

SNYDER'S SHIPYARD



B R I A N M A C K A Y - L Y O N S

Faculty of Architecture Technical University of Nova Scotia

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Snyder's Shipyard: Place, Form, Craft
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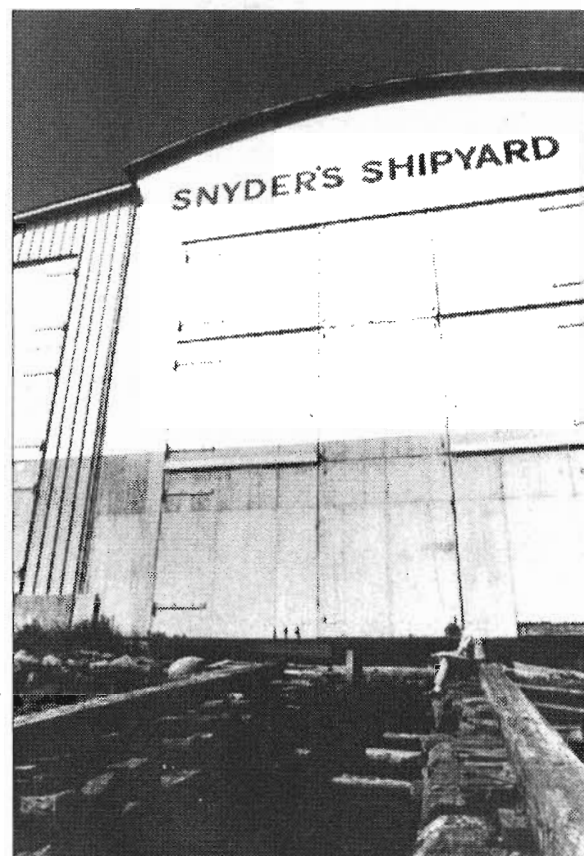
Snyder's Shipyard: Place, Form, Craft

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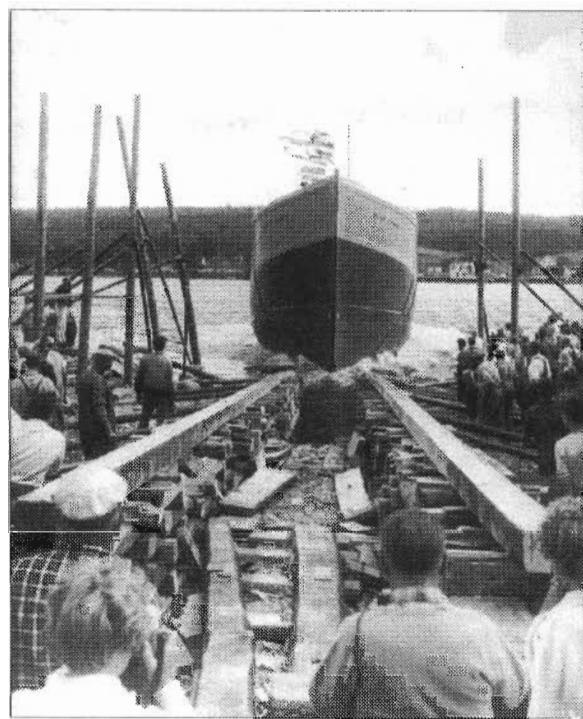
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P L A C E

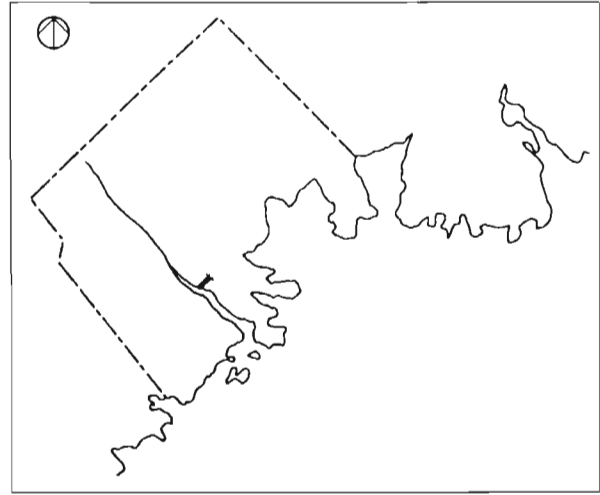


Psalm 107

23 Those going down to the sea
 in the ships,
Doing business on vast waters,
24 They are the ones that have
 seen the works of Jehovah
 And his wonderful works
 in the depths;
25 How he says [the word] and
 causes a tempestuous wind
 to arise,
 So that it lifts up its waves.
26 They go up to the heavens,
 They go down to the bottoms.
 Because of the calamity their
 very soul finds itself melting.
27 They reel and move unsteadily
 like a drunken man,
 And even all their wisdom
 proves confused.
28 And they begin crying out to
 Jehovah in their distress,
 And out of the stresses upon
 them he brings them forth.
29 He causes the windstorm to
 stand at a calm,
 So that the waves of the sea
 keep quiet.
30 And they rejoice because these
 become still,
 And he leads them to the
 haven of their delight.



Lunenburg County



La Have River

Beginnings

The twentieth century saw the full maturity and decline of the shipbuilding industry in Atlantic Canada. Origins of this industry date back to the European exploration of the North American continent. Early settlers relied on local resources and personal volition to survive; marine communities built fishing vessels to extract their livelihood from the sea.

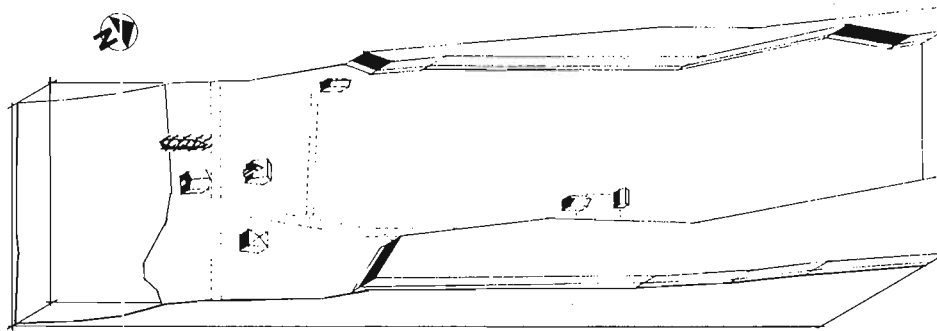
Loss of the American colonies and continuing demands of expansion and empire forced the British navy to seek alternative sources of timber. Initially satisfying these immediate raw material needs, the Maritimes would by the late nineteenth century develop into one of the world's largest shipbuilding centres.

Shipbuilding communities like Mahone Bay and Lunenburg on Nova Scotia's south shore developed

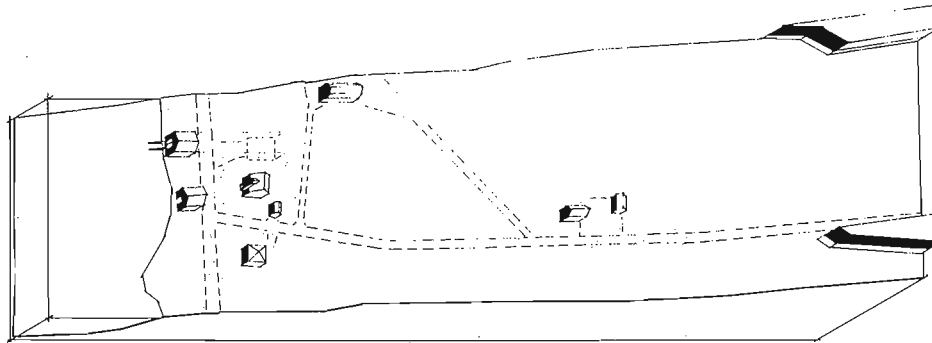
throughout the Atlantic region. Originally composed of tiny Acadian settlements later settled by the Swiss and Germans, Lunenburg County became Nova Scotia's principal shipbuilding centre producing world-class schooners such as the *Bluenose*. The LaHave River, draining Lunenburg County, once had numerous shipyards like Snyder's. Timber from inland forests was floated down river to be milled at shipyards located on the river estuaries where completed ships could be floated from their skids at high tide.

Growth

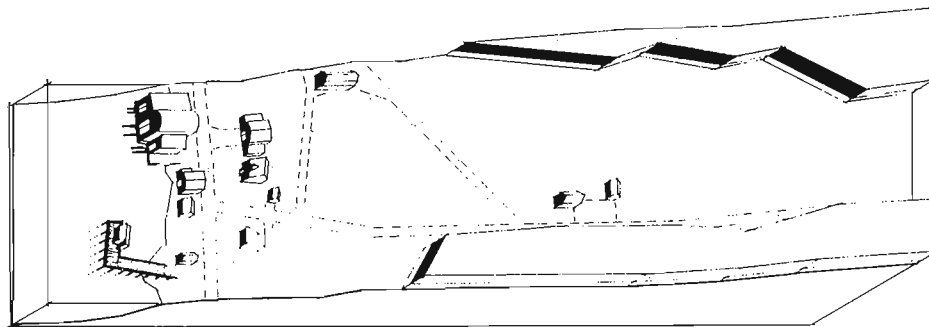
The original colonial land grants provided deep water access, garden plots and woodlots allowing a local self-sustaining mixed economy to develop.



1800: *Development of a mixed, self-sustaining economy including an inshore fishery producing small boats to provide sustenance for local markets.*



1900: *Expansion of fishery to include international markets. Intensification of building industry to meet fishing and shipbuilding demands of growing global markets.*



1994: *Economic diversity threatened; reliance on export markets. Shipbuilding occurs indoors and adapts to new technologies and materials including fibreglass, steel and aluminium. Particular boats evolve to fish for specific catches.*

F O R M



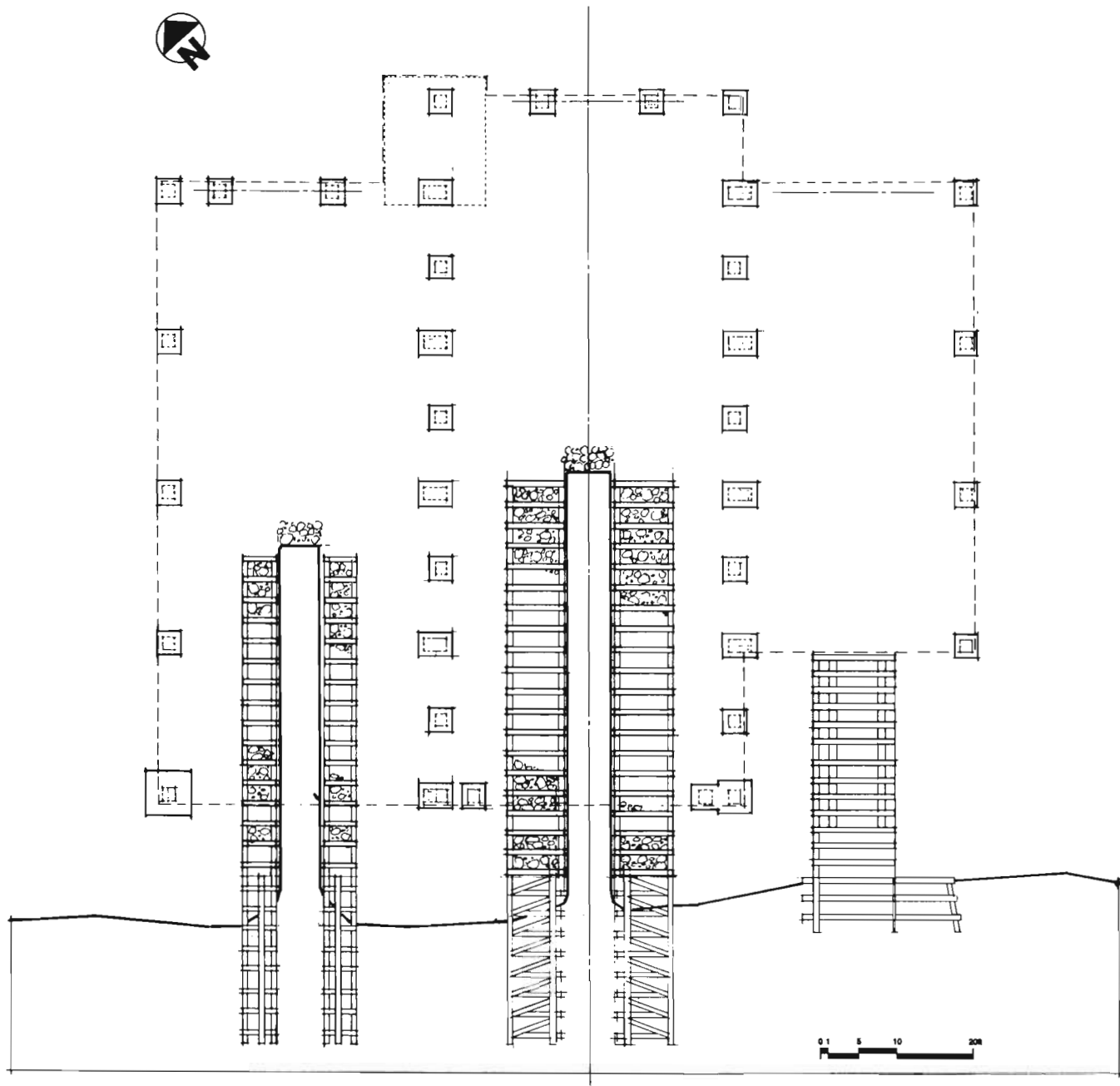
"Cultural differences not only manifest themselves in modes of thought or in built form, but in building methods as well."

Tom Peters

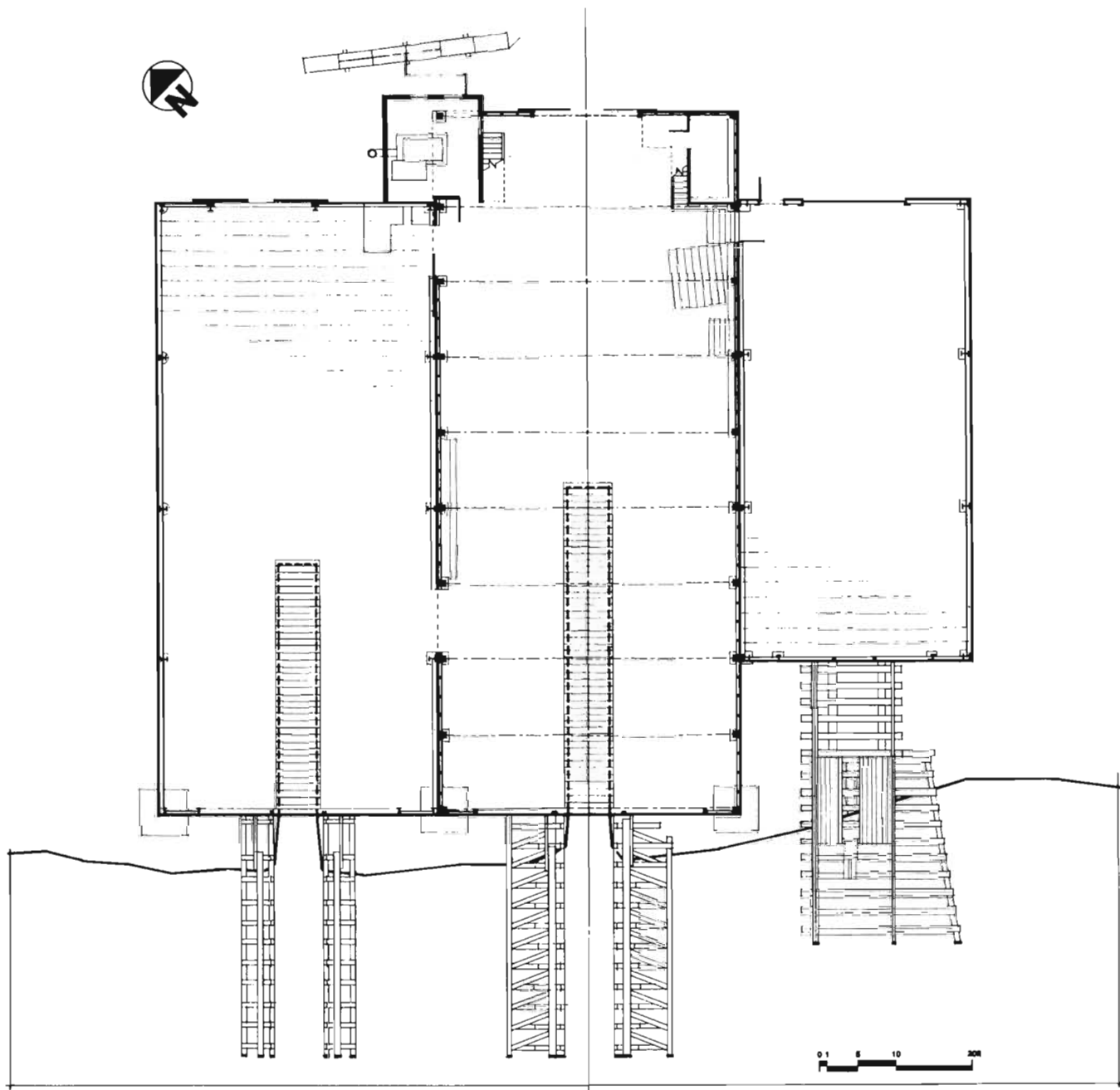
"An American Culture of Construction"

Perspectiva 25

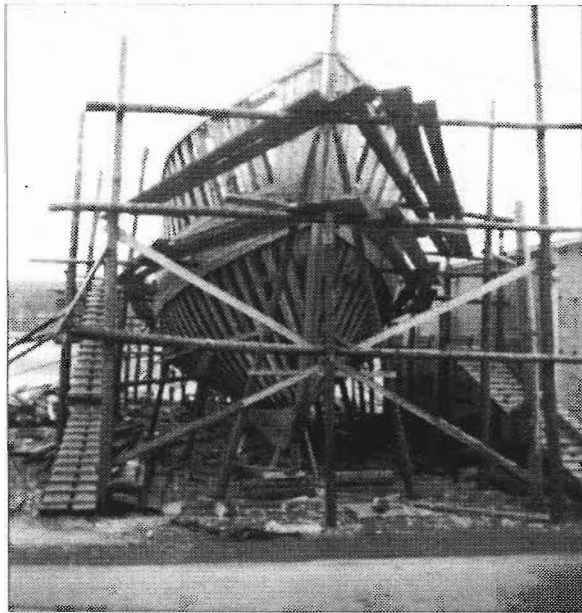
22 April 1989



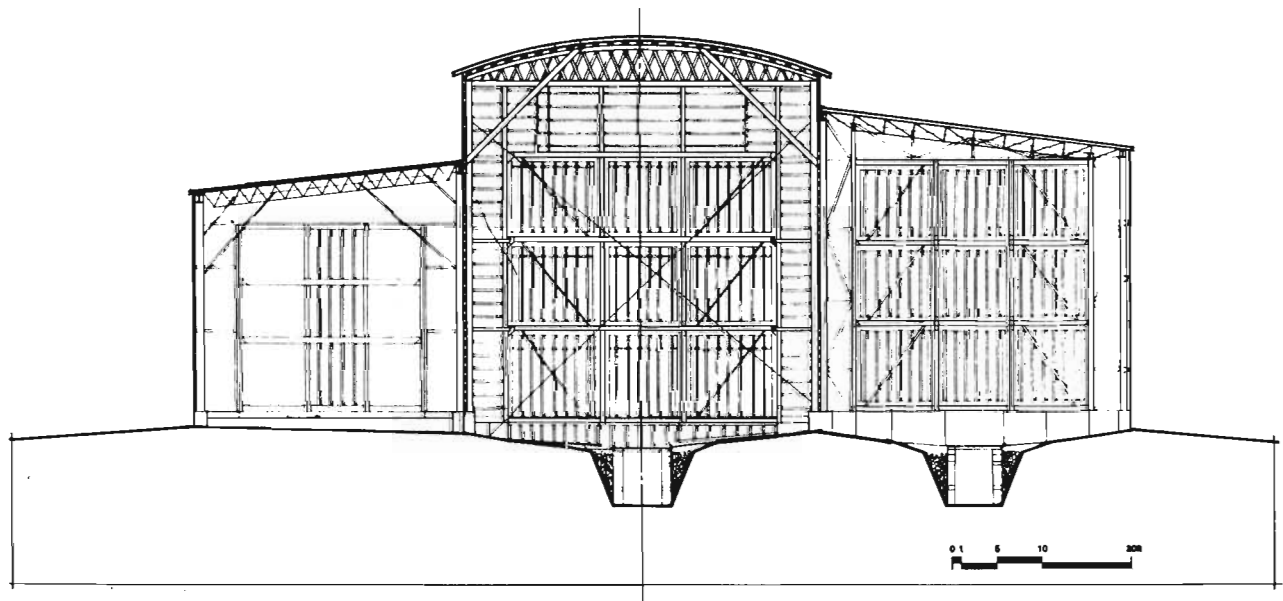
Foundation plan



Plan

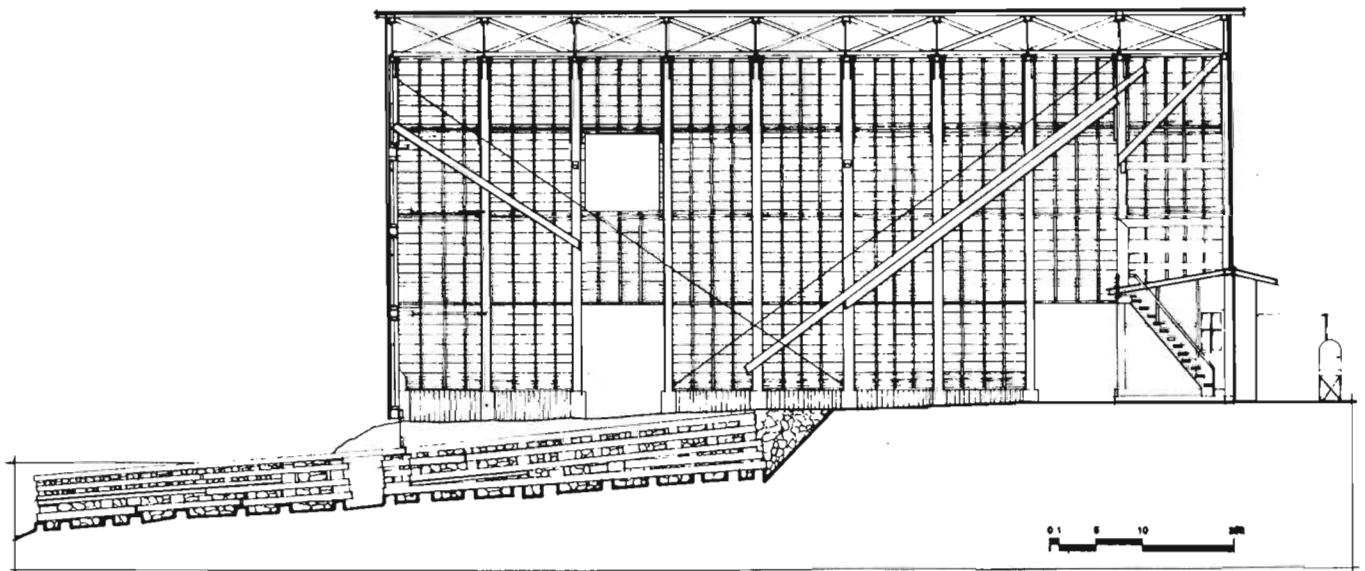
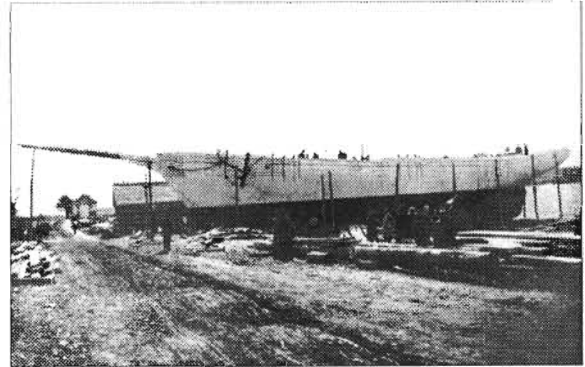


Boat and building construction respond to different environmental demands. The regional architectural landscape, however, was a derivative of the wood trade skills which evolved from boat building. Regional natural resources and building skills together created the vernacular wooden architectural landscape.

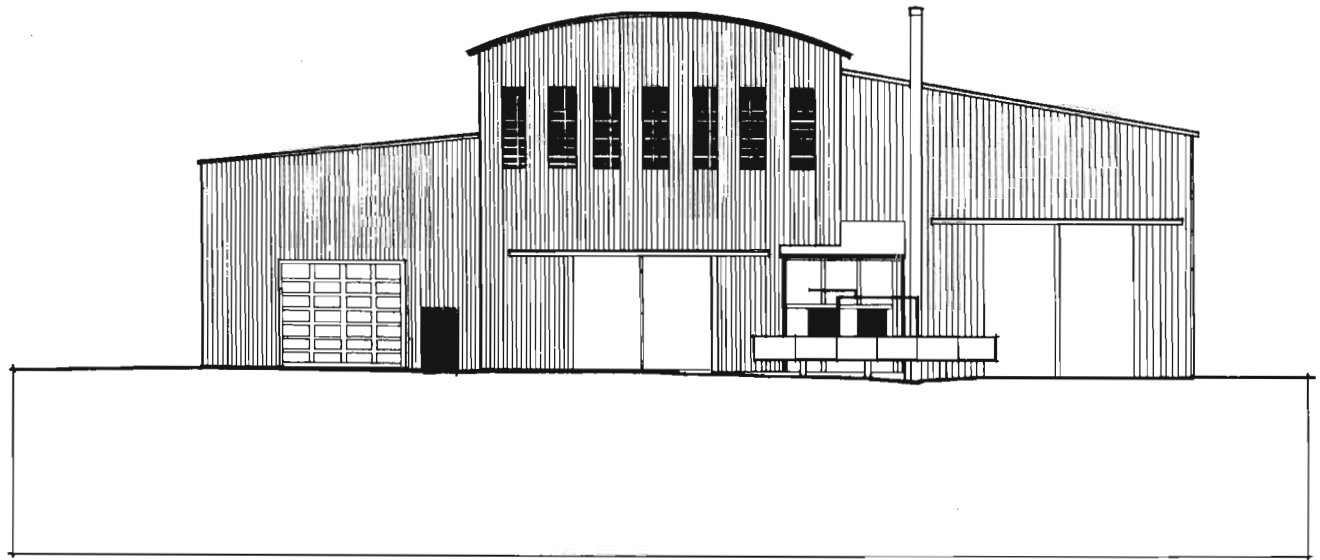


Transverse section

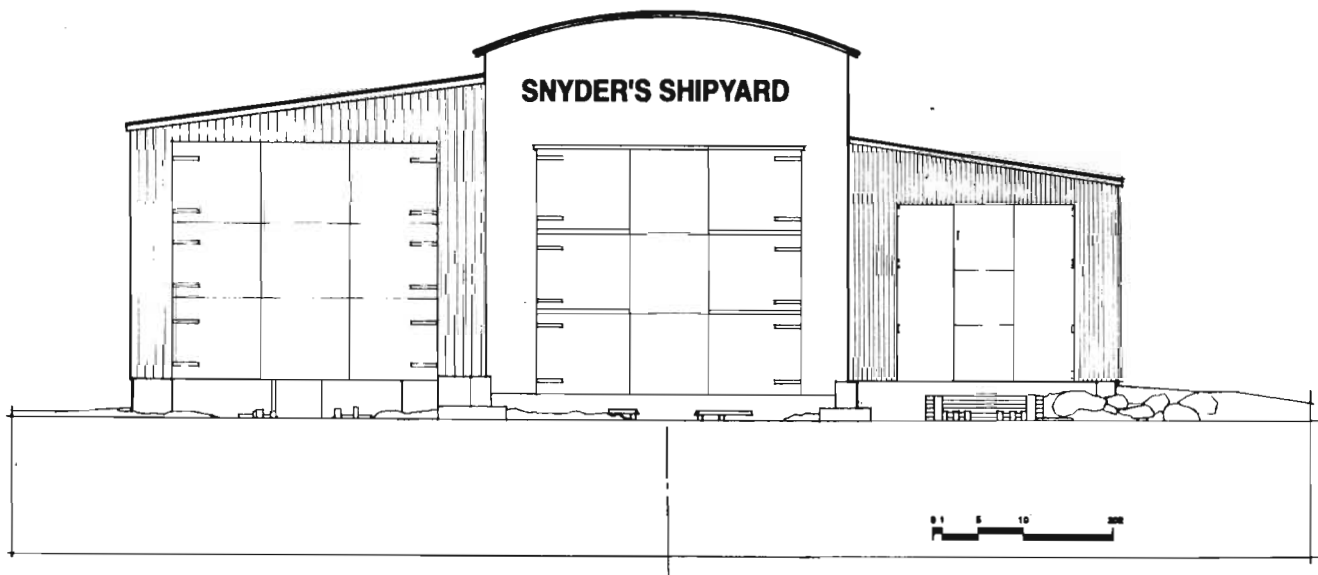
Principles pertaining to the craft of boat building and shed building stand parallel here. Knowledge of one implies knowledge of the other. Teddy Snyder designs and builds boats, and he designs and builds buildings.



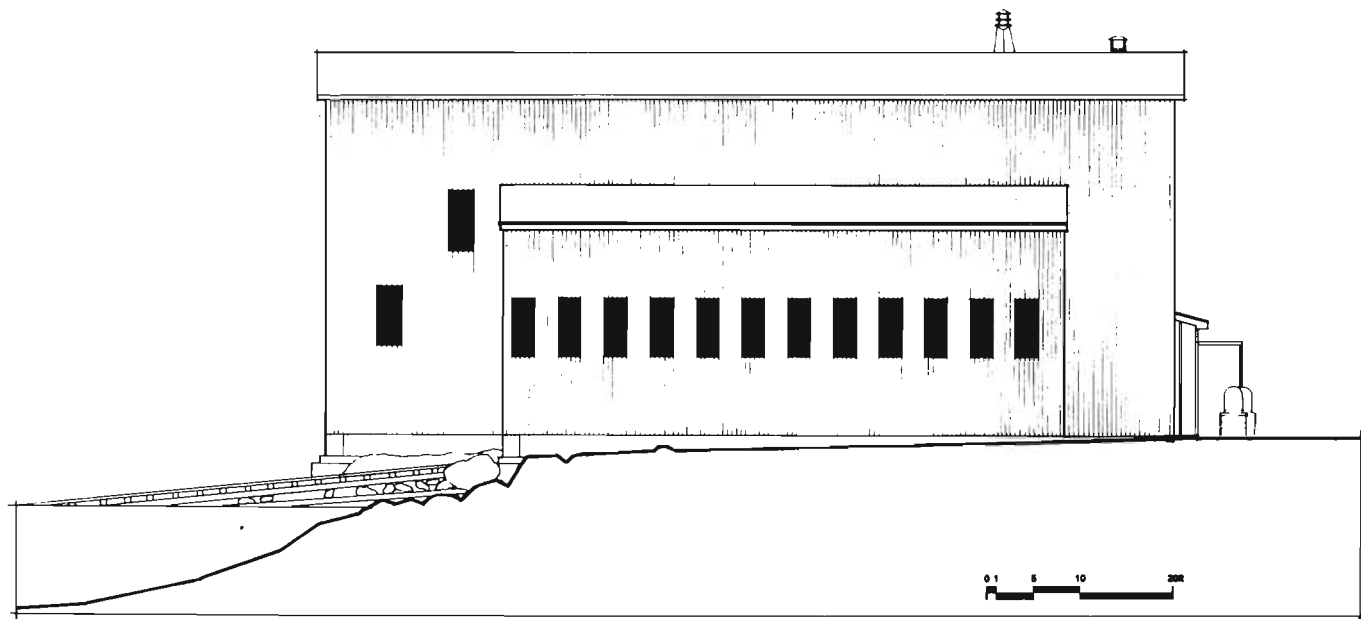
Longitudinal section



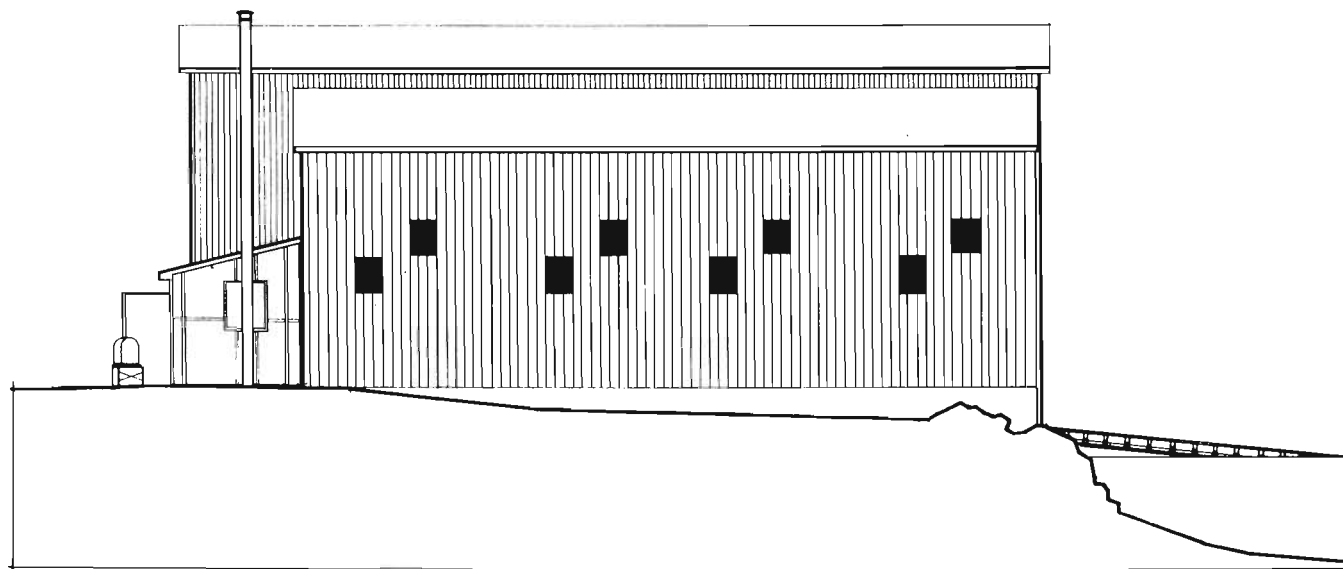
North elevation



South elevation

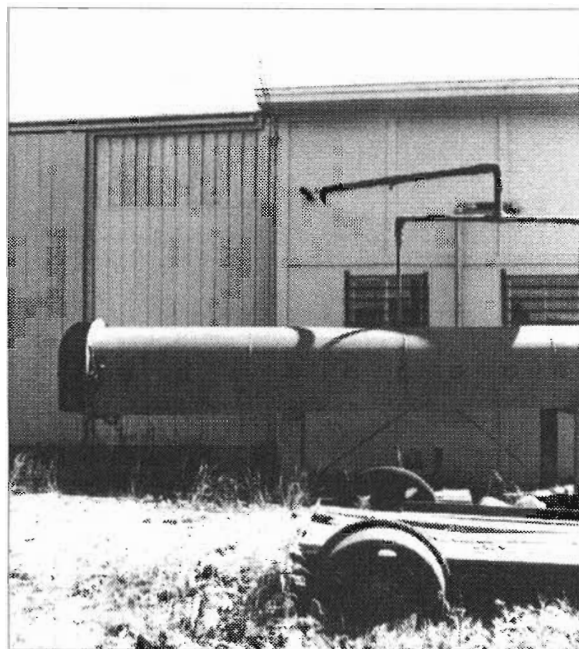


East elevation



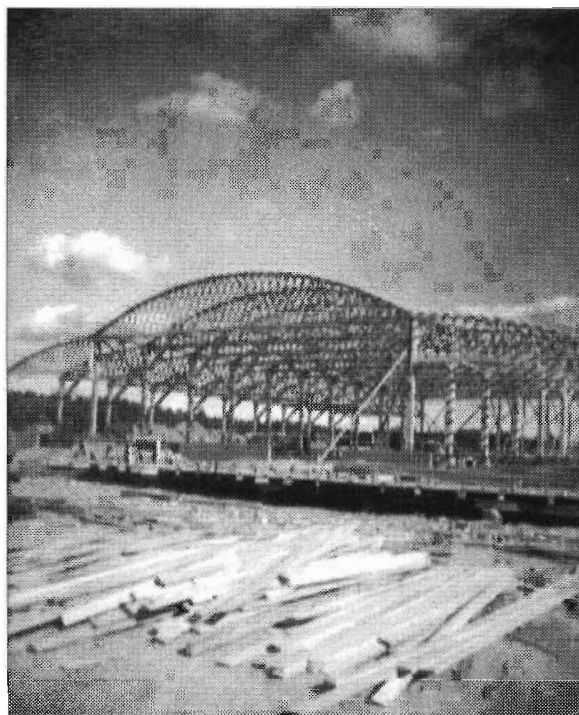
West elevation

C R A F T

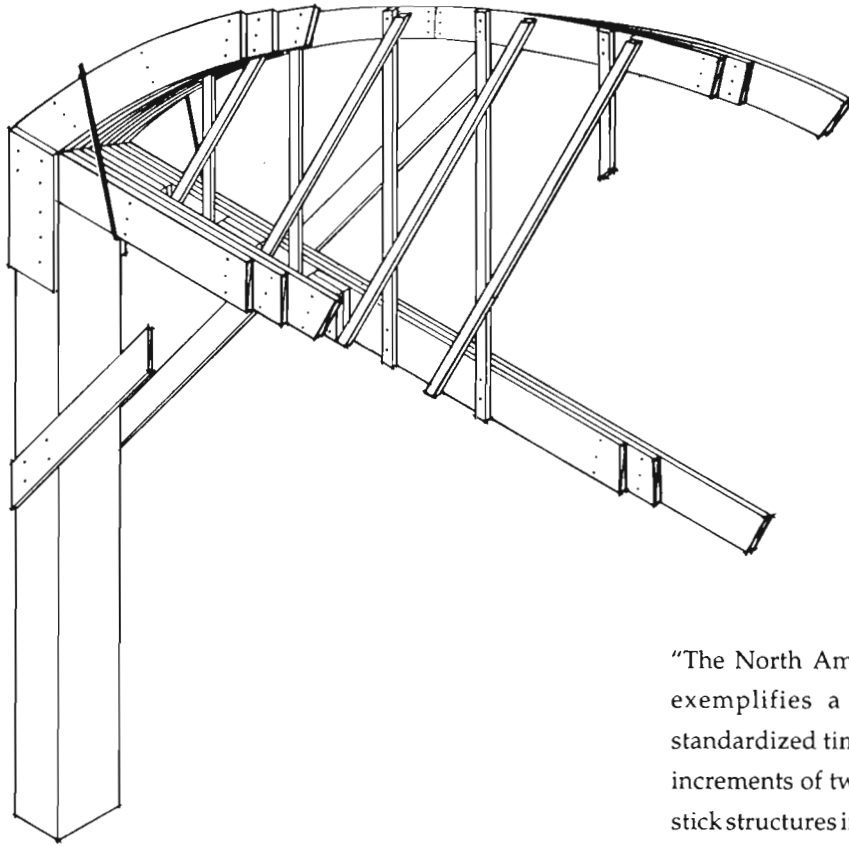


Snyder's boat shed, like their boats, was designed by eye, reckoning and oral traditions. Its quality as with all things vernacular is dependent on a sound culture of building as well as individual ingenuity.

Opposite: The steam chest is an essential tool in bending planks to the shape of the hull's skeleton.



*Lockharts. Bridgewater, NS, 1961
Designed by Reginald (Teddy) Snyder.*



The 'Snyder' Truss (designed by T. Snyder)

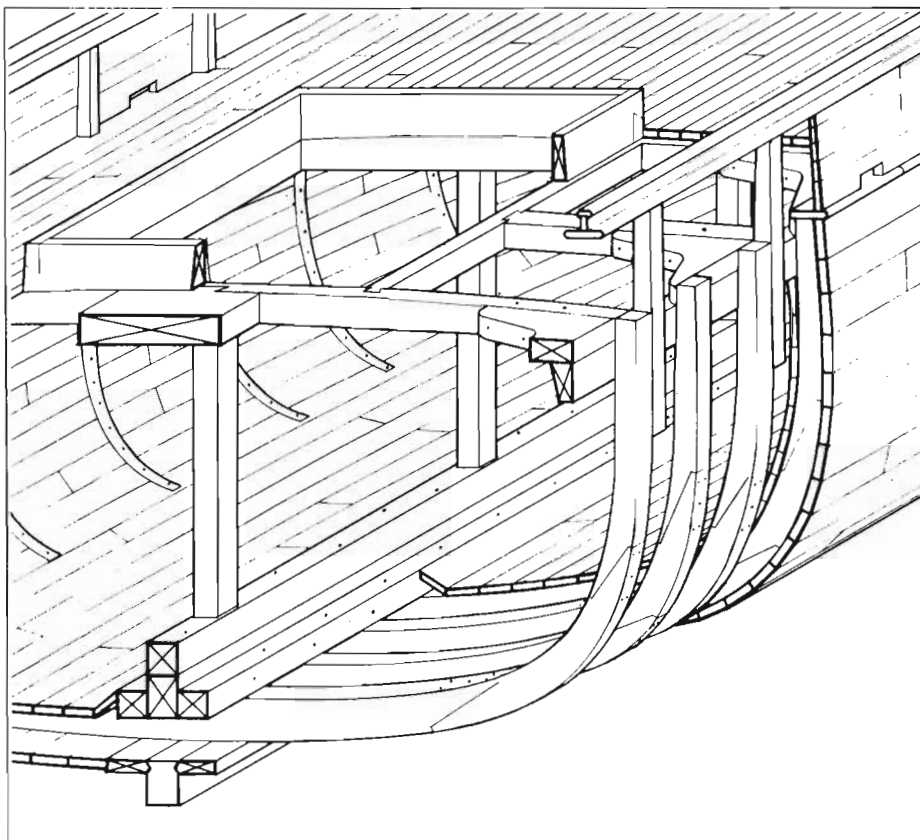
"The North American light timber framing system exemplifies a pragmatic thought process. Its standardized timbers, with nominal cross-sections in increments of two inches, form the seemingly flimsy stick structures indigenous to our culture and peculiar to it. The light timber frame is put together by means of an admittedly poor connector, the nail. Nailed connections therefore hold thanks to their quality and pattern of distribution rather than the quality of the connection each one makes."

Tom Peters

"An American Culture of Construction"

Perspectiva 25

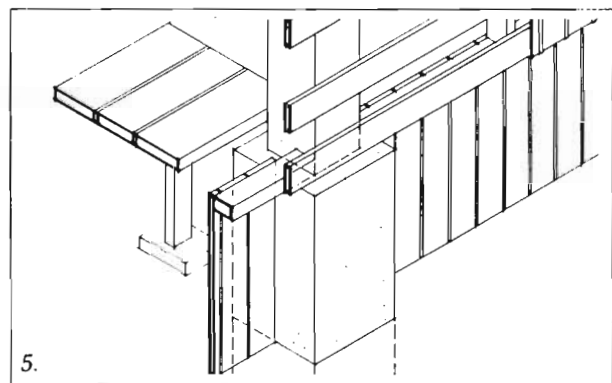
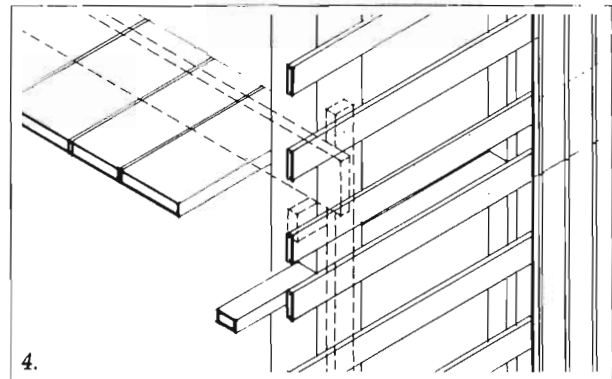
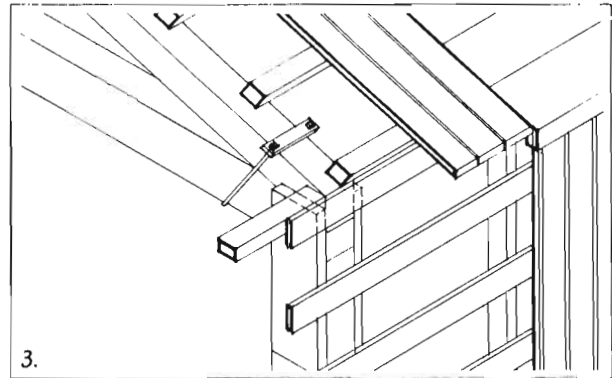
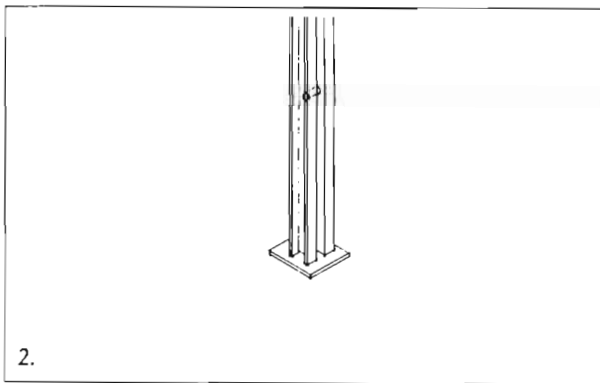
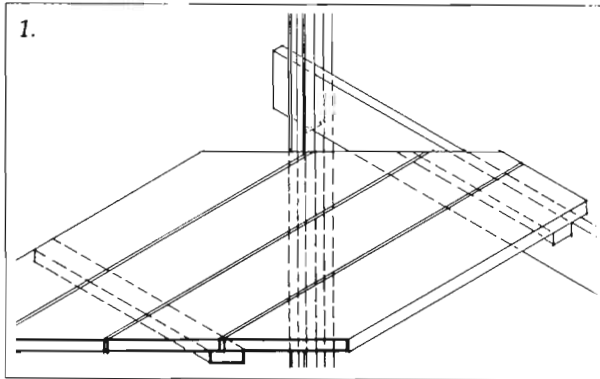
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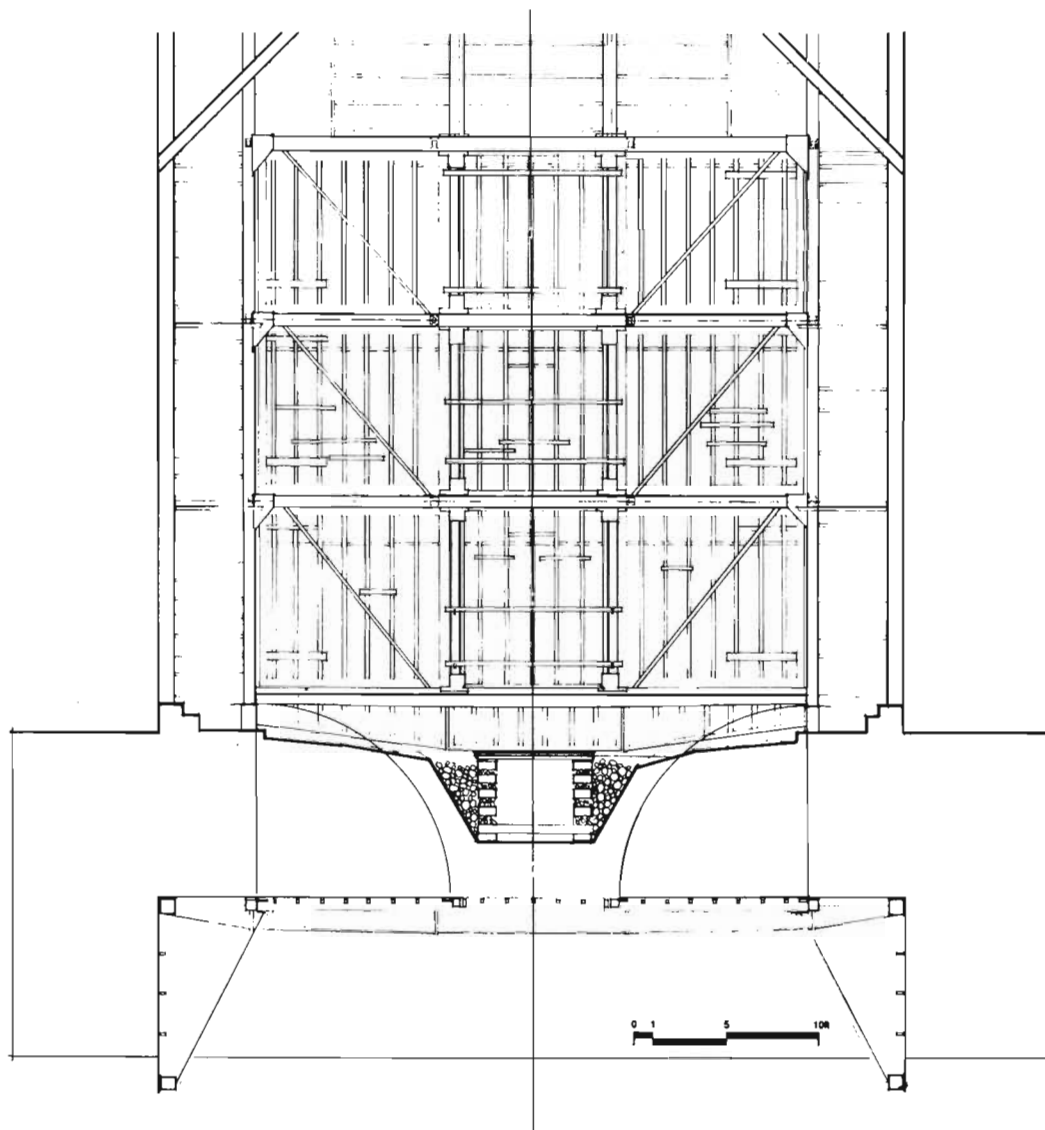
Boat section

Connections

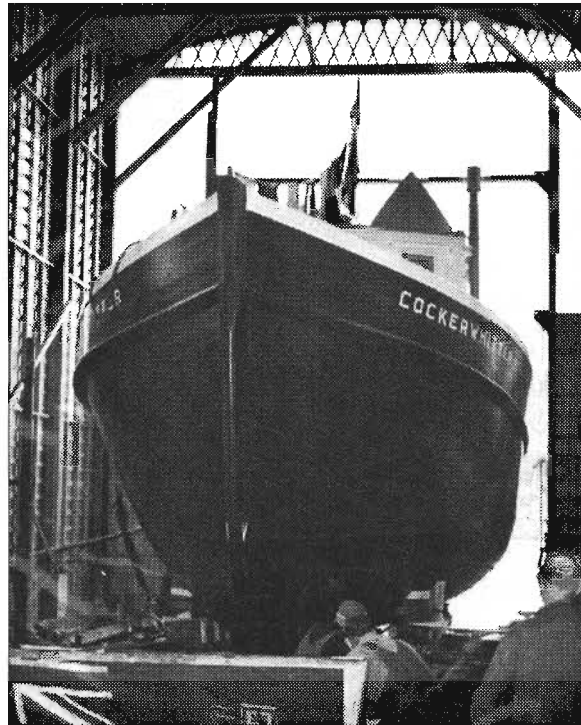
1. Scaffolding to C-channel
2. C-channel to ground
3. Roof to wall
4. Scaffolding to wall
5. Wall to foundation



Wall sections



Launching door



The launching of the vessel is the final stage in the building process. A community ritual is performed: the blessing, christening, launch and celebration, a communion of boat, building, builder and the sea.

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We would like to thank Ted and Phillip Snyder for their cooperation and assistance in the research of their shipyard on this its 51st anniversary.

BML
October 1994

