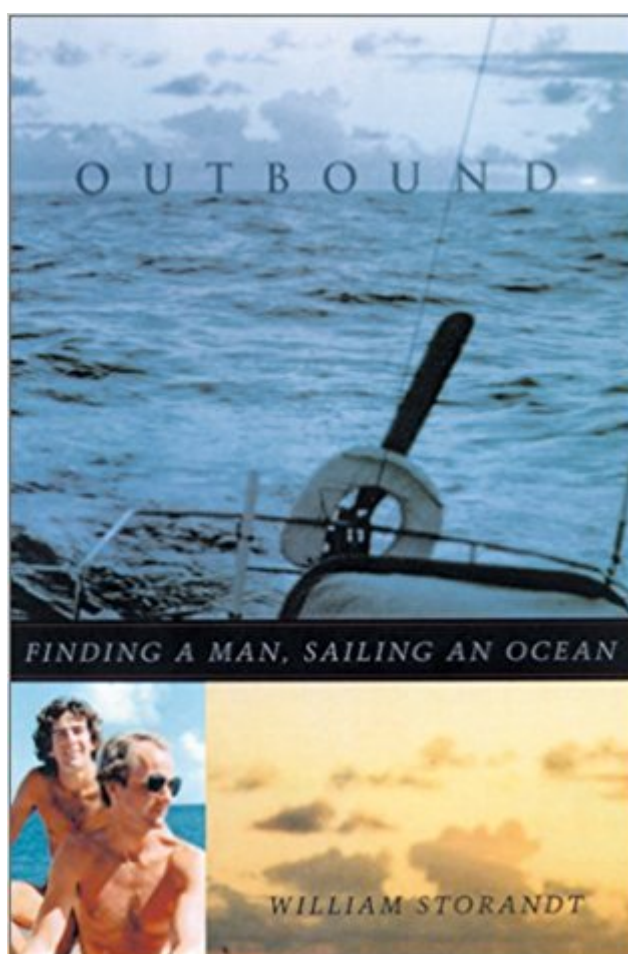


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Outbound: Finding A Man, Sailing An Ocean (Living Out: Gay And Lesbian Autobiographies, Joan Larkin And David Bergman, Series Editors)



Synopsis

Outbound is the story of two voyages: an Atlantic crossing in the 33-foot cutter Clarity, bound for Scotland; and the hard voyage of self-discovery that finally brought Bill Storandt to his life partner. Storandt's account of the adventure he had carefully planned with longtime partner Brian Forsyth and their friend Bob soon turns into a white-knuckled sailing tale, as they encounter a fierce storm four hundred miles from the Irish coast that tests their courage and all their sailing skills. The sea story, vividly evoking life in a small boat on a big ocean, is interwoven with Storandt's flashbacks to his earlier life. Outbound delivers its share of excitement, but it's also a moving reflection on how circuitous our paths can be, even when the destination is clear and beckoning.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Graced with an unusually apt title that embraces both the gay concept of coming out and the nautical term for leaving port, this compelling memoir weaves Storandt's tentative coming out during the late 1960s and 1970s with a jaunty account of an Atlantic Ocean crossing with his life partner, Brian, in the early 1980s. He writes with a charming mix of wry self-analysis, dryly witty travel commentary and narrative energy, particularly when it comes to a storm-tossed passage on the crossing to Scotland. The result is a stellar life story with broad appeal. Gay readers of a certain age who came out during the Vietnam War will identify with Storandt's charming, somewhat fumbling progress toward finding a gay lover, while younger gay readers should enjoy a cheerful history lesson. At the same time, fellow sailors will be caught up in the author's obvious passion for sailing

and the sea, and will savor the book's nautical savvy and insight. Just as captivating are the quick sketches Storandt draws of his pre-gay, pre-sailing life, first as a Juilliard-trained orchestral percussionist in New York (session work included banging tambourines in studio sessions for the Monkees), then as a geodesic-dome-dwelling Vermonter. Photos from the adventure generously enhance an already lively account. (Aug.) Forecast: Storandt's engaging twist on the coming-out story and the credibility he's acquired as a 20-year contributor to *Cruising World* magazine effectively position this memoir as a book for both gay readers and sailors of any persuasion. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

Storandt, an avid sailor, freelance writer, and 20-year contributor to *Cruising World* magazine, tells the story of his voyage across the Atlantic and his life journey to a better understanding of himself. Along with friends Brian and Bob, Storandt sails his 32' wooden cutter, *Clarity*, on an idyllic cruise from Connecticut to the Azores but then makes a very stormy passage to Scotland. Once in Scotland, the friends cruise the rugged coast, visiting many of the same places as Mairi Hedderwick described in *Sea Change: The Summer Voyage from East to West Scotland of the Anassa* (LJ 3/15/00). Storandt flashes back to his early life as a music student, his move from New York City to a geodesic dome in Vermont, and his introduction to sailing. His soul searching is greatly influenced by his gradual "coming out" and his realization that he has finally found his life partner. Full of many personal references, this newest volume in "Living Out Gay and Lesbian Autobiographies" series also makes for a good sailing story as well. A nice addition for public libraries. John Kenny, San Francisco P.L. Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This is an interesting and fascinating memoir of one man's life who happens to love sailing and who is also a gay man living in a caring and loving relationship. You don't have to have a knowledge of sailing to enjoy this book. Although I have gone sailing a few times, I wasn't familiar with a lot of the sailing terms, but the author explains them very well. The author writes with dry wit, a questioning self-analysis, and deep passion. It was a pleasure to read his story, and it was never boring. This is a true-life story that will have broad appeal to many people. Storandt tells in vivid detail the story of his transatlantic sailing adventure from Saybrook, Connecticut to Ireland, then on to Scotland aboard his 33-foot cutter named *Clarity*. He made this journey with his longtime partner Brian, and their friend Bob. It's an adventure that turns out to be exciting, unpredictable, and even life-threatening. They certainly get to test their sailing skills through rough seas, gale force winds, and a fierce storm. It's not "The Perfect Storm", but it's close. Interwoven throughout his sailing

adventure we learn all about Storandt's earlier life; his marriage, being a freelance musician, living in the Vermont woods in a geodesic dome, leaving his marriage, coming out, and meeting his soon to be life partner, Brian, a Scottish doctor. So whether you're hooked on sailing or just want to read a well-written passionate coming out story, this book is for you. I was disappointed when this adventure ended. As good a writer as he is a sailor, Storandt tells a wonderful story I couldn't put down till finished.

I bought this book because I was blown away by Storandt's first fictional novel, "The Summer They Came." However, as a straight male who does not know the first thing about sailing, I did not know what to expect from this work. My enjoyment of Storandt's effort is all the more impressive, given my lack of knowledge about the subject matter. Like all master story tellers, Storandt lets the reader enter his world by describing the situation in detail, with references to more familiar subject matter. For instance, when explaining why he cannot get out of bed during a severe storm, Storandt says that he can no more get out of bed than a potato worm can unfold in your hand ... brilliant! Storandt has 2 running stories in this book. In the foreground is his gripping account of his sailing adventure to Scotland (the homeplace of his life partner) across the Atlantic. In the background, is a discussion of his and his life partner's lives up until the time of the trip, with particular focus on how they came to realize they were gay. I highly recommend this book to even the most staunchly conservative "straights," and to the landlubbers most prone to sea-sickness!

This book, in its less than 200 pages, kinda sneaks up on the reader. It starts out with the writer/narrator filled with self-doubts, both about the voyage he has embarked on and his life for his first thirty years or so. Stay with it and you will be richly rewarded. By page 80 or so I was totally enchanted, first by what slowly unfolds to be a beautiful love story. A love story told with such restraint that it wasn't until halfway through the book that I realized that Bill and Brian were actually a couple, and had been so for more than half a decade. He writes about his partner with such understated ardor that I was sure that the story would end in tragedy, or that merely the two parted company. Neither is true. Oh yeah, and Overboard was also a rip-roaring sailing yarn. And what would have been a rather pathetic coming out story (what took him so long?) until I realized how old he was. Denying oneself and getting married was a more reasonable survival strategy before Stonewall.

Sometimes a friend will surprise you. You know there's a memoir in the works, that it is to be

published. Good for him. You'll have to read it. Reading it, you are impressed, knocked out, amazed. This is what happened to me with Bill Storandt's book, *Outbound*. The two stories, interwoven in alternating chapters, will satisfy both those seeking the taste of wind-driven mid-Atlantic salt spray and those who seek to better understand a gay man and witness his success in finding a life partner. There are wonderful side trips to Julliard, the Vermont woods, the Caribbean, the Scottish coast, and married life. The book also satisfies a larger audience, however, and it does so with the simplest and most difficult device: honesty. Bill gracefully and without pretense shares his difficulties and successes, both maritime and personal. It is no accident that his boat is named *Clarity*. Because he has taken the risk to be so honest with us, an unusual bond develops between author and reader. The authenticity of his voice causes us to care about his perception of the world and to examine how it compares with our own. This happens rarely and it is a privilege and an adventure. We are in good hands with Bill, whose gentle and persistent humor, thoughtful consideration, and respect for all parties make the voyages we take with him away from and back to safe harbors both illuminating and very enjoyable. I literally couldn't put the book down.

William Storandt wanted to sail across the Atlantic. And he was afraid he wanted to love a man. In this sometimes harrowing story of the ocean and the heart, Storandt tells us how he finally managed both. His journeys take him from Julliard to a hippie dome in the Vermont woods to a 30-foot sloop in a life-threatening gale off the coast of Ireland. His parallel course leads him from a youthful marriage to a live-in girlfriend to his first gay bar. And then to Brian Forsyth, a Scottish-born pediatrician at Yale. Storandt's clean prose and eye for fine Homeric detail make for an exciting yarn about an unusual life. You won't have to be gay or nautical to enjoy it.

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