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Voyages Of The Damn Foole



Synopsis

Tom McGrath's accounts of the cruising life aboard the tiny sailboats *Damn Foole* and *Damn Foole II* have achieved cult status in the magazine *Messing About Boats*. With humor and a touch of irony, McGrath makes observations that resonate with cruising sailors, shoestring boaters, and others who take their boats more seriously than themselves. McGrath sprinkles his sailing anecdotes with biting social commentary; he casts a satirical eye at everything from waterfront development to the Civil War, from foreign fishing boats to the arrival of the *Mayflower*. Never totally dogmatic, he's frequently interrupted by members of his "spirit crew," who argue various points of view and brew trouble in every port. Even the boat chimes in occasionally to settle debates or rescue the author from his mistakes. McGrath's ability to laugh at himself and his seamanship follies give these tales universal appeal.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Tom is a cranky man with a leaky boat that talks to him. He sometimes carries with him a crew of mocking ghosts as well as he travels. Doesn't sound too promising, and yet this book, first published as a series of mimeographed pages tacked to the wall of a marina, gets closer to the spirit of sailing than anything you'll ever read.

Voyages... are refreshing, hilarious, cynical short stories opposing the Boy Scout motto "Be Prepared". If you like the writing of Kurt Vonnegut or Toole's "A Confederacy of Dunces" you will love this book. While some of the stories are a bit repetitive, they are wonderful. If you are a sailor,

no doubt you will recognize some of the characters in the book - including the boat's. The black and white illustrations in the book are charming and add a lot.

I purchased this book when it was first published because it was recommended as very worthy in a review in Wooden Boat magazine. They listed it among such masterpieces as Sailing Around the World Alone and N by E. I was not disappointed. Since I first purchased the book, I have done a lot of sailing. This summer I sailed my sloop solo north from NJ. Upon returning home, I reread McGrath's book and was absolutely delighted to see that my voyage overlapped much of his. The book is a marvel and worth reading. His opinions about the damage inflicted on creation by human beings are very much a word in season. His pacifism is fierce and right on. His cranky and grumpy ways are a hoot, and we can thank his sweet, leaky, wayward boat for calling him to task from time to time. The illustrations are unique and creative, and the way he depicts himself in them - a dark hulking spectre, makes you ask, is that really how he is shaped? I will pay the book what could be highest compliment that can be paid to a sailing yarn - it made we want to get back aboard, slip free of the mooring and let my own dreamboat take me out for adventure.

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