

THE HISTORY OF HAMPTON BOATS LTD.

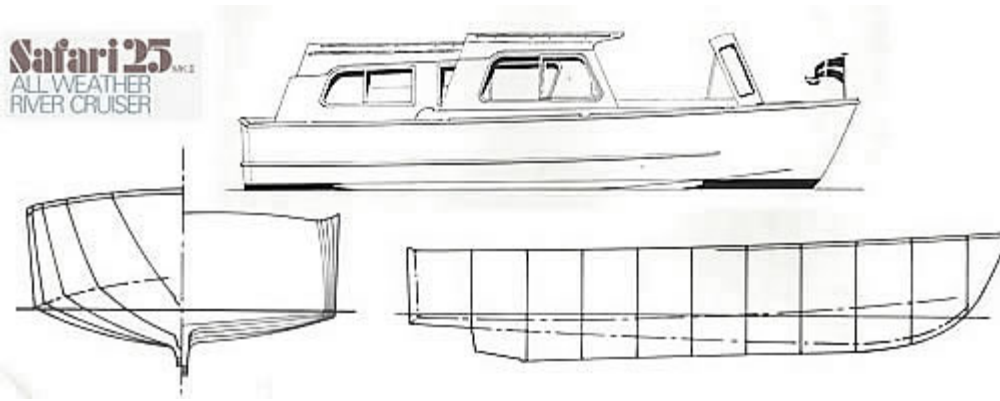


Hampton Boats has long ceased trading, but a few years ago I was fortunate enough to be able to contact the designers and builders of the class and am most grateful for their invaluable assistance in compiling this document, taken from my web page.

The history and photographs have been very generously provided by Mrs Heather Hampton, (wife of the designer, Alec Hampton), Phillip Hampton (their son) and Kenny Stone (their boatbuilder for many years and who played a key part in the design and production of the Safari.)



[Cruisers](#) > **Hampton Safari Boat History**



Elsewhere on this website, the pictures and text of the renovation of [our Hampton Safari](#) in 2002 had generated so much interest, (mainly from other owners), that I made efforts to research the model.

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There is a new Hampton Safari Owners Club website at <http://hamptonsafaribc.webplus.net/>

In the 1960's, Alec Hampton's boat hire business 'Hampton Boats' at Oulton Broad consisted of a fleet of traditional mahogany cruisers like the two shown on the right.



The upper photo is of W343 with Alec at the wheel.



The lower photo of S875 shows the development of the same type of boat towards forward control, still traditionally made from mahogany, but with the shortened rear cockpit and wheel steering from the front. There was no sliding wheelhouse, but she did have sliding sunroof.

S875 'Bullfrog' as she looks now (2005), still complete and looking quite sound.

ON SAFARI Class

On Safari, My Safari for 2

Terms per week A-£31 B-£38 C-£42
D-£45 E-£47 F-£50 G-£53 Late-£26

Boatyard: Hampton Boats Ltd., Oulton Broad.
Length: 22 ft. Beam: 8 ft. 6 ins. Headroom: 6 ft.
Engine: 8 h.p. Stuart-Turner, reduction geared for improved performance and fuel economy. Very smooth running. Galley: Spacious, Formica lined. Gas cooker, oven, grill and hot-plates. Stainless steel sink. Water heater. Refrigerator. Berths: Double Dinette. Foam mattress 6 ins. deep. Special Features: Modern open plan interior, luxury all-weather cruisers. Forward drive steering, comfortable seats, large sliding roof and windows. Electric windscreen wiper. Portable table. Roomy aft well. Trakmark safety decks. 50-gallon water tank. 230-volt A.C razor point. Heating.

A 1972 extract from Blakes boat hire catalogue showing S121.

(click the image to see a larger



photo (c) G.Craig Slawson

version)



Her Sister, S121 'Bonny Ann' is in superb condition, as seen here, also in 2005



Alec then designed the mark one Hampton Safari for production in fibreglass. The length was increased from 22' 6" to 25' 6" and the beam from 8' 6" to 9' 6". A plug was made from marine plywood, which was then used to form the female hull moulding.

The boats were moulded firstly by *Rydgeway Marine of Kessingland*, and then by *Bob Smith of Lowestoft*.

This photo shows an early mark I fresh from the moulders, before the windows were cut out and the windscreen fitted.

The mark one gave way to the mark II, still with the sliding wheelhouse, but with many detailed modifications such as the integral gas locker etc. (detailed in this brochure).

The original sales brochure was scanned and is published here by kind permission of Mrs Hampton.



[click any page to view full size](#)

A slightly different brochure was produced for the hire boat market.

It is a testament to the original design concept that even now (30 years on), there are still a few boats available for hire with various Broads hire fleets, both Blakes & Hoseasons.



[click any page to view full size](#)

Principal Dimensions:

LOA 25ft 7ins (7.8 m)

LWL 23ft 7ins (7.19 m)

Broads Auth toll 'area' 22 sq m

Beam 9ft 6ins (2.90m) (plus gunwhale fendering)

Draught 2ft 2ins (0.66m)

Displacement 3.1 tons (3,150 kg) (Draught and weight vary with the individual fit-out and tankage. Full tanks can weigh 0.75 ton !)

Tons per inch immersion 0.4

When lifting the minimum aft strop lifting point is 4 ft from transom.

Marks I and II

with sliding wheelhouse/lounge

(Standard internal layout shown, wc and shower may be transposed.)

They are somewhat difficult to distinguish because individual boatyards completed the Hampton moldings to their own spec. Mark 1's (usually) didn't have the integral molding for the gas bottle stowage under the afterdeck, or the molded in mudweight holder on the foredeck. The control panel molding was different and the keel was smaller.

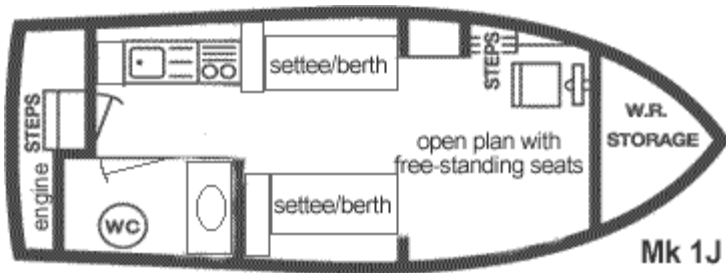
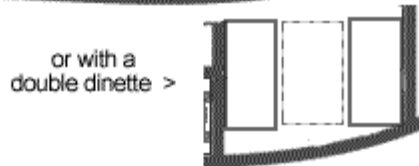
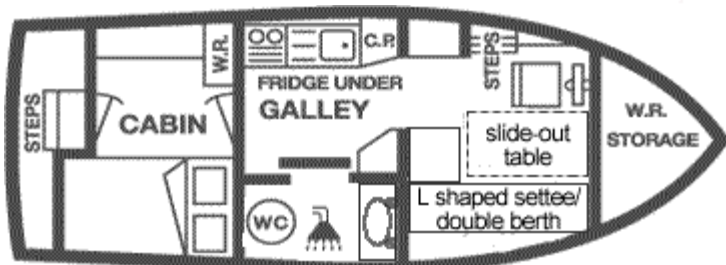
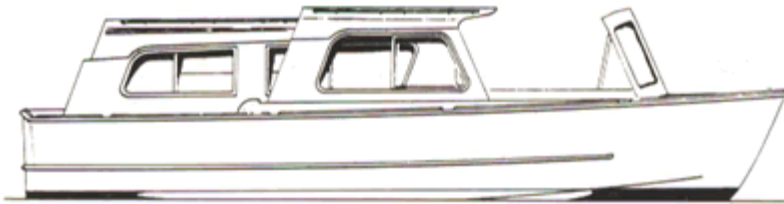
We are still researching this, the most common style. There are a number of subtypes:

Mk1J (Constructed by L.H. Jones)

Very different in layout and drive, open plan cabin with the toilet aft and propulsion via an hydraulic drive. Hull and Cabin mouldings as per Mk1. Two single berths only.

Mk1D (Dawncraft 26)

The history of these is a little clouded. They differ in having one long cabin side window and a round port hole in the aft quarter, otherwise they appear to be Mk1 mouldings . The aft cabin on some perhaps all, was unusual, in having 2 single berths.



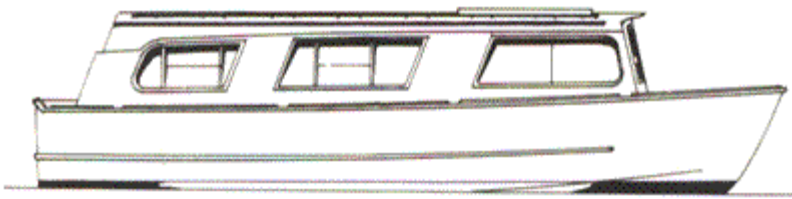
Mk 1J



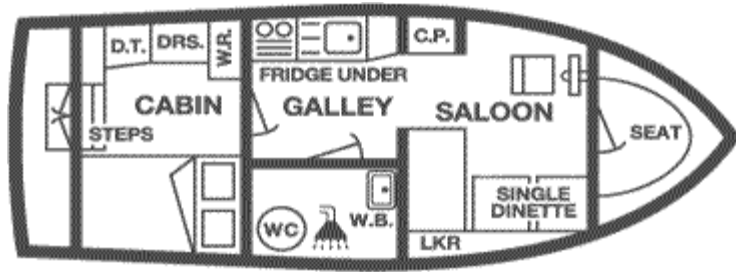
Mk 1D

Mark III

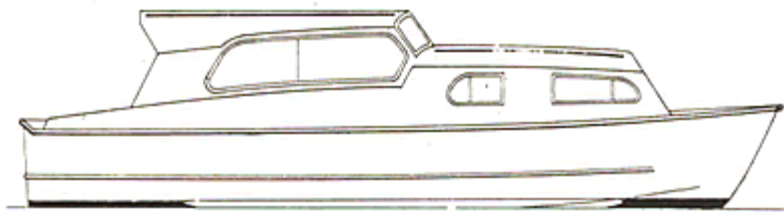
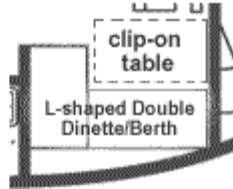
With fixed wheelhouse, sliding sunroof, and forward



well.

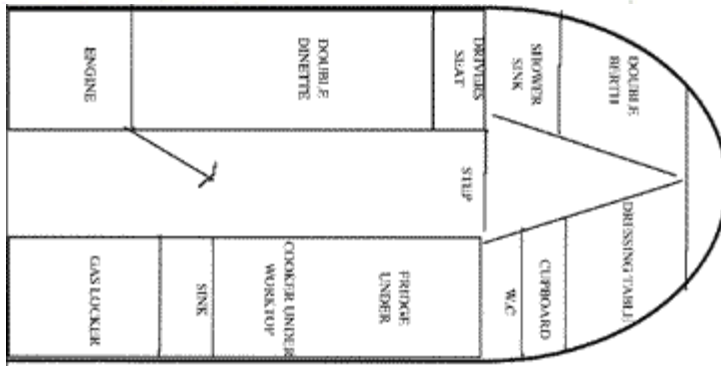


or >



Mark IV

With raised, fixed wheelhouse/lounge.
(only three were made, and one of those has been extensively modified.)

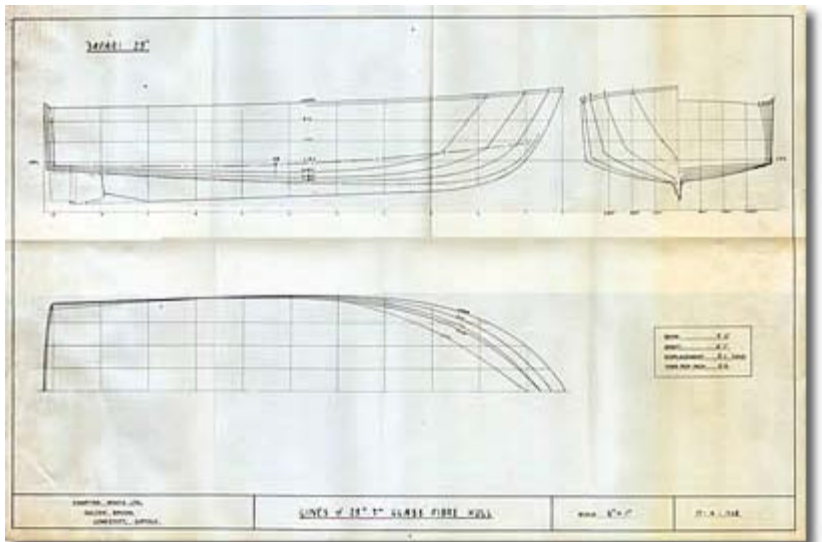
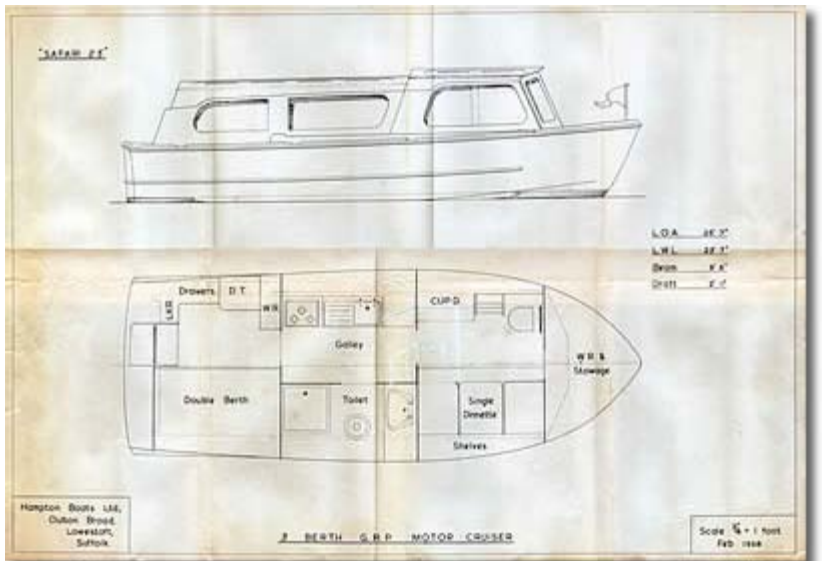
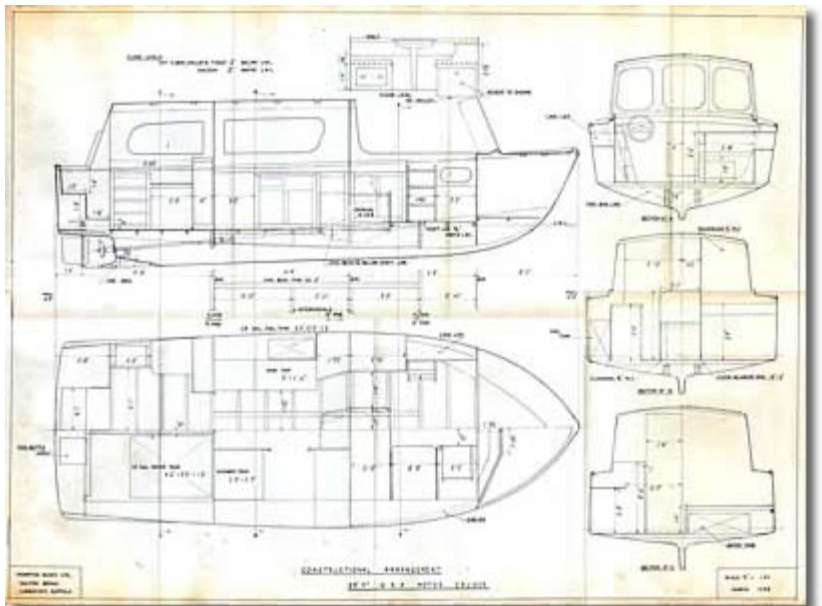


(interior layout kindly supplied by David Coster)

I now have the original scale drawings of the Safari, (Mk 2, but identical hull to the mk3).

They reveal that although the design might appear slab sided above water level, the underwater profile is quite complex, with a relatively deep keel for directional stability, and yet a shallow draft.

[click any plan to view full size](#)



[click any plan to view full size](#)

Safari 25 Mk II III & IV



SAFARI MK. II
Sliding wheelhouse version.



SAFARI 25 MK. III
Sliding hatch/forward cockpit version.



SAFARI 25 MK. IV
Sedan version.



SUGGESTED INTERIOR LAYOUT OF MK. III
Safari cruisers are ideal for enjoying our inland waterways to the full. With three types of superstructure available on a well proven hull, tried and tested on many rivers & inland waterways of Britain.
Available as bare hull or hull & deck for home or yard completion.
Send today for details & price list.

Also from the manufacturers, the original Safari Toilet (recirculating marine toilet the type now demanded on most landlocked waterways). Manufactured in high quality G.R.P. for easy maintenance and long life.
For a high quality, clean & efficient toilet system the Safari Toilet is a must.

For information of the Safari Cruisers or the Safari Toilet contact:

HAMPTON BOATS LTD.,
Caldecott Road, Oulton Broad,
Lowestoft, Suffolk.
Tel: Lowestoft (0502) 4896

The company ran this advert in the boating press in 1981.

[\(click the advert to view it full size\)](#)

Using the same 25'6" hull, the advert shows the three superstructure designs, the mark II, mark III and the Sedan.

The mark III dispensed with the sliding wheelhouse roof but instead provided a forward cockpit with front door to the saloon. This eliminated the potential for draughts from the sliding canopy (although many DIY owners have devised solutions with draught excluders etc.)

The Sedan was a return to a the more conventional rear raised wheelhouse, but only two were ever built.

The picture shows the three marks in a row at the boatyard pontoon (with Mrs Hampton standing on the Sedan).



This extract from a 1973 guide shows Safaris produced by Harvey Eastwood of Brundall, named 'Santa Lucia' and 'Santa Barbara', together with Hampton's own Safari listing.

The Eastwood boats appear to have identical mouldings, differing only in the interior layouts. One wonders if the 'BMC 1500 petrol I/B' was a typo....

Happy Christmas from Hampton Boats



Although a total of 256 Hampton Safaris were produced from 1969 to 1982, most were supplied to other hire-boat yards as bare mouldings for their staff to complete. During the peak years, Hampton Boats ran 14 Safari 25's in it's fleet, but this reduced to just two in the final season of 2002. Sadly, the yard has now ceased trading, and will surely be missed by the large regular clientele, some of which have been regulars for nearly 30 years.

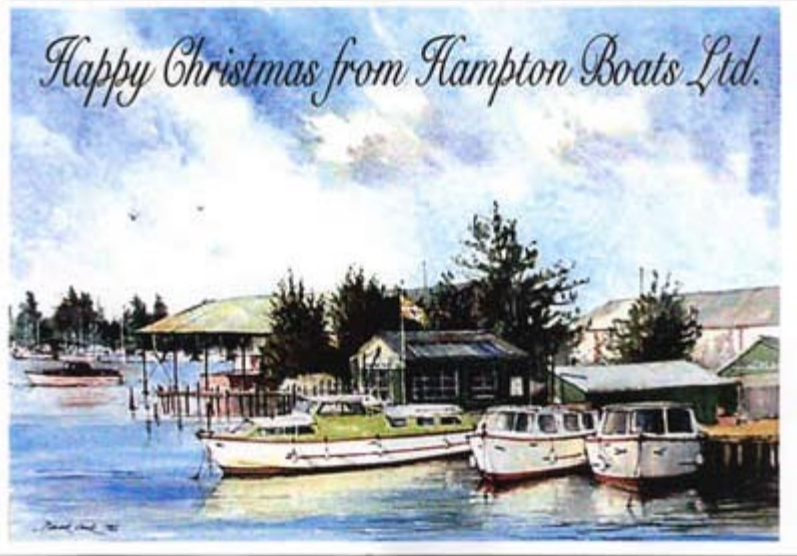
Happy Christmas from Hampton Boats

(Hamptons themselves only built one Safari for private use, in 1971 called 'Blue Tit' for *John Jarrold*, who was then the Mayor of Norwich.)

The two photos here, from Company Christmas Cards, are from 1962 and 2000, showing the yard at the same location, though greatly expanded.



The third Christmas Card is of a watercolour painting of their yard commissioned by Hampton Boats.



The New York Times
Travel

Sunday, July 23, 1995

Section **5**



The Sovereign Safari on Oulton Broad.

A 1995 edition of the *New York Times* featured an article which included a cruise around the Broads in 'Sovereign Safari', one of Hampton Boat's Mark III Safaris.

(The cost was then quoted as

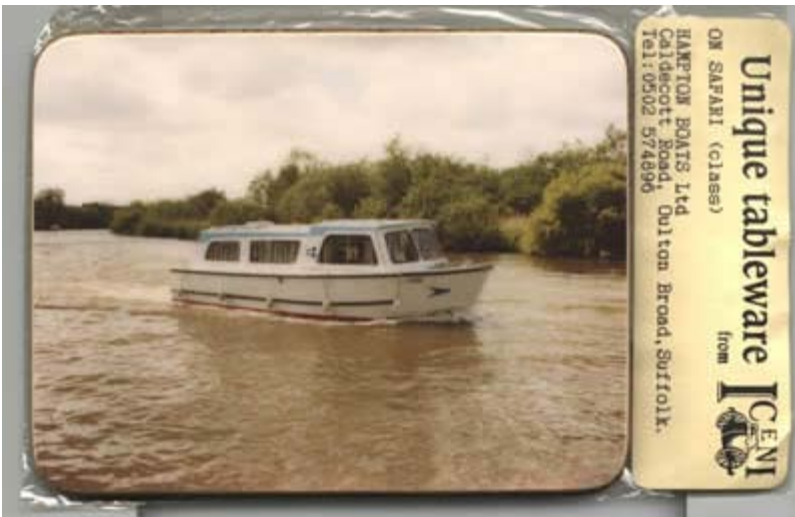
'\$543 a week high season,
and \$326 a week low season,
at 1.6 pounds to the dollar.)

England by Boat



Jonathan Pleyer for The New York Times

The Sovereign Safari was home for a week of exploring churches by the Norfolk Broads.



Hampton Boats also distributed memorabilia for the regular clients, including such items as the coaster, shown here.

In March 2004, I was contacted by Craig Slawson, who has painstakingly compiled and maintained lists of most Broads hire boats over the past 30 years. He has very kindly supplied and allowed me to publish a comprehensive [list of all of the Hampton Safari 25 boats](#), showing their histories. Click on the thumbnail to view the PDF file (8 pages, 139k). Craig has a website at <http://www.horning.org.uk/> where has set up an *sql* database of Broads Hire Boats History.

The Safari 25 fleet of Hampton Boats 1974 onwards

Introduction

The following list has been compiled from sighting of the Safari 25 boats on the Norfolk Broads from 1974-2005, hence some of the dates are vague, or could be a year or two in error.

Any corrections should be notified to the author Craig Slawson (craig@salton.org.uk).

The four styles of Safari 25 are as follows:

- Saf Forward control with sliding canopy, window arrangement not noted (Safari 25 Mark I or II)
- SafI Forward control with sliding canopy, windows in two sections (Safari 25 Mark I or II)
- Saf2 Forward control with sliding canopy, windows in a single section (Safari 25 Mark For II)
- Saf3 Forward control with fixed canopy (Safari 25 Mark III)
- Saf4 Stern control sedan style (Safari 25 Mark IV)

Inventory

Reg. No.	Boat Name	Boatyard	Joined	Left	Last Seen	Style
388A	Oppy	Private Cruisers	Inferred 1994	Current	1999	Saf1
200C	Diamond Emblem	Diamond Cruisers	1995	1998	1997	Saf1
	Cape 5	Horning Pleasurecraft	1998	2001	2000	Saf1
201C	Diamond Emblem	Diamond Cruisers	1996	Inferred 1998	1997	Saf1
	Lion Heart 4	Hearts Cruisers	Inferred 1996	Current	2000	Saf1
202C	Diamond Emblem	Diamond Cruisers	1996	1998	1997	Saf1
	Cape 5	Horning Pleasurecraft	1998	Current	2002	Saf1
203C	Diamond Emblem	Diamond Cruisers	1996	1998	1997	Saf1
	Lion Heart 5	Hearts Cruisers	Between 1996-2001	Current	2001	Saf1
204C	Blue Oriole	Private Cruisers	Before 2000	Between 2001-2003	2000	Saf3
	Patricia Anne	Private Cruisers	Between 2001-2003	Current	2003	Saf3
454C	Advantage	Private Cruisers	Before 2000	Current	2002	Saf1

Finally, I have included my gallery of Hampton Safaris that I have seen here on the Norfolk Broads. All of these photos were taken since the year 2000, so the quantity and condition of the boats still in private and company ownership shows the regard in which they are still held.

(If you happen to own any of the boats shown here and object to it's inclusion, please email me at the address shown on the Shorebase home page and I will of course remove the picture. Alternatively, if you would like me to add a caption or a photo of

another Safari, I would be most pleased to do so.)



My own boat, built in 1975 for Harmony Boats of Norwich. ([more photos](#))



'Blue Tit' (is this the boat that was built for the Mayor of Norwich in 1971 ?)

'Camelot' moored at Loddon, Winter 2002/3

Once again, I thank Mrs Hampton, her Son and Kenny Stone for the provision of most of this material and the extensive background knowledge that they enthusiastically gave to enable the creation of this

web page.

I'm sure it will interest current and future Hampton owners who may wonder about the history of their boat.

Shorebase/**Boats** visitors since June 1997

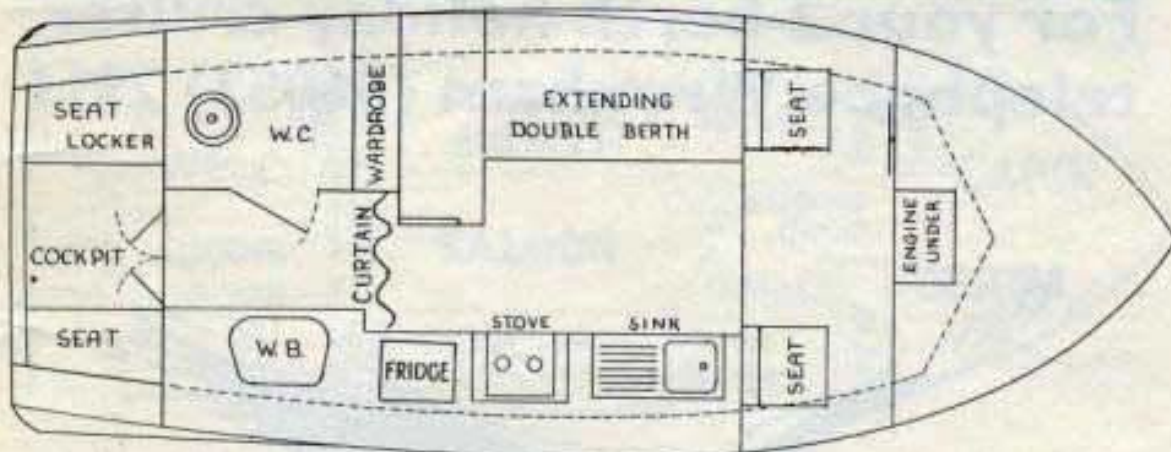
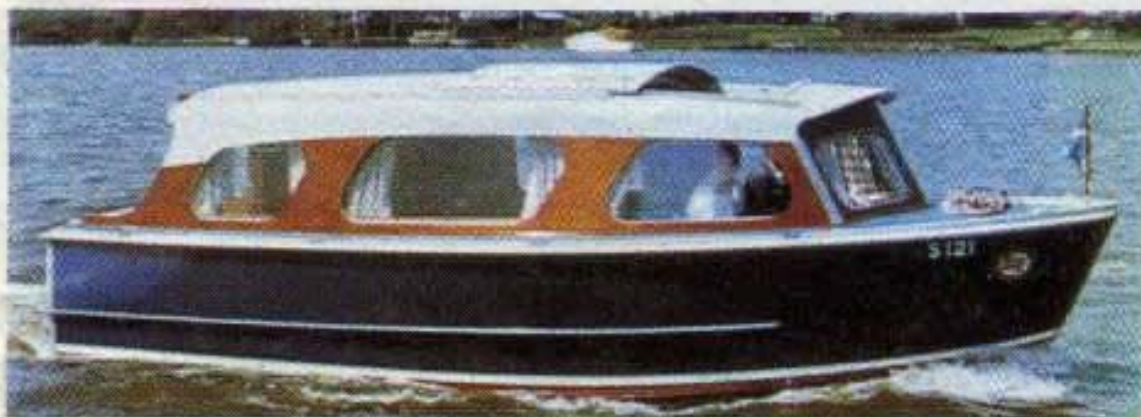
©2004 *Shorebase*

ON SAFARI Class

On Safari, My Safari for 2



Terms per week A—£31 B—£38 C—£42
D—£45 E—£47 F—£50 G—£53 Late—£26



Boatyard: Hampton Boats Ltd., Oulton Broad.
Length: 22 ft. **Beam:** 8 ft. 6 ins. **Headroom:** 6 ft.
Engine: 8 h.p. Stuart-Turner, reduction geared for improved performance and fuel economy. Very smooth running. **Galley:** Spacious, Formica lined. Gas cooker, oven, grill and hot-plates. Stainless steel sink. Water heater. Refrigerator. **Berths:** Double Dinette. Foam mattress 6 ins. deep. **Special Features:** Modern open plan interior, luxury all-weather cruisers. Forward drive steering, comfortable seats, large sliding roof and windows. Electric windscreen wiper. Portable table. Roomy aft well. Trakmark safety decks. 50-gallon water tank. 230-volt A.C razor point. Heating.

(c) Blakes Boating Holidays <http://www.blakes.co.uk>

Safari 25 MK.II

ALL WEATHER RIVER CRUISER



HAMPTON BOATS LTD

CALDECOTT ROAD OULTON BROAD LOWESTOFT

Telephone Lowestoft 4896



Safari 25^{MK.II}

25' 7" HULL & SUPERSTRUCTURE DESIGNED SPECIALLY FOR INLAND WATERWAY CRUISING

Formed in 1958, Hampton Boats Limited designed and built high class wooden Broads cruisers, but gradually turned to glass fibre construction because of the many advantages this material offered to both the boatbuilder and owner.

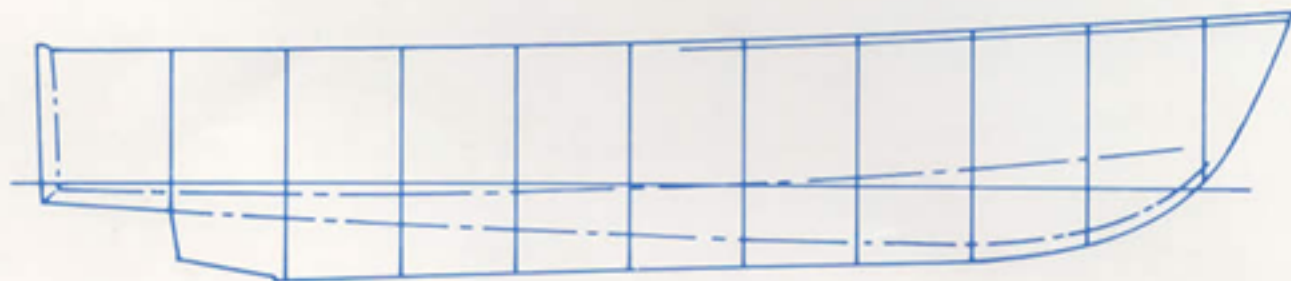
From our past experience the first 'Safari 25' was designed by us and launched in 1968. These craft have since proved to be a really outstanding river cruiser both commercially in the hire fleet and to the discerning private owner.

The Mark II 'Safari 25' incorporates many improvements and gives the ultimate in year round cruising in any weather, with the forward steering position and sliding wheelhouse affording complete comfort, wonderful visibility, and ease of handling.

HULL

The maintenance-free hull of the 'Safari 25' has been designed specially for inland waterway cruising and is an ideal hull on which to base a two/four berth cruiser, which gives a wide scope to the private owner and hire fleet operator.

The chine form hull with long, straight keel gives excellent steering qualities and stability, together with exceptional strength. Being wall sided and bluff at the bow makes for maximum floor area and accommodation. The low freeboard, rounded transom, and soft nose stem is practical for river cruising, and also very pleasing to the eye.



SPECIFICATION

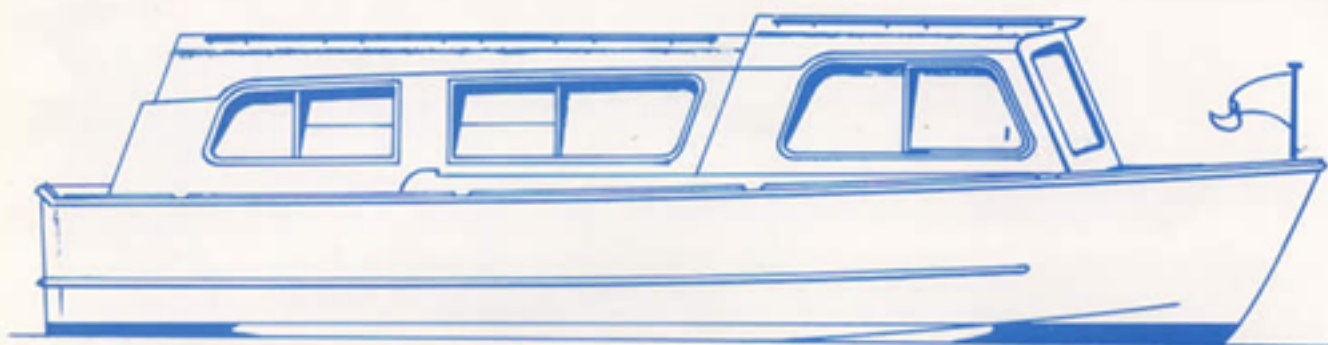
The hull is of single skin construction utilising a rugged chopped strand/woven roving complex and polyester resin. Reinforced with six longitudinal foam bilge stringers to prevent flexing.

Mouldings are available in a standard laminate and a super laminate, which caters for the private owner and hire fleet operator where extra strength is required, although the finish is identical.

The external finish is pigmented white, colours available at extra charge. Internal finish grey.

SUPERSTRUCTURE

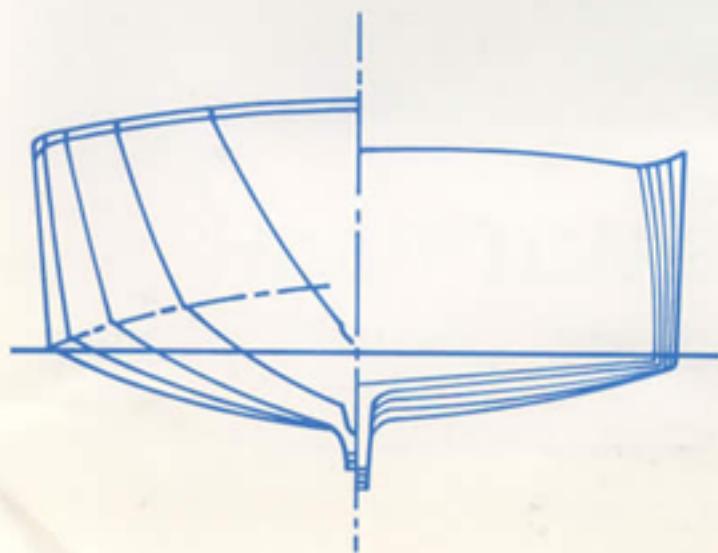
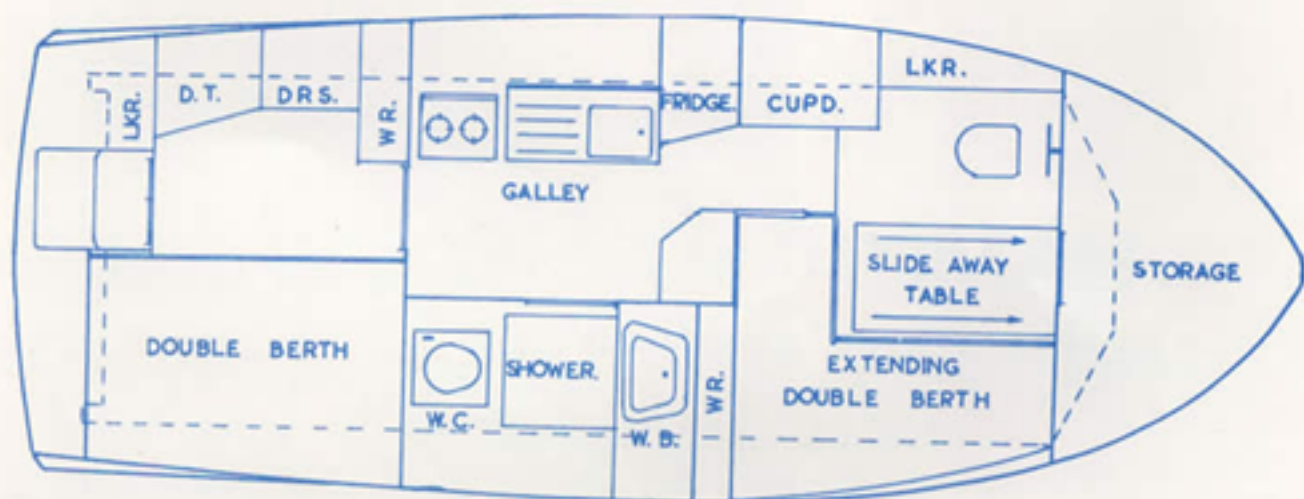
The superstructure has been designed to meet the growing demand for comfort when cruising, all round visibility, and 6 ft. headroom throughout the craft. The wide non-slip decks and handrails along both cabin and wheelhouse give added safety.



SPECIFICATION

The reinforced glass fibre superstructure and sliding wheelhouse is also available in standard or super laminate form, and the deck area, cabin top, and steps are all reinforced with pine stringers for rigidity.

The external finish is pigmented with any of our standard six colour range. Special colours and two colour combinations to customer requirements at an extra charge.



The Mark II 'Safari 25' has many new improvements which have been gained through experience and the following points have been incorporated in the mouldings to aid the boatbuilder:

- Windscreen and base
- Instrument panel recess
- Handrail chocks
- Toe rails
- Mud weight chock
- Non-slip deck pads
- Flat section around sheer line for fixing rubbers
- Hollow section keel to accommodate stern gear
- Aft cockpit with drain point
- Gas bottle hatch and container
- Sliding wheelhouse track
- Cabin top and under deck lining grounds
- Aft cabin door rebate.

Safari 25^{MK.II}

ALL WEATHER
RIVER CRUISER



DIMENSIONS

L.O.A.	..	..	..	..	..	25 ft. 7 ins.
L.W.L.	..	..	..	..	..	23 ft. 7 ins.
Beam	..	..	..	..	..	9 ft. 6 ins.
Draught	..	..	..	..	..	2 ft. 1 in.
Displacement	..	..	..	..	..	3.1 tons
Tons per inch immersion	..	..	..	..	..	0.4

We reserve the right to amend the specification to take advantage of advances in design and construction at any time without prior notice.

Materials and workmanship are of the highest quality and the mouldings are produced under ideal conditions.

Trade Enquiries are invited for special terms for the supply of Hulls, Superstructures and completed craft. Appointments may be made to visit our Works to view the craft in course of construction.

Terms of business as sponsored by The Ship and Boatbuilders' National Federation.

HAMPTON BOATS LTD

CALDECOTT ROAD OULTON BROAD LOWESTOFT

Telephone Lowestoft 4896



HAMPTON BOATS LTD

Safari



BROADS
HOLIDAYS

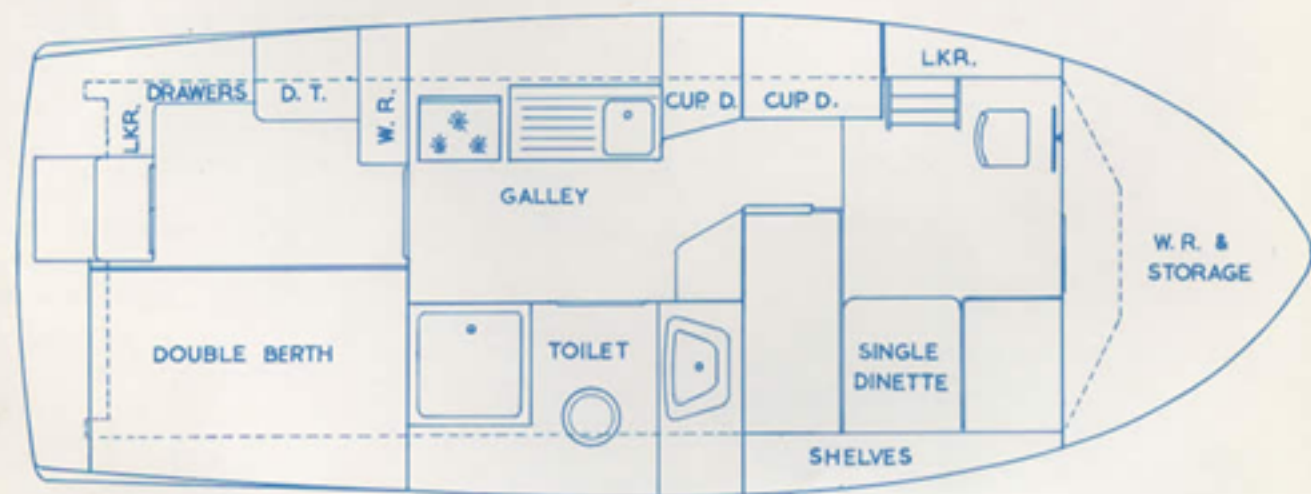
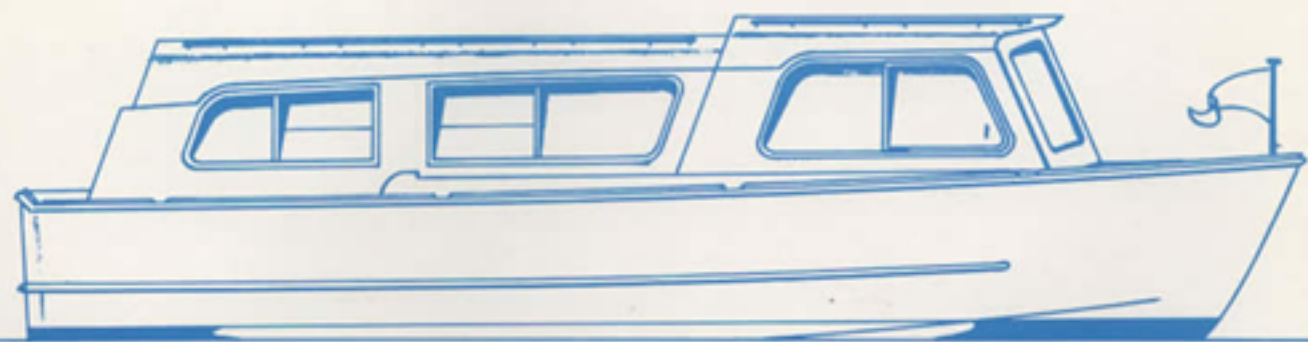


Safari

ALL WEATHER
RIVER CRUISER

SURPRISE Safari

3 BERTH CLASS



SURPRISE SAFARI

SUMMER SAFARI

SECRET SAFARI

SWINGING SAFARI

The Surprise Safari three berth class is the ultimate in luxury for three people, providing the comfort of your own home, with the excitement of a holiday afloat.

Saloon. The latex foam dinette converts to a comfy single berth. When cruising the table stows away to give a spacious day saloon. The easily operated sliding wheelhouse makes cruising a pleasure in any weather and permits passage under all broads bridges. The forward steering position gives the helmsman ease of handling and a wonderful view of the river ahead. Large bow locker, drawer and lockers give ample stowage space. The Catalyst fail-safe heater gives warmth when required.

Galley. Large well equipped household size stainless steel sink unit with large cupboards. Easy-clean surfaces. Two-burner cooker with oven and grill. Fail-safe gas refrigerator.

Toilet. Extra large compartment comprising vanity basin, large shower and hygienic recirculating toilet. 230 volt a.c. razor socket.

Aft Cabin. Double berth with interior sprung mattress, locker, chest of drawers, dressing table, wardrobe, shelf and berth light.

General details. Automatic Calorifier water system with hot and cold to all taps. Portable TV point. Fluorescent lights. Windscreen wiper. Aft cockpit. Large water and fuel tanks. Wide non-slip decks and handrails for safety.

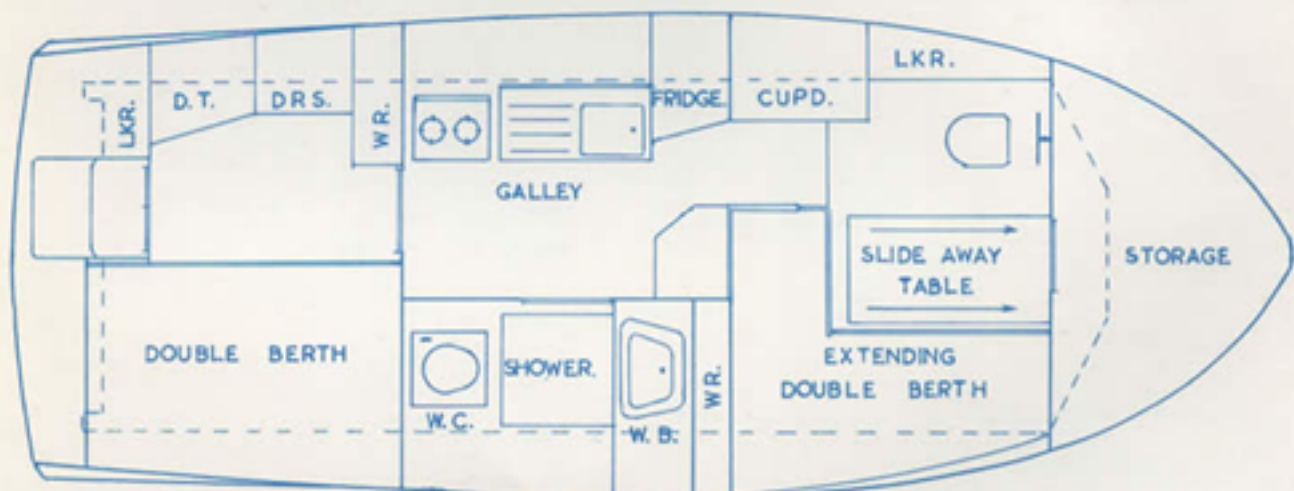
Engine. The powerful Perkins diesel engine and Velvet drive gear box is operated with a single lever control making for easy handling, smooth running, economical and safe cruising.

Length 25' 6". Beam 9' 0". Headroom 6' 0".

Regret not available to all minor or all male parties.

ON Safari

4 BERTH CLASS



ON SAFARI — MY SAFARI — HIGH SAFARI — CLASSIC SAFARI — CLOUDLESS SAFARI

The ideal all weather cruiser for a family of four, or two couples. These compact boats are designed to give maximum accommodation for length of craft as every inch of space is used to advantage.

Saloon. This carefully planned cabin has a pull-out double berth with foam mattresses, drawers under, large bow stowage locker and wardrobe. The large table when not in use slides completely away into the bow providing a spacious day saloon. The fully sliding wheelhouse moves easily into any position, turning the saloon into a wonderful sun trap or a cosy cabin depending on weather conditions. The large wheelhouse saloon enables the whole crew to enjoy a panoramic view of the passing scenery in complete comfort. Fail-safe Catalyst heating give ample heating during the early and late season.

Galley. Offers a full size stainless steel sink unit with large cupboards, and ample easy-clean surfaces. Large multi-burner cooker with oven and grill. Fail-safe gas refrigerator. Automatic water system with a plentiful hot water supply by Calorifier.

Toilet. The toilet compartment is a special feature of the 'Safari' being more spacious than the average cruiser. The large sanitary basin, household size shower, 230 volt a.c razor point, ample locker space and recirculating toilet gives all the requirements for hygiene and comfort afloat.

Aft Cabin. Luxury interior sprung double berth, dressing table, lockers, chest of drawers and wardrobe.

General details. Large water and fuel tanks. Portable TV point. Windscreen wiper. Fluorescent lighting. Aft cockpit for fishing. Wide safety tread decks with handrails the full length of cabin top.

Engine. Economical Perkins diesel engine with single lever control, and Velvet drive gear box.

Length 25' 6". Beam 9' 0". Headroom 6' 0".

Regret not available to all minor or all male parties.

Hampton Boats Ltd. is a family business with many years of broads holiday experience, giving unrivalled personal service and the highest craft standards.

Situated at the Southern end of Broadland, easily reached by road or rail, Oulton Broad is an ideal point from which to commence your Safari

holiday and explore the 200 miles of unique meandering rivers, broads, lovely villages and plentiful wild life.

Safari cruisers are designed especially for all weather cruising and are built by craftsmen using both modern and traditional materials to give you the maximum in comfort and trouble free cruising.



HAMPTON BOATS LTD

CALDECOTT ROAD OULTON BROAD LOWESTOFT

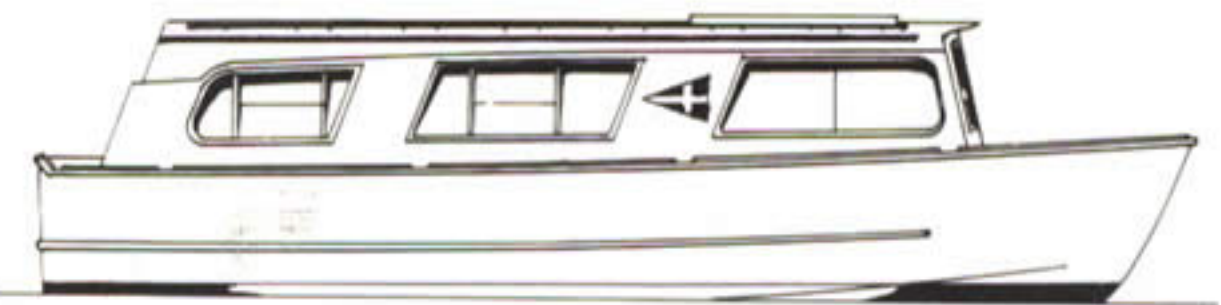
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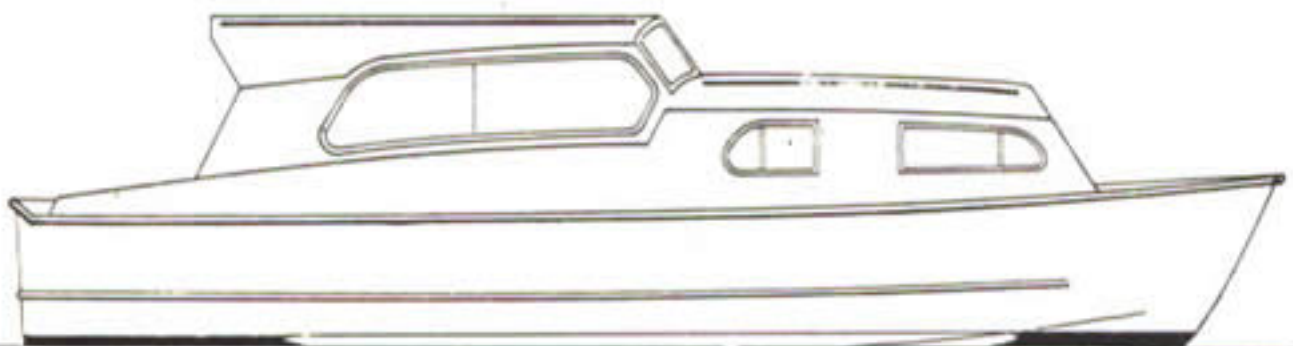
Safari 25 Mk II III & IV



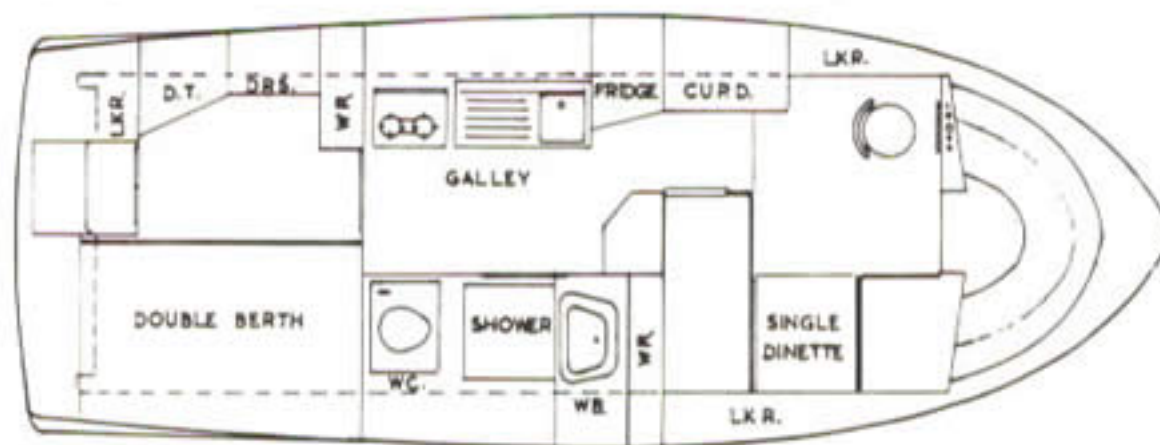
SAFARI MK. II
Sliding wheelhouse version.



SAFARI 25 MK. III
Sliding hatch/forward cockpit version.



SAFARI 25 MK. IV
Sedan version.



SUGGESTED INTERIOR LAYOUT OF MK.III

Safari cruisers are ideal for enjoying our inland waterways to the full. With three types of superstructure available on a well proven hull, tried and tested on many rivers & inland waterways of Britain.

Available as bare hull or hull & deck for home or yard completion.

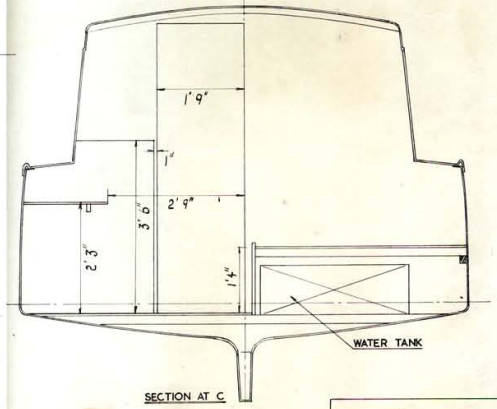
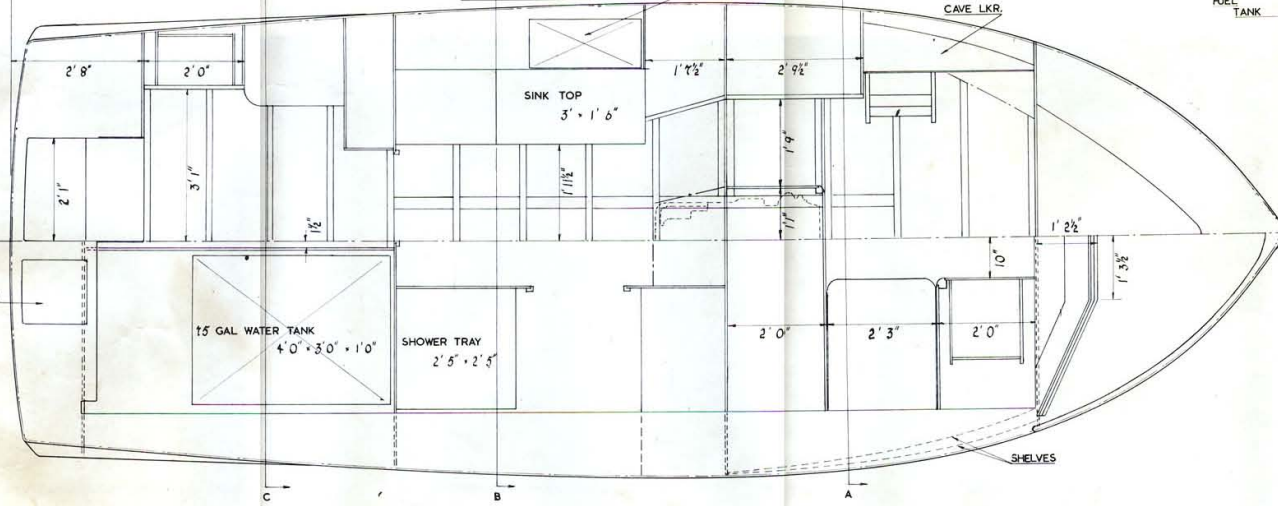
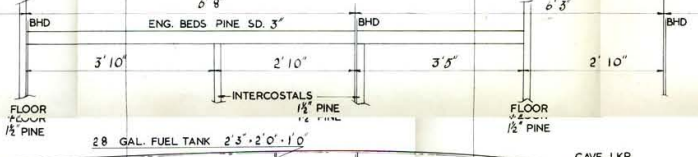
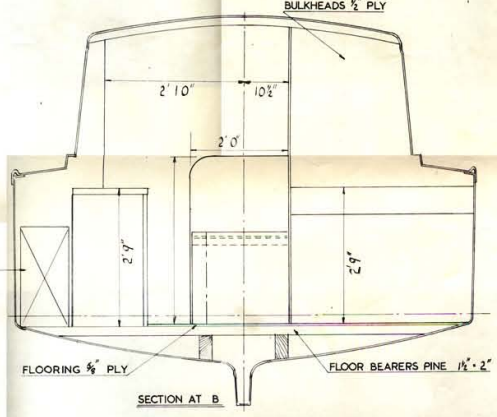
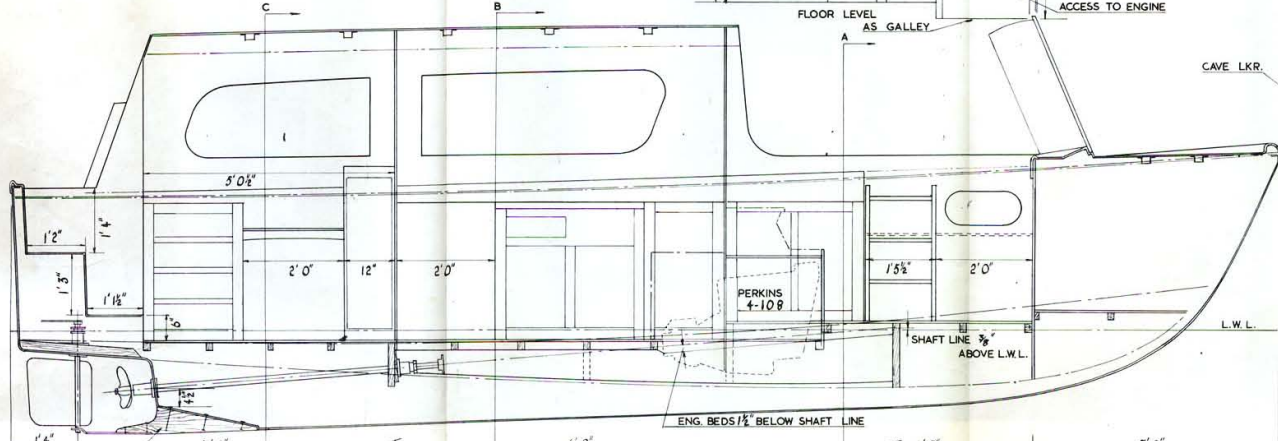
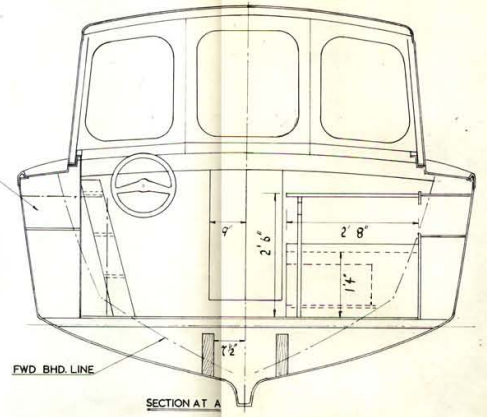
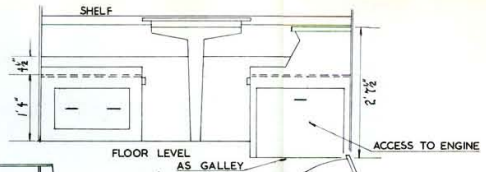
Send today for details & price list.

Also from the manufacturers, the original Safari Toplet recirculating marine toilet (the type now demanded on most landlocked waterways). Manufactured in high quality G.R.P. for easy maintenance and long life. For a high quality, clean & efficient toilet system the Safari Toplet is a must.

For information of the Safari Cruisers or the Safari Toplet contact:

HAMPTON BOATS LTD.,
Caldecott Road, Oulton Broad,
Lowestoft, Suffolk.
Tel: Lowestoft (0502) 4896

FLOOR LEVELS:
 AFT CABIN, GALLEY & TOILET 2" BELOW L.W.L.
 SALOON 2" ABOVE L.W.L.

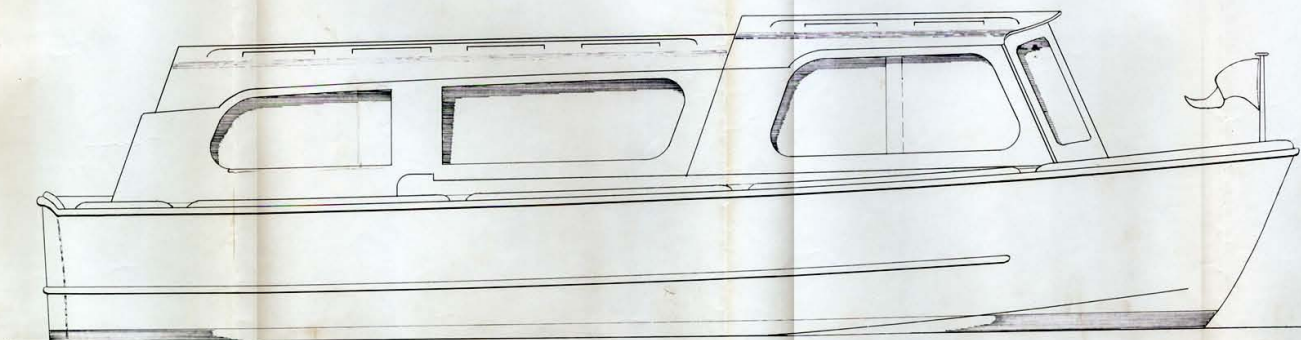


CONSTRUCTIONAL ARRANGEMENT
 25' 2" G. R. P. MOTOR CRUISER

HAMPTON BOATS LTD.,
 OULTON BROAD,
 LOWESTOFT, SUFFOLK.

SCALE 1/4" = 1 FT
 MARCH 1968

"SAFARI 25"

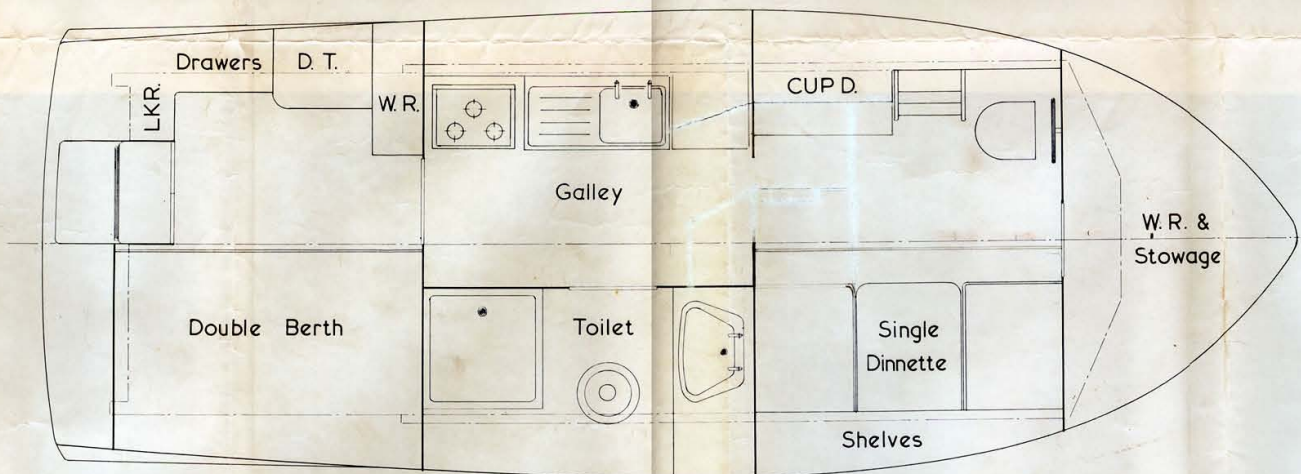


L.O.A. 25' 7"

L.W.L. 23' 7"

Beam 9' 6"

Draft 2' 1"

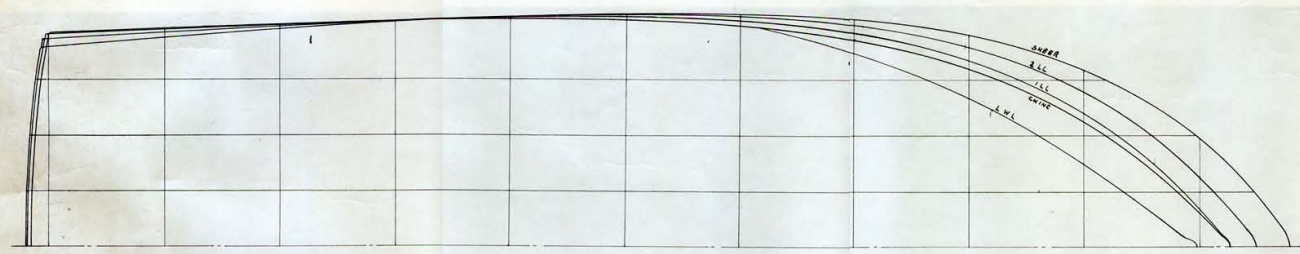
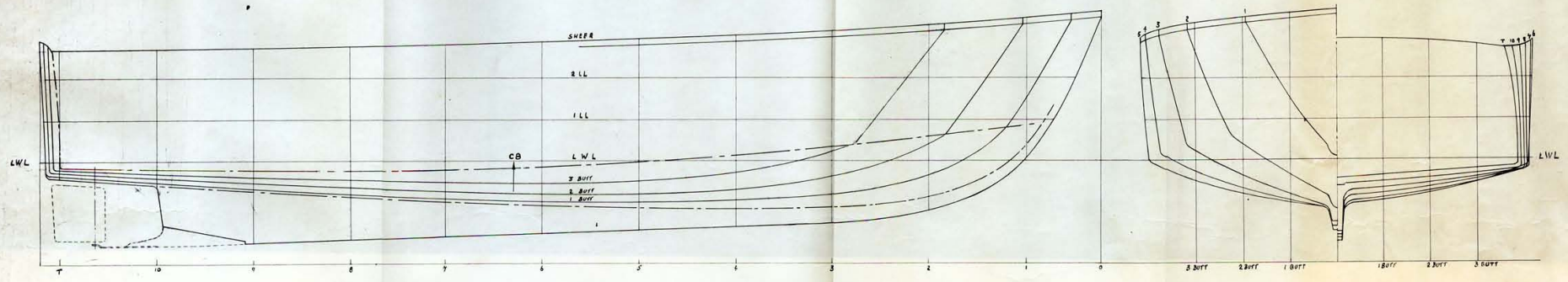


Hampton Boats Ltd,
Oulton Broad,
Lowestoft,
Suffolk.

3 BERTH G. R. P. MOTOR CRUISER

Scale $\frac{3}{4}$ " = 1 foot
Feb 1968

"SAFARI 25"



BEAM	9' 6"
DRAFT	2' 1"
DISPLACEMENT	3.1 TONS
TONS PER INCH	0.4

HAMPTON BOATS LTD.,
 OULTON BROAD,
 LOWESTOFT, SUFFOLK.

LINES of 25" 7" GLASS FIBRE HULL

SCALE $\frac{3}{4}$ " = 1"

17-4-1968