

# GOOD OLD BOAT

The sailing magazine for the rest of us!

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## AUGUST 2014 NEWSLETTER

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This newsletter is available as an MP3 audio download at <[AudioSeaStories.net](http://AudioSeaStories.net)>. It is read by Michael and Patty Facius. We recommend a broadband Internet connection to download, since it is a large file.

You can also Download a printer friendly version <[in MS Word](#)> or as a <[PDF file](#)>.

Want to look up a previous newsletter? We've added an <[on-line index](#)> of all the *Good Old Boat* newsletters.

### ONE MORE GOOD OLD BOAT JOINS THE FLEET

It really happened. The editors' C&C Mega 30 hit the water. Umm, no. That's not exactly right. It was dropped in . . . whoops! Not that either. What we really meant to say is that it was gently lowered into Lake Superior in late June. The launch was followed by the requisite christening and champagne bottle smashing to formally recognize her new name: *Sunflower*.

A weekend of celebration followed. Neptune and Poseidon got their share and so did "the rest of us." There was a party and dinner for the good old crew on Saturday following the christening and an open house for subscribers on Sunday. Since both were gatherings of sailors — who of course had much in common — a good time was had by all.



After 11 years spent sitting on her trailer while Jerry Powlas first re-cored the deck and demolished the interior, and then added modifications, upgrades, and innovative touches, it was time to see whether a Mega 30 can sail as advertised.

A boat show in 1980 or so exposed Jerry to the siren call of the marketing experts. The short version: this is a 30-foot trailerable one-design with standing headroom. While this boat is fairly large for a trailerable, it is so light it can plane on occasion just like a much smaller racing boat. After that, he says, he always wanted one. He waited 23 years until the price was right, picked his up for \$10,000, and put a whole lot of new parts, time, and energy into her refit.



So does she sail as promised? After only two test sails and with much more to learn, Jerry's early pronouncement was that she sails very well indeed. And we are pleased to announce that a new member has joined the good old boat fleet.

*(Read more on the early lessons Sunflower taught these experienced sailors in the September issue of Good Old Boat. Hint: Karen uses the word "rehumbled." – Eds.)*

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## WHAT'S COMING IN SEPTEMBER?

### FOR THE LOVE OF SAILBOATS

- Pearson 27 review
- Nimble Arctic 25 review
- International Folkboat refit

### SPEAKING SERIOUSLY

- Paper Charts 101
- Lightning protection?
- A leak-proof deck gland
- In search of solitude
- One brain, six hands
- The cruising-capable dinghy
- Trailer revival
- Ten-minute tethers
- A crane for tight places

### WHAT'S MORE

- Generation to generation
- Our readers' boats
- New age of sail
- Reflections: Journeys with no end
- Simple solutions: Windlass pendant switch
- Quick and Easy: Delrin deck pads and A turnbuckle cover that breathes
- New product launchings
- The view from here: Learning the ropes 2.0

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## IN THE NEWS

### NAV 1000 TURNS 25

Magellan, a leader of innovative GPS devices for vehicles, fitness, outdoor, and mobile navigation, is celebrating the 25th anniversary of its NAV 1000 handheld GPS. The NAV 1000 was the world's first commercial handheld GPS receiver which entered the market in 1989. Developed for the marine market, the NAV 1000 made the accuracy of GPS available to a large commercial and recreational boating community.

The handheld unit measured 8.75 inches by 3.5 inches by 2.25 inches, and weighed 1.5 pounds. In addition, the unit was waterproof, non-corrosive, buoyant, and constructed of a durable compound to withstand shock,

vibration, humidity, and temperature extremes.

Named by *Popular Mechanics* as one of the “101 Gadgets That Changed the World” and by *TIME* magazine as one of its “All-TIME 100 Gadgets,” the NAV 1000 is on display in the “Time and Navigation” exhibit at the Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum.

For more information, visit <<http://www.magellangps.com>>.

## **EARTHCAM’S LIVE WEBCAMS HELP CELEBRATE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF SANDY HOOK LIGHTHOUSE**

The Sandy Hook Lighthouse was one of only eleven lighthouses built in the thirteen colonies during the colonial era. At 250 years old, it is now the oldest standing and oldest operating lighthouse in the country.

In honor of the 250th anniversary, EarthCam, the global leader in delivering world-class webcam content, technology, and services, and the National Park Service collaborated to set up four webcams to continually stream views of and from Sandy Hook. Threecameras present live views of the Gateway National Recreation Area, the New York Harbor, and the city skyline from the perspective of the Sandy Hook Lighthouse. A fourth webcam provides a live look at the historic lighthouse. Watch what’s happening at Sandy Hook as it happens at <<http://www.earthcam.com/usa/newjersey/sandyhook/>>.



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## **CALENDAR**

### **PENOBSCOT BAY RENDEZVOUS**

August 14 – 17  
Camden, Maine

What a party! The Penobscot Bay Rendezvous is on the map as one of New England’s best regattas. Last year 55 sail- and powerboats gathered for the four-night/three-day event co-hosted by Wayfarer Marine and Lyman-Morse Boatbuilding. Momentum has been behind this event from the beginning and it is expected that this year’s event will draw even more boats to this all-out-fun regatta. It’s been recognized by *Yachting Magazine* as one of the best events! Mark your calendars and find out for yourself! More information can be found at <<http://www.penobscotbayrendezvous.com>>.

### **44TH ANNUAL NEWPORT INTERNATIONAL BOAT SHOW**

September 11 -14  
Newport, Rhode Island

The Newport Exhibition Group has announced the 44th Annual Newport International Boat Show at the Newport waterfront along America’s Cup Avenue in Newport, Rhode Island. The premier boat show in New England will encompass 13 acres and will host hundreds of exhibitors from around the world with power and sailboats ranging

from 15 to 85 feet, plus a wide variety of accessories, equipment, electronics, gear, and services for boaters. For more information or to purchase tickets go to <<http://www.newportboatshow.com>>.

### **NORTHEAST C&C RENDEZVOUS**

September 19-20

The Alofsin Piers at Fort Adams

Newport, Rhode Island

Enjoy a privateboat show of the New Redline 41 and the C&C 30. Weather permitting, there will be sailing demonstrations. Details can be found at <<http://www.cnrendezvous.myevent.com>>.

### **WOODEN BOAT SHOW**

September 27

Southport, North Carolina

Southport's fourth-annual Wooden Boat Show promotes interest in the craft and art of wooden boat construction, to support efforts to preserve wooden boat construction and skills, and to celebrate the region's maritime and boatbuilding history. Held in the Old Yacht Basin, activities will include a seafood chowder cook-off. For more information, go to <<http://southportwoodenboats.netfirms.com>>.

### **TURKEY SHOOT REGATTA**

October 3-5

Carter Creek/Rappahannock River

Irvington, Virginia

This year's Hospice Turkey Shoot Regatta, held annually on the Rappahannock River in Virginia, will take place on October 3 to October 5, a week earlier than the traditional Columbus Day weekend. John McConnico, the regatta committee chairman, says the change was made to accommodate sailors who wanted to participate but who had conflicting commitments over the Columbus Day weekend, notably the Annapolis Sailboat Show.

Last year, the venue was moved to Irvington on Carters Creek off the Rappahannock River. Rappahannock River Yacht Club and Yankee Point Racing and Cruising Club are hosting the regatta together with Rappahannock Yachts, which is providing the site for the waterside event tent at its recently expanded marina. The Tides Inn, a short dinghy hop away, is sponsoring a prize for the regatta's overall winner that includes a complimentary room for two for two nights and a complimentary slip at the Tides Inn marina, both to be used in conjunction with the 2015 regatta.

To enter the regatta, boats must be of a design that is at least 25 years old. Registration and more details can be found on the regatta's website, <<http://www.turkeyshoot.org>>.

### **45TH ANNUAL UNITED STATES SAILBOAT SHOW**

October 9-13

Annapolis, Maryland

The 45th Annual Sailboat Show is the oldest in-water sailboat show in the world. For more information and to

buy tickets go to <<http://www.usboat.com/us-sailboat-show/home>>, and don't forget to stop by *Good Old Boat's* booth, to meet Jerry, Karen, and some of the crew.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

The following book reviews have been [posted online](#).

- ***The Little Blue Book of Sailing Wisdom*** edited by Stephen Brennan
- ***Sea Trials: A Lone Sailor's Race Toward Home*** by Peter Bourke
- ***Life Boat: How a Century Old Boat and a New Dream Inspired an Adventure of a Lifetime*** by Mark Harwood
- ***Cruising Life: The Best Stories from Caribbean Compass***, compiled by Sally Erdie and Rona Beame

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## SUPERSTITIOUS? MAYBE IT'S BAD LUCK NOT TO BE

by Karen Larson

Perhaps we weren't superstitious enough. We know all about the bad luck said to come with changing a boat's name. We know you have to follow a few perfectly acceptable rules in advance and read aloud from a very simple script as part of a wholly reasonable ceremony. So why did we screw up before we even launched our new good old boat?

Jerry thought that it wasn't really a name change at all. I say her name was *Mega*. But these boats were all Mega 30s and came from the C&C yard with huge Mega logos on their sterns. So the previous owner had just covered over the original logo with a similar looking graphic stating (I believe) that her name (not just her model) was *Mega*. Right there Jerry and I split tacks.

I looked up and printed out the proper de-naming ceremony script written by John Vigor. We had run this in our magazine within the first year of publication (July 1999). This and the subsequent christening ceremony are available online at: <[http://www.goodoldboat.com/reader\\_services/articles/naming.php](http://www.goodoldboat.com/reader_services/articles/naming.php)>. But if you're working on a two-year project boat for 11 years, *when* exactly is the right time to change her name?

Not long after this boat came into our lives, I got out a heat gun and plastic razor blade and removed all traces of the old name. At least five years ago, Audrey Mikkelson — a staff member, fellow sailor, and dear friend — created the *Sunflower* graphic for her. During the summer of 2013, when it looked as if things were getting close, I asked Clif Perkins, another fellow sailor and subscriber, who has a graphics business, to make the vinyl letters. He delivered. They looked great.

Later that summer, however, we decided to have the yellow part of her hull repainted (rather than just buffed out) as part of some other work that would be done to *Sunflower's* keel and bottom by the staff at Barker's

Island Marina. She spent part of her winter indoors being pampered and painted before coming back to our home for final touches to rigging, rudder, ropes, lines, and accommodations.

New paint? It looked great! Now was the time (at last!) to apply those gorgeous graphics we'd had sitting around for nearly a year. We got in a hurry. We had a long list of things that had to be done. This was just another task on the to-do list. Or was it that one of us was not convinced that this was truly a name change?

On the first spring day that was warm and windless enough to do the deed, we applied the graphics using the advice from a well-known guru of all things sailboats. This advice was to spray the hull and the graphic with Windex so that, as the letters and design went on, there would be some wiggle room to adjust them. We sprayed (perhaps too much?) and applied the letters. The next step is to wait an hour, or two at the most, before removing the protective layer of paper over the letters.

While waiting, I exalted over one more job well done and crossed that job off the rather lengthy to-do list. One hour went by. Another hour. We were beginning to realize that something wasn't working. When we tried peeling off the top paper layer, the vinyl letters slid all over the place. They had not adhered at all. We waited another hour. And another. And another.

Finally, knowing a thunderstorm was predicted overnight, we faced reality and slid the whole slippery messes off both sides of the hull, wadded them into a sticky ball, and tossed them in the trash. Had the graphics gotten too old during the year we stored them? Did the Windex quash the deal? Was it too cold? Too humid? Could it be bad luck to cross an item off a to-do list before it has been truly completed? Or was it because we had not followed the proper de-naming ceremony before applying the new graphics?

A sadder, but wiser, girl went back to Clif for another set of graphics. He said to forget the Windex. "Just put them on dry this time," he advised. He was right. The replacement design looks great and went on without a hitch. But before we did it the second time, we thought it wise to go through the appropriate ritual one evening in the cockpit using John Vigor's de-naming script. Jerry had a scotch. I had red wine. *Mega* was properly de-named with the text and a proper libation (brandy) for the gods of the winds and the sea.

She's properly and unquestioningly *Sunflower* now. I'll drink to that!



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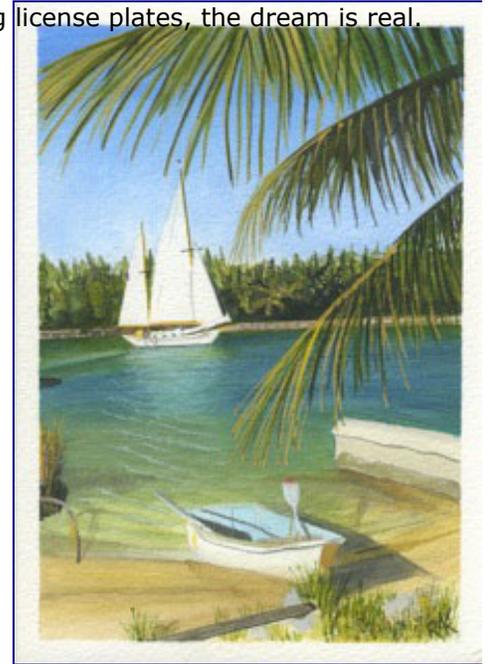
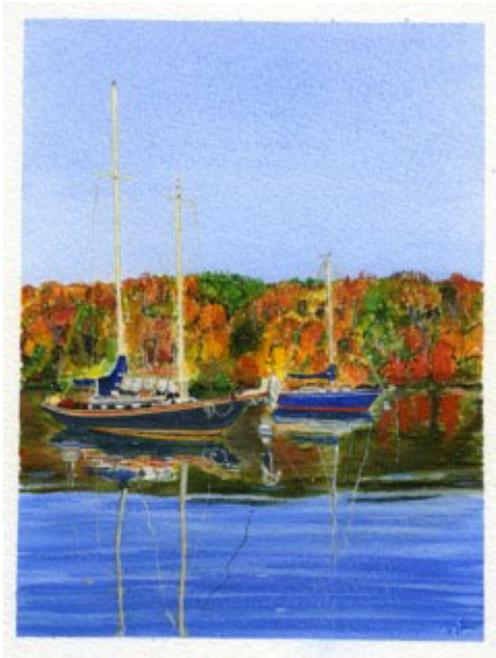
## HATS OFF TO AN ARTIST

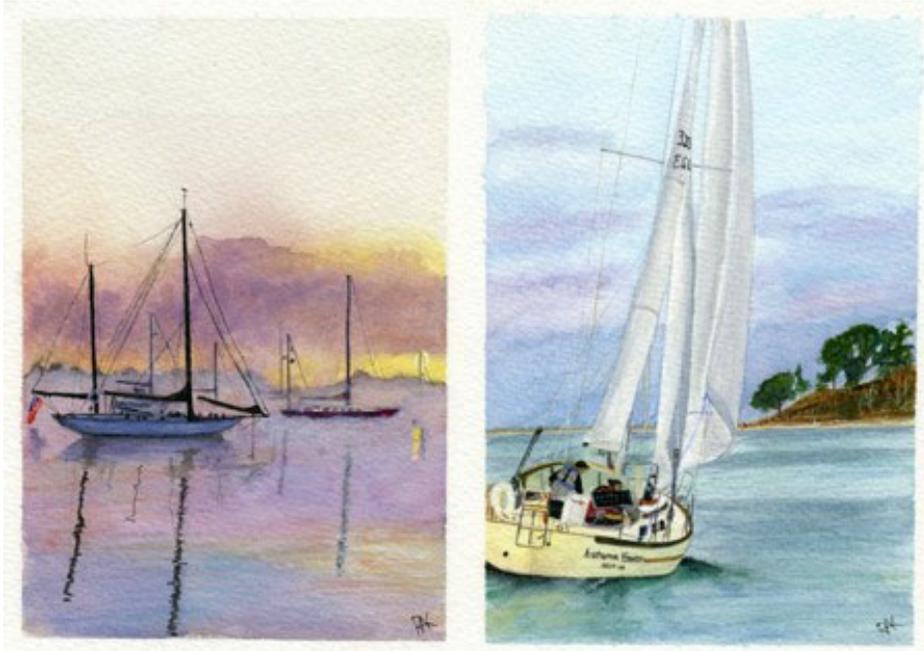
by Karen Larson

"Guests," as some call themselves, of the American penal system (federal and state prison facilities) make up a small percentage of each sailing magazine's subscribers. I believe that nothing speaks as eloquently to them about freedom as a sailboat on the water. For some it's just a fantasy. But for many, who pay for subscriptions

with money earned slowly through work in the facility laundry or by making license plates, the dream is real. They were sailors once and they will be again someday.

They study *Good Old Boat* and other magazines for tips about affordable cruisers they might someday live on, the gear that makes it possible, and the experiences of sailors who are living the dream they share. Many of these subscribers practically memorize the text and study the photos in infinite detail. They have time on their hands in a way we cannot imagine and sailing magazines offer a mental escape from the present. Occasionally we receive letters from a few of them, just as we hear from a small percentage of our other readers. At least one of our inmate readers has written occasional book reviews for us.





Another, who will remain anonymous, has taken up painting. A former U.S. Coast Guardsman, this sailor began painting the covers of the issues he received in his subscription. He sent some to us as a way of introducing himself and he earned an ongoing subscription in return. He has made several paintings of our boat and we have framed them and hung them on our wall with pride. These days, I receive several cards with his cover paintings each month as he works his way through back issues. It's been therapeutic for him as he's been treated for cancer in recent months. (Yes, there's a special facility within the system for that. Who knew?)

What's most impressive about these watercolors is the level of detail in such a small card. When we asked about his art training, he said, "I'm basically self-taught on *Good Old Boat*. I really enjoy painting the covers." We really enjoy receiving them and I'm very careful about their use as cards. Each is a unique handmade object, one of a kind. A special talent is developing here. We are happy to supply the inspiration with our covers.

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## MAIL BUOY

### FLATTERED CONTRIBUTOR

I'd like to thank you for anthologizing five of my *Good Old Boat* articles in your PDF downloads "Designers," "Boatbuilders," and "Boat Reviews." It is strangely flattering to know something you've written may be embraced as valuable advice by someone, somewhere, to help him choose a boat or designer as part of what may turn out to be a very important decision: selecting a sailboat. It is particularly flattering to see the caliber of some of the other authors selected with me. I am indeed in distinguished company.

–**Henry Cordova**

### BOAT NAMES

I missed the search for the 10 best boat names. I'll submit mine late. I'm a retired Episcopal priest living in Alameda, California. My boat's name is *Father's Aweigh*, a 24-foot pilot cutter formally named *Island Time* out of

Wisconsin, I believe. *Father's Aweigh* is finally leaving the San Francisco Bay area and heading south down the coast of the Americas after a brief refit in Southern California. Your great magazine will be one of the few mailings following me on my excursion. Thanks for all you give to the boating community. Blessings.

**–Fr. Richard Hicks**

*We didn't do the search for the 10 names. It's a "gimmick" BoatU.S. does each year based on the vinyl names ordered for people's boats. But I think yours is a great name. You realize (don't you?) that this will probably inspire a whole bunch of others who will want to share the names of their boats or others they have seen. Have a wonderful time on your big adventure!*

**–Karen Larson, Editor**

## HERE'S ONE NOW

This boat's name caught Allen Penticoff's eye. Have you seen a name you thought particularly clever or meaningful? Send a photo of the boat and its name to [Karen@goodoldboat.com](mailto:Karen@goodoldboat.com).



## CELESTIAL DISCONNECT?

I have a question/rant about "Celestial Reflections" in the July 2014 issue. As I glanced through the issue, this article caught my eye, so if I missed something please pardon me. Is this article a joke?

Last April, *QST* magazine (the monthly journal of the American Radio Relay League) had some joke articles disguised as real ones to celebrate April Fool's Day. I didn't know the ARRL had a sense of humor and was perplexed by these articles. It does seem funny now, but at the time I was worried about the League.

So, with *Good Old Boat* being a magazine dedicated to the boats of the early years of fiberglass icebreaker vintage, I found it odd that there would be an article advocating the abandonment of analog navigational equipment (sextants) in favor of GPS technology that is completely unrepairable, if something goes wrong. What madness is this? There's a very good reason mechanical self-steering windvanes and sextants retain their popularity: dependability.

My main question is this: since both analog celestial nav, in regular use globally, and GPS (absent a lightning strike or simple internal failure) are both reliable means of navigation, what's the point of the article?

Henry's assertion that celestial navigation ". . . has now become a pastime for dilettantes, a quaint art for armchair sailors" alone tells me this man knows nothing of voyaging in small boats. This is among the most patently absurd remarks I've ever seen in print.

If this isn't a joke, I'm surprised you'd publish it. *Ocean Navigator* would've laughed him off the street. I know we have.

On reading the issue more closely, I found the articles on blisters very informative, as well as the article on

replacing the rudder — both projects I have to tackle. I'd love to see an article about rebuilding/replacing the companionway hatch to make it watertight, but based on how little information I've been able to scare up I'd guess it's not done very much.

Anyway, lest you think I was just ranting (I think the author's reference to "dilettantes" is what really fired my boiler), the fact is that I enjoy your magazine very much. I love the DIY projects and color photos!

Thanks for the magazine!

**–Paul Adams**

### **KAREN LARSON REPLIES**

"Celestial Reflections" was not meant as a joke. We published one of those meant-to-be-funny issues once many years ago (January 2003), poking fun of the "boat of the year" phenomenon and the move to ever-larger sailboats from fully functional good old cruising sailboats of the past. Unfortunately, a *whole* bunch of readers didn't "get it" that just about everything in that issue was an outrageous fabrication. We'll *never* do *that* again! Our readers expect us to be technical, serious, and believable and that's what we will be.

Henry has mostly small sailboat experience, it's true, but he has *big* ship navigational experience by the bucketload. What he was expressing in his piece was the bittersweet demise of the skills needed to navigate the old-fashioned way. Navigating with a sextant is something he loves and truly misses. I think you and Henry are actually on the same page. He just expressed his frustration in a different way.

**–Karen Larson, Editor**

### **HENRY CORDOVA'S ANSWER**

Paul, thank you for comments to my article, "Celestial Reflections." Karen's response pretty much summarizes my own position: I love celestial navigation and take immense pride in my modest skills with it. But I have little reason to consider it as anything less than obsolete. I am by no means happy about this, and as I write I have often fantasized about a scenario I could write about where the hero/captain saves the day with his sextant skills after a solar flare, nearby supernova, thermonuclear war, or alien invasion knocks out the NAVSATs now operated by several nations. I really couldn't come up with a realistic one.

As Karen points out, my article was not an attack on celestial navigation, but a nostalgic farewell to it, a skill which meant a great deal to me for reasons other than wayfaring, as I believe I made clear. It might help to understand this if you knew my original title for this piece was "Lines of Position," but *Good Old Boat* renamed it.

Granted, GPS is a mechanical device vulnerable to malfunction, and it relies on a complex technological infrastructure and the equally massive government bureaucracy that supports it. But the same can be said for the time ticks that come in on the short-wave radio and the annual publishing of the Nautical Almanac. Even your super-accurate chronometers (mine are battery-powered microchip-driven \$40 Timex Iron Man wristwatches) are as vulnerable to an electromagnetic pulse as the rest of the electronics on your boat, even the pocket calculator you probably use to reduce your sights. I suggest you're as likely to drop your sextant over the side as you are to have your GPS spoofed by some military, astronomical, or even accidental disaster.

For the cost of a high quality sextant (and several plastic backups), not to mention the almanacs, sight reduction

tables, and timepieces needed to use it, you can easily buy several hand-held waterproof GPS units, plenty of spare batteries, and some tin boxes to serve as Faraday cages to protect them from the EMP of a lightning strike or enemy action. They will be less vulnerable to damage and take up a lot less space below. Sure, they won't save civilization by keeping the sea lanes open after the apocalypse, but they'll get you home. When GPS receivers were bulky, complex, and delicate (and extremely expensive!), they were a viable backup to your sextant. Today, the sextant is not a realistic backup to GPS.

I'm sorry you consider my remarks an attack on traditional navigation. Far from it, as an astronomer, mathematician, geographer, and bluewater sailor, as well as a student of navigation, I am saddened by the loss of yet another human art to digital technology. I have spent my professional life as an aerial photo mapper and GIS (geographic information systems) specialist, and was a scientific programmer working with satellite imagery for 13 years, too, so I don't exactly consider myself a Luddite, either. The old cavalryman can be perfectly aware that horses and sabers have no place on the modern battlefield and still miss them terribly.

**–Henry Cordova**

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