



Stuart's first Oughtred building project 'Elf'

world's first *Auklet* LAUNCHED?

by ROBERT AYLIFFE
pics courtesy STEWART PORTER

When I first saw the drawings of Auklet, I thought that the size tail might be at the point of wagging the design dog.

Cute maybe, but would it work?

Since it was an Iain Oughtred design, I really had no doubts, but ...

One of the first plans buyers in Australia was Stuart Porter, who had already built a very fine 'Elf'.

An email, then a brace of pictures arrived a few weeks ago.

Stuart has built, and launched what I believe is the world's first Auklet.

I let Stuart, and his pictures, do the talking!

Hi Robert,

Thanks for your prompt service when I bought Auklet plans through you late last year.

I've now completed her and attach some photos of the finished product.

She rows beautifully, on all points of the wind. On a beam wind, doesn't seem to want to round up into the wind. Down wind, she scuds at an amazing speed, with any wish to broach.

The large skeg keeps her tracking well.

She weighed in at 26kg fully painted and varnished. I used western red cedar on most solid timber. I laminated the keelson with cedar on bottom and merbau on top. The cedar was to make it easy to plane and the hardwood to make the keelson damage proof, from the top. I could save half a kilo here and stick to all cedar, so with a bit of effort, could get the weight down to 25kg. I used 4.5mm ply which gave a very stiff finish.



Planking 'Auklet'. (above)



Auklet Stem planking. (right)



'Auklet's' gunnels go on.

Still have the jig, moulds and plank patterns if others want them.

All in all, at almost 60 and weighing in at a modest 70kg, I can lift her onto fairly high, car roof racks, by myself. I have a great little boat. Thanks.

My last set of plans from you, was for Elf, also one of Ian's. She is the pride of my fleet. I am considering selling her now, but am unsure if you offer a selling service in Sydney.

I have many photos of construction if you need them.

I hold Ian in the highest regard. His plans are a real joy to read and the best I've built from. They are a mixture of science and art.

Regards, Stuart Porter

Auklet is launched, and will no doubt be a hit among the many sailors who want a small tender that is a joyous combination of very lightweight, very good rowing and small outboard performance and best of all, real elegance!

Phil Bolger once commented to me that the choice of a good first owner builder often had as much to do with the success of a design as the fine work of the designer himself.

Iain will be proud of you, Stuart.

Pictures of Stuart's boat look like being shown at the special testimonial dinner being held for Iain at the WoodenBoat Festival, in Mystic Seaport, Connecticut, USA later this month.

We are hoping that Stuart comes to the Australian Wooden Boat Festival in Hobart in February 2011, when he will be able to show his Auklet to Iain, in person!

Did you hear that right?

NIS BOATS HAVE CONVINCED IAIN OUGHTRED TO MAKE ONE LAST TRIP TO AUSTRALIA, AS A GUEST OF THE AUSTRALIAN WOODEN BOAT FESTIVAL IN FEBRUARY, 2011!

You heard it, first, here!

After six months of indecision he has finally confirmed he would be coming!

Bring YOUR Oughtred boat, and join the hundreds of Tasmanian Oughtred builders who will also be bringing theirs!

More to come on THAT in the next, special Iain Oughtred/Australian Wooden Boat Festival, special issue.

Contact NISBOATS and Australian Wooden Boat Festival Office :

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Iain Oughtred; at the Australian Wooden Boat Festival, Hobart, February 11-14, 2011!



Auklet Thwarts in place.



Auklet shows her surprisingly pretty lines.



And on the roof of the car; she really IS small!



And on the water one up ...



... and, on the water two up!