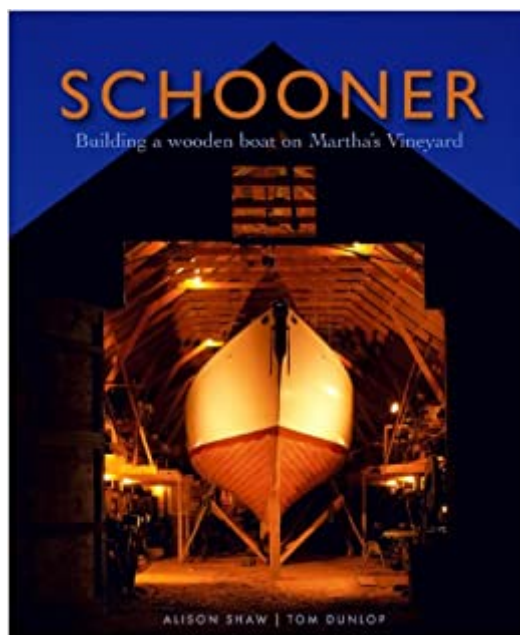


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# Schooner: Building A Wooden Boat On Martha's Vineyard



## Synopsis

WoodenBoat magazine says this book "delights the eye while informing the mind." It takes you through the construction of Rebecca of Vineyard Haven, a sixty-foot wooden schooner designed and built by one of the few boatyards in the United States devoted exclusively to the design, construction and repair of traditional wooden boats. At the time Rebecca was constructed, she was the largest sailing vessel built on the Island of Martha's Vineyard since the election of Abraham Lincoln and the only boat of her type being built anywhere in the world. In words and extraordinary photos, you learn that every part of Rebecca is built or cast by hand by the few craftsmen in the world who still do this work. She is, as one of her builders calls her, poetry on water. Jon Wilson of WoodenBoat magazine calls this book "exquisitely beautiful." And singer James Taylor, whose boat was the first one built at the yard, labels the work being done there "astonishing." In a world that puts the word "disposable" in front of everything from cash to razors, the story that Schooner shows and tells will appeal to boat lovers, book lovers, and everyone who cares about the skill required to build something significant and useful and lovely, not just for today and tomorrow, but for the ages.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Humankind has been taking to the seas in wooden ships since at least 2650 BCE, using construction techniques that have not changed much through the millennia. Over the last 50 years, modern alloys, fiberglass, and composite materials have become the standard in the recreational sailboat industry, and wooden boats have been relegated to specialty magazines and pocket

colonies of connoisseurs. Schooner is a gripping and delightful tale of the design and construction of the largest wooden boat to be launched from Martha's Vineyard in the last 150 years. Author Dunlop and photographer Alison Shaw chronicle the 1,215-day gestation of Rebecca of Vineyard Haven. Through prose and pictures, the reader joins builders Nat Benjamin and Ross Gannon from the initial design conversation through the launch. Combining the stages of the boat's construction with snippets of American history, portraits of rugged individualist craftsmen, and a glimpse of the power of a New England community, this book is a joy to read—and not just for boat-building enthusiasts. --Mark Coe

(I found) both joy and beauty in the pages of this book. ...Schooner delights the eye while informing the mind. ... (Photographer) Alison Shaw found sculpture in some of the most routine objects in the boatshop. She did not miss a beat...and some of her extemporaneous portraits of the people who built Rebecca are stunning and perhaps unparalleled in the annals of boatbuilding documentation. (Writer) Tom Dunlop strikes a good balance (in his boatbuilding narrative), celebrating the gestalt of wooden boats without teaching you how to build one. --WoodenBoat magazine, July/August 2010

On the island of Martha's Vineyard, three miles off the coast of Massachusetts, it was the most festive launch in more than a generation: the christening of Rebecca of Vineyard Haven, a 60-foot, 76,000-pound schooner designed and built, plank on frame, at the Gannon & Benjamin Marine Railway, one of the leading traditional boatbuilding yards on the U.S. continent. Cannons fired around the waterfront village of Vineyard Haven, a Korean War-era Ryan Navion L-17 warbird laced the sky with white smoke, the ferry Nantucket fired jets of water from her stern doors, and hundreds of Vineyarders cheered as the largest sailing vessel to be built on the island since Abraham Lincoln's election 141 years before rolled down the ways into the harbor at Vineyard Haven. Indeed, the fuss over Rebecca was justified. As her hull slid gracefully into the water, admirers could only marvel and breathe sighs of relief at the project's completion after the bankruptcy of her original owner. A long but finally successful search for a new owner averted the threat of a partially finished hull being left bone dry in the yard. In 2010, Gannon & Benjamin mark 30 years of distinctive boatbuilding, and Rebecca begins her 10th year of stylishly carrying crew throughout the world's illustrious cruising grounds. Schooner: Building a Wooden Boat on Martha's Vineyard, chronicles the dramatic tale of how the fate of boat and yard became irrevocably intertwined. For more about Rebecca and Gannon & Benjamin, see below. --Cruising World, June 2010 issue

A big, beautiful book about a stunning boat. --Boston Globe, June 6, 2010

In naming Schooner one of the top photo books in 2010, Shutterbug magazine says, "Talented author Tom Dunlop's lively and informative

text is carefully paired with acclaimed photographer Alison Shaw's expertly composed, crystal-clear images. Together they bring the story to life and allow the reader to share the wonderful experience of the creation of this beautiful vessel." --Shutterbug magazine, December 2010

Some wonderful stuff here, although the author's over-the-top effusive praise bordering on Godhead for the G&B boys is a little bit stomach-churning at times. Yes we all recognize and appreciate the wonderful work that they do. But I would frankly be a little embarrassed if I were them. It's a bit much. Stunning photography and some good writing notwithstanding; but if you want a detailed book about building a wooden boat, this is not it. More about the aura of G&B and some very careful sanitizing of the people involved on the ownership side even though anyone with any sense can read between the lines.

'Schooner' is a great story about two true craftsmen and the workers in their company, Gannon & Benjamin. Their location on Martha's Vineyard and the old-world craftsmanship they and their workers have learned make for a really interesting story, refreshingly devoid of modern technology. Their boats are works of art, as well as the photography, which focuses not just on beautiful boats, but the raw materials and process behind the boats.

Great story about how it takes a village to run a company

Wonderful book, beautifully illustrated

Nice text and great photos! excellent book to pick up and read at anytime, it goes great with the book " Wooden Boat "

A must have for anyone with an interest in boat building or just the love of wooden boats.

Schooner - Building a Wooden Boat on Martha's Vineyard details, in prose and photographs, the story of the design and construction of the schooner, Rebecca of Vineyard Haven, the largest wooden vessel to have been built on Martha's Vineyard since the days of Abraham Lincoln. At first glance, it would be easy to consider Schooner to be a "coffee table book." In one sense, it works very well as one. The photography by Alison Shaw is stunning and the layout of the graphics and sidebar text is beautifully done. It is easy to pick up the book, flip through the pages and get lost in

the vivid imagery and the succinct captions. It would be a mistake if that is all you do, however. Tom Dunlop's account of the birth of the shipyard, and the growth of Rebecca from an idea, to a sketch, to a design, and finally to a sailing schooner is fascinating. At the heart of the tale are Nat Benjamin and Ross Gannon who began repairing wooden boats on the beach at Vineyard Haven and go on to found the Gannon and Benjamin Marine Railway, where the Rebecca will be designed and built. Dunlop follows the construction of the schooner one step at a time in language that is clear enough for the layman but still engaging for those who have spent a bit of time in boatyards. We follow along with the shaping of the angelique timbers, imported from the jungles of Suriname, for schooner's keel; to the cutting of frames; the planking of the hull and the construction of the masts. We encounter a major fire at the shipyard, which misses the Rebecca, and the bankruptcy of the original owner of the schooner. Ultimately, the story told in Schooner has as much to do with those who built this beautiful schooner as it does the construction itself. My only quibble with the prose is a certain understandable enthusiasm that creeps in from time to time. For the sake of full disclosure I built fiberglass boats while in college and spent several decades working with steel ships, which perhaps informs or at least colors my skepticism when I read gushing passages about the superiority and longevity of wooden boats. Tom Dunlop writes: "Properly cared for, there is every reason to believe that this schooner, built at the turn of the twentieth century, will still be sailing strong at the turn of the twenty second." The statement is absolutely true. Nevertheless, the average reader might not grasp what is entailed in the phrase "properly cared for" as applied to wooden boats of this size. He also comments that "sailing a wooden boat feels more rewarding than fiberglass - an organic craft that seems to come to life as it moves through the water, rather than a plastic thing that seems vaguely to confront it." Having sailed on wooden, fiberglass and steel sailing boats and ships, the primary difference I've noted was the attention we paid to the bilge. (The wooden sailing vessels usually required more pumping.) These quibbles aside, Dunlop's enthusiasm for his subject captures the very real sense of wonder and excitement as the schooner begins to take shape from its component parts. He captures the magical sense of creation that has inspired boat builders and sailors for as long as boats have been built.

feel very good . This product has great balance and weighting to it. I was impressed with the packaging and the product itself is impressive, especially given the price. I would absolutely recommend purchasing this product to others. very nice . arrive on time. for my family ,

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