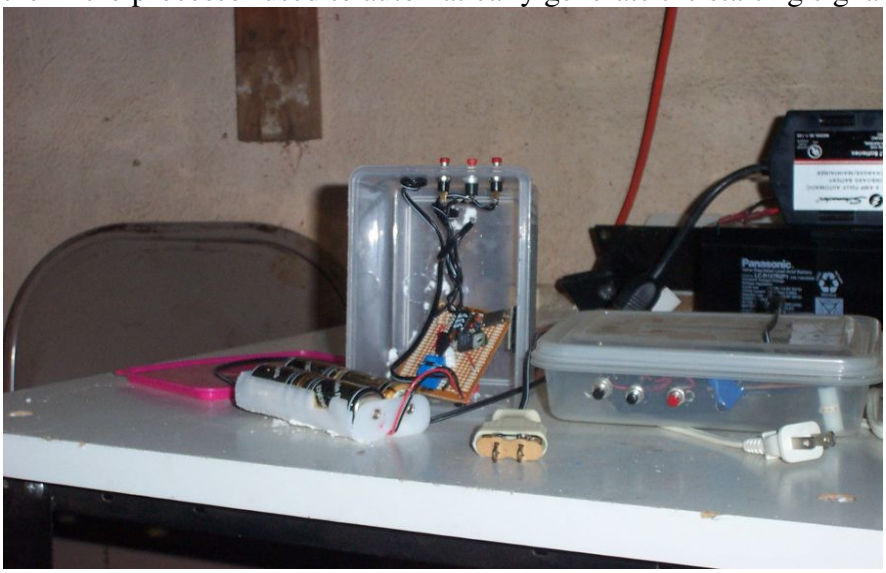
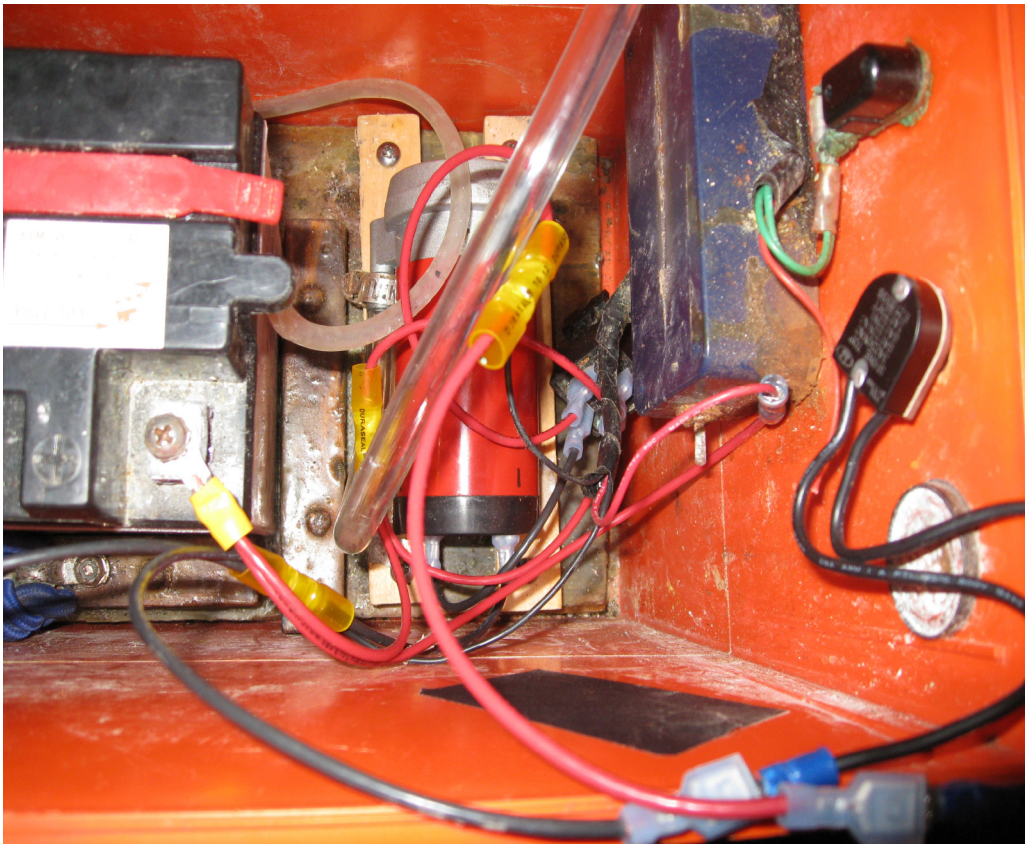
My first electrical horn used to manually produce sound signals for sailboat races at the Springfield Yacht and Canoe Club. One of the orange cables had alligator clips to attach to a battery, the other cable is for the momentary switch constructed from 3/4” in. pvc tubing and caps. The 4 in. pvc tubes and caps housed the compressor and relay. The switch wire (trigger) was later spliced into to test the circuit of the micro processor used to automatically generate the starting signals



The first circuits were enclosed in plastic sandwich boxes and had their own electrical power. The ac plugs were used to tap into the trigger splice in the above manual horn.

The Essex frostbite club had a manual horn which I automated. I retained the original push button and had the plywood base replaced with an oak frame built by Kevin Sullivan, the carpenter at STCC. Stan Horan and the RC showed remarkable patience with the automation hiccups as they had to revert to the button to sound the dinghy sequence a number of times.

While Dave Fraser was carrying a marine battery to power the Essex horn, he suggested that I design a system with an integrated battery. The above system was my first “portable” unit with the compressor and electronics attached to a wooden frame that encircled the battery and the unit was carried by the strap built into the battery case. This unit was delivered to Matt Largess and “donated” to the Newport Frostbite fleet. The above system is a replica as the parts of the original were morphed into a larger version of the “Ollie” at the behest of the late Peter Milnes. I believe there was only one attached trumpet. That unit has been morphed a number times and when last heard of, it looked like this:



These photos along with others along were supplied with the following note:

Ollie,
Thanks so much for all of your help. As you know the fleet 413 starting horn Ollie system has been is service for a long time and started countless races, after speaking with you I found out it is actually unit number 1!
After all these years the wiring had become corroded and several of the connections failed completely. When I began the process of getting the unit resuscitated I ran into a few problems and your time spent walking me through it on the phone was priceless. Customer support like that after 15+years is truly something worth noting.
I have attached some pictures and a wiring diagram(like everything in life, simple once you know how to do it!) of the rebuilt unit. I replaced all of the wiring, the push button, and the compressor($38 at auto parts store) and the system is like new!
Thanks again for all of your help, priceless. Please let me know if there is ever anything we can do to repay you.
Cheers,
Will Donaldson
Laser Fleet 413

Note that the trumpet is an AFI replacement. This trumpet has a lexan diaphragm which is impervious to corrosion and it ought to honk long after the rest of the box turns to goo.

Leighton Lee suggested that I use a dry box to house the guts of the portable unit and the first prototype was used as partial payment for a laser that was used by the Russian competitor in the 1996 Olympics. Karl Marsden was told that it was piece of “maritime history”

The first units were sold to the Pettipaug YC and the Saratoga YC. The one below was traded in by Saratoga in the summer of 2008. Note the stainless steel battery posts used for charging the battery. The first thing that Bill Grover (Pettipaug) did was to install an on board battery charger.

And this is the historical perspective of the “OLLIE”(a name bestowed by Alden Bugly aka John Potter).