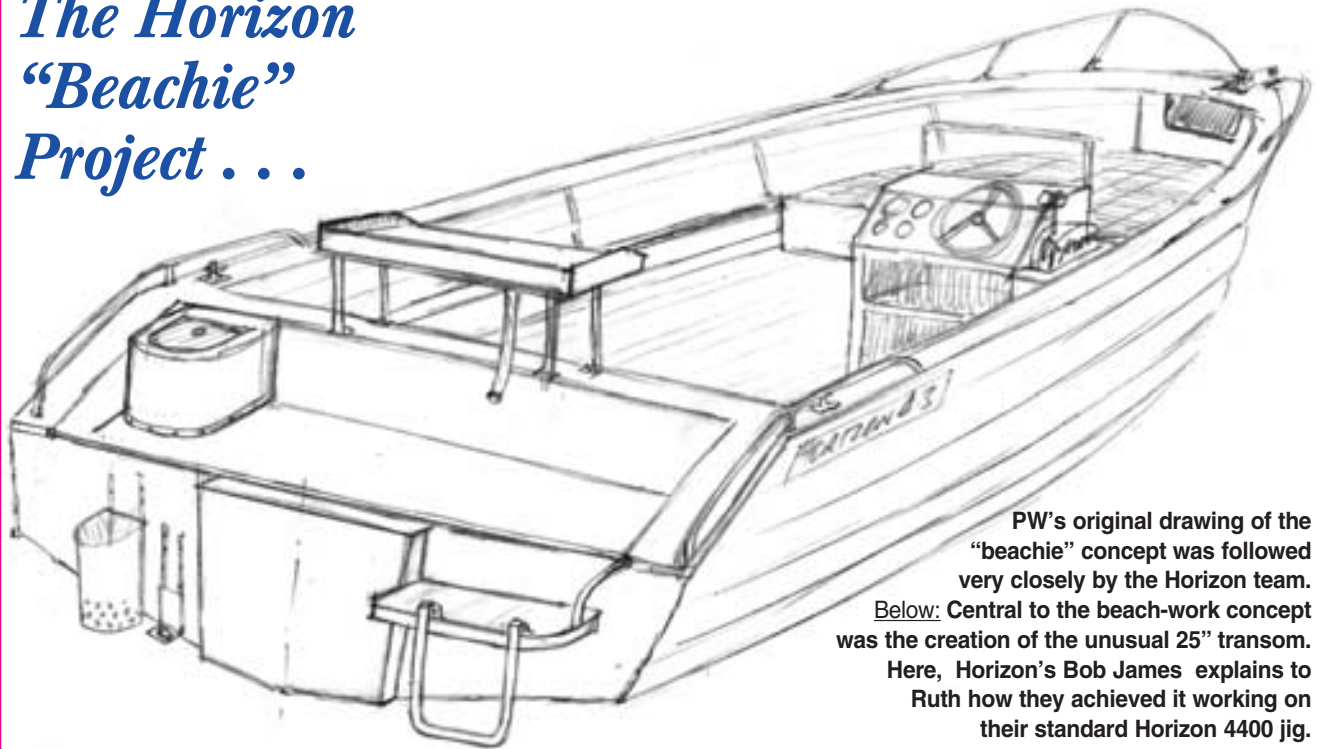


Horizon 4.4 m 'Beachie' Project

Introducing a special F&B small craft report dedicated to building an all-purpose fishing boat specifically designed to be launched straight off the beach. Story & Pics by Peter Webster

The Horizon "Beachie" Project . . .



PW's original drawing of the "beachie" concept was followed very closely by the Horizon team. Below: Central to the beach-work concept was the creation of the unusual 25" transom. Here, Horizon's Bob James explains to Ruth how they achieved it working on their standard Horizon 4400 jig.

The project started simply enough. A long time reader with a holiday house tucked away behind the headland on one of the big rivers of the northern NSW River district, wrote to F&B seeking our advice and input concerning a boat problem he was having.

After many years of faithful and happy service, it seemed his 15 year old Quintrex LazeAbout, Johnson outboard and once galvanised trailer had all arrived at the point where it was cheaper to replace them, than try to rebuild them. But despite a very in-depth look at available boats on the marketplace, he was having trouble finding a suitable boat, motor and trailer combination.

This we found a bit amazing, especially considering the proliferation of highly fitted models from the likes of Quintrex, Ally Craft and Savage.

Nevertheless, we decided to look into it a bit further because some of the points he raised concerning beach launching techniques and strategies, we knew would be of great interest to readers in other parts of Australia.

What also made this project so interesting, was that it concerned more than the boat. This project involved a very careful study of all three elements – the boat, the outboard motor and



specifically, the boat trailer. Normally, no one gives two hoots about the trailer, but in this case, the trailer was a critical factor in the whole package.

The Problem: From the outset, we knew the boat was going to be beach launched nine times out of ten. In many parts of Australia, this is still the preferred option, especially where small craft are involved.

In this instance, the alternative is having to cross one of the meanest, toughest ocean bars in Australia, and

whilst it can be achieved two times out of five quite safely, more often than not, coming or going through the bar is a potentially life threatening situation in small craft. It's certainly not something you would regularly undertake with your wife and grandchildren, that's for sure.

The far better and safer alternative in this case is to launch the boat straight off the beach in a protected lee created by the adjacent headland. Here, the waters are invariably protected. About the worst that can happen is that the fishermen come home from the