

Georgetown family to set sail for South Pacific

By MAGGIE HANNAH
Georgetown may be gaining recognition as the home of the crazy boat race, but this boat is too big for that race. It is 35 ft. 8 in. long. It is made of galvanized steel. And it will be the floating home of the Rattenbury family when they realize their dream and set off to cruise the South Pacific. Whether that happens in two or three years or takes even longer will depend on many things including the amount of time John Rattenbury has to finish the interior of his craft.

John and Karla Rattenbury have been planning this cruise for eight years and refuse to speculate on exactly when their departure will take place. All they say is they have to get prepared before they set off. For that reason they won't be pinned down to any exact time.

However, when the yacht is missing from the converted dry dock that used to be their driveway that will be a hint that departure time is approaching. Since the bare steel hull weighs 10,000 pounds prior to finishing and piling gear aboard, the only way to shift it from Hewson Crescent to its launch site will be via a crane and a float.

Mr. Rattenbury says that it will be taken away very early in the spring before the ground thaws so that the crane won't sink. It will be launched into Georgian Bay and the family will spend the summer aboard working out last minute details, checking navigational equipment and generally ascertaining that their travelling plans are working as hoped. Then in the fall of the year they will depart for the Caribbean and eventually the South Pacific.

Many people consider cruising the world to be the stuff of dreams. Not so says Mr. Rattenbury.

"It takes a lot of determination to really make the break with the system. You might not realize it until the point comes when you have to do it," he says.

Mr. Rattenbury warns would-be travellers that this sort of dream is not to be undertaken on the spur of the moment. He has known people who jumped in without investigating and the results were disastrous.

The Rattenburys' planning began when they decided that the system wasn't giving the type of life they wanted. It was a matter of arranging their priorities so they could save as much as possible towards achieving their dreams. Then they began shopping around to find a boat that would suit them. They are still shopping, comparing prices for the materials they need to complete the hull.

veloped by Huronic Metal Industries, of Goderich, eliminates these and results in a smooth line.

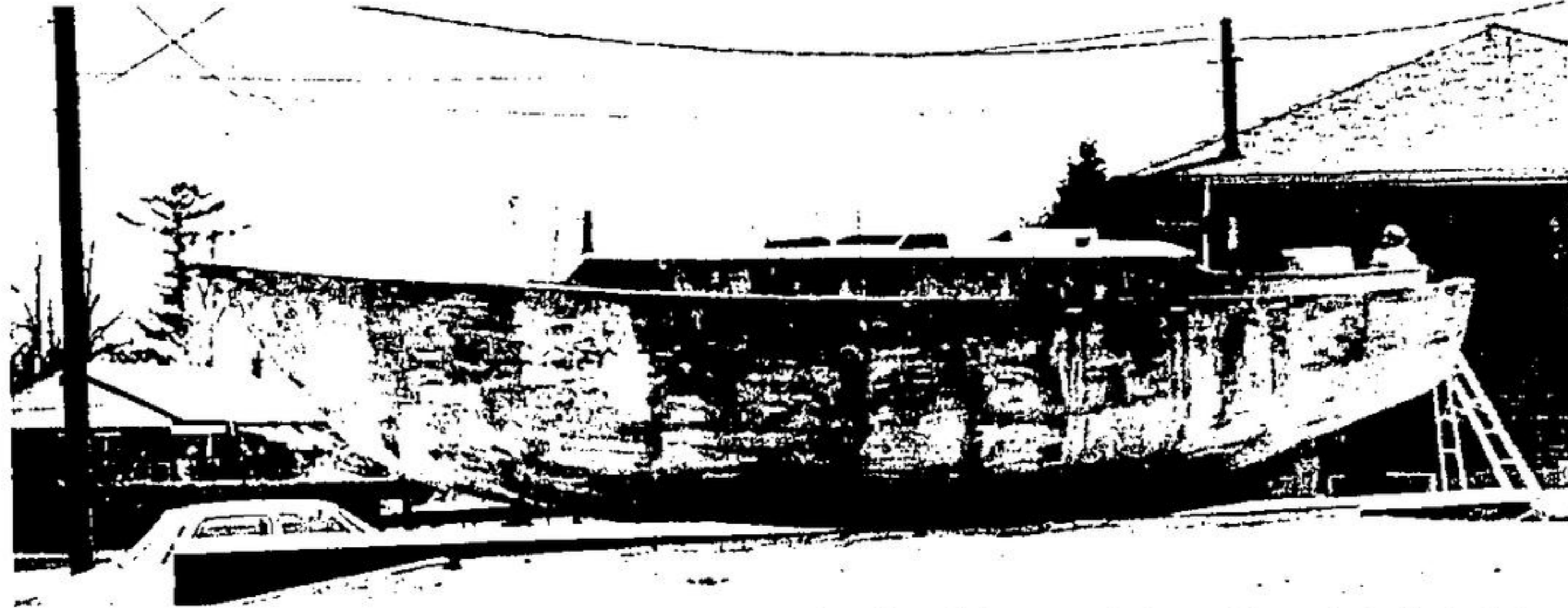
The yacht known as a Goderich 35 was designed by an ex-Hamiltonian named Ted Brewer who is one of the leading designers of cruising yachts and now lives in Maine. Although there was a design for the cabin space included in the plans Mr. Rattenbury has made his own design to conserve space and locate areas most conveniently for his family. The design has caught on and others are now ordering the same yacht but with his interior plans, he finds.

The Rattenburys will be as self-sufficient as possible when they set off. Their stove will burn diesel fuel as does their emergency motor but since they can only carry 70 gallons of fuel they will depend on the wind whenever possible. They will carry 120-150 gallons of water which they feel will keep four people going for six weeks.

Since the propeller will be turning away even when they are using their sails they will rig it for generating power for electrical equipment. Mr. Rattenbury feels solar energy is the most efficient source of power once the technique is perfected but for now it is expensive.

They hope to install a ham radio as well as stereo equipment so that they will have contact with land no matter where they are. The stereo will provide entertainment and also allow their children to use cassettes in their education. The only thing they'll lack will be television and they don't feel that to be much of a handicap.

When John and Karla began planning for the break their children, Janet 5, and Mark, 2, hadn't been born. Their arrival however, has only added a dimension to their planning. Ontario has one of the really good correspondence courses of education available in Canada, Mr. Rattenbury says, and they



Skeptics who wonder about the validity of the tales they hear about the boat on Hewson Crescent can stop wondering. It is for real and it is for the ocean. But not just yet. Huronic Metal Industries delivered a 35-foot galvanized steel cruising yacht to John and Karla Rattenbury last week and

will put their children into it. They are already picking up ideas for education projects they can use while they are travelling and feel that by the time they return home their youngsters will have learned much that can never come from texts.

"We plan to stop off a couple of months at a time wherever the fancy suits us," he says, "and we'll plug our kids into the local school while we're in port. The social contact will be good for them. As white, Anglo-Saxons they'll probably be a minority in most of the places we go."

Mr. Rattenbury is Australian by birth and an engineer by profession, although he now works in computers and admits he has tried all kinds of things in his travels.

Mrs. Rattenbury was born in the Maritimes and raised in Ontario. She is a teacher. Both of them grew up around salt water and their children have been sailing from a very early age. John and Karla also scuba

they will spend the next couple of years fitting up the interior into living quarters for themselves and their two children before they embark on their trip to the Caribbean and the South Pacific.

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strange grey boat that had drivers rubbernecking so badly he was afraid there would be an accident in front of his home before people got used to seeing it. Things are settling down, but he doesn't want the neighbors

unhappy with the view he's giving them. Once the weather warms up, he'll have it painted. From there on the work will all be inside and nobody will know how he's progressing until the day it gets hauled away.

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