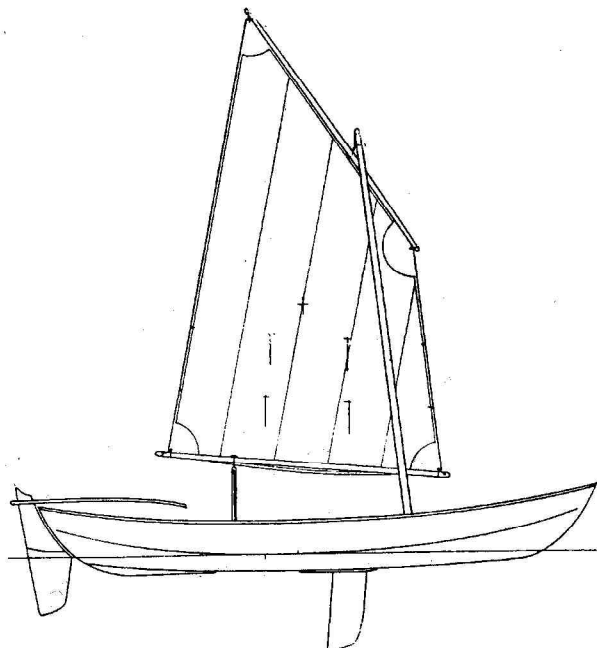
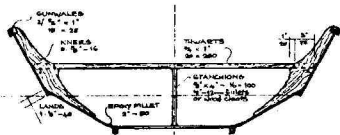
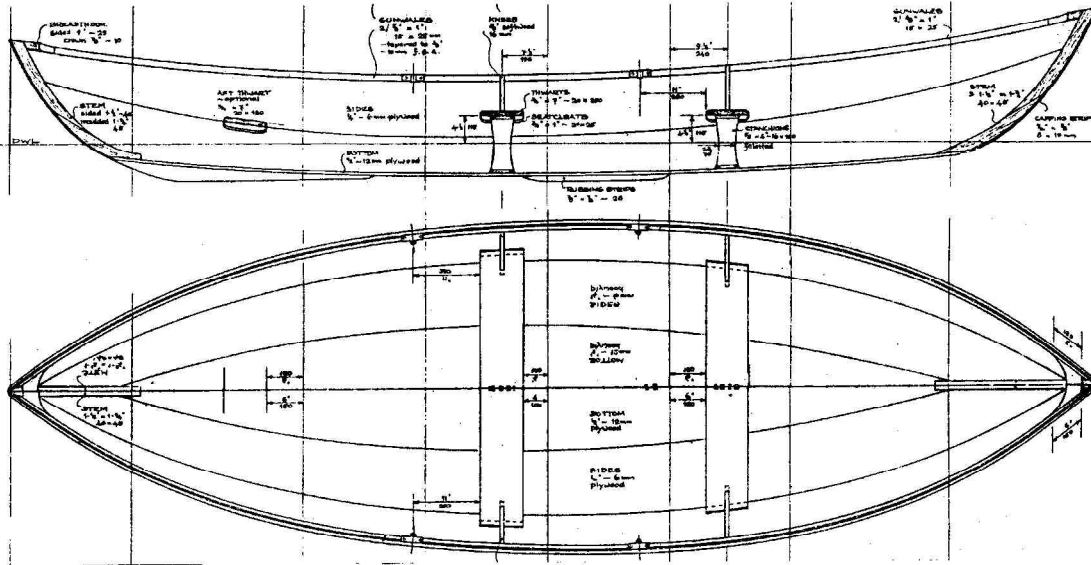


# SKERRIESKIFF 15

design

no. 94

LOA: 14'-10" or 15'-3"    Beam: 4'-7"    Weight: 140 lbs    Sail: 60 sq ft  
 4.53m    4.65m    1.40m    65 kg    5.57 sq m



Type: double-ended dory-skiff

Sailing Rig: balanced lug

Capacity: 1 to 3

## BUILDING INFORMATION

CONSTRUCTION: glued lap clinker plywood

OPTIONS: none

BUILDING TIME: 100 hours + Rig 50

COST:

Materials: £450    Rig + 350

Plans: 5 sheets with instructions

A skerry, in the North, is a half-tide rock or reef. But in parts of the East coast of England, around East Anglia, this Norse-sounding word referred to a small boat carrying two or three people.

Boatbuilder Adam Way, who lives by the Crinan Canal in Argyll, was asked to build two boats with the high-school kids at Lochgilphead. Within two weeks.

# SKERRIESKIFF 17

design

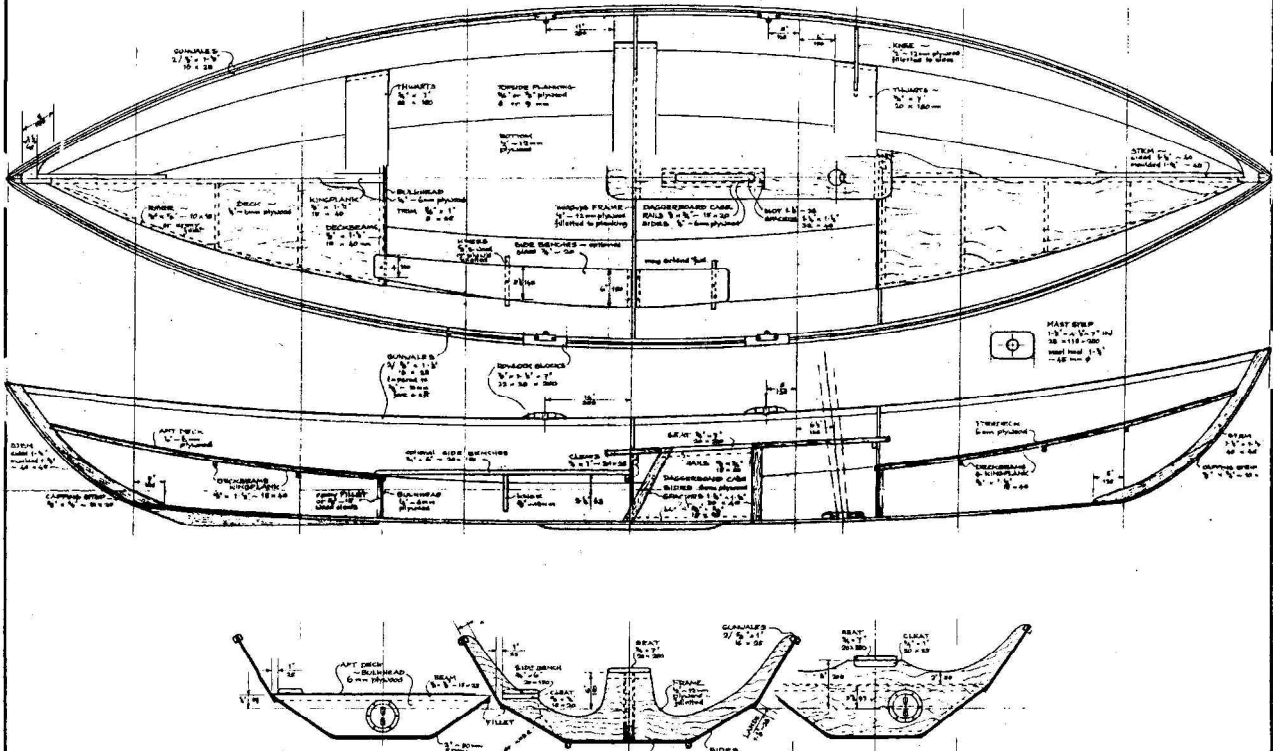
no. 93

LOA: 17'-4"  
5.28m

Beam: 4'-8"  
1.43m

Weight: 170 lbs  
75 kg

Sail: 67 sq ft  
6.22 sq m



Type: double-ended dory-skiff    Sailing Rig: balanced lug    Capacity: 1 to 4

## BUILDING INFORMATION

CONSTRUCTION: glued lap clinker plywood  
OPTIONS: none  
BUILDING TIME: 120 hours    Rig + 50

COST:  
Materials: £550    Rig + 400  
Plans: 5 sheets with instructions

Given this severe limitation, along with the inexperience of the prospective builders, and not knowing how good a teacher Adam would turn out to be, I thought this could be a disaster. Especially as, while frantically trying to prepare (with very moderate success) for the Glen Raid, I had not time to prepare proper construction plans.

However, having a strong belief in the educational value of building boats, I really hoped it would work. Thought it was a good opportunity to try out my theory that, with a limited amount of time, a more shapely, attractive, and able boat could be built than the boxy flat-bottomed skiffs that are popular in the boat show boatbuilding weekends.

He did great! – they did fine .... the two 17' boats were ready for launching in 10 days. Rough, sure. But they looked good (from a moderate distance), performed very well, and, above all, the kids loved it! They worked long and late, with an

enthusiasm for learning that I suspect their teachers had never seen before. One guy, the woodwork teacher told me, still didn't know which end of a chisel was which after two years. But now, "he knows how to shape up a stem!"

The hull embodies some features of the dories and faerings. They are about as simple as they could be, with the flat bottom, and two strakes a side. The sharper angle of the 'chines' necessitates a wider than usual land, with the resulting gap on the outside filled with an epoxy fillet or wedge-shaped strip of wood. (Adam chose the latter option, being more concerned with doing a proper job than with saving every possible minute). As this is less practical at the lower chine – where the garboard meets the bottom – a wide fillet is worked in along the inside. Amidships, where the strength is needed most, this is backed up with a 3' external rubbing strake. In theory, the fillet should be backed up with fiberglass tape; but the generous fillet alone seems adequate. The 12mm bottom provides a reasonable landing to start with.

**M**aldwin Drummond, author of the fascinating 'West Highland Shores', is planning a similar book about some of the inland lochs, and needed a boat for doing the research. The 15' faering seemed almost ideal: a nifty and able rowing boat with a small sail. But the flat bottom of the Skerrieskiff has significant advantages: the boat glides right onto the beach, where she sits upright, then is easy to haul out and onto the trailer. She can even be hauled over wet grass. Not least, she can handle the short steep seas that can quickly get up on the lochs. But lacking the faering's external keel, she has less grip on the water in a crosswind, so will be requiring some ballast to hold her down when it gets breezy. This can be in the form of bags of beach stones, or plastic water containers.

The dories do all these things well, of course, but are a little more complex to build. Something with a little more Norse/Scottish feel was required.

The sail area is moderate, as these really are rowing boat hulls, with a waterline beam of about 3'-3" – 1m. They are certainly fast and maneuverable under oars, but, like the dories and faerings, they slide along very easily with just a wee sail, responding instantly to trimming of the sheet and slight shifting of the live ballast.

Both boats have a simple dagger board for sailing, and a lifting rudder. They may be built as open hulls or with built-in buoyancy fore-and-aft. The balanced lug rig was chosen as offering the best combination of simple safe handling and good performance. A boomless standing lug is also possible. This is a less useful sail, but gets the boom out of the boat.

