually sold was relocated to Kappas's marina in Sausalito 54 years ago...I have stopped in to check with her current owner and she still looks to be in top condition



SEABORNE TUG



NEIL YONK, CLOYD DAWSON, RICHARD ON LAUNCH, LAUNCH HELPERS

With the bait shop completed and delivered...Marina Homes...our new company name was out of business...so to speak...We had no additional orders.... However, sometime thereafter...in walked Herman Hogrefe...a wood boat owner a resort in the Delta called Grindstone Joes. He had an idea for a floating vacation home for his berth in Grindstones...and he said he was getting to be to old for operation a power boat. Jerry Cruitt, our architect Len and I met with Herman and began the design process for perhaps another order. Herman came thru...signed the build agreement and we were off and running for project # 2.

The design called for 2 pontoons...3' deep x 4' x 44' with a tapered bow on each pontoon. for easier towing or perhaps in the future adding a couple of motors on the stern. We built the pontoons again as separate pieces. which required adding the floor joists when each pontoon was turned over and lined up perfectly.... all went well and according to plan...with one exception. We had built 2 port side pontoons which of course would not work for adding the floor joists as each inboard pontoon had gusseted slots for the joists to set in and be glued and nailed into place. We had no option but to start over and build another pontoon. this time for the starboard side. This project had a walk around each side, bow and stern decks.

I had worked up a system for fiber glassing the pontoons by first applying catalyzed resin to the plywood surface and then un-rolling a pre-cut/sized roll I had made up of A Cloth 9 oz 5' wide onto the wetted resin and then adding more catalyzed resin as needed to the top of the cloth. This seemed to give better adhesion to the plywood by insured maxim saturation to the cloth. Once that was cured...I added a 6" stripe of fiberglass cloth to the chines and then rolled on catalyzed resin to the bottom and sides of the pontoons to add thickness to the application. The original application was a structural layup resin as suggested by Tap Plastics. (Taylor and Art Plastics)

Glassing decks should work the same I thought...just find a way to make them non-skid and find a way to make the connection to the house to the deck waterproof. The solution was to apply by throwing white sand on top of the almost cured resin in the areas I was working on...It had to be sticky enough to hold some of the sand...after covering the deck with sand...and after complete curing I would blow off the excess sand with an air compressor or sweep with a broom leaving a smooth non-skid deck.

The 90 degrees turn from the deck to the wall framing was offset with a simple addition of a nailed on 45-degree wood trim piece around 3 sides of the structure that allowed the cloth to follow a slopping path from deck to under siding. Therefore, no concern for future cracking. We raised the sliding glass doors up on a 1' x or 2" x 4" help keep water from traveling under to slider to the inside of the home and or the hull.

The Herman Hogrefe e project went well...Lenny was now the lead carpenter, and I was his helper. Plumbing was an in-house project. My job focus became selling the homes, costing, ordering materials and building the pontoons and barges with Lenny. I did all the fiberglass work. Barney came by a few times to say hello.

Herman was pleased with his finished floating vacation pad and we prepared for launch.



HERMAN HOGREFE FLOATING HOME

Ralph Truost, this time had fabricated a set of wheels for moving the house down the ramp. He designed car wheels (4) welded to 5' steel I beams that the stern end of the pontoons would sit on. For the forward pontoons he provided steerable house moving wheels with a long tongue to enable us to turn the leading wheels. A long wood beam 12" x 16" x 20' was set on the wheels spanning to each pontoons to rest on. A tightened chain on each side ran from the forward beam to the back wheel set to keep them coming along as we moved forward. The floating home itself was so stiff that you could jack it up at 3 points and the 4th would follow. The launch was uneventful...she lifted off the wheels as planned and this time I towed her to Svendsen's old dock. We still had work to do inside...so Len and I put several late work nights to finish the ceiling tiles and call this project finished.

Either John Seaborne, Don Sanborne or I towed our homes to their destinations. John had a real tugboat and towed barges of sand around the bay for Tidewater Sand and Gravel. Don owned a dive shop in Alameda selling gear and giving diving lessons. He lived at Barnhill on his boat...named "Beachcomber". She was a 45'-50' or so twin-screw yacht...and did various towing jobs in the bay. Len and I bought a work boat, added a center towing post and I towed all of the future homes on launching to a dock by the Galleon Restaurant, Svendsen's old dock, to Barnhills or Kappas Marina in Sausalito. John, Len and I delivered Herman Hogrefe home to Grindstone Joes off the Stockton Channel. Herman was on hand for the delivery and helped with the tie-up. Other members of Grindstones ended up ordering the same model.



DON SANBORN TOWING TO BARNHILL

We have now completed and delivered 2 homes and again without an order for another. We needed the next project so Len, Jerry and I came up with a new design, a two-story home with the master bedroom on the upper level, kitchen, bath and a living room below. with interior stairs. I recall a bank loaned us some money to get this going...Out of fear of adding to much weight on the upper level we kept the upper bedroom small. 12'-16' I recall. She had exposed wood beams, 4" x 8" @ 4' On Center with 2" x 6' T&G spanning the open space with wood shakes on the exterior. The wood railings of 2"x 4" timber and 2" x 2" posts. We painted "Majestic" wood stain on the beams and "Warm Glow" on the exposed lumber by Sherwin Williams. Carpeting was laid on the floor by Don Dixon...fiberglass on the decks front and back. We still on built pontoons for this model and the designed dimension was 16' by 40'.

As we were finishing finding a prospective buyer, Tom Walker came to our shop. Tom had met my roommate, Tom White on our rented floating home and knew about his living aboard. Tom came to see what we were building. He liked it and became the owner of home #3, our first two story home. Our material bills got paid and life was good.

Launching the first two-story home caused concern...It was possible the extra weight might keep the house from lifting off the beam and wheels before water came pouring into the pontoons. To provide some insurance that this would not happen...we built a wood box to fit between the pontoons, later to be removed. I fiberglassed it like the finished pontoons and we attached it to the cross timbers. Again, inch by inch ralph released the brake on his cable brake and the wheels rolled forward. This time there was a crowd of neighbors and subcontractors watching this potential disaster unfold. Again, the water came up close to the deck...but not as close as the previous launch. The box did its job of adding to the lift...and forward we went until the home was floating and was ...perfectly balanced and level. Lenny had again completed the off center loading calculation which dictated the floorplan. Again, we have completed a successful design, build and launch.



TOM WALKER'S FLOATING HOME AT BARNHILLS MARINA



BARNEY WITH HIS WORKBOAT

Barney has approved this home and Tom coming to his marina...but the berth was not ready when we launched...so Tom's new home remained tied to the Galleons guest dock for some time. Finally, I recall Don on Beachcomber or I or Barney towed Tom to Barnhills Marina. To gain access from the new dock Tom welded up a ramp from his deck to the dock. He connected his electric cord to the dock plug in, the telephone connection, a water hose from the faucet to his inlet and a flexible 2" sewage hose to Barneys inlet on the dock. Tom was a pioneer in many ways and his purchase of his floating home. He helped us continue with our business. He let us show his home to prospective buyers and later when Bud and Bruce decided to sell my rental, I moved in with Tom...and then Jerry Cruitt also became Toms next roommate. On a visit to Calif. my parent also stayed on board Toms home. I think they were convinced I had lost my mind to be building these homes for a career. Tom today is retired and living part time in Alameda. We spoke recently about this adventure. He enjoyed reliving our past.



**TOM WALKERS HOME ON DISPLAY
AT GALLEON GUEST DOCK**

**RICHARD BOLAND,
LEONARD FARRAUTO,
JERRY CRUITT
ON TOMS NEW HOME.**



Orders began to come in and with Barneys approval of each buyer he began working on providing the berthing. Andy Anderson and Jack Flederman ordered the early two-story models this time with solid hulls rather than pontoons. At 16' it made sense...as we simply laid down inside of the pontoons to form the barge. We thought we needed extra floatation with the added weight of the second level. The barges were built entirely upside down inside the shop. I built the frames on a jig. We purchase railroad tracks in 20' plus lengths then lined up and leveled one on each side...inset about 2' from the outside edge of the frames. The frames were placed on the tracks 2' on center and the longitudinal members were then glued and screwed into place. With all frames secured and I sanded each frame smooth, cleaned them off and began to apply 5/8" exterior plywood with glue and ring shank gun nails. Once nailed off, Bondo (a fiberglass reinforced filler) was applied to each recessed nail, then the entire hull was sanded smooth. From that point I fiberglassed the bottom and sides with a new resin, this time adding color and wax to the resin mix. I had at this point switched to a flexible iso resin and thickened the final flow coat on the side and bottom.

The switch to a new resin application from the initial structural layup resin happened when I accidentally hit a previously build pontoon with a hammer and the resin cracked. The flexible-iso resin allowed impact without any noticeable effect



JERRY CRUITT, RICHARD BOLAND, JACK AND MRS. FLEDERMAN AT BARNHILL MARINA

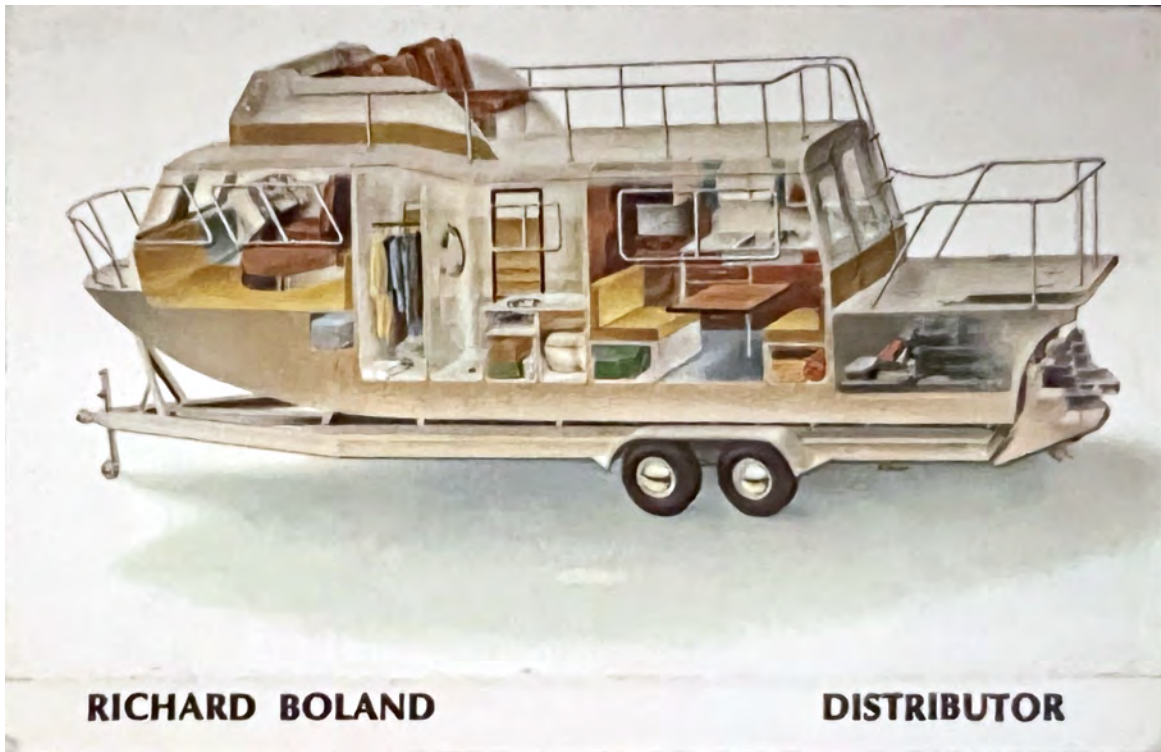
Lief Kievelich, the buyer for one of our next orders changed the design and build parameters again by asking for a "sunken" living room. Jerry or George re-designed the barge and lowered his living room floor frames inside the hull. The term "sunken" was removed from the description of this custom feature.

Sometime before starting to build Leif's home Len, Barney, Jerry, Don Sanborne and I and others began working on an ordinance for the City of Alameda to consider making floating home legal within the Alameda City Limits and establish a building code and standards for floating home construction. I don't think we understood what we were getting ourselves into but for the benefit and security of the marina and our clients, but we felt it was a good move. The code utilized the unified building code for homes on land...but added elements for a marine application for plumbing, sewage disposal and hull design and constructions details. This included a naval architect required sign off on our plans for off center loading, tipping calculations, partitioning of the hull interior, etc. Each home now had to be inspected by the Alameda building department for wiring, framing, plumbing, hull construction and overall marine applications. It brought down the requirement for Barneys marina meet the codes standards for docking floating homes including plumbing his docks for sewage disposal for each home hook up.

Barney was ahead of this and had already installed a 200-gallon lift station to pump collected material up to the city sewer line. We had installed a 30-gallon fiberglass holding tank and a Barnes SE 51 trash pump in Tom Walkers home per Barneys request. Tom was the first to hook up. All other floating homeowners to follow to follow. I was at Barnhills Marina recently and one of the owners was having her sewage pump replaced. It appeared to be the original pump and my plumbing work was completed 52 plus years earlier.

BCDC was formed thru passage of the McAteer-Petris Act in 1965. The initial San Francisco Bay Plan was approved in 1968. One of the objectives was to gain control of developments occurring in the bay that required filling the bay with dirt etc. to provide additional building sites for commercial and residential building. We didn't pay much attention to the details of the BCDC formation as it did affect us at the time. Eventually BCDC included floating homes in their scope of regulations and regarded them as "bay fill", therefore requiring the placement of a floating home in the bay be come under the scrutiny of 20 plus permitting agencies including the Corp of Engineers and others. At that point I knew building floating homes had a limited future as the Barnhill and Kappas Marina was almost at full capacity and there would not be other floating home marinas.

During that period, I became a dealer for the 28' trailerable Land N' Sea Craft at George Kappas suggestion.



At a January boat show with the Land N' Sea Craft in Los Angeles, I saw a beautiful Viking 40' on display by the Southern Calif dealer, Jeff Marsh. Within a couple weeks I was at the Miami Boat show at the Viking display and ordered a new 43' double cabin Motor Yacht and became a Viking dealer. I had no known way to pay for it at the time of the order, however my bank came thru with financing. That Viking was in the next Cow Palace Boat show and launched a successful 16-year relationship with Viking. The new Vikings arrived a few hours before the show closed the doors leading into the display area. I had the trucker go through a car wash to get the major grime off the yacht and we cleaned the rest inside with Windex and paper towels. Gary Luback and I used dozens of rolls of paper towels and many gallons of Windex. As a side note. After the show Dick Meltzer, a San Francisco advertising executive came to my shop in a limo. His driver stood by the car door as Dick walked into my shop. Sawdust, spider webs and cigarette butts were on the floor. In addition to that there were several Land N' Sea Crafts and floating homes under construction in the shop. The Viking was parked on the old Svendsen's dock nearby.

Dick did purchase that Viking 43' and his first cruise was to Tinsley Island in the Delta. To this day I thank Dick for overlooking all the reasons not to buy this yacht from me.



DICK MELTZER



**RICHARD BOLAND WITH DICK'S VIKING MOTOR YACHT
AT SVENDSON'S NEW BOAT YARD**

With the passage of Ordinance 1610 Len and I simply set about complying. We provided more detailed plans required by Alamedas building department. Each floating home now required building permit. I hired a naval architect to review our building plans and he suggested changes to enable us to be in compliance with the new code. We worked with Hep Heffernan, the lead building department person, to alter our designs on our homes to be in compliance with the ordinance.

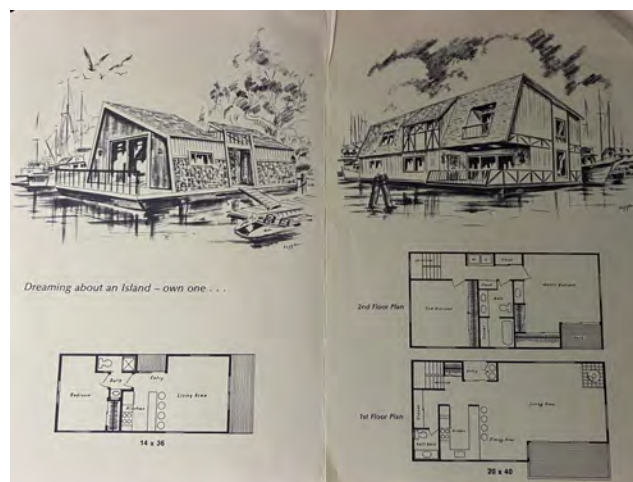
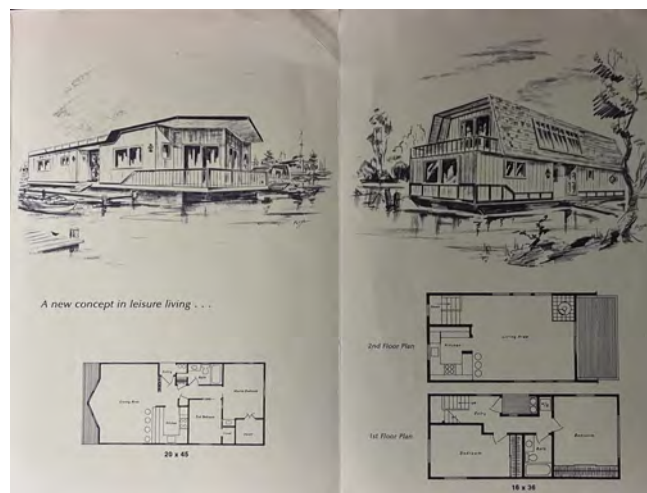
Liefs home was the first to be inspected. All went well as we were compliant in all ways except plumbing. Al Spadoni was the city plumbing inspector who required all plumbing on our home be done per land residential and commercial standards. His first call was to require us to use cast iron pipe for sewage connections and piping which would have meant tearing out all the interior walls and removing our DWV plastic piping. This was a building code and plumbers union requirement for land-based homes. This was a boat we argued. He was not giving up on this...and we were shut down.



LAUNCHING LIEFS FLOATING HOME APRIL, 1970

Finally, Al and the city relented and allowed plastic piping for waste and potable water. However, it had to be installed to land-based installation requirements. We were not in compliance for some of our connections and venting for the waste lines had to tear out some of our work and re plumb. I recall that we hired a plumbing contractor to come in and complete the project. This was a simple case of our being annoyed at the extra work and expense, but we were satisfied we had contributed to a long-term benefit for our customers.

Leif's home was the first floating home to be berthed in an outside berth at Barnhills Marina facing Oakland. Jack Flederman and then Andy Anderson moved to the new premium berthing on the outside. Barney built the entire outside berthing line up for our hull size and layout. These homes still sit in their original place...50 plus years later.



BROCHURE FOR NEW MARINA HOME MODELS



**NEW TWO LEVEL MODEL WITH
SALOON AND GALLEY UPPER LEVEL**

The two-story models were a success, and we expanded the size of the upper level on some models to cover the entire upper deck moving the living room, the galley was moved up and a small deck forward. We were able to build the complete structure in the shop by rebuilding the shop entrance. We increased the height of the opening to gain clearance for the second story to be rolled outside for finish. That involved removing the support beams and tin siding above the existing double door opening. The building did not collapse...so it must have been ok. By now we had asphalted a large area outside the shop to give us a better finishing area and we now had 5 homes under construction at the same time.

Tom Hanks farther, Bud Hanks and his stepmom Frances placed an order for one of our full two-story models with galley and saloon up. Bud and Frances were avid cooks and wanted a oversized stove and oven in their galley. We had added an architect, George Dedekian to our team and one of his first clients was Bud Hanks. When working on any of the designs weight distribution was a key as to the location of the equipment, bulkheads, and owners' furnishings. Lenny had done the weight distribution calculations and George worked with Lenny to get it right. I don't recall ever having to add lead or other weights in the hulls to balance the home. George had just started his own architectural business and we were his first customer. He worked with many more clients completing the working drawings for us to build by and the building department

**LEONARD FARRAUTO, RICHARD BOLAND,
GEORGE DEDEKIAN**



The stove was too big and heavy to fit through any stairwell. By this time, we had a forklift. I rigged a platform for the stove to take off the delivery truck and up she went to the upper deck. Lenny, Neil Yonk, our lead carpenter at the time and I wrestled the stove through the sliding door resting in the saloon for later placement in the galley. Tom Hanks came by often from school to visit his dad and stepmom and check on progress. Later he lived on board at Barnhills while finishing school. Lenny and I feel we contributed to his acting success...with his early time spent aboard one of our homes.



BUD AND FRANCES HANKS FLOATING HOME WITH RICHARD ON THE DOCK.

Another special project was for an east coast lady...Ann Bronston. Ann liked a 20' by 44 design, one story, two-bedroom, fireplace, and stairs to the upper deck featured on a brochure I had put out. Her request was that her home be located at the Oceanside Marina in Oceanside south of Long Beach on completion. A more nautical appearance was required by the Oceanside harbor-master. We tried to remove some of the "box" look and finished her siding with white paint with blue trim and blue canvas on the decks. Her drawings and details were complete and approved by Ann and the harbor-master. Because of her beam 20' and the need to tow her to somewhere we decided to go back to pontoons with more of a raked bow for a hull design. The underside of the joists between the pontoons were enclosed with 1/2" glued and nailed and fiberglass...like the pontoons. We fabricated the pontoons inside the shop and rolled her outside to be turned over with a crane. The turnovers were always tense...I drilled a 2" hole across the plywood gusset plates. that were glued and nailed to the upright and floor joist. With a chain placed thru openings spaces on two frames about 8' apart and then extended to the lifting cleat from the crane the lifts were uneventful. I had a 3rd back up chain straight down from the cleat. Once the barge or pontoons were off the ground, we were able to push the lower side toward the crane and she was lowered to blocks on the ground.

I'm not sure how we planned to get her home to Oceanside when she was ordered but this unknown did not slow up the building process. Sometime near completion moving the home to Oceanside became important. I found a broker/shipper who agreed to take on the project.

He found a barge being towed to Long Beach with a nose cone ring for a satellite company being built in Washington. It was the only cargo on board and was secured to the bow of the barge. They agreed to accommodate us on the stern portion of the barge. With that arrangement agreed to the next task was to get the home to San Francisco and loaded onto the barge. I arranged for John Seaborne to tow her to San Francisco and Sheedy Drayage agreed to a pickup the home with a single crane and place her on the barge deck. The glass windows were secured with plywood in the event either the tow to San Francisco or the barge ride to Long Beach was in heavy seas. I purchased two I beams 12" by 24' and fabricated 4' x 4" plywood pads the just shy overall to the full width of each pontoon. They were made of 1 1/8" plywood with carpet. The tow to San Francisco was uneventful and the home was tied alongside the pier with the barge tied up ahead of us.

Sheedy secured their lift cable to each end of the two beams with a 20' spreader bar secured above for spacing.

I had 4 divers in the water Neil Yonk, Maynard Graves a friend, Lenny and one other person to make sure when the beams were lowered behind the home and them slide under the pontoons. The pads had to fit perfectly under the pontoons. The divers did a great job on placement...Once placement was secure...Sheedy began to slow lift and bring upward pressure on the beams. The divers moved back and with the home about a 12" up the spreader bar collapsed sending the home slowly back into the water. The divers were clear and safe and there was no damage to the home.



RICHARD BOLAND, MAYNARD GRAVES, LEONARD FARRAUTO



PREPARING THE BEAMS



LEONARD FARRAUTO AND NEIL YONK ON THE DECK



LEONARD, NEIL YONK AND MAYNARD GRAVES DIVING



READY TO HEAD SOUTH



**MAYNARD GRAVES NEIL YONK
LENNY FARRAUTO ON SEABORN TUG**



DEPARTURE, TOWING TO LONG BEACH



READY TO LIFT ONTO BARGE



THE L BRACKETS HOLDING US IN PLACE FOR THE TRIP SOUTH.



ON DECK OF THE SOUTHBOUND BARGE

The weight of the home was greater than Sheedy had anticipated. Their solution to the problem...was to bring in another crane...with each lifting one end of the home. The lift with the two cranes had to be timed perfectly to ensure the home stayed level and didn't tip and fall into the bay. The new lift plan went into operation and the divers moved out of the way and came up to the pier...for safety. Sheedy carefully brought the home up to a level that would clear the deck height of the barge. The tug slowly pushed the barge back under the home. Per plan the floating home was lowered onto the deck of the barge and the cables were released from the beams. We were all safe with no damage to Ann's home.

The plan was to secure the beams and home to the deck cleats on the barge. An inspector for the barge company decided that we were a risk to the nose cone ring if we broke loose underway. He then required that L shaped steel support brackets be welded to the deck of the barge with the long leg extending alongside and above the wood rub rail. The home was now surrounded by these brackets. Once the welding was finished and reinspected the barge with Ann's home on board departed at dusk from San Francisco for Long Beach.

I drove to Long Beach to check out the home for any damage to the home and the fiberglass on the pontoons. At several points the fiberglass was damaged from contact with the pads or added blocking. I had resin, catalyst, wax additive and cloth in my car and completed the repairs. The home was offloaded in the same manner as loaded and a tug then towed her to Oceanside. Our pontoons held up for the Ocean tow. We were relieved. Hiring a shipping broker to deal with the delivery was a good move. He organized the entire process...San Francisco to Oceanside.

Within a few days Lenny and I were back in the shop loading a U haul van, with items we had not installed on board and headed to Oceanside. We spent perhaps a week on board finishing her floating home. Ann was a happy owner. Mission completed!!!! I

have heard Ann's home is now in San Diego. I would like to know where and see how she is holding up



ANNS HOME IN OCEANSIDE

There were times over the years that we didn't have a client's home to build...and somehow Barney always seemed to know when that was happening. We constructed 5 floating homes for Barney...3- 14' x 36' one story and 2 custom homes 16' x 40'...two story.

One of the 2 stories was entirely custom built with George and Barney working on the design and building materials to be used. Barney called for a ceiling made of 2' x 6' Douglas Fir lumber on edge...full length of the ceiling. Barney came up with that look. I remember Lenny and I laying them in and pounding the nails with Lenny. Most of Barney's orders were rentals and he always had them rented before completion. He ordered a two-story model for his brother, Warren. This one is now owned by Barneys daughter, Shelly and her husband Denis.

Sausalito floating home builders were busy at the time and George Kappas, owner of the main floating home marina was willing to take them in. Forbes Kadu was perhaps the main and most accomplished floating home builder in Sausalito.



WARRENS BARNHILL HOME. NOW OWNED BY DENIS AND SHELLY BARNHILL

With his concrete hulls and great designs. He went on to build the "Island" that was tied up at Pier 39 and used as a restaurant for many years. You could access the "Island" by a launch from a dock next to the first Harbor gate at Pier 39 provided by Forbes. She has previously been anchored off Sausalito and in the Delta for years. Forbes gave me a tour of his "Island". The interior featured the most amazing and beautiful wood working throughout. He was a brilliant craftsman!

Forbes was also building floating home in Sausalito at the same time as we were building. He was a competitor, but all his homes were on solid concrete poured in place hulls and ours were on fiberglass. Lenny and I debated switching to concrete hulls and tried several experiments with Ferrocement. Some do it yourself sailboat builders were taking a wire screen and applying a mixed concrete from each side of the screen to build their hulls. We decided that wouldn't work for what we were building. We did not have the facilities to build a poured in place hull (ie track and forms)

We discussed the concrete hull option with Barney. He told us he was not going to take any concrete hulls with floating homes into his marina. They were too heavy, and his pilings were not sufficient to hold the homes in place. That kept Forbes clients out of Barnhills, and Barney continued to provide our buyers with berthing.

Later, Barney changed his mind on concrete and several of our owners decided to put their Marina Homes on a concrete hull.



LENNY WORKING WITH CONCRETE APPLICATIONS

In some cases, they retained the side walls of our barges and cut out the bottom. The house was then placed on a freshly poured barge and secured. A benefit was adding a full basement to their structure.

George was under pressure from all agencies to bring his Kappas Marina in compliance with the local Sausalito ordinance prohibiting sewage disposal in the Bay.

I remember sitting on the dock with George discussing the system we were using in our homes and Barneys installation of a lift station to bring his marina to compliance. He planned to get his daughter and son in law, David and Helen Steckler involved.

David was at the time and is a plumbing contractor in Marin County. I had clients interested in berthing space if George would approve their application. Six of my floating homes ended up berthing at Kappa's Marina.

There were many "high Points" to working with Lenny on the floating home project. We started this together and spent many days working from dawn to dark to complete homes we had contracted to build. We simply did not charge enough for what we were delivering...and consequently our cash flow was usually in the negative. I take full

blame for that as my estimating build costs were off on many of the projects. As a result of that we slept in our office below the Oakland Yacht Club with Lenny and I switching between sleeping on the floor and our model home couch.

We camped in the Caravel apartments as tenants a couple of time without much furniture. On one occasion we owed money to the State for withholding taxes and the collectors were parked at our shop door and would not leave without payment. Len and I locked the god damn door from the inside and worked 24 hours straight to complete framing on one of our homes under construction to gain a progress payment from our client. The client came to inspect and approve our work and we paid the tax bill in full. It was a home for Alice Lobel. She didn't seem to be upset by the extra company at our shop or question paying money to an almost insolvent builder. Her floating home just happened to end up in a prime berth on the outside of Barnhills.

At some point Len became frustrated with the lack of net income or profit and mounting bills for Marina Homes and wanted to leave the partnership. We had no orders at the time and no prospects. I did not want to give it up and spent several days trying to decide what to do. I remember making the decision to stay with it. I will tell you it was a lonely moment in my life, and I missed talking to Lenny about what to do next.

Once I decided to keep going...my next step was to order lumber and other materials for a 12' x 32' barge. If I completed a hull, I thought...I might be able to sell it or a sell a finished home to someone. I remember clearly picking up the first 4' x 8' sheet of 1/2" plywood and sliding it across the table into the saw blade. The cut was the start of making gusset plates to build the hull frames. I continued cutting the pieces for the frames and lined them up for assembly. At some point during construction of that barge an architect from Sausalito came in and wanted me to build his design and to test build with foam sandwich panels for the exterior walls. About the same time a client Gil Gitchel came in and sure enough he wanted a 1-bedroom floating home, the 12' x 32' model in our brochure that I just happened to have a completed hull for. So now, the question, how do I get these projects underway? I called Lenny and asked if he would come back for wages and a paycheck every week. He agreed and all our future builds to the last one in 1978 were finished by the Richard and Lenny combo. To this day I regard Lenny as my brother, my best friend, my partner, our engineer, and lead craftsman for every home we delivered. Over 50.

Here are some short stories about some of our clients and details of delivery etc.

Ruth Kephart had Jerry Cruitt designed her floating home to look like her home farm barn. We finished the project to Ruth's satisfaction and with the floating homes gambrel roof design and bright red color were a sight while being towed by John Seaborne to Bethel Island in the Delta during a spring flood stage on the river. There were reports of a sighing of a barn coming offshore from the flooding. Ruth decided later to relocate to Sausalito by the float planes. For many years I could always spot Ruth's home when driving by the area.



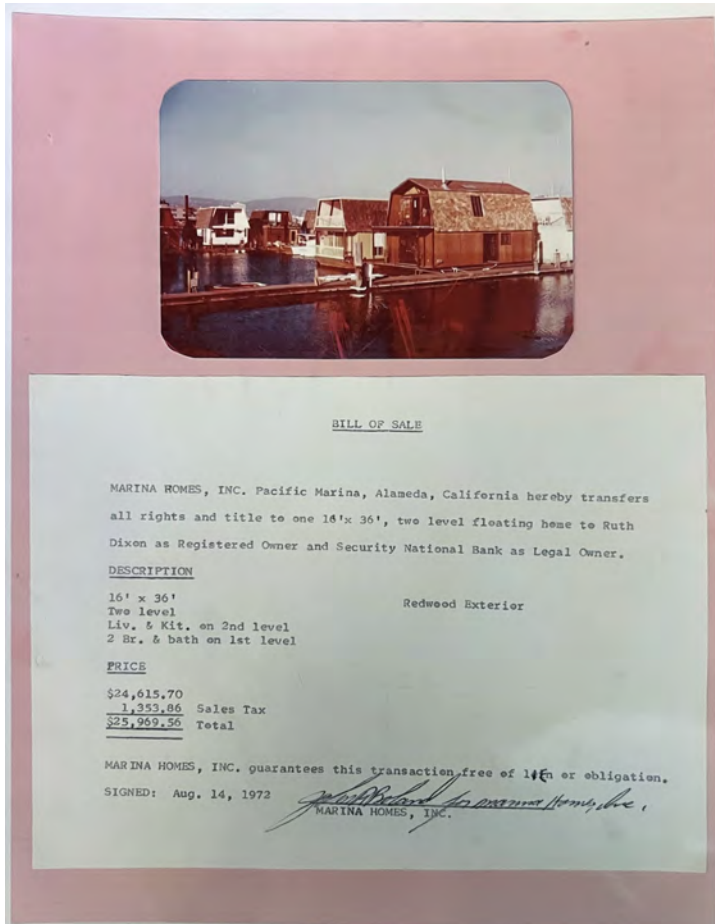
RED BARN, RUTH KEPHART

Soon after the Red barn was completed Ruth Dixon, a Professor at UC decided to order her Marina Home. She liked the style...but declined the red color. Instead we used red-wood siding.

Jerry Hennis ordered his Marina Home with an A Frame look.

Bob and Grant McNair, brothers who owned Grant Mortuary in Oakland each ordered one of our two story models. Bob asked for a baby grand piano to be placed in his living room on the upper level and of course I agreed. We held up installing the deck railing and I set up the fork lift with a platform for the piano. Bob provided a concert of a sort while still in our shop. Because of the shallow depth at Kappas I decided to tow both homes to their berth with my single engine workboat. This was a 16' open ski boat design with a single engine and no back up motor. Svendsen's boat yard had installed a tow post welded to a steel plate and bolted to the deck in the center.

It was a perfect design I thought. The entire tow went ok until I got within a couple hundred yards from the berthing area. At that time there was much negative publicity about the live aboard in Richardson Bay with various agency's demanding an end to derelict boats with liveaboards. One of those live-a-board characters who was angry with the situation came up fast on his canoe and grabbed onto the tow line running between my workboat and my tow.



RUTHS FLOATING HOME WITH BILL OF SALE.

One in a series...



The architectural reasons California Classics are still the number One sellers!

The kitchen . . . not only one of the most practical and functional rooms ever designed, but it is one of the most beautiful ever conceived for a new home in this price range.

Already over 3500 families throughout the State start their mornings in a California Classics kitchen. But this is just the beginning . . . let your imagination wander through the rest of these stunning homes. You'll quickly see why they have out-sold any other brand-name series since The Classics were first introduced in September 1967.

1 & 2 STORY ☐ 3 & 4 BEDROOMS ☐ ALL-GLASS "TERRACE KITCHEN" WITH G.E. APPLIANCES ☐ CERAMIC COUNTER TOPS ☐ FORCED AIR HEATING ☐ RAISED FOUNDATIONS ☐ FRONT FENCE AND LAWN

From **\$26,350**
VA/FHA and Conventional

Hurry, only 24 remain in current unit!

CALIFORNIA CLASSICS SAN RAMON



San Ramon—Take Hwy. 580 to San Ramon Blvd. exit, then North to Pine Valley underpass, 61 Randolph Place, San Ramon, Tel. (415) 828-8800



He had a knife gripped in his teeth when he grabbed on the tow line. He put my tow line under his armpit and came along as I was moving into the marina. With one hand free he took the knife from his mouth and moved it toward my line with a cutting motion starting. I was in the channel and had no option but to continue straight ahead and hope he changed his mind. He yelled some words at me while hanging on. I don't recall exactly what I yelled back to him but somehow my request came thru to him "please don't cut my god damn line" and let me continue. He stayed in place for a short distance, then placed the knife back in his mouth...and took off allowing me to find the berth and move Bobs home in. Fifty years later Bob and Grants floating homes are in their same berths. Twice a day when the tide goes out, they sit in the mud and refloat when the tide returns. George Kappas did rebuild his marina with all amenities in place on fixed piers. All the floating homes are and were then connected to city sewer lines. The individual floating homes provided the pumps and lift to the fixed pier.

Another order came for a two-story model to be built for a client for Redwood City. John Seaborne did the towing. Lenny rode on the floating home and Gary Luback, a friend, Neil Yonk and I followed in our trusty work boat. I took over the tow near the channel to the final berth. Floating homes were recently removed from the Redwood City Marina and this floating home relocated to San Francisco behind the bridge next to the ballpark. There was recently in an article about this small community of floating homes in the Chronical.



TOW TO REDWOOD CITY



DELIVERY TO REDWOOD CITY



DELIVERY TO REDWOOD CITY



TOWING TO REDWOOD CITY

On one launch I hooked on to the tow line with the work boat...the wind just came up as my line tightened. I turned around from being satisfied with the tow line on my center post and started to move the home toward the center Oakland Estuary per the usual procedure. For some reason I had not noticed that the entire Estuary at that moment was full of small sailboats apparently in a race, perhaps from the Encinal Yacht Club. The wind was blowing for the benefit of the sailboats...but not helping my efforts. Lenny usually went ahead to Barnhills to help with the landing and tie up so no one was on board the home or my workboat. With some stalling and maneuvering I slide past the sailing fleet and made a successful landing. Bringing the tow into that small opening did require the understanding and taking advantage of the current wind and tide condition.

On another tow to Barnhills, somehow one of my lines dock lines fell overboard and became entangled in my prop. It must have been a sight see a two-story house and a small blue tow boat floating past Jack London Square with an outgoing tide and some nut leaning over the transom of the towboat cutting on something. Fortunately, I had a good knife and was able to cut the line loose, reposition my tow and end up at Barnhills as planned. Mr. and Mrs. Harry Plant ordered their floating home for retirement at Barnhills. During the framing phase of their build...Harry informed us of a single request. George had designed a window on the outboard side of the galley/dining area, and he wished to be able to sit at a table and look out with ease. I had Harry come on board and placed his with his table and chair by the window and seated him in front of the framed in window. The window dimensions were changed to give him a clear view out. Over the years I would go by their home and see Harry at his table...waving and smiling.



PHOTO: MR. AND MRS. HARRY PLANT

With the first home delivered to Grindstone Joes for Mr. and Mrs. Hogrefe, two more orders came in for the same model. Jack Kelly was one...and I don't recall the other name. We finished the homes and ask John Seaborne to make the tow...both at the same time. All went well until the fog set in a few miles from the Antioch bridge and it was getting dark. The new bridge under construction and there were pilings and barges filled with rock and other materials all around us. As we approached the construction area, we could not see more than 20 feet or so. John reduced his speed to a standstill and one by one out of the fog both homes came up toward the tug. Lenny and I were able to bring one home to each side of the tug and tie them off for continuation of the trip. John was outstanding...navigating this extra wide load, about 52' thru the remainder of the trip and into Grindstones. We tied up each home...and headed back to Alameda. A future Riviera Yacht buyer many years later, Doug Devlin, was standing on the dock with his dad watching all of this.

Lou and Patty Scott ordered a floating home to be berthed at Carols Harbor on Sand Mound Slough. Bethel Island. Lou was a home builder and asked me to let him provide the lumber for the project and that we not finish the interior. We completed his home with his lumber and left the interior unfinished. Don Sanborne (Beachcomber) towed "The SS Love Nest" 12 hours to their berth with Lou and Patty on board. His good friend, Dennis Ball saw the home on arrival and immediately ordered his new Marina Home with a larger second level. Both had their ski boats tied to their homes...and enjoyed the Delta every day possible. The Bay Delta Yachtsman did a feature article on Lou and Patty's home November 1969.

Happiness is a Floating Home on a Ski, Fish 'n' Loaf Slough

Any time newlyweds Lou and Patty Scott "can find an excuse of any kind to get there," they'll hop into their highway sedan and head for Carrolls Harbor on Sand Mound Slough a mile south of Bethel Island.

The attraction is the SS Love-nest, the floating home that's partly their creation and partly that of Marina Homes in Alameda.

Just before their October 18 nuptials at Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church, Patty (nee Bentley) confided: "It's our dream week-end and vacation home."

Lou, the Walnut Creek-Lafayette building contractor, nodded in assent and added: "Great for comfort; great for relaxation."

Richard Boland, whose Alameda firm provided the hull and shell of a two-storied super-structure, calls the home the couple finished "a showpiece, that's for sure".

FASTBOAT, TOO

They took delivery of the "pod for a pod" late last July and rode it the 12 hours it took a tug to make the tow to the Sand Mound home berth -- there to join their "fleet" of one custom built inboard skiing speed boat. They rushed it to luxurious completion in 30 days.

Lou had some help from fellow craftsmen in his home-building enterprises. Teakwood paneling was used for walls and ceilings, with walnut cabinets for the galley, bedroom and top-side den which separates rooms, fore 'n' aft sun decks.

The galley is outfitted with a gas range and electric refrigerator, dishwasher and disposal. Overhead, frosted glass encloses a full ceiling of lighting.

The shower walls were lined with a thickness of ceramic tile so heavy they had to balance the starboard hull with sand-bags.

Patty, in charge of interior decorations, chose lime green shag rugs throughout, with drapes of matching color and gold specklings. In the salon are bronze portholes which were scrounged from a marine junkyard and required a month to cleanse down to metal.

PHOTO FRAMES

They are to become frames for two of the Scotts' specially printed wedding pictures.

Outside, visitors -- there were 300 of them "wall to wall" at the christening -- are treated to a dockway of tough-textured carpets. Lime green also.

More of the basic color.

Patty's taste is found in the round Aztec fireplace in the forward corner of the salon.

After the honeymoon -- they wouldn't say where -- the couple will frequent their mecca "to water ski, munch steaks and just loaf around".

For chores, they'll assign themselves to care of lines in the water for catfish and stripers and to tending nets for crawdads, the "mini-lobster".

Serving as a sentry at the sliding glass front portal is a four-foot ship's telegraph.

Forgotten for 15 years in the backyard of a friend, the pilot-house instrument was donated to the SS Love-nest.

"And, it couldn't have found a better home," said Lou Scott, as his bride smiled agreement.

FRIENDS OF Lou and Patty Bentley Scott are shown on the forward deck and aboard a speed boat at christening day of the SS Love-nest on Sand Mound Slough. At dockside is the Scotts' ski boat.

BUILT FOR MR. AND MRS. LEWIS SCOTT CAROLS HARBOR BETHEL ISLAND, CALIFORNIA

JUST BEFORE their October 18 nuptials, the Scotts and their German schnauzers, Oscar (left) and Fritz, were hosts to a Bay and Delta YACHTSMAN camera. They are shown at the dining table of the salon. Spiral steps, left, lead to topside den and sun decks.

ARTICLE FEATURING LOU AND PATTY



The Living Is Easy On A 'Houseboat

By Jeff Cohen

For those who wish to leave the close quarters of city life for the pleasures of riverside living, a houseboat may be the answer. For Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Kephart, a red two-story barn-shaped houseboat on the Sacramento River is the solution for Mrs. Kephart's disdain for gardening.

"I hate it," she says.

Of the estimated 250 houseboats registered in Sacramento, Sutter, and Yolo Counties, the Kephart home ranks as an unusual example of riverine accommodations.

Its brightly furnished liv-

ing room gives the impression of an antique shop rather than a mariner's hideaway. The room contains a vintage organ, a swivel-based coffee table, an old-fashioned wall telephone and an elaborate hutch among its treasures.

Their houseboat, which measures 16 feet by 32 feet downstairs and 16 by 16 upstairs, contains what can be described as luxury items if one usually thinks of a houseboat as a floating shack with a few cots. A washer and dryer complement a fully equipped kitchen and the place is air-conditioned. The bedroom upstairs has a com-

manding view of the river. There are also one and a half bathrooms.

The Kepharts built the boat in Alameda for \$18,000 and had it towed up to its present dock at a marina on the Garden Highway in January.

"I've always wanted a barn," says Mrs. Kephart who answered for the unusual shape and color.

Life on the river can be unsettling; however, rather than serene. When they arrived in January, the river was running extremely high. Kephart pointed out the 15-foot wood pilings lining the marina and said that in

January the water level had risen near their tops.

"My car, which was parked up on the dirt road just above the landing, was totally submerged."

"During the high water we had trouble getting groceries over by rowboat without getting them wet. We didn't have water connected for the toilets and faucets for a couple of weeks." Now they get their water at a nearby gas station and bring it home in gallon containers. The faucets are connected for well water.

The only sound of civilization is the occasional roar of jets coming in and out of Metropolitan Airport a few

miles away.

retired Al

is not ann

Only the

ing and s

passing m

a visitor th

"I was s

three week

notice. It,

says.

Eventual

will leave

and move,

adventures

the boat in

buy a m

around the

Why the

"We ju

they respo



THE SACRAMENTO BEE, Sunday, August 10, 1969



BUILT FOR
MR. AND MRS. LEWIS KEPHART
PRINCE HARBOR
BETHEL ISLAND, CALIFORNIA

Floating Homes Born of Dream

By WILLIAM DOYLE
Tribune Financial Editor

Richard Boland was living in a rented houseboat tied up on the Alameda side of the Oakland Estuary.

One night, lulled by the motion of the water and half asleep, he started thinking about all of the visitors who wanted to know how he liked houseboat life and how they could buy such a home.

He went from the dreamy state to some hard thinking and now, in partnership with a young engineer, is building "floating homes at the Pacific Marina in Alameda.

Boland differentiates between the floating homes which he is building to be tied up at a permanent location and house boats which have power and can move about.

He would also like to differentiate between his floating homes and the arks and other strange craft which have plagued Bay cities periodically.

The youthful entrepreneur intends to do more than wish about that.

He is going to approach the city of Alameda with a request that a uniform code be adopted covering all aspects of floating homes from their construction through locations where they may be moored to requirements for living aboard them. Oakland is on his list after Alameda.

Seattle Has An Ordinance

Seattle adopted such an ordinance in June and Boland says that as far as he knows is the first city in the U.S. to take such action.

He says Alameda city inspectors have looked on an informal basis at the two boats already built that he is hopeful of action on the proposed code.

Boland says that when he and his partner Leonard Farrauto began six months ago they felt no one was building houseboats which matched the quality of private homes on land.

They adopted the Uniform Building Code of the state as their guide and go beyond its requirements in some areas.

Construction costs of the house itself run about 10 per cent higher for the basic shell than a similar structure built on land, Boland says.

He says the principal difference is in the framing where metal bracing is used and other steps taken to compensate for the movement of the water and avoid squeaky walls in the future.

A major problem with all houseboats tied up in cities to this point has been the disposal of waste.

The floating homes build by Boland and Farrauto contain a pumping system which makes it possible to pump all waste materials into city sewers.

Will Lead to Approval

Boland believes this will lead to cities giving approval for floating homes to be tied up within their borders.

BUSINESS AND Finance

ES★ Oakland Tribune Aug. 20, 1968



BUILT FOR
MR. AND
MRS. ALAN

The first boat the pair built measured 20 x 40 feet and sold for \$15,000 ready to move in, exclusive of draperies. The second one, delivered yesterday, was 16 x 44 with a 12 x 36 cabin and cost \$13,750.

The floating home builders have contracts to build four others and also started work this week on a prototype which is intended to lead to assembly line production of a standard house.

The assembly line models are engineered to sell for \$8,000 for a one bedroom model and \$13,000 for a larger one.

The pair use a catamaran pontoon system to support the house. It varies in size depending on the structure above it.

Boland, who has a background in business administration, and Farrauto, whose specialty is engineering, each put up \$700 to get the operation going.

At first they worked nights while holding down their regular jobs but things have grown to the point where they now have four men working in production and a designer and can turn out the object of Boland's dream in three weeks.

Beachcomber towed another two story model Prince Harbor on Bethel Island as a model for future sales in that market. Dr. Lawson purchased his Marina Home for dockage on Bethel Island and the model was sold.



MODEL DISPLAYED BTHEL ISLAND



MARINA HOMES DEALER

Dana Judy was helping with some of our account and ordered one of our custom style homes. George and Dana worked up a unique exterior, two story homes, unpainted on the exterior. It was destined for Lauritzen Yacht Harbor in Oakley. The owner of this marina bought our burned-out tugboat hull that was a trade in on floating home #1. Dana's choice of paint was a bright yellow which he applied in one day. The next morning on his return he discovered that every bug in the Alameda area had decided to use Dana's home as a landing strip...and all his siding was covered with "bugs" stuck on his new paint. Somehow, he got them cleared off and then repainted his siding in smaller sections giving the paint time to dry before nightfall.



DANA JUDY, THE YELLOW HOUSE

All of homes constructed by Bob Minton were on foam floatation. As time passed the foam deteriorated and did not offer any structural value to the home. Several of his owners asked to have one of our barges installed to replace the foam. I purchased a trailer and installed railroad tracks on the top full length. Then added two 12" I beams and welded guides on the bottom. We brought the home to the ramp and placed it on the trailer and pulled the forward beam up with the home. When secure the trailer was pulled up and the home was ready for the barge. The original home I was living on received our pontoons in the same manner.



**RICHARD BOLAND, LERRY FARRAUTO
AND GARY LUBACH ON DECK**



LAUNCHING A REBUILD



LAUNCHING



RICHARD TOWING TO BARNHILLS MARINA.

I met Lee Brandenburg who came to my shop to view some of the floating homes under construction. Lee was a major mobile home park developer in the San Jose area and his interest was to build a floating home park somewhere in the Bay and Delta. We spent much time looking at options and flew to Florida to look at a major floating home Marina development in progress. Marina Bay Resort in Fort Lauderdale, Florida consisted of 173 yacht slips, 250 Hotel Rooms and floating Villas. The finished units we saw were floating duplex units on fiberglass over plywood hulls. I remember seeing 25 plus units finished in the water. Their finished plan called for 40 units.

We came home energized at the projects of building such a park in Northern Calif. Lee contacted the City of Alameda and the owners of Pacific Marina and the owners of Quimby Island in the Delta. The plan at Quimby was to complete all of the infrastructure inside the levy and when finished to flood the Island and bring in the floating homes. Neither project went much further then meetings and conversation. The mounting pressure against floating homes and the permitting process required to berth them was mounting. Lee became a good friend and later introduced me to Diane Jordan whom I married for 28 years. Our children Stacy, Chrissy and Michelle spent time in the shop, riding the forklift and helping with cleanup of the shop until we moved out. Skip forward to 2012 Lee called me with another project in Florida for floating homes...this one Florida's West Coast. He came to my office in Alameda and wanted to know if I would like to join him with organizing and building the project. Lee had contacted a houseboat building in Indiana, Destination Yachts and the design and plans were in progress. Sometime before Lees meeting with me I had a yacht in escrow located in Fort Lauderdale with delivery to Alameda for a local buyer. The yacht just happened to be berthed in a marina in Fort Lauderdale. After my sea trial from the marina, I thought it was in familiar surroundings. Over in a far corner of the marina was a partially demolished building, partially in the water and part out. On further inquiry this was the Marina Bay marina...and all the floating duplexes were gone except for the one left in a partial torn down condition. A Hurricane had destroyed much of the roofing materials on each unit and the follow up rain filled the barges and sank most of the floating duplexes. A giant clam shell crane was called in to tear ll of the units apart and load the debris onto a barge for final destruction. I sent Lee a copy of the original brochure and reminded him of conditions in Florida regarding weather and the tale of the Marina Bay project. I told Lee I didn't want to be a part of his project.



FLOATING HOME DEVELOPMENT FORT LAUDERDALE

In 2018 or so a houseboat builder from Indiana Sheldon Graber the owner of Destination Yachts in Indiana called me to discuss my selling his powered houseboats in my marketing area and help with a warranty job in progress. As a part of my presentation, I toured Barnhill Marina with him. One of the residents of a home I had built for Barney. Susan Driscoll, the current owner, invited us onboard. During our conversation he mentioned working on a project in Florida with a developer from San Jose, Calif. You must be talking about Lee Brandenburg I said. Indeed, it was Lee. Lee ended up ordering a couple of models from Sheldon to begin the project. Apparently, the development ended with 2 finished units only as Sheldon heard nothing more from Lee. There were similar anti floating home issues on going on several areas of Florida as in ours.

Facebook featured a new houseboat brand in 2015. Overblue Yachts was a new houseboat looking brand from Italy. I thought the model looked interesting...so I called the factory in Italy to speak with the sales manager. The Overblue model was in Florida with a dealer and was the first of the new houseboat/cruiser brand coming to the USA. My flight to Miami was uneventful...the sea trial on the Overblue was acceptable and I became an Overblue dealer for the West Coast. This was the beginning of my renewed attempt to provide floating homes with engines on San Francisco Bay and Delta. I spent time on board the incoming Overblue models at several boat shows in Fort Lauderdale and Miami Boat shows with prospects for the Overblue. I was unable to sell and new Overblue and did not order inventory for the West Coast. I did manage to sell a brokerage Overblue located in Tampa to a client in Cabo, Mexico. That was during the COVID period and getting her to Cabo was another adventure story. Overblue factory closed their doors in 2019 with only 6 sold in the USA.

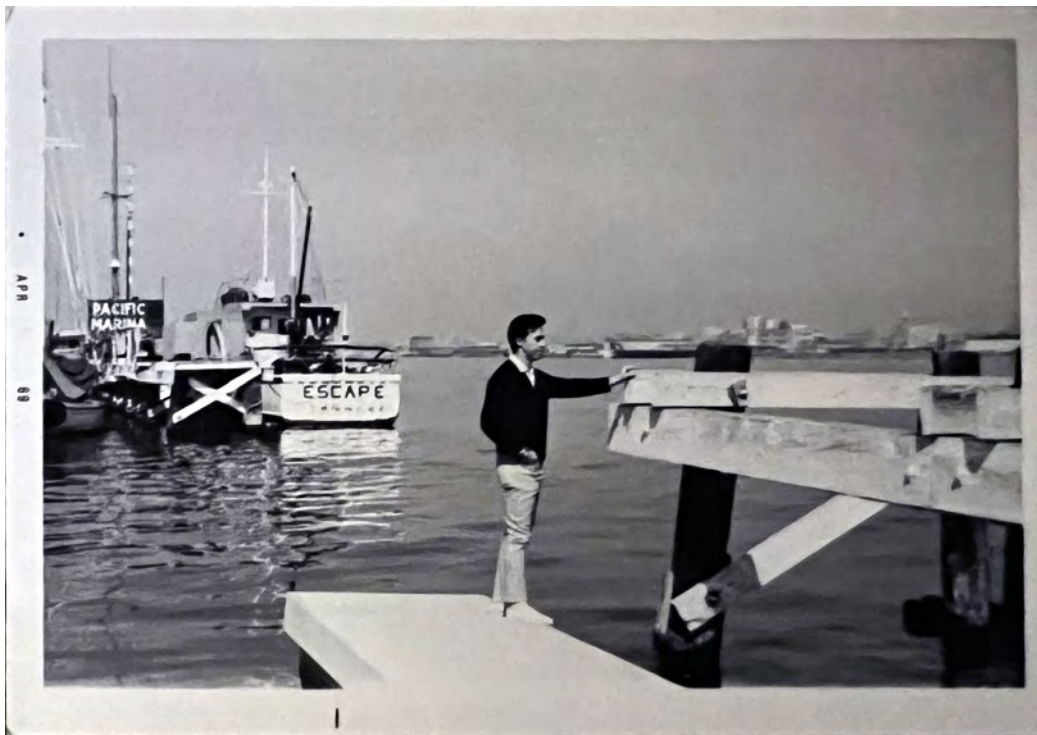
In 2019 I began the design process for a new series of floating homes with the a different styling. Marina Bay Yachts, at the moment is the trade name. I asked Juan Beltran, a graphic designer to help with the drawings and build a brochure for the model. Finding a builder, however in this market condition has had it challenges. Boat builders are overwhelmed with a backlog of orders for their own models and COVID has not helped. As late as July 2022 I have had conversations with builders in China, Taiwan, Indiana and with one builder in Calif. There may be some hope to get this project underway.

As of August, 2022 I have asked Jim Antrim, a naval architect to review my plans for this new build. Perhaps a new generation of powered floating homes will soon be on the market.



A NEW PROJECT, MARINA BAY CATAMARAN CRUISERS

SPECIAL PHOTOS:



LENNY ON THE DOCK



**BARNEYS CUSTOM
MODEL IN FRAMING.
SUSAN DRISCOL NOW
OWNS THIS HOME.**

SPECIAL PHOTOS:



RICHARD AND LENNY AT LAUNCHING



THE LAST HOME READY FOR LAUNCH. 24 X 46 CLOYD DAWSON, 1978



MARINA HOME READY FOR LAUNCH



A FINISHED HULL



BARNEY AND HARBORMASTOR YEARS LATER.

SPECIAL PHOTOS:



A SPECIAL GIFT TO DENNIS AND SHELLEY



CUSTOMER DINNER IN THE SHOP

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Barney Barnhill Marina and our best customer.
George Kappas. Marina and intro to Land N' Sea Craft
Frank Terranova Painting
Tony Terranova Panting
Bud Townsend B and B Electric
Neil Yonk Carpentry
Barry Kaye Fiberglass assistant
Keith Iverson Original Sketch
George Dedekian Architect
Don Sanborne Towing
John Seaborne Towing
Ralph Troust Launching first home
Ron Troust Launching and gifted wheels
Tom Walker First two story purchase
Andy Pagano Hardware sales
Raymond Andrade Shop Security and friend
Jerry Cruitt First Architect
Ed Major Intro to fiberglass
Herman Hogrefe New ideas
Maynard Graves Diving
Lucy Bozeman First Intro to a floating home.
Dewayne Titus Landlord
Bud Pollard & Bruce Westphal Owner of rental floating home
Bob Minton Builder Floating homes
Ken Martin First order
Denis and Shelley Barnhill Managers Barnhill Marina and friend
George Mulock Worker
Dick Backus Competitor builder
Lee Brandenburg Developer and friend



