

In Dorval, Quebec in 1969, I began building a 55' Herreshoff 3-masted schooner in fiberglass from a wooden male mold I had built over the previous winter. I then brought the hull to the Royal Saint Lawrence Yacht Club for finishing. It took me 8 more years to finish the boat which I named Canada Goose. One day, while working on the hull, I noticed a smallish man watching. I said hi and we chatted. He was elderly, but very wiry and strong looking, still had his hair, cut quite close, slightly wavy, and he was very neatly dressed. His manner was very cordial and he was curious about the boat. He offered no suggestions nor did he allow any inkling that he might be a sailor man. Had a twinkle in his eye and a pipe in his mouth. I saw him on many days and his arrival was always a happy event for me. He learned I was an ad man, a writer of television commercials and he allowed that he too wrote. This intrigued me and I somehow got hold of these wonderful, quaint stories of a tramp steamer somewhere in the Maritimes, its skipper involved in comical cargo situations, one in particular involved some guy who had invented fiberglass tomb stones, and the skipper had lost a load he was carrying as cargo. you can imagine these floating tombstones turning up on beaches! By this time, I knew he was Alan Easton, and that he had been in Corvettes during WW2. After this initial meeting I would see Alan on Dorval Island where he had a Summer home, and where my wife and I had rented one for the Summer. What struck me about Alan was his gentlemanliness. He was always polite, thoughtful, and a listener. Good looking guy too. Neat, and as I say, always with the pipe. I would say he was a person of reflection, someone who did a lot of thinking. He was Irish and that wonderful Irish characteristic of humour and ability to write was certainly upon him. I often think of Alan Easton, his quiet demeanour and ability to listen. I felt so silly, a young guy with little experience except sailing Finn dinghies, explaining to an incredibly experienced blue water man what I was doing. He had no advice, no criticism, nothing but that curious ability to listen. In 1978 I finished Canada Goose and sailed it down the St. Lawrence around Gaspé then Northumberland to Port Hawkesbury. From there we made it to Mahone Bay in 21 hours, mostly motoring. I kept the boat in Martins Point for 10 years, then sold it to a Bermudian woman who kept it for 5 years then sold it to her boyfriend when they broke up. So it had Bermudian registry, then Dutch, as the new owner was a container ship captain, Ron Jaarsma. Canada Goose is now in Luperon DR. I can hardly think of her without remembering those days of building and the enormous kindness and charm of Alan Easton.