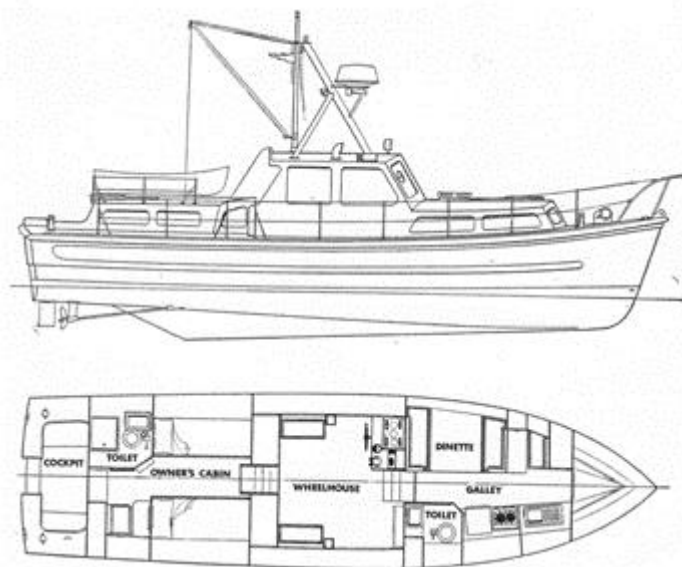


For Work or Play – A Keith Nelson 40 – Footer

Motor Boat and Yachting - 1965

Not long ago on a singularly cold and blustery day we were able to go for a run in the Solent aboard the newest and biggest of the Keith Nelson range of craft, a 40-footer. The conditions were hardly ideal for boating and standing on the Gosport Ferry pontoon we had serious doubts about the whole enterprise, but, in the event, she handled so well and had such an easy motion that our doubts were forgotten and we simply gave ourselves up to the enjoyment of the moment. "Edelweiss" in fact, proved a splendid vessel and one that should give her owner years of pleasure.

The Keith Nelson range has always attracted the discerning for their good looks, excellent sea-keeping qualities and surprising turn of speed. Boats of the type here described, which are designed by T.T. Boat Designs, have been acquired by many harbour and customs authorities, and the 40 ft. by 11 ft. resin-glass craft we were aboard is a development of the 36 ft. timber-built boat owned by the Cornish Fishery Protection Service. The hull was moulded by Halmatic and completed to a high standard as a private yacht by Keith Nelson and Co. Ltd., of Bembridge, Isle of Wight.



The accommodation plan gives an impression of the space and freedom from the fussiness actually felt on board. Despite the room below there are wide side decks and stacks of space for lounging in the sun aft.

Turbo-Charged Diesels

Engines are a pair of Perkins TH6.354 turbo-charged horizontal diesels each developing 135bhp and driving through 2:1 reduction boxes. Even at high revolutions these motors were commendably quiet - due partly, no doubt, to good installation. They are designed to give a cruising speed of 15 knots at a total fuel consumption of nine gallons per hour, and a maximum speed of 18 to 19 knots. This maximum, which we achieved on our run, is remarkably high for the type of vessel which is round bilged and of essentially seaworthy and moderate displacement form. The secret of success must lie partly in the run of the buttocks which, we believe, have a slight knuckle aft so that they drop rather than rise toward the stern. This gives a good lift to the back end and allows comparatively high speed without excessive trim.

Handling characteristics were excellent and though the motors were not handed it was possible to leave the wheel for long periods without the vessel getting off course, despite the fact that it was by no means calm on our run. Turning was quick and sure in both directions.

As has been mentioned, construction is of resin-glass and the craft has been granted Lloyd's 100 A1 yacht classification (reinforced plastics construction). Certainly, a similar hull we saw completing struck us as an exceptionally sturdy job. On "Edelweiss" fuel tanks of 320 gallons capacity are moulded into the structure in three separate compartments.



"Edelweiss" shows her sweeping shear and workmanlike appearance to advantage.

This boat is for E. H. Wheelwright, of Guernsey, and that is where she will be based for extended cruising on the French coast and for passage making to this country. The Channel Islands are noted for the urgent navigation problems they can pose, but "Edelweiss" is equipped to deal with most emergencies of this sort. There is a Brookes and Gatehouse echo sounder, Raytheon 1700 radar, Sharp's auto-pilot and a Sum-Log, while good visibility in rough water will be aided by a Kent Clear View screen. The latter is a new model with central motor and an improvement on the old type, we felt. The viewing ends of all navigation instruments are grouped conveniently for the navigator on the starboard side of the wheelhouse where he also has a good sized fold-away chart table to help him sort out his problems.