



# GADGETS & KINKS

EXPERT ADVICE STRAIGHT  
FROM THE VOICE OF  
EXPERIENCE

## How Do You Know You Can't Do It (If You Don't Try) By Sherwood Heggen

Restoring a wooden boat has many challenges. They include hard work, dust and dirt, strained muscles, expenditure of large sums of money, energy, and time. But if none of these bother you, proceed to whatever project you feel capable of doing. My overlying point in this article is: everyone has a limit to their abilities and skills, but only if they believe that. It is amazing to realize one can go one step beyond what they thought they could do.

I have been pressed in my work for others to do what I never thought I could do. One of the most difficult projects I have encountered in restoring wooden boats is making the dreaded bull-nose on a Chris Craft Continental. This bull-nose, as you might know, is a large multi-curved chunk of wood at the top of the stem that fairs into the curves of the topsides. The original bull-nose from which I could refer still existed but only in a state of deterioration that left a lot to the imagination to create a new piece. To do so, it was necessary to follow the tried and true method of "sculpting" a new bull-nose by removing any material that doesn't look like a bull-nose. The trick is how to do that. Let me give you some insight as to how to think through the problem.

First, it is always good to have an example

of what you are trying to create. In this case I had most of the original bull nose but there was little left to understand the exact location of the bull-nose. I found pictures of other Continentals helpful to see how the bull-nose blended with the rest of the forward deck and topsides. Soon, it was more evident how the extended curves of the topsides and deck terminated at, and formed the shape of, the bull-nose. With that knowledge it was easier to see the final position and shape of the bull nose. A profile drawing was made from

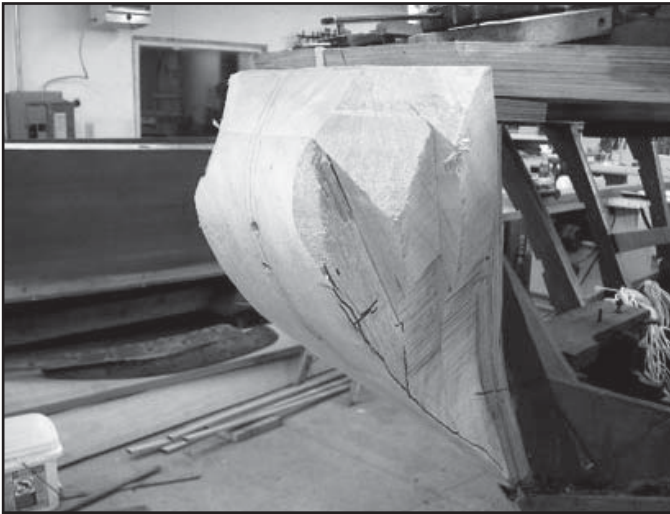
the fragments of the original bull-nose. With this, it was easier to determine how much wood was necessary. Planks of mahogany were sawed to the shape of the front view of the bull-nose and a triple lamination of 2" stock was made. Then the profile was drawn on the laminated stock. From there, a wide variety of tools was used to bring shape to this mind bending project. Tools included the four-pointed star that screws to the front of the bull-nose, a Sawzall, templates, belt sander, chisels and mallet, planes, sanding



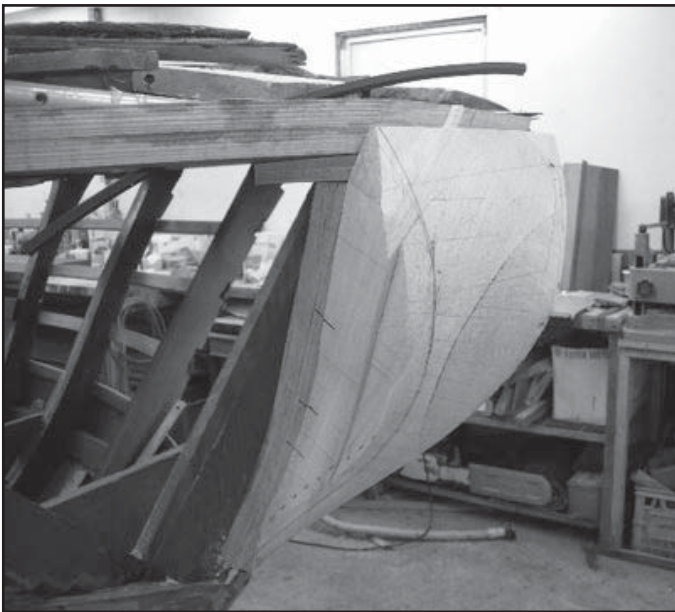
**Triple lamination of 2" stock forms the bullnose.**

blocks, determination, time, and imagination. The pictures below show the transformation of ugly blocks of wood to an artistic shape that leads the Continental across the lake.





Still rough, but the shape is beginning to take form.



Further definition. Unmistakably bull-nose.



A lot of work for one piece, but worth the effort to nail it just right!



You start at the nose and work your way back!

The above is just an example of a challenge that was met and conquered. I encourage you to meet your challenge headlong. Perhaps it is a deck that needs replacing even if you have never done anything like that before, or it might be a damaged topside plank that needs replacing, or a transom frame, or----- . You never know your capabilities are until you try. And, when you succeed, the rewards of pride and accomplishment are what you can take with you for the rest of your life. Go for it!

If you have any question regarding restoring your boat, give me a call. Note that I have new contact information. My email is [Heggensm@Frontier.com](mailto:Heggensm@Frontier.com) and my phone is 715-781-3213. I always enjoy hearing from others who are dedicated to saving a wooden boat. ☸



A distinctive bow leads the way! Similar Chris-Craft Continental under power.

