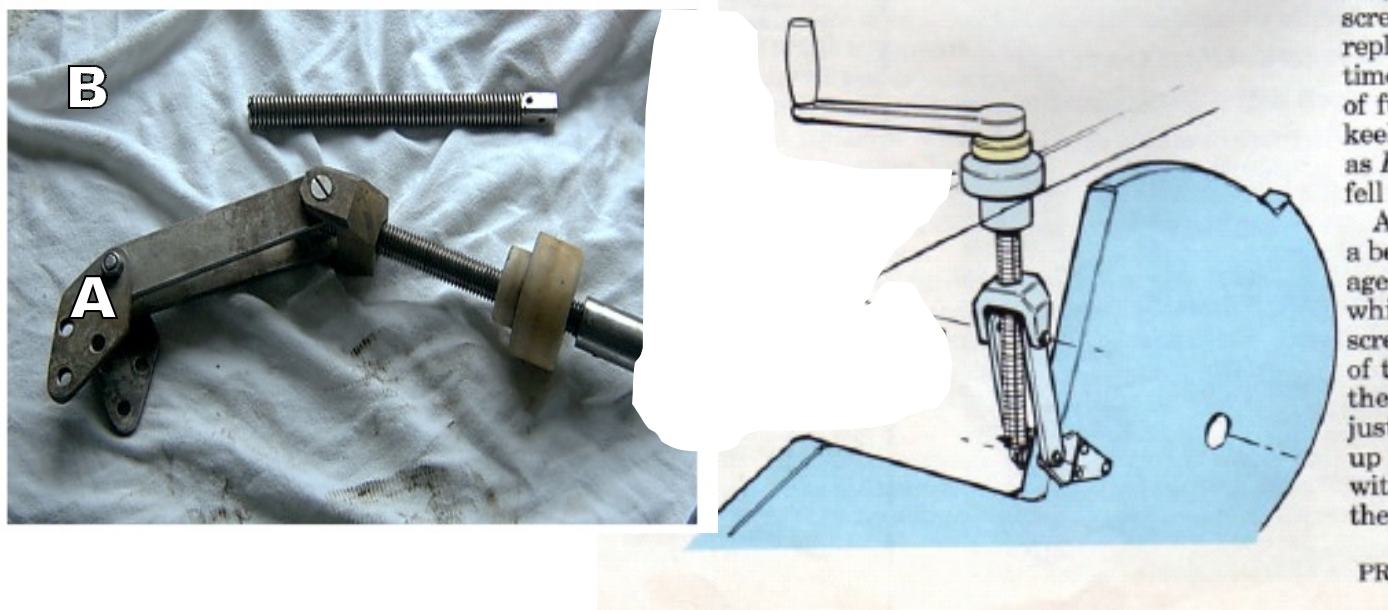


CHERRY PIE (Gary & Ruth)

A short story about our problem with our: SWIFT 18 KEEL MECHANISM



The sketch on the right was passed on to me, it is from an article written by the owner of Heart of Gold and it was published in PBO No 308 August 1992.

Pictured above in the photo A is our keel mechanism, last Monday 21/08/06 just after returning from a short sail double reefed in the Conwy Bay area the sails were stowed away and the keel retracted. The keel mechanism felt unusually stiff so rather than beaching for a short time and greasing the screw we decided to lower the keel onto a warp suspended below and cleated amidships. On lowering the keel a metallic ripping sound was heard and then a bang.....the bush had stripped and the keel even missed the warp (not in the right position). Having got over the shock we decided that was the end of our season unless we could get Cherry Pie home and repaired quickly.

The dangling screw was removed and Cherry Pie was beached, the keel came up under Cherry Pie and the bracket could be seen, the keel cover was removed and a warp passed through the centre of the bush and back up through the hole. We used the screw as a bar to place across the hole and a reef knot secured the keel in place. We managed to push Cherry Pie off the beach on a falling tide and left her on her mooring whilst we went home to fetch the trailer.

Next day (Tuesday) we arrived at Conwy and had no problems in getting Cherry Pie on to the trailer (had we put a warp amidships this would have hampered progress on to the trailer).

Once home the keel bolt was removed and the back of the trailer raised.....then the front of the trailer raised, chocks of wood were placed just in front of the keel and the front of the trailer was lowered taking care to adjust the docking arms on the side of the trailer to steady. When the 3 keel bracket bolts were exposed these were removed and the keel mechanism removed from inside via the keel inspection hatch.

We have been quoted £80 for a new screw and bush. The screw B (pictured) is the original that was bent in 1994 (48 turns) and replaced with A (68 turns) we have asked for a new screw to be made like the original because we think that the mechanism was weakened by having more thread. We also discussed the possibility of using stainless steel for the bush, thinking this would be stronger, however we were advised against this because the bronze bush acts as the weakest link so to speak and would save against more serious damage.... Hope you found this of interest. See photos of Cherry Pie jacked up in photos section.