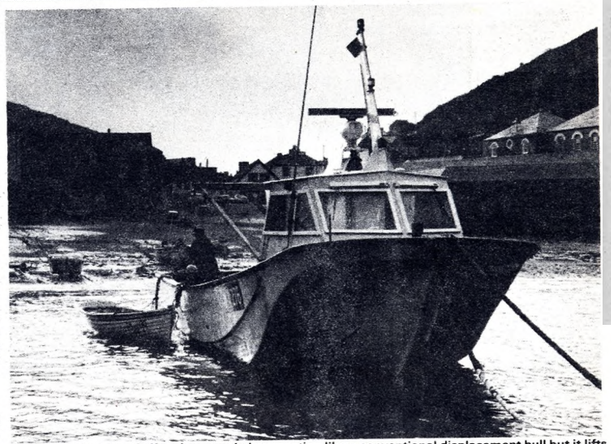
BIG DORY SPEEDS

WHEN A boat is right for the job except for being too small the obvious answer is to build a bigger version.

This is how the 38ft. fast potting dory *Francis Kate* came to be built earlier this year to fish the Lundy Island grounds off the north Devon coast.

She is a twin-engine planing boat capable of over 25 knots with a draft of just 1ft. 6in.

The boat is specially designed for potting and has many advantages for the job — speed, stability and high carrying capacity, combined with the ability to work from a harbour that dries out. This is the key to her success fishing the Lundy grounds from Port Isaac since her launch last May.



The fast potter *Francis Kate* has a main bow section like a conventional displacement hull but it lifts at planing speed. She cruises to the grounds at 18 knots.

— Port Isaac potter shoots at 12 knots

Pressed

She is owned by local brothers Jack and Peter Rowe and was built in a barn. The glassfibre boat took her builder Rod Baker nine months to complete, single-handed, including the design work.

The idea for the boat came from Jack Rowe while he was operating a Dell Quay 17ft. 6in. dory from Port Isaac. He pressed the boat hard for many seasons, but according to Rod Baker the floor kept collapsing and the craft just wasn't big enough for the job.

Even when a Q22 dory came to the area and proved a success because of her range and low operating costs, Jack Rowe thought this was not the complete answer. So he decided to go the whole way and have a 38-footer built and went into partnership with his brother, Peter, who was then a part-time fisherman, newsagent and harbour master.

They approached Rod Baker, who had repaired the dory, to build the boat and he completed the design to their requirements. Two weeks after initial talks the design came off the drawing board and, said Rod Baker, few changes were made.

Francis Kate has been designed with a large bow section to prevent her burying her head when going down a wave in following seas.

Since May she has been in waves "as big as houses", her owners say, and the hull form acts like a massive surf board — zooming her down waves at up to 40 knots.

The boat "skips" over the top of 3ft. waves and cruises at 3,000 rpm, which is 18 knots, leaving a lot of revs in hand so as to give her twin Volvo engines a long life.

She planes with a full load of pots aboard, yet acts like a conventional boat at slow speeds and can still manage 12 knots in hefty seas, according to her skipper.

"She is an excellent sea boat, with more of a movement than a roll — a stable working platform," Skipper Rowe told *Fishing News*. He didn't feel it was a gamble to build this type of boat.

Barn

There were no problems in building a long dory, but Rod Baker did not have a suitable shed. So he used a barn owned by a friend, David Phelps, and soon work got underway.

C-Flex, the patented American-made flexible plank, was used to mould the 14ft. beam by 18in. deep hull as only a wooden framework is needed instead of an expensive mould. It also allows hull shapes to be followed fairly easily. C-Flex comes in strips 1ft. wide and 200ft. long. The hull form was then built up using wooden ribs and the 'planks' stapled on.

This structure was reinforced with Fab Mat, a high-performance woven roving cloth which combines strength with light weight — a critical factor when building fast boats. The woodwork was then taken away.

Transverse bulkheads are built in to the hull every 4ft. from stern to bow, with inspection hatches cut in each one just big enough to crawl through. Buoyancy tanks are also built into the hull below deck for the full length of the sides.

The fuel tanks are constructed of GRP and they were built into the hull before the deck was fitted. The ¾in. marine ply deck is sealed with 6oz./ft² woven cloth and given a non-slip finish.

One interesting feature of the hull is that no holes were drilled during construction. Bilge pumps discharge

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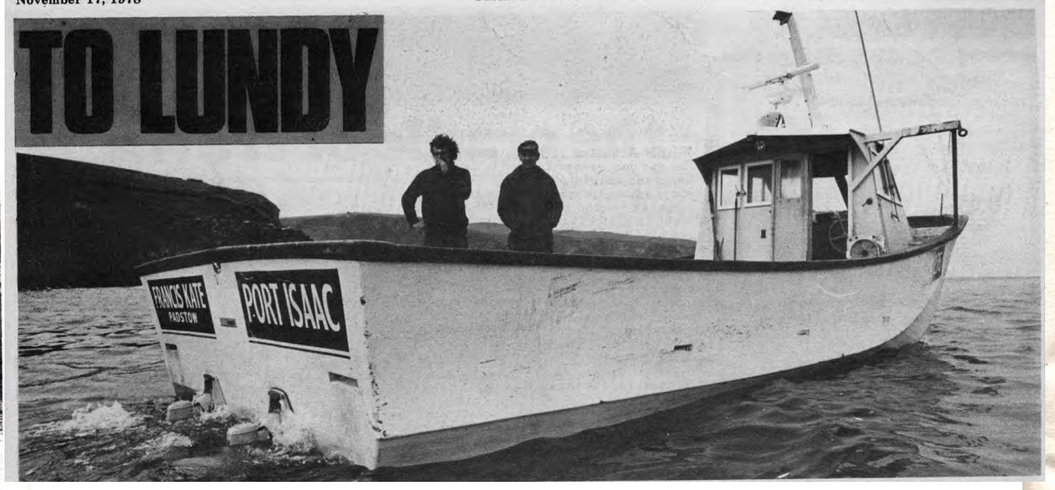
Below: the builder and owners of *Francis Kate*. Left to right are: Jack Rowe, Rod Baker and Peter Rowe.

TO LUNDY



FRANCIS KATE

Fishing News, November 17, 1978
& September 16 1983

New power plant for dory 'Francis Kate'

***FRANCIS KATE* (PW 276), busy working the north Cornish coast in all weathers since 1977, has undergone an extensive refit including an engine change.**

Owned by Jack Rowe, *Francis Kate* (left) was the first 38ft. boat completed by Port Isaac Bay Marine. She was initially powered by twin Volvos with V-drives and has now been fitted with a Cummins 320hp V8 with conventional drive.

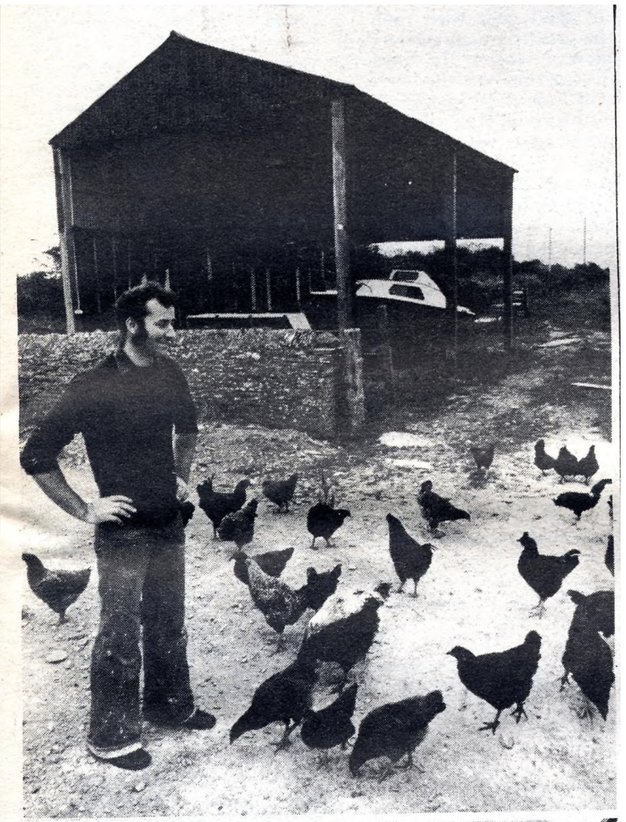
Transmission is through a Twin Disc 506 gearbox with 1.5:1 reduction. This meant creating a new keel and also gave the opportunity of installing a propeller inspection hatch which can be a great asset to any boat working static gear.

Twin GRP fuel tanks with 170-gallon capacity have been fitted. The GRP work was carried out by Jon Rowe, the owner's son, who worked under sub-contract to marine engineers Chapman and Hewitt of Wadebridge, which completed the rest of the work.

The electrics have been rewired to 24 volts and a new mizzen has also been fitted.

All the work was done to SFIA specifications and *Francis Kate* is now working out of Port Isaac once again.

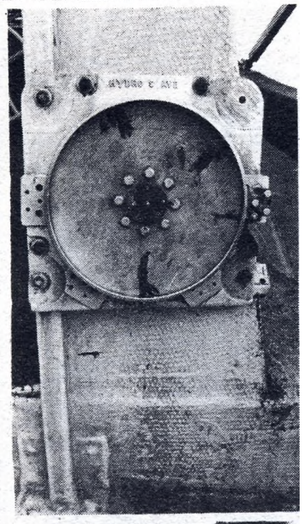
***Francis Kate* was built virtually single-handed by Rod Baker of Port Isaac Bay Marine and at 38ft. remains the biggest dory-type craft in service with the fishing fleet.**



Top: *Francis Kate* off the coast at Port Isaac, her home port which is a dry harbour. The two outdrives for the Volvo main engines are seen aft.

Above: the boat was built in this barn, as Rod Baker didn't have a shed large enough.

Right: her one-tonne Hydroslave pot hauler is a real winner.



Below: controls in her wheelhouse.