

SILHOUETTE **MAKE & MEND** Sheets

No.6 **PULPITS & PUSHPITS**

Editor: Ian Rodger

Everybody has their own priorities for on-deck safety, but the collective wisdom of the SOIA seems to suggest that on a Silhouette, a pulpit is a must, closely followed by a pushpit of some kind. The hull shape does tend to induce an alarming amount of pitching movement, and if you are attending to moorings or the anchor at the bow, it is reassuring to have some strong framework to brace yourself against.

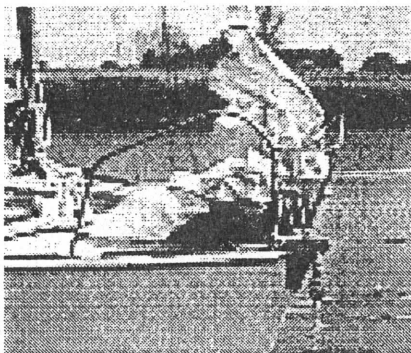
Having fitted this, and possibly a pushpit, you may be inclined to fit guardrails, and though these may give the boat a very 'seaworthy' appearance, guardrails need to be at least at knee high to provide any material safety, though they may give some misplaced reassurance to your next of kin. A guardwire lower than two feet high will simply trip you up and hasten your departure from the boat so give this idea careful thought before you lash out on expensive stanchions and fittings.

It may be more useful to build up a really positive toerail- by laminating two or even three pieces of 1"x1" screwed on to the deck of a plywood SII, or extended from the rubbing strip of a grp MkII.

Pulpits

The drawing opposite shows the basic dimensions of a pulpit which will fit all the MkII to MkV Silhouettes. The position of the feet corresponds to the fixing positions on the deck mouldings of the S III. These are small circular patches of plain fibreglass slightly proud of the diamond tread pattern in the deck, and also appear on some of the later grp SII boats which used an SIII deck moulding. A circular foot plate 2" dia. will fit on to this more effectively than a rectangular one.

There is no problem fitting a pulpit of the same size to plywood SII's. Older pushpits tend to have rectangular foot plates, or circular ones with four fixing holes. The current practice tends to be simpler, a



A home built pulpit from Poland which gives good access forward as well as providing stowage for the anchor

circular foot with an M8 or M10 stud welded on in the centre, fixed with a 2" dia washer and nut under the deckhead.

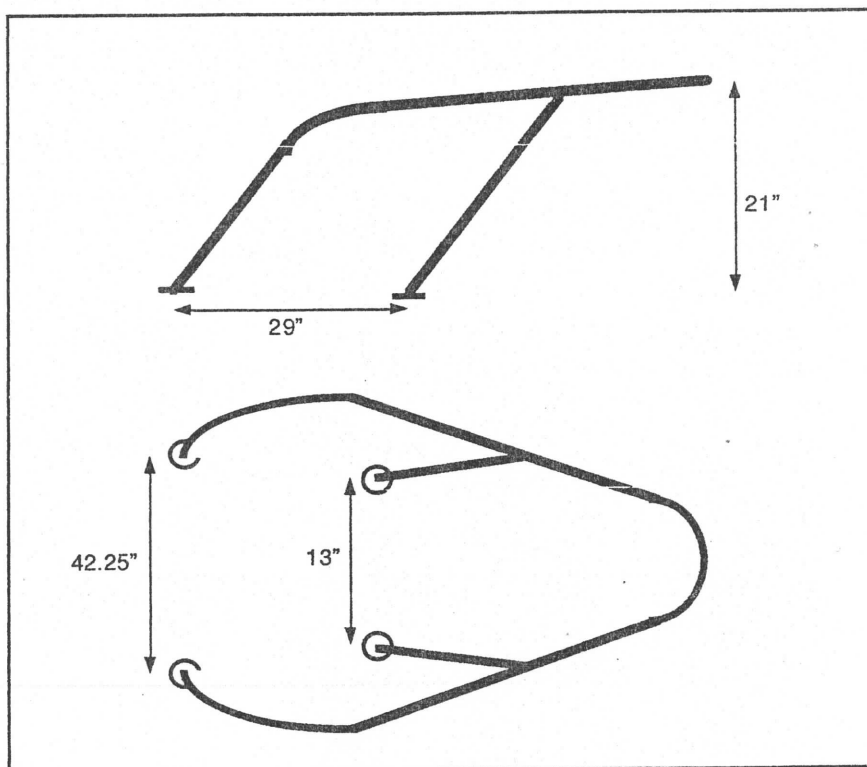
Deciding on the height of the pulpit is a balance of aesthetics and practicality. On a typical Silhouette pulpit the 'standard' height of the front supports is about 20". If this is increased to 24" to tie in with a standard stanchion height of 24", the proportion of the pulpit is just a bit too big for the size of the boat, and the extra height may not be of

much use anyway. With this height, a second horizontal rail at half height is not necessary, and this will keep the cost down a bit if you are having one made specially.

Materials

Marine grade stainless steel is going to need least maintenance and will look good as well. For this size of pulpit 7/8" or 22mm. diameter tube is adequate, but the wall thickness is probably more important than the o.d. 16 swg steel will make a much stronger job than 18swg, and the extra cost will be well worth it.

Some members with pipe bending facilities have made their own pulpits from mild steel tube, and even plumbers' copper pipe (a bit dubious!) and if you don't mind regular care and maintenance to keep rust at bay this will be good enough. Alternatively you can have it galvanised for around 50p per kilo weight of steel if you can get it put in with a batch of other items.



Pushpits

The design of a pushpit for your Silhouette needs to suit your arrangements for mounting the outboard motor if you have one, particularly as the height of the top rail needs to clear the motor as it is tilted upwards or lifted on and off the bracket. A popular view is that two corner rails are more useful than a continuous rail across the transom, as this gives you something to grab hold of as well as leaving clear access for dealing with engines or kedge anchors over the stern.

As with the pushpit, dimensions for fitting a pushpit are identical across all the marques. Another reason for fitting one is that you can then run wires from the forward supports across to the aft end of the cabin so that a dodger can be rigged. This will definitely improve the comfort and weather protection in such an exposed cockpit as the Silhouette's.

Discussions about pushpits with various people suggest that a pair of corner units linked by guardrail wire would be more useful than a full pushpit bridging the whole of the transom. This would give better access to the outboard motor while still offering support. Compared to the wooden SII's, the cockpit coaming on fibreglass models seems to give your back very little protection, and a guardrail wire (if not a solid rail) could profitably be stretched from the pulpit to the aft edge of the cabin side, just above the coaming.

Sources

If you can't make your own, pulpits can be bought ready made from chandlers like Thomas Foulkes, but check the dimensions and specification of the steel before you order. Other manufacturers advertise in the magazines, or have stalls at most of the boat jumbles. Below are listed some suppliers.

C Marine Fabrications

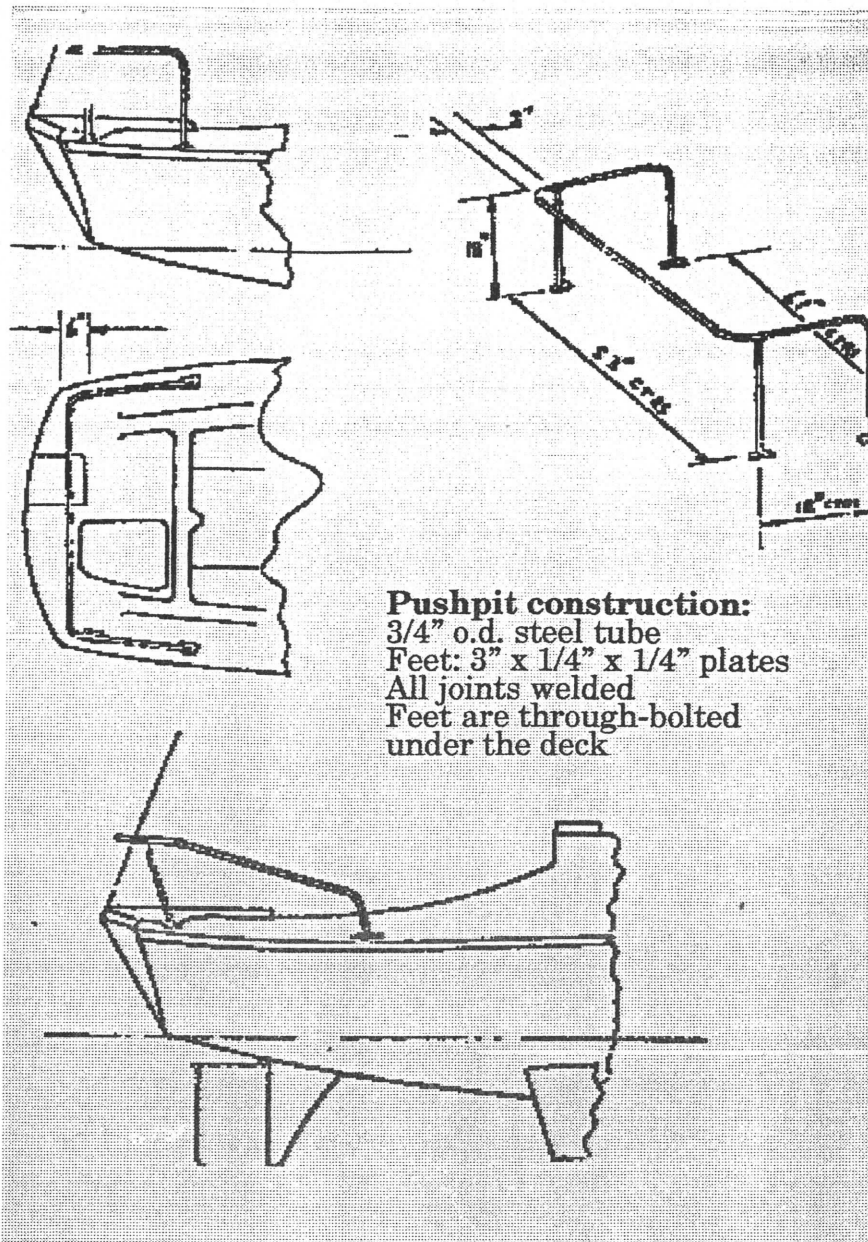
Units 4 & 5

Riverside Business Park

off New Passage Hill

Devonport, Plymouth PL1 4SN

Tel 01273 513032.



Pushpit construction:
3/4" o.d. steel tube
Feet: 3" x 1/4" x 1/4" plates
All joints welded
Feet are through-bolted
under the deck

R.W. Collins Marine equipment

Peg's Farm, Staplow,

Nr Ledbury Hfds. HR8 1NQ.

Tel: 01531 640779. Send for their

list which includes stanchions, boarding ladders, grab rails, bollards etc.

Steel Line Ltd,

Shalesmoor

Sheffield S3 8UJ,

Tel: 0114 270298

Lencol Engineering

22 Ashley Road

Hampton

Tel: 0181 941 4265

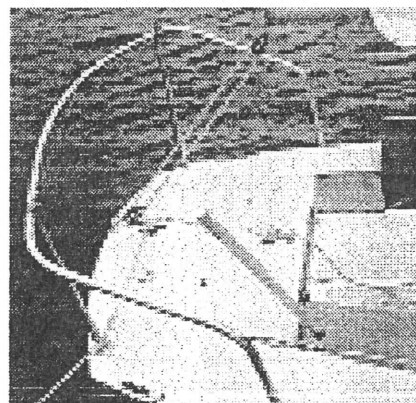
Stainless Steel Stockholders Ltd

Imber Court Trading estate

Orchard Lane

East Molesey

Tel: 0181 394 4121



A typical Silhouette pushpit arrangement, but make sure there is enough clearance to swing an outboard motor up underneath it.