

Evolution of a Lord Nelson Victory Tug 37



Photo by Pat Cooper of St. Michaels, Maryland

Knock Off

Hull 66, Laid Up September, 1986

Owners: Jeanne and John Niccolls
Round Hill, Virginia

Introduction

Knock Off came to us in 2005 well equipped and in good condition. Her prior owners, Linda and Fred Byram, treated her well and used her often--they made several passages to Florida from their home port, White Stone, Virginia. They gave her a new name and hailing port, both of which we kept after hearing Fred's story behind the name. Fred was in the furniture business and said that "Everything in the furniture business is a knock off."

Before the Bryams owned her, she was named "Tuggie" and used on Lake Erie and Lake Huron by then owner, David Sanders. Dave currently is finishing a ten year project of constructing an exact replica of what is now Knock Off. Apparently one never stops enjoying tugboats.

In 2009, we met John Harris who's goal was to build a wooden hulled Lord Nelson Victory Tug 37--full-scale. He had never cruised on one so of course we invited him out for a day on the Chesapeake Bay. He brought along this beautiful model.



Lord Nelson Victory Tug 37
Model by John Harris

Steam powered tug model by
S. Thomas Niccolls

A Special Note

My late brother, S. Thomas Niccolls, Ph.D., made this little steam powered model after his first cruise on Knock Off. A small candle generates the steam propelling her nicely around a basin of water. Young children, of course, are amazed as we were the first time she was seen.

Tom was a master woodcrafter, puppet maker, musician, poet, philosopher, teacher and amazing older brother.



We own Knock Off as trustees for a lucky future owner. Aside from routine maintenance and the occasional major repair, we've added features and improvements to enhance our Chesapeake Bay cruising experiences. Some are trivial, some are labor savers and some are safety related.



Toaster Oven Shelf: When we bought Knock Off, this nifty toaster oven lived on the counter to the right of the galley sink. The shelf freed up precious counter top space.

GFIC 120 VAC Outlet: Replacing a standard duplex outlet with a ground fault protected device seemed like a good idea. An extension box was required as you can see in the picture below.

Cutting Board Bracket: The space left between the toaster shelf and the pantry cabinet wall was perfect for storing cutting boards so we added an "L" bracket to keep them dry and off the countertop.



American Cherry, finished with MinWax spray varnish, develops a nice patina which closely matches the original teak found throughout the boat. This cover plate hides an opening in the salon ceiling for access to wiring in the mast.



Utensil Drawer Dividers. The deep galley drawers cried out for more efficient use of space so we added a two-level partition in the top drawer (the box on top slides fore and aft as needed to expose tableware below) and dividers in the lower drawers. The material is hard maple.



Fan/Light Backboards: Attaching replacement salon lights and new fans directly to the wall seemed out of place among Knock Off's fine joinery. Anything that's to be wall mounted is given a backboard made of American Cherry.



Knock Off's new salon lights were gifts from our daughter, Jennifer.



Light Blocking Shades: Copied from Julie and Steve Sell's shades on Growler (now Hjortie), these 90% light blocking shades provide privacy while allowing some light into the salon and wheelhouse.



Tide and Time Clock with Cherry Backer: The backer was made by our niece, Tessa, who came on board and completed the installation herself.



Life Jacket Label: Knock Off's PDFs are stored under the salon settee so a label was added to indicate their location.

Support Post Cover: Having seen how great the post looks when polished to a high brass sheen (but without the energy to do that) a Sunbrella cover was made.





CO Detector: Carbon monoxide reportedly is not much of a threat aboard diesel water-craft but one was added in an abundance of caution.

Spice Rack Boxes: Two boxes added to the spice racks above the galley sink help keep small items secure.

Pantry Shelves: This wonderful space next to the galley was once a coat closet but adding three shelves made it a useful pantry.



Flashlight Holder: We added two. This one is next to the salon door. The other is attached to the forward companionway wall.



Wheelhouse Window Locks: A number of these were made for the Annapolis rendezvous and they've served well on Knock Off as a shortcut for securing the wheelhouse windows.



Bilge Pump Switches:
Knock Off had no device to indicate when either bilge pump was on so these Rule switches with ON lights were enclosed in a small box of American cherry and mounted in the wheelhouse.



VHS Mounting Bracket: This bracket lowers the radio to within reach of almost everyone on board.



Dinghy Davits and Aluminum Hull RIB: Our design for the stainless steel davits supports (the davits themselves are by St. Croix Marine) is available on the Hull 66 page at LNV.T.ORG. They were fabricated by Annapolis Rigging and have proved to be quite sturdy. The RIB is from AB Inflatables and weighs only 88 pounds. The dingy is powered by a 5 HP Honda 4-stroke engine.

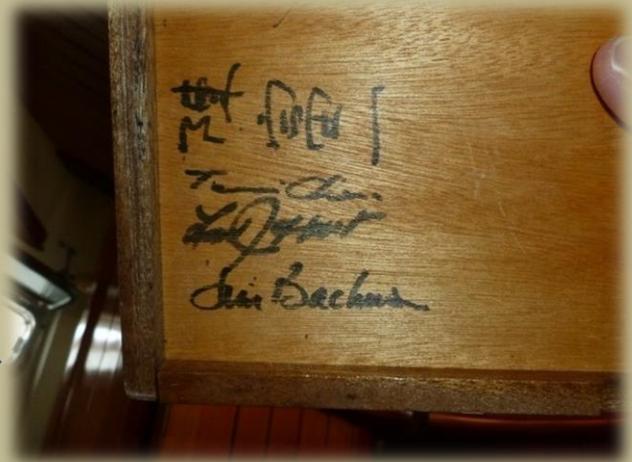


Shipwright Installs Davit Supports





A very special treasure!



Autographed Vanity Drawer: We were so happy when Bicki and Dave Howell promised to have one of Knock Off 's vanity drawers autographed by Lani Hart, Tommy Chen and Jim Backus and even happier when they returned from Seattle with the treasure.

Binocular Bracket: This bracket keeps the binoculars in place and at the ready.



Mahogany Boat Hooks and Mounting Brackets: When my nephew Phil agreed to "lend" me some 5/4 mahogany stock the result was three boat hooks. The brackets were machined from high density plastic.



Mike Bracket: The hailer and VHF microphones were mounted to the wheelhouse ceiling but kept falling in rough seas so we added this angled bracket—no more falling mikes!

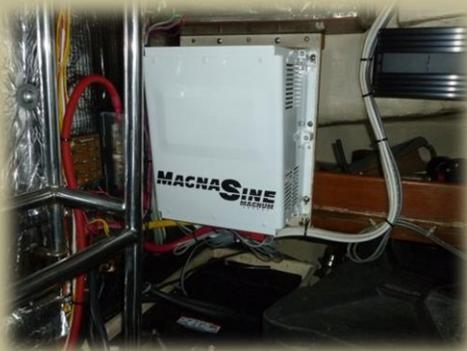




Deck Filler: As soon as we saw these on other LNVTs at our first rendezvous in Seattle (2006) we knew Knock Off had to have one. This one is made of American cherry with maple inserts. It stores easily.



Magna Sine Wave Charger/Inverter



Engine Room Hatch Handle: One of a pair of bronze handles Jeanne and I bought on our honeymoon in England. The other is mounted above the companionway down from the wheelhouse—a real safety feature.



Sunbrealla Gas Grill Cover



Sliding Shelf: Here's a handy shelf (plastic laminate on plywood with teak trim) that tucks away under the instrument console.





Chart Rack: This rack is mounted below the watch berth.



Electric Range: We replaced a three burner electric range with this flat top Princess model. Knock Off has a 8.8 KW Westerbeke generator.



Teak Stair Treads: Both companionway ladders and the aft step received teak treads.



Hatch Cover: We made this Sunbrella cover to protect the refinished teak cover hatch.

Sun Blocking Screen – Wheelhouse



English Bronze Safety Handle Companionway to salon





Knock Off Name Graphics



Deck Umbrella: The umbrella was a gift from the Howells (Nellie D) . The mounting brackets were made from high density plastic.



O&M Manual Shelf: This simple device sits on top of the forward cabin closet and keeps our manuals in place.



Pilot House Carpet: We think the removable carpet makes the pilot house sole much safer.



Small Visitor Enjoys the Harbor View



Coat Hooks: Two of these simple hooks are attached to the valance above the salon windows. The Cherry backing hides holes in the valance made by metal clips which were removed.

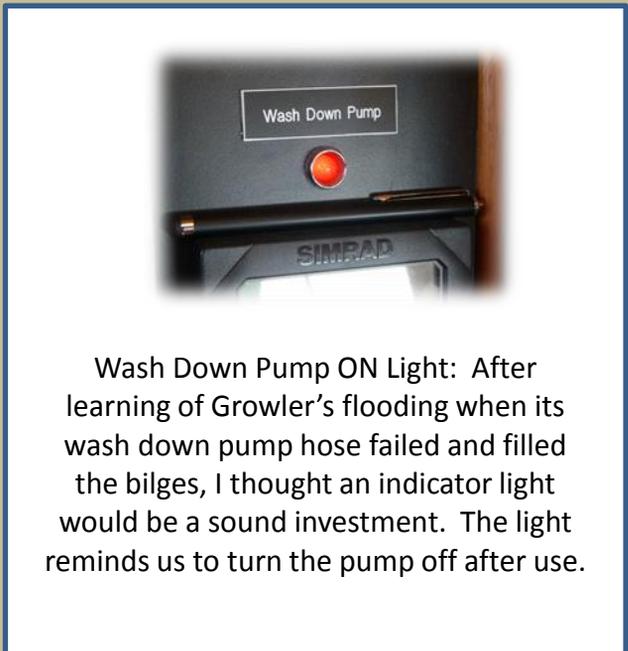
Ensign Cover: Another Sunbrella cover--I was tired of replacing the US flag every year so this protects Old Glory when we're not on board .



Door Catch: This one holds the head door open and replaces the original hook and eye.



Fridge Latch Guard: Our shins were scarred from accidental brushes against the fridge latch so a teak guard was put in place.



Wash Down Pump ON Light: After learning of Growler's flooding when its wash down pump hose failed and filled the bilges, I thought an indicator light would be a sound investment. The light reminds us to turn the pump off after use.



Salon Seat Support: We store PFDs under the salon seat. Cutting the large plywood seat support panel in half made access easier. The hand hole was enlarged.



Valve Handle: Water and fuel valves are easier to turn using a simple teak handle.

Swim Ladder Treads: We use the swim ladder a lot so teak treads were added—lots easier on the feet!



Decks Refurbished: Phipps Boat Works in Deale, MD, did a beautiful job on the decks. The decks were lightly sanded then the old polysulfide caulk replaced. The caulk used was "Martime" brand and has held up well.



Bilge Keels: Adding bilge keels to Knock Off significantly increased our satisfaction with this wonderful yacht. She certainly rolls less as expected but pitch is also reduced.

The work was done at Osprey Marine Composites in Deale, MD, from plans drawn by Chesapeake Marine Design. A copy of the plans may be seen on the Invt.org site, Hull 66.

The first step was to laminate and shape the structural foam. Next, the keels were coated with fiberglass in the shop. Bottom paint and the barrier coat were planed and the keels were fastened to the hull with thickened epoxy. The final steps were to add additional fiberglass cloth, a final coat of epoxy resin and anti-fouling paint.



Underwater Metal Anti-Fouling Paint
Applied to Running Gear



Navigation Instruments: We've added a Simrad auto helm, Lowrance sounder, Garmin GPS chart-plotter, Garmin HD 18 radar and AIS receiver.

Many years ago we sailed a Coronado sloop all around the bay with only a compass and paper charts. Her keel served as the depth finder!

Bow Pudd'n: Marlinspike
Artist Barbara Merry
made this bow pudd'n for
Knock Off.



Happy Birthday! My sister Mary Rose and our daughter Jennifer thought a tug boat theme birthday cake was perfect in 2007.

So did I.

No two people have been more helpful to Jeanne and me as we transitioned from sailing our Wauquiez Hood 38 sloop to tug-boating on Knock Off than Bicki and Dave Howell. During one of our first cruises after buying our LNVT we anchored quite unknowingly about 500 yards from the Howell's "always under construction but soon to be finished" home on Church Creek. Dave suddenly arrived on board a neighbor's runabout shouting excitedly that he and his brother, John, just bought an LNVT in California! Dave convinced us to attend the 2006 rendezvous in Seattle where we met Lorn and Lani Hart, Tommy Chen and Jim Backus plus the many LNVT owners who have so willingly shared their knowledge and given us their friendship.



The Howells on Board Knock Off
November, 2010



Jeanne piloting Knock Off

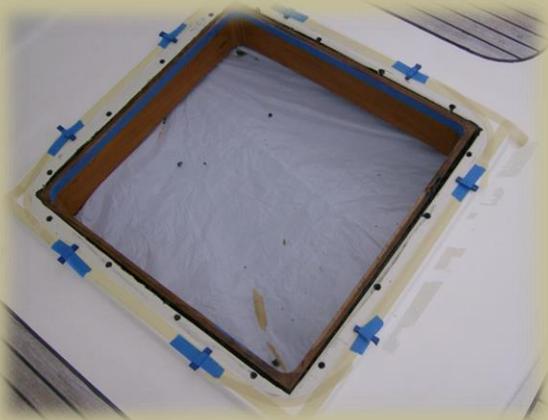
Blue Charm: Our son William and me with our Wauquiez Hood 38 sloop. The binnacle, wheel and grill covers were made using Sunbrella fabric.



Window Channel: Dave Howell found just the right window channel material and fashioned a jig to shape the channel for a perfect fit in the LNVT windows. Best of all he provided Knock Off's channel AND helped install it. Thanks, Dave!



Hatches Re-bed: Eventually, all boat hatches leak. Fixing the forward and pilothouse hatches took a long day but they leak no more!



We hope you enjoyed seeing how Knock Off has evolved since 2005.

Jeanne and John Nicolls
September, 2013