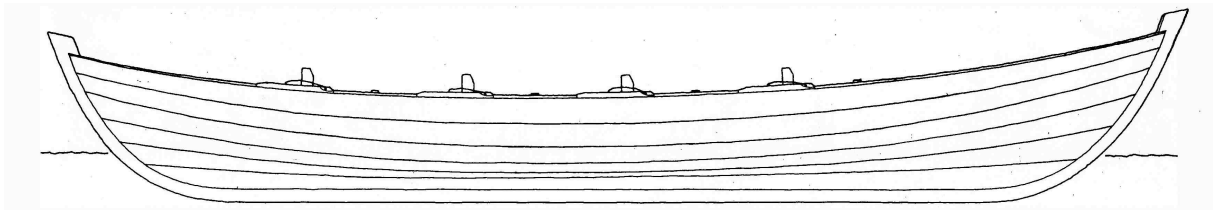
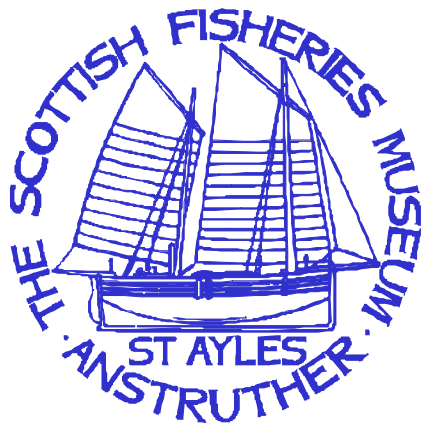


# Prospectus

# Scottish Coastal Rowing Project

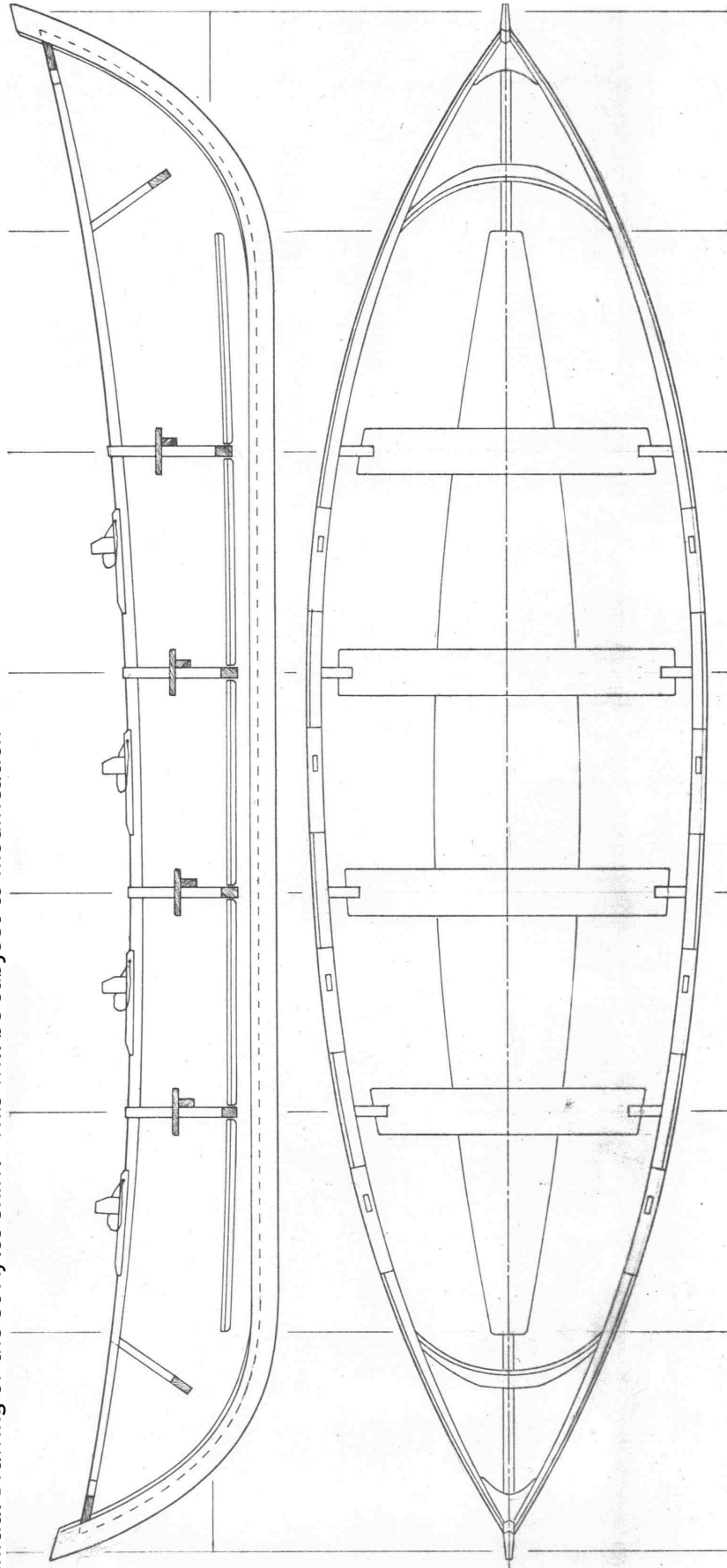


Encouraging Boat Building and  
Rowing Racing in  
Scottish Coastal Communities



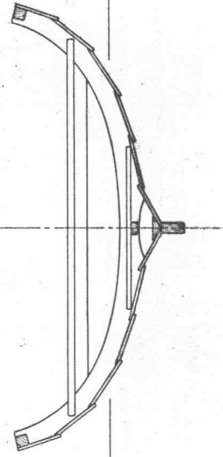
The Scottish Fisheries Museum  
St Ayles  
Harbourhead  
Anstruther  
Fife  
Scotland, KY10 3AB

Initial Drawing of the St Ayles Skiff. This will be subject to modification



St Ayles Skiff  
21'-7" x 5'-7"

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2009



# Scottish Coastal Rowing Project

## Introduction

The Scottish Fisheries Museum is supporting an initiative to re-start the inter-community rowing competition that for many years was a strong feature of life in the coastal communities of Scotland.

When first mooted, this initiative was intended to cover the Kingdom of Fife alone. However, as the project was discussed, and word of its existence spread, there has been considerable interest from outside Fife. Hence, it has been re-titled the Scottish Coastal Rowing Project, and it is hoped that in time, the sport will become a major part of the life of Scotland's many coastal communities.

## Origins

Until the 1960's there was a considerable interest in boating amongst the mining communities in Central Fife, and a strong fisheries industry in the East Neuk. These communities held their own regattas on a regular basis using their own local designs. Where regattas have carried on, they are now generally the preserve of sailing clubs using mass produced GRP yachts and dinghies, with the exception of Dysart Sailing Club where a few traditional boats are still raced. There are no rowing races in Fife apart from the Newburgh World Coble Boat championship, which is peculiar to Newburgh. Newburgh has made a concerted effort to keep this tradition alive.

In the past twenty years or so, other areas in the UK have seen a revival of inter communal rowing events using local craft.

The South West of England has seen the biggest revival and Pilot Gig racing is a big attraction, with some events attracting scores of boats, with both mens and womens crews, and thousands of spectators. However, building these boats is the preserve of professional boat builders.

In Shetland, there is considerable interest in rowing, with over twenty boats having been built in the past twenty years. Again, these boats are professionally built.

West Wales has seen a slightly different emphasis with a 24ft GRP design being used in a fast growing class.

## Proposed future in Scotland

This project is approaching the cost of entry into coastal rowing from a different angle, with the intention being that the communities who want to race the boats will build them as well, which will dramatically reduce the initial costs.

The guiding principal is that fast, safe, attractive boats should be available for building at a relatively modest cost, and that interested groups should not have to purchase boats from professional boat builders. We are therefore proposing that the boats are available as kits that can be built by the groups that will be rowing them.

Indeed, the very fact that the boats should preferably be built by their owners and operators is intended to increase the pride and cohesiveness of the communities and groups in their boats.

## Community Benefits

We see many benefits for a community in building and racing these skiffs.

- The building of a boat will provide a focus of interest during the time that it is under construction. There is approximately 400-500 man hours work in building the boat, and the more hands that are willing to get involved, the easier it will be.
- Rowing is above all a team sport where all members of a crew have to give their all, and work together to win. This is seen as an ideal method for building team spirit.
- The support of a set of crews within a group or community is also important, and it is hoped that this will increase the cohesion within, and through friendly competition break down barriers to other communities.
- It is particularly hoped that youth groups can be encouraged to get involved, both as a means of training in cooperative constructive activity in building the boats, and in what is hoped will develop into a very popular means of competition against neighbouring communities.

## The Boat - The St Ayles Skiff

The internationally renowned small boat designer Iain Oughtred has been commissioned by the SFM to design a suitable craft, which will be based on the Fair Isle Skiff. As this project is being backed by the SFM, the name of the design will be the St Ayles Skiff, St Ayles being the name of the old Chapel in which the SFM is partially housed.



The model of a Fair Isle skiff in the Scottish Fisheries Museum which inspired the design of the St Ayles Skiff.

The design brief of the boat has been drawn from the following perspectives:

1. The total cost of building such a boat must not be prohibitive - it should be well within the fund-raising capabilities of possibly small organisations.
2. The build must be within the capabilities of reasonably handy amateurs, with completion within a reasonably short time-frame so that interest is not lost.
3. The resulting boat must be fast and safe.
4. The crew should be comparatively small so that practices can be easily organised.

The St Ayles Skiff will provide a desired mix of tradition, seaworthiness, speed, and ease of build. These boats take a crew of five - four rowing and a coxswain to steer and coach the crew during racing and training.

When the idea was first mooted, the Dysart Yawl had been considered for the project. However, it is a smaller boat and is less suitable for rowing competition than the Fair Isle Skiff, having evolved mainly for sailing. The original design evolved to cope with the very rough sea conditions around the Fair Isle, and are small and light, and very seaworthy.

## **Racing**

It is intended that racing these skiffs will be a community attraction, and for that reason it is likely that most of the races will be of a fairly short duration, and run within easy view of the shore.

As the racing is intended to be a focal point for communities, there will be different categories of racing, e.g. mens open, womens open, mixed, juniors, veterans etc. It is likely that all these categories from the same group will use the same boat, though it is possible that in the future, groups and communities may build more boats if there is such demand for racing and practice seats.

Some St Ayles skiff rowers may, as competence and competitive spirit increases, wish to participate in longer races against other classes.

Race formats with other coastal classes vary in length from a few hundred yards to several miles, with the Great River Race on the Thames being 22 miles with a huge variety of boat types participating, allowing the different coastal racers to compete against dragon boats, Thames wherries, and many other types.

The extreme race is the biennial Celtic Challenge of 90 miles from Arklow in Ireland to Aberystwyth in Wales. This is the longest sea rowing race in the world, and includes crew changeovers at sea.

## **Development and Competition**

We envisage these boats being built by any kind of group close to the coast with an interest in the sport. In smaller communities, it may be that the community council will take a lead in constructing and racing the boats, with other primary candidates being fishing and sailing clubs. It has also been suggested that Pubs, Youth Groups, amateur football clubs and other similar organisations would also take an interest.

## **Boat Construction**

The boats are being designed to be built with the Clinker Ply construction method. This form of construction marries the traditional and the modern.

Hull planking is from marine plywood, with all other parts made from solid timber. The Hull is glued using epoxy resin, together with stainless steel and silicon bronze fixings where appropriate.

The boats can either be built from scratch, or from a kit which will be developed and cut by Jordan Boats of East Wemyss.

There is nothing to stop a participating group employing a professional boatbuilder to construct their skiff, but this will more than double the cost of getting the skiff built.

The Information Pack includes a section showing the construction of a similar type of boat from a Jordan Boats Kit.

A skiff will be built at the SFM over the winter of 2009-10. It is intended that as this boat is built, the process will be recorded and placed on a website as a tutorial for other builders to follow.

## **St Ayles Skiff Cost**

The current estimate of the kit cost is £1350. This comprises the plans, plywood parts, and the moulds over which to build the boat. It is estimated at the current time that the completion cost of the boat will be approximately £3000, including the timber, glues, fittings, paint, and other items. It may be possible to complete the boat for less depending on the materials used and the level of support offered by local businesses.

Groups may wish to factor in the additional costs of a trailer and cover.

It should be noted that the moulds can be re-used, which will slightly reduce the cost of building second and subsequent boats.

It may be that some groups will wish to try sailing as well as rowing the St Ayles skiff. A rig is being designed, and will probably involve around £800 for a sail together with the cost of a mast and rigging.

The Steering Group is recommending that experience is gained with rowing the boats in the first year or two of operation before sailing is brought into the equation.

## **Timescales**

The plans for the St Ayles Skiff should be complete and available at the beginning of August 2009. Immediately they are available, Jordan Boats will kit the design, which will take approximately one week, and enable firm pricing. The Kits should then be available from the beginning of September.

The work on the SFM boat will commence in September, with completion by April 2010. It is hoped that any other boats being constructed will be completed at about the same time, so that crews can be trained for a first regatta at the end of May, and further regattas to take place at Gala days along the Fife coast, and other locations around Scotland as can be arranged and depending on the number of boats built.

## Publicity

We anticipate a Press Launch of the scheme in July 2009 when full information about the boat and the project will be available.

Watercraft Magazine have already asked for articles covering the launch of the project, and updates through to the first regattas.

Yachting life have expressed an interest and will carry editorial about the project.

## Funding

Each group building a boat will have to consider how to fund construction and use of the boat. Sources of funds for groups to consider may include:

- Personal contributions
- Community Fund raising events
- Sponsorship from local businesses. This may also be help in kind, eg materials, storage, use of tools, use of a shed etc, rather than just cash.
- Grant Aid from local Councils and other funding bodies. A list of possible Grant Aid sources is given in the Information Pack.

## Steering Group

A steering Group has been formed which will carry out the following tasks:

- liaise with other Organisations who have an interest
- draft the rules of racing
- set dates for a racing calendar for 2010
- Gather information for individual clubs on insurance, and other statutory requirements
- Publicise the project in Local and National Press and other media.
- Compile the Information Pack. This is under preparation. It will detail what is required to build the boat (subject to final design), funding sources, an overview of the construction method, and some information about the racing aspect.

The initial membership of the Steering Group is:

Chairman David Tod Trustee and Board Member of the Scottish Fisheries Museum

Secretary Robbie Wightman

Member Alec Jordan Proprietor, Jordan Boats & CNC

As other groups commit to building a St Ayles Skiff, we will hope that they will assist in some of the tasks necessary in setting up a new organisation from scratch, and that individual members of these groups will be willing to be co-opted onto the Steering Group.

In the early spring of 2010, as the first boats approach completion, it is intended that the groups building the skiffs will come together to constitute a body that will govern the Class, at which point the Steering Group will hand over all information and be dissolved.

## Next Steps

If this Prospectus has caught your interest, please contact a member of the Steering Group to let us know. You will be added to a mailing list which will keep you updated of progress to the project, and membership of an internet forum on which the progress of the project will be discussed.

Then you need to:

1. Find some friends (or make new friends) to build and race the St Ayles Skiff
2. Download the information pack
3. Find somewhere to build it
4. Start your fund raising efforts.

## Contact details

Please replace “(at)” with “@”. This has been changed to reduce the amount of email spam that we receive.

David Tod	tods2(at)tiscali.co.uk	01333 310421
Robbie Wightman	paragon2(at)tiscali.co.uk	01620 895664
Alec Jordan	skiff(at)jordanboats.co.uk	01592 560162

## About Jordan Boats & CNC

Jordan Boats have been producing kit boats since 2002, for a variety of designers. They currently sell the majority of their kits to the south of England, with many being sold to customers in Germany and the Netherlands, and several other European countries. The kits are also sold under licence in Australia and the USA.

The St Ayles Skiff kits will be sold at a price considerably below the normal cost of a kit for a similar sized boat.