

# Bob Hoff Gives Whittling a Whirl

by Nancy Friedman

**W**hen you or I look at a metal egg beater, we imagine omelettes. Life Member Bob Hoff, on the other hand, imagines carved wooden figures animated by the stirrings of the wind. Which probably explains why you and I were down in the kitchen washing dishes while Bob created the whimsical whirligigs that grace the deck outside the Staib Room

"I like to whittle," Bob says modestly. About 10

years ago, he decided to make something that moved. His first attempt at a rowboat used a propeller, "but it was noisy. And twice the boat blew off into the garden."

Meanwhile, Bob designed the swimmer whirligig, using a wind-cup contraption that harnessed the wind more efficiently. A cam on each shoulder, attached to the corresponding leg, coordinates the kick with the stroke.

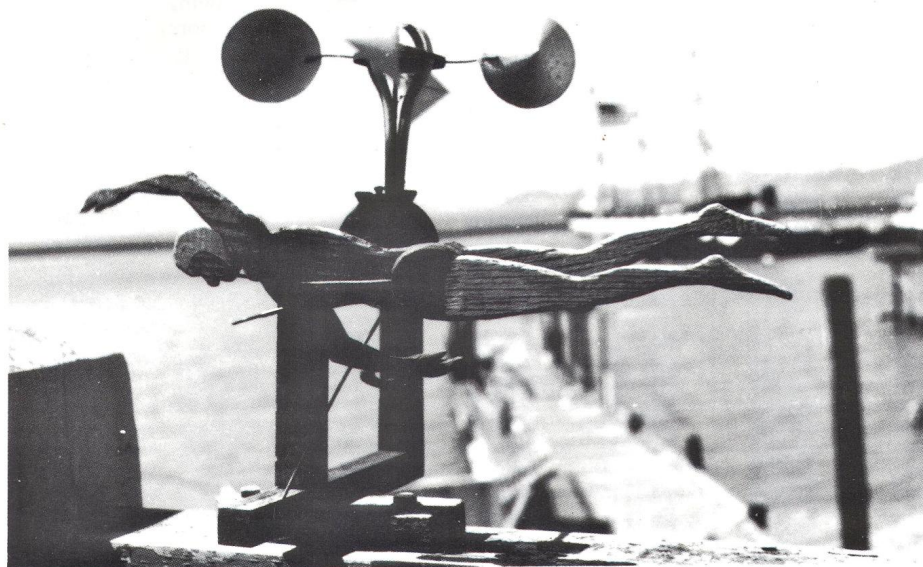
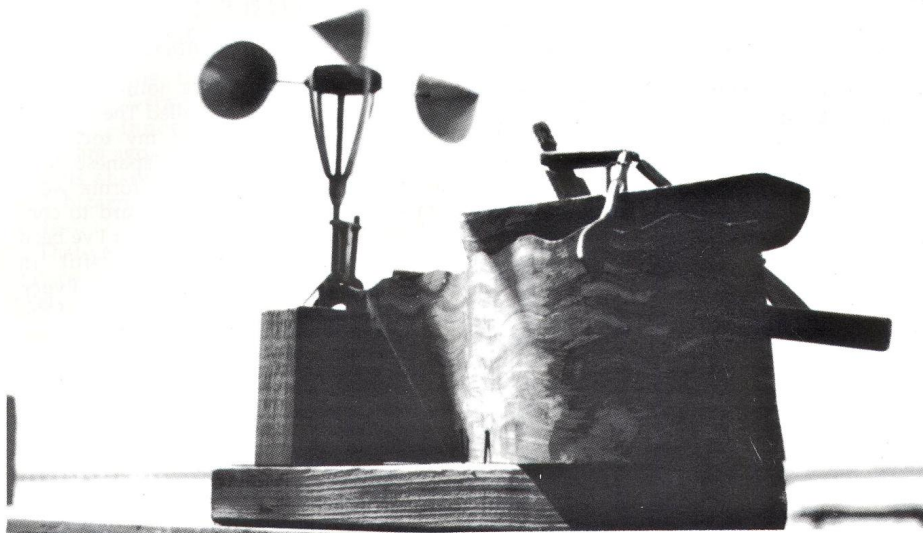
Pleased with the results, Bob turned his attention back to the rowboat. The

problem: how to translate the circular motion of a propeller into back-and-forth action. The solution came during one of Bob's regular cove swims. ("Swimming is great for thinking about problems," he says.) It occurred to him that an eggbeater's cam action is similar to the crankshaft of a car. Flea markets proved to be a good source of old eggbeaters, and during a few more swims he thought up the design details. As the wind turns the blades of the eggbeater, the little oarsman,

*continued on page 9*



Dolphin John Perino's skilled photograph captures the elegant design of Bob Hoff's runner, part of the triathlon series of whirligigs on display at the Dolphin Club.



The rower and the swimmer complete the triathlon series. Bob Hoff has indicated there are maybe more whirligigs on the way. Watch the Dolphin Club deck for future additions.

Photos by John Perino



## Dolphin Bob Hoff Gives Whittling A Whirl

- from page 2

carved of oak, slides back and forth in his redwood boat, stroking his oak oars through the air.

Bob works with what he calls "primitive tools" in the basement of his Noe Valley home, where he's lived with his wife, Elizabeth, for the last 30 years. He paints his creations but doesn't varnish them, preferring to

let them weather naturally. He comes out every so often to make minor repairs and lubricate moving parts with WD-40. (The rowboat atop the weight room is not one of Bob's; it was a discard found by Boathouse Captain Jeremy West and donated to the club.)

Bob's fascination with craft began early. He grew up in the Highland Park section

of Los Angeles, where he learned the typesetting trade in high school print shop. Drafted into the Army at 18, he saw combat in Europe in World War II; in 1956 he moved to San Francisco and found a job at the *San Francisco Examiner* as a linotype operator. At 67, he's still there, having survived the revolution from hot type to

*continued on page 11*

since John Selmer's mid-winter cove triumph February 9th, a Dolphin mer-man was victorious. Coincidentally, no women were entered in the over-60 swim.

Lake Tahoe was the site for the yearly fresh water carnival and swim, with six Dolphin teams as the close, personal guests of the Olympic Club. Continuing a tradition that dates back to the swim's inception, the Water Pigs proudly bore the Dolphin standard. Adding a Dolphin touch to the festivities the pigs did their best to keep swimming from getting in the way of a good time. Being gracious pigs, they shared this philosophy with as many teams as possible, save the blazing Dolphin Trout team. Utilizing a cloaking strategy of swimming like a fast team (something rarely employed by Dolphins), the Trout managed to avoid Pig hospitality, getting across the lake so quickly that mother Trout

Anne Clark was deprived of her second turn in the water. Ultimately, justice prevailed as the dynamic duo of Eduardo Barranco and Neil Hartnett rode in from the horizon to vanquish the Pigs and restore tranquility to the water.

Meanwhile, at a beach far, far away, a select corp of Dolphin women did the Club proud, taking the three mile Seal Beach swim by storm. Team Cadillac, under the direction of Kate Coleman, produced medals by Susan Anson, Kate, Nancy Friedman, Pat McGarvey and Bonnie Winn.

The coming weeks hold promise for just about every desire, at least as pertains to swimming. August 1st marks the annual amphibious assault onto the beaches and B.B.Q.'s of Santa Cruz. With an entourage of about two hundred anticipated, good times are expected all around. Back in the friendly confines of our Bay, the twi-

light Gas House Cove swim on Friday, August 7 will commence an evening of hot dogs and libation, provided for all to enjoy as we salute our many Dolphin pilots.

From around the Bay, Dolphins will converge Saturday August 15th on Petaluma to join in the celebration of their local festival. A jump into the Petaluma River will take participants on a pleasant 1/2 mile course leading to a B.B.Q. picnic. All Dolphins are invited to participate and their friends and family are encouraged to attend. Details are posted on the swim board.

With plenty of B.B.Q.'s under and over the belts of Dolphins and tapering complete, the Golden Gate swims arrive August 22 and 23. As always, check the swim board for sign-up information and updates. And remember, a clean galley is a happy galley.

*Dave Zovickian*



25. Lou Meyer	52:27
26. Kate Coleman	52:29
27. Megan Sullivan	52:33
28. Gina Rus	52:44
29. Eric Shackelford	53:15
30. Peter Neubauer	53:44
31. Rich Livingston	53:45
32. Krist Jake	54:57
33. Eric Mellinger	55:01
34. Susan Anson	55:25
35. Nancy Friedman	55:32
36. Dave Copeland	55:54
37. Liz Ann Zirker	56:00
38. Eduardo Barranco	56:20
39. John Hornor	57:10
40. Jude Stalker	57:57
41. Marcia Grimm	58:59
42. Kathy Zirker	59:10
43. Susan Cobb	59:31
44. Roger Kleid	60:11
45. Jerry Cullen	60:13
46. George Gara	60:57
47. George Robin	61:12
48. Carol Murphy	61:47
49. Joe Cowan	62:09
50. Susan Hornor	62:35
51. Susan Lauritzen	63:57
52. Mary Cantini-Norkin	64:12
53. Larry Alioto	65:13
54. Will Powning	66:40
55. Keith Weaver	67:24
56. Don Reid	70:39
57. Bill Powning	79:14
58. Phil Kohlenberg	82:00

PILOTS: Susan Allen, Dang Nguyen, Phil Fernandez, Marla McGowan, Bob Danielson, Colin Gift, Don Harrison, Harry Louie, Meg Reilly, Chuck Vogt, Rich Cooper, Diane Schatz, Jim Growden, Andy Camous, Dan Osborne, Jim Fagan, Kevin Hartnett, Neil Hartnett, Steve Pinetti, Warren Welter, Barry Christian, Ann Tingley, Ken Frank, Gwen Passano, Ed De Cosio, Stan Hlynsky, Lance Younger, Flicka McGuirrin

HELPERS: Larry Alioto, Rich Livingston, Mark O'Hara, Matthew Sheridan, David Claman, Anne Clark, Chris Kelly, Pete Neubauer, Lorna Newlin, Meg Reilly, Anne Sasaki, Elmer Tosta, Cecco, Nancy Friedman, Rudy DeMay, Tom Hofmann, Steve North, Bill O'Brien, Dodi Marosi, Mary Heth, Cathy Huang, Pat North, Mimi Osborne, Lou Meyer, Kathy Zirker, Era Osibe, Walt Schneebeli

## Twilight Cove

June 19, 1992

Clear Skies with light to moderate winds. 1.25 miles, jump @ 1815.  
High @ 1619, 4.7; Low @ 2110, 2.9

1. Suzanne Heim	22:51
2. Laura Burtch	25:46
3. Jon Nakamura	26:05
4. Karena Liberty	26:43
5. Tom Schatz	27:05
6. Alan Budenz	27:53
7. Laura Merkl	29:10
8. Rick Crafts	29:27
9. Susan Allen	29:40
10. Mike Webb	30:30
11. Dan Osborne	30:43
12. Richard Kosinski	31:07
13. Megan Sullivan	32:47
14. Diane Schatz	33:04
15. Mark Richard	33:05
16. Joni Beemsterboer	33:12
17. Celeste McMullin	33:13
18. Kate Coleman	33:15
19. Rich Antonchuk	33:20
20. Eric Shackelford	34:05
21. Tina Scott	34:19
22. Chris Jake	35:25
23. Susan Cobb	35:54
24. Ken Frank	36:07
25. John Hornor	36:57
26. Milo Fay	37:30
27. Barry Christian	37:36
28. Keith Nelson	38:30
29. Mark O'Hara	38:46
30. Kathy Zirker	39:10
31. George Gara	40:27
32. Peggy Lavelle	41:01
33. Nancy Hornor	42:30
34. Bill Callahan	43:45
35. Warren Welter	45:20
36. Pete Bianucci	45:53
37. Will Powning	45:54
38. Steve Pinetti	46:11
39. Joe Cowan	46:35
40. Rudy DeMay	47:05
41. Larry Alioto	47:09
42. Meg Reilly	48:46
43. Nick Zoller	49:56
44. Cathy Direen	49:59
45. Keith Weaver	50:42

PILOTS: Sam Cuddeback, Hank Kosinski, Steve Worthington, Phil Fernandez, Ken Coren, Bob Danielson, Monica Towers, Lou Meyer, Jon Bielinski, Ted McKown, Kevin Hartnett, Eduar-

do Barranco

HELPERS: Patrick Freillinger, David Marten, Matt Sheridan, Nancy Hornor, Mark O'Hara, Tony Reveaux, Gina Rus, Anne Sasaki, Roger Kleid, Cecco, Padraic Doyle, Megan Sullivan, Diana Abele, David Claman, Anne Clark, Lisa Leffingwell, Mark Lubiszewski, Marla McGowan, Lorna Newlin, Mimi Osborne, Nick & Bruno, Alan Budenz, Ken Frank, Keith Nelson, David Rich, Joe Schatz, Eric Shackelford, Nick Zoller, Bob Blum

## Over 60 Cove

July 12, 1992

Low @ 0451, -0.5; High @ 1211, 4.7.

1. Glynn Jones	09:47
2. Jack Bettencourt	11:51
2. Jerry Cullen	11:51
4. Ted McKown	12:36
5. Herb Madden	12:43
6. Don Harrison	13:23
7. Nick Zoller	14:02
8. Walt Schneebeli	14:19
9. James Vanya	14:48
10. Don Reid	15:55
11. Bob Hoff	16:17
12. Peter Butler	16:20
13. Bill Powning	16:30
14. Joe Bruno	18:14
15. Charlie Rockwood	19:47
16. Hal Miramonte	23:22
17. Bill O'Brien	35:03
18. Cecco Mennucci	38:47

PILOTS: Pete Bianucci, Rich Antonchuk, Bob Derham, George Gara, John Selmer, Mary Cantini-Norkin, Colin Gift, David Rich, Lance Younger, Jim Fagan, Jon Bielinski, Ed De Cossio

HELPERS: Brian Huse, Bob McKenzie, Jon Nakamura, Susan Anson, Pat McGarvey, Alan Budenz, Nancy Friedman, Roger Kleid, Laura Burtch, Cathy Direen, Anna Henry, Peggy Lavelle, Anne Sasaki, Mark Birchard, Suzie Dods, Mag Donaldson, Glynn Jones, John Lennox

**Bob Hoff**  
- from page 9  
computers.

Bob recalls his introduction to the Dolphin Club. "I was living in a bachelor apartment at Hyde and Bay," he says. "A friend who went running at Aquatic Park told me there was a nice group of people down here, so I started coming myself. We'd go swimming and then build a big fire on the beach to get warm. Talking to some of the other guys, I learned about the Dolphin Club." He joined in 1960, becoming a regular swimmer and rower; he completed this year's over-60 cove swim in 16:17 and turns out regularly to pilot out-of-cove swims.

Just last year, Bob completed the "triathlon" series with his runner whirligig. He's already thinking about new designs. "Several women have asked me to make a female figure," he says, "so I may try that. A bicyclist would be good, too. Or a weight lifter." And he adds with characteristic self-effacement: "There are possibilities."