

Manhandling and Storing the Mariner 6 Outboard

By Jonathan Cook, Shrimper 1065 (Kune Kune), October 2012

Fellow Shrimper owners, you will understand why I say that my wife and I, on being introduced to Shrimper sailing, thought this was the boat for us. It has taken us over 15 years to get there but, on retirement, we treated ourselves to a lovely new Shrimper. But then the debates started; what interior fit, toilet or not, what colour and, perhaps most importantly, should we go for an inboard or outboard version? As we planned to use this as a family boat and have children and grandchildren on board, we decided we needed cockpit space and so opted for the outboard version and had the hatch cover in the cockpit lowered down to deck level.

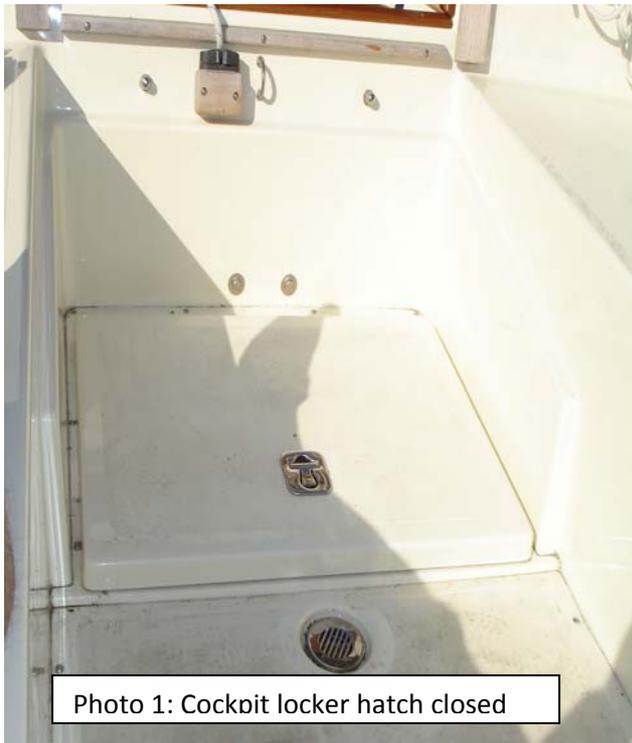


Photo 1: Cockpit locker hatch closed



Photo 2: Cockpit locker hatch open

Let me just say this works really well and the locker is still huge; it runs the full length under the cockpit floor. As this photo shows, in addition to our battery and flares, all our warps and fenders, a bucket with our anchor warp in, you can also get a boat hook and brush in there

Now, the modern day recommended outboard, the Mariner 6hp, is considerably larger than its predecessors. There is no lack of power and we easily keep up with the inboards, but it is a bigger beast to manhandle than the old two strokes. As we had a drying mooring, we decided it was better to remove the outboard from the well when not on board. There is space for it to go into the stern locker but this is somewhat fiddly and definitely bad back territory as you are shifting a heavy object down below your feet. And my wife wouldn't countenance it in the cabin!

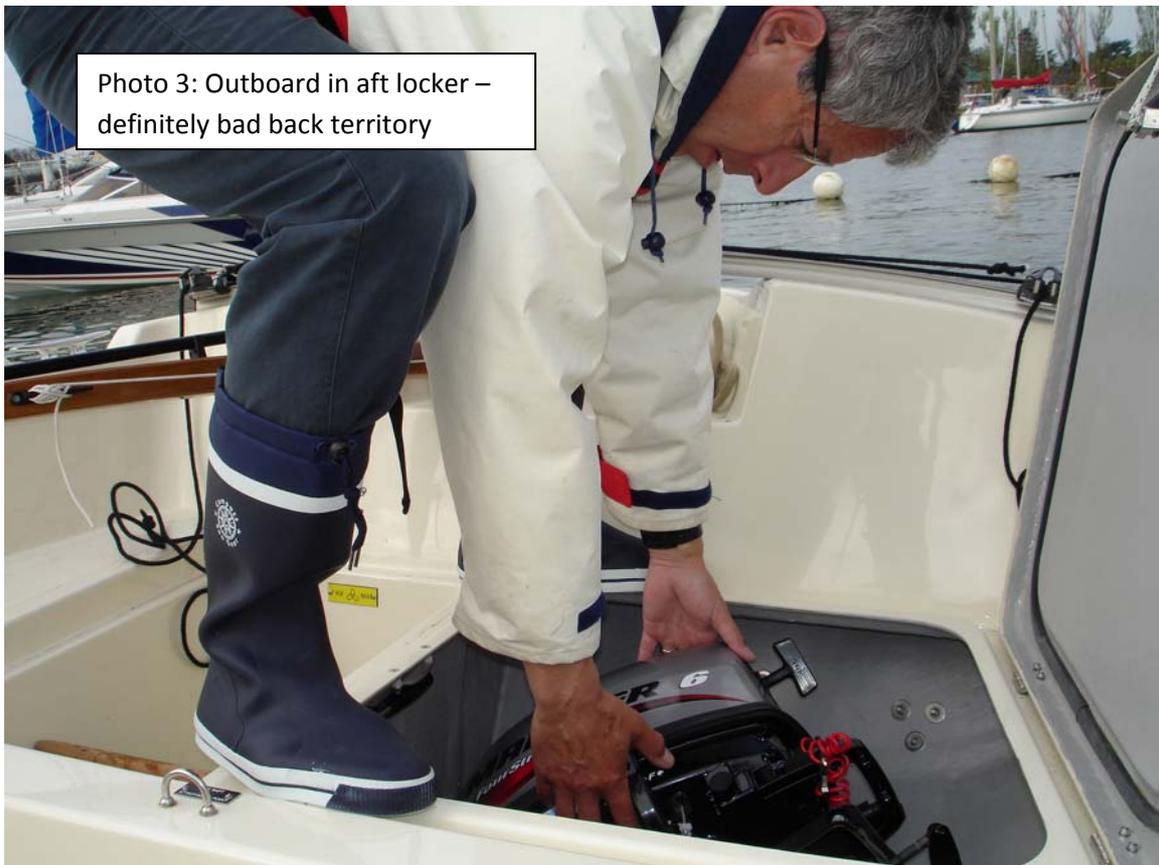


Photo 3: Outboard in aft locker – definitely bad back territory

As we had a nice large flat cockpit area, we decided to simply lay the outboard on the floor of the cockpit. (Remember with this engine it has to be stored upright or flat. If flat the handle must be downwards). It can easily be hidden from prying eyes by a simple cockpit cover (wife currently working on posher Mark Two version) and secured by padlock to the strong point in the cockpit.



Photo 4: Cockpit cover

Rather than me lifting the outboard in and out by hand, we opted to use a handy-billy and a trip round the Beaulieu Boat Jumble enabled us to buy all the necessary bits and bobs at really minimal cost. My wife cut up a sail tie and we fixed this as a harness round the outboard. You can buy a commercial product to achieve the same result. She cut up an old webbing strap, added two loops and we use this as a strop over the boom.



Photo 5: Strop over boom and top pulley block

To this we attach a handy-billy. This is snap-shackled to the strop and we have a 360° swivel there which goes onto the top pulley block. This has two pulleys side by side and a jamming cleat. At the other end there is a single pulley with becket and a large snap shackle which goes onto the harness round the outboard.



Photo 6: Bottom pulley attached to outboard

We are now ready to lift.



Photo 7:
Ready to lift

As my wife pulls on the handy-billy, I stand in the cockpit and simply guide the outboard into the upright position.



Photo 8: Upright in cockpit

It's at this point we remove the bag we keep the outboard in and the boat lock and I now change position and stand up on the seat. I then simply lift the outboard up out of the cockpit, which isn't a big lift and very easy as you are not bending over at all, and align it over the well. My wife then un-jams the handy-billy cleat and lowers away whilst I guide the outboard into position.



Photo 9: Outboard in well

It really is as simple as that*. It is the first thing we do when going on board and the last thing we do when going ashore. We have it down to a fine art – it takes no time at all, the outboard is secure and hidden from view - and my back is in one piece.

*[*Well, not really. At first, we had the usual misunderstandings between husband and wife on the meaning of verbal instructions – clear as daylight to one of us, total gibberish to the other! But that’s another tale.]*