

Brightwork

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 4

NEWSLETTER OF THE FINGER LAKES CHAPTER, ANTIQUE AND CLASSIC BOAT SOCIETY

DECEMBER 1997

ANNUAL MEETING & SILENT AUCTION

THE CHAPTER'S ANNUAL DINNER MEETING AND SILENT AUCTION will take place at The Sherwood Inn in Skaneateles on Saturday evening, January 24, 1998. A cash bar will be available from 5:30 to 7:00 PM with an accompanying table of appetizers. Dinner, tailored after the outstanding fare provided by The Inn on Saturday night of this last summer's Boat Show weekend, will begin at 7:00 PM with a three-entree buffet (stuffed breast of chicken, pasta Primavera and carved top round of beef).

The Silent Auction will run continuously during the cocktail hour and dinner, and results will be announced after dinner. In preparation for the auction be sure to look around the shop/boathouse/garage/cellar/etc. for items of a nautical nature and plan to bring them with you to the auction.

Chapter business to be conducted will include general announcements, FLC plans/calendar for 1998 and adoption of a slate of officers for 1998 and 1999.

Wrapping up the evening will be the drawing for the winner of the raffle for the original art work of 1997's Boat Show poster, or \$2,000. cash. As of mid-November some \$1500

worth of ticket stubs had been turned in with many still outstanding. Unsold ticket holders are urged to exercise their best sales-manship and make this fundraiser a real success. All ticket stubs (with checks or cash) and unsold tickets must be turned in to **Arnie Rubenstein** by Jan. 10th.

Dinner cost is \$25./person (tax & gratuities included) and reservations are required. Please call **Shirley Marsden** as soon as possible at 315-253-7505 (eves) or 315-252-9506 (days), but not later than Monday, January 19th, with your reservations. Checks, made payable to the Finger Lakes Chapter, ACBS, can be sent beforehand to Shirley at 67¹/₂ E. Genesee St., Auburn, NY 13021.

Chapter's Annual Winter Workshop

SUTHERLAND BOAT & COACH, HAMMONDSPORT, NY, WILL ONCE again be the site of the Chapter's Annual Winter Workshop to be held on Saturday, February 28, 1998 from 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM. Host, **Dan Sutherland** will demonstrate some refinishing techniques and show how to handle spring touch-ups. Traditionally, this is a well-attended workshop with several members of Wine Country, the Niagara Frontier Chapter and the Finger Lakes Chapter attending.

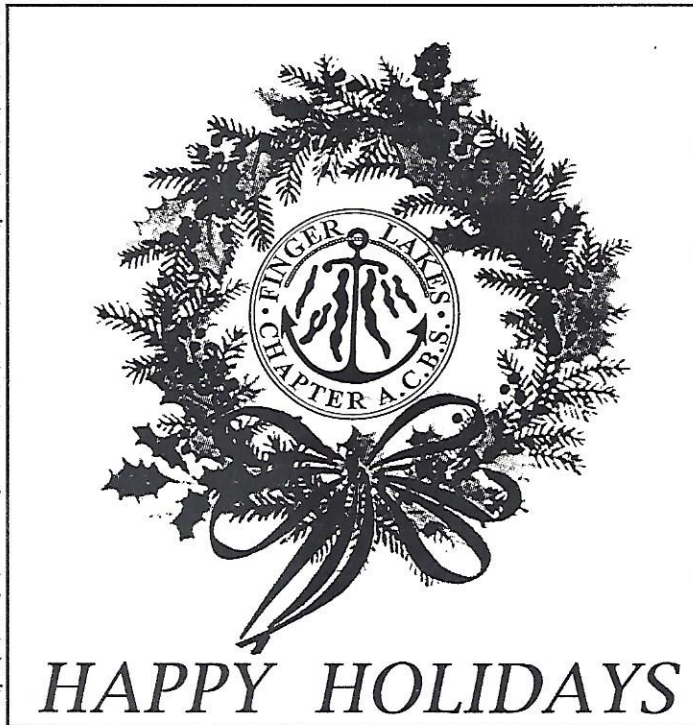
Activities will get underway at 9:30 AM with coffee and donuts. Lunch with coffee and soft drinks will also be provided. Cost will be \$5./person at the door with the Chapter picking up the tab for costs not covered by attendees.

Reservations or prior notification of your intent to participate are not required. Just show up anytime during the course of the day, plan to ask some good questions, learn a couple of new ideas, and enjoy an informative and worthwhile day with fellow wooden boaters.

Thanks, Dan, for giving up your Saturday to host this event and to **Bill Root** for making the arrangements.

Directions to Sutherland Boat & Coach: The address for SB&C is 416¹/₂ West Lake Rd, Hammondsport, NY. However, Dan's shop is actually a bit off West Lake Road. When heading south on Route 54A (West Lake Road) on the west side of Keuka Lake, SB&C is located on the first road to the right after the "Town of Urbana" sign. The sign is located on the right side of the road about two-thirds of the way down the length of the lake and is not particularly large. The shop is a large white metal building high on the hill to your left as you start up the hill after the right-hand turn. If you get lost, the shop phone is 607-868-3993.

Hope to see you there!



Central New York Winter Boat Show

IN A COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENT AMONG the Antique Boat Museum, the Finger Lakes Chapter and the organizers of the Central New York Winter Boat Show, wooden boats from the Museum will be put on display at the New York State Fair Grounds during the CNY Show from Wed., Feb. 18 to Sun., Feb. 22, 1998. It is hoped that the wooden boats will become a drawing card for the show and that eventually their annual presence may be recognized by the organizers as a requirement for an even more successful event.

A booth will be staffed by FLC members and will be the site for attracting new ACBS, Chapter and ABM members, for selling Ship's Store items and for answering visitors' questions about wooden boats and the antique boat organizations. Volunteers will also be needed to help set-up and tear-down the booth and wooden boat displays. It is not unusual for ACBS chapters to undertake a commitment like this and for some it has become a very lucrative proposition. If you can volunteer some time to be at the CNY Show, please give **Arnie Rubenstein** a call at 315-637-8522.

Joint Dinner Meeting With NFC & WCCB

THE THREE ACBS CHAPTERS LOCATED IN western/central New York – the Niagara Frontier Chapter, Wine Country Classic Boats and the Finger Lakes Chapter -- are planning to hold a joint dinner meeting with speaker on Saturday, March 28, 1998. Location is yet to be decided, but will probably be central to the three regions represented by the three organizations.

This is the first time that these three ACBS chapters will have formally put together a joint meeting, one which may become an annual event. So save the date and look for more information in the March '98 issue of **Brightwork!**

Planning for 1998 Boat Show Underway

Monthly meetings between the Skaneateles Chamber of Commerce and the Chapter were initiated in October to begin the planning process for the Chapter's 20th Annual Boat Show next July. Boat Show press releases with photographs have also been mailed to 59 national and regional publications. Local releases will begin in February 1998.

FLC Past Presidents' Council Formed

RECOGNIZING THAT THE PAST PRESIDENTS OF the Finger Lakes Chapter represent a unique and valuable resource to the Chapter, a Council has been formed made up of the six individuals who have previously served the Chapter as president and continue to be active members; namely, **Ford Knight, Syd Marsden, Bob Myllymaki, Jim Brennan, Susan Buehler** and **Dick Sherwood**.

The purpose of the Council will be to identify other Chapter members who should be recommended for future leadership positions in the Chapter. The Council will, in effect, act as a standing nominating committee for future officers of FLC.

1997 concludes the second of two years in office for the current slate of officers listed in the side bar on the opposite page. On January 24th at the Chapter's Annual Meeting, a new slate of officers will be presented for the years 1998 and 1999. If you would like to be considered for a future leadership position in the Chapter, please let Dick Sherwood (716-265-1518) know of your interest as soon as possible and that message will be conveyed to the Council.

Christmas Gift Ideas for the Antique Boater

Prints of FLC's 1997 Antique & Classic Boat Show Poster

Prints of the Chapter's 1997 Boat Show Poster are available at the following Skaneateles locations for \$10.00 each:

Skaneateles Area Chamber of Commerce Information Center, 11 Jordan St.

Pomodoro, 61 E. Genesee St.

1st National Gifts, 2 E. Genesee St.

Evergreen Gallery, 7 Jordan St. (framing available)

Village Artworks, 3 E. Genesee St. (framing available)

For purchase by mail, please add \$4.00 for shipping and handling, and send a check to:

The Skaneateles Area Chamber of Commerce, Box 199, Skaneateles, NY 13152

A limited number of prints signed by the artist, **Larry Van Alstyne**, are also still available for \$50.00 each.

Questions? Call **Susan Dove** at the Chamber Office, 315-685-0552.

FLC's Ship's Store Items

The Real Runabouts, Vol. 7..\$27.00 | Wooden boat Note Cards (20)..\$12.00

ACBS Photo Album (holds 100 photos)..\$10.00 | Historic Map Jig-saw Puzzle of the Finger Lakes..\$14.00

White & gray Tee Shirt with large FLC printed logo..\$14.00

White Golf Shirt with small embroidered FLC Logo..\$28.00

Real wood-grained Writing Pen engraved with "Finger Lakes Chapter, ACBS"..\$12.00

Questions? Call **Ron Svec**, evenings, at 607-657-2748

1998 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sat., Jan. 24	FLC Annual Meeting & Silent Auction, The Sherwood Inn, Skaneateles, NY	July 24-26	FLC's 20th Annual Antique & Classic Boat Show, Skaneateles, NY
Feb. 18-22	Central New York Boat Show, State Fairgrounds, Syracuse, NY	July 30-Aug. 2	Antique Boat Museum's 34th Annual Antique Boat Show, Clayton, NY
Sat., Feb. 28	FLC Winter Workshop, Sutherland Boat & Coach, Hammondsport, NY	August 7-9	Manotick Classic Boat Club, ACBS, 23rd Annual Antique Boat Show, Westport, ONT, Canada
Sat., May 16	FLC Workday at the Antique Boat Museum, Clayton, NY	Sat., Sept. 12	NFC's 21st Annual Antique Boat Show, Buffalo Launch Club, Buffalo, NY
Sat., Mar. 28	Joint Dinner Meeting: Niagara Frontier, Wine Country & Finger Lakes Chapters	Sept. 16-21	WCCB/FLC Annual Fall Outing to Lake Winnepesaukee, NH
Sat., June 13	FLC Shoreline Cruise	Sept. 17-20	ACBS Annual Membership Meeting hosted by the Southern California Chapter, San Diego, CA
July 18 & 19	Wine Country Classic Boat's 16th Annual Antique Boat Show & Regatta, Hammondsport, NY	Sat., Oct. TBD	FLC Fall Foliage Cruise
		Sat., Nov. TBD	WCCB Annual Workshop & Pig Roast

Letter From The President

AS EVERYONE KNOWS, WHEN WRITING A letter of thanks and naming names, there is always the possibility of overlooking someone who deserves special recognition. In my letter in the September issue of **Brightwork**, I did just that!

My apologies to **Bernie Clapp** who designed and labored long to build the 45 boat placard holders for the Chapter's Boat Show. They mount on the pier's railing where spectators can read information about the boats they are viewing in the water. Those holders are an excellent addition to the Chapter's Annual Boat Show and fill the bill to a tee. Many people commented about how effective and convenient they were. And, of course, they can be used year after year.

Thanks, Bernie, for making such a fine contribution to the Show. It is very much appreciated by Chapter members and spectators alike, and will be for many years to come.

Arnie Rubenstein
President, FLC, ACBS

Reminder

Completed ACBS and chapter registration renewal forms and membership dues for 1998 were due Dec. 1st. Did you send in yours?

New Chapter Members

THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS HAVE JOINED the Chapter since September 1st:

Bill & Jan Beall of Baldwinsville, NY
Dan & Karen Frost of Auburn, NY
Thomas Goodwin of East Rochester, NY
Jerry & Gloria Hart of Weedsport, NY
Mark & Kim Jones of Geneva, NY
David Kidd of Schenectady, NY
Robert Kidd of Baldwinsville, NY
Bob & Sharon Lawless, Jr. of Fairport, NY
Frank & Genia Marando of Rochester, NY
John McGreivey of Cato, NY
Fred & Nancy Schepper of Liverpool, NY
Matt & Cindy Sherrill of Ontario, NY
John & Karen Wayman of Rochester, NY
Dave & Deanna Yates of Skaneateles, NY

A big thanks and a warm welcome is extended to all the above. We hope you will become active in the life of the Chapter.

Finger Lakes Chapter membership is at an all-time high of 158. A revised Addendum to the 1997 FLC Membership Roster is enclosed for Chapter members.

FINGER LAKES CHAPTER, ACBS

President

Arnie Rubenstein (W) 315-637-8522
(S) 315-685-0353

First Vice President

Scott Buehler 315-834-6303

Second Vice President

John Laidlaw 315-252-0549

Treasurer

Shirley Marsden 315-253-7505

Secretary, Membership & Newsletter

Dick Sherwood 716-265-1518

1997 Boat Show Chairs

Susan Buehler 315-834-6303
John Laidlaw 315-252-1549

Ship's Store

Ron Svec 607-657-2748

Past Presidents

Dick Sherwood 1992-1995

Susan Buehler 1988-1991

George Zeth 1987

Jim Brennan 1984-1986

Bob Myllymaki 1982-1983

Syd Marsden 1979-1981

Ford Knight 1977-1979

Founders

Jim Brennan, Fred Curry, Jerry Feltus
Ford Knight, Syd Marsden, Richard Morehouse, Dick Wyckoff, George Zeth

Brightwork is the quarterly newsletter of the Finger Lakes Chapter of the Antique and Classic Boat Society, Inc. and is published for the benefit of Finger Lakes Chapter members. Publication dates are March 1st, June 1st, September 1st and December 1st. Questions, articles for publication, commercial and non commercial ads, letters to the editor, etc. should be addressed to **Brightwork** 1734 Lake Road, Webster, NY 14580. 716-265-1518

Some FLC Demographics

As 1997 winds to a close, a look at the primary address demographics of FLC memberships turns up the following:

Total number of FLC memberships	158
Number with ACBS affiliation	148 (94%)
Most common ZIP Code.....	Skaneateles, NY (16)
Second most common Zip Code..	Baldwinsville, NY (6)
Third most common Zip Code.....	Webster, NY (5)
Number of states/provinces with FLC members	12

Number of memberships by state/province:

New York.....	141 (89%)	Connecticut.....	1
Pennsylvania.....	4	Massachusetts.....	1
Florida.....	2	New Jersey.....	1
Ohio.....	2	Tennessee.....	1
Alaska.....	1	West Virginia.....	1
California.....	1	Ontario.....	2
Most distant address	Anchorage, AK		
Number with FLC as secondary chapter.....	36 (23%)		

1997 Boating Awards and Recognitions Won by FLC Members

Award / Recognition	Boat	Boat Name	Owned By
<u>Sodus Bay Yacht Club's 3rd Annual Antique Boat Show, Sodus Point, NY, June 14 & 15</u>			
DOCKMASTER'S AWARD	1934 16-ft Chris Craft Runabout	Misty	Roger & DeAnne Townsend
<u>Toronto Chapter's 18th Annual Summer Boat Show, Gravenhurst, ONT, July 12th</u>			
HISTORIC BOAT OF THE YEAR	1917 24-ft. Dowsett Power Skiff	Emerald	Blair & Tish Cook
<u>Sixth Annual Fulton Chain Rendezvous, Old Forge, NY, July 19th</u>			
EXHIBITOR'S CHOICE FOR BEST ANTIQUE BOAT & PEOPLE'S CHOICE	1934 16-ft Chris Craft Runabout	Misty	Roger & DeAnne Townsend
<u>Wine Country Classic Boats' 15th Annual Boat Show & Regatta, Hammondsport, NY, July 18-20</u>			
BEST PREWAR RUNABOUT & CENTURY AWARD	1939 17-ft. Century	Chandelle	Bill & Donna Flack
DOCKMASTER'S AWARD	1930 22-ft. Triple Cockpit Gar Wood	Imprest	Bill & Sandy Nedrow
PRESERVATION AWARD	1930 26-ft. Triple Cockpit Dart	Al Mo	Jim & Susan Hawver
BEST PREWAR CHRIS CRAFT UTILITY	1939 17-ft. Utility	Purr-r	Don & Eleanor Babcock
COMMODORE'S AWARD to Pam Gratzer for organizing the 1997 WCCB Boat Show			
INBOARD, CLASS 3 REGATTA WINNER	1992 22-ft. Gar Wood Speedster	Wood Too	Phil Rubenstein
<u>Finger Lakes Chapter's 19th Annual Antique & Classic Boat Show, Skaneateles, NY, July 25-27</u>			
BEST ROWING CRAFT	1903 17-ft. Parsons Guide Boat	Echo	Kathleen Cappon
BEST NON-POWERED REPLICA	1996 16-ft. Sailing Whitehall	Harmony	Roger Spofford
BEST POWERED REPLICA	1995 26-ft. Hacker Triple Cockpit	My La\$T Desire	Bill & Bayne Gregory
BEST ANTIQUE UTILITY	1940 18-ft. Chris Craft	Second Chance	Sprague & Marilyn Wheeler
BEST CLASSIC UTILITY (>18')	1954 18-ft. Morehouse	River Runner	Bob & Teddy Mullymaki
BEST CANADIAN- BUILT BOAT	1948 17-ft. Shepherd Utility	Wyllie Coyote	Ian & Debra Wyllie
CRAFTSMANSHIP AWARD	1952 16-ft. Century Resorter	Relationship	Terry & Cheryl Piper
PETER WILES, SR. AWARD	1941 22-ft. Chris Craft Sportsman	Dickster	Scott & Susan Buehler
STEVE GIOVANNETTI AWARD	1934 22-ft. Gar Wood Triple Cockpit	Miss Lucia	Steve Shehadi & Lucia Eckles
<u>Antique Boat Museum's 33rd Annual Boat Show, Clayton, NY, August 1-3</u>			
ANTIQUÉ BOAT OF THE YEAR	1931 17-ft. Chris Craft Runabout	Betty Ann	Peter & Ann Patch
SMALL CRAFT BOAT OF THE YEAR & BEST SAILING CRAFT	ca 1911 21-ft. sailboat (builder unknown)	Sapphire	Tish & Blair Cook
BEST HACKER CRAFT	1936 17-ft. Split Cockpit Hacker	Our Toy	Kathy Schombert & Erwin Laitenberger
<u>Manotick Classic Boat Club's 22nd Annual Antique Boat Show, Ottawa, ONT, August 8-10</u>			
BEST REPRODUCTION	1995 26-ft. Hacker Triple Cockpit	My La\$T Desire	Bill & Bayne Gregory
<u>Adirondack Chapter's 24th Annual Lake George Rendezvous, Lake George, NY, August 22-24</u>			
BEST REPRODUCTION	1992 22-ft. Gar Wood Speedster	Wood Too	Arnie Rubenstein

Letters to the Editor

September 25, 1997

Dear Dick,

Just a note to say thank you for the great article you wrote for Brightwork. Winning at Clayton was such an honor and then the publicity that followed was a big surprise.

We both were amazed at how basically the same information was told in different styles, tone and emphasis. We particularly liked how you communicated the history and background of Betty Anne.

Again, thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,
Peter & Ann Patch

October 2, 1997

Hi Dick,

I would like to take a minute to thank you and Arnie Rubenstein for seeing that I received the March 1997 issue of Brightwork. Thank you.

What a great job on the September issue of Brightwork. My hat is off to all of you.

Good fortune,
Donn Booth

Brightwork Wins 1997 ACBS Award

When the newsletter awards were given out at the ACBS Annual Membership Meeting in Baltimore, **Brightwork** won the runner-up position for 1997 -- a repeat of its award won in 1996. The competition is held in an effort to encourage improvements and stimulate the quality of chapter newsletters throughout ACBS. About twenty newsletters were evaluated for consideration this year.

Other 1997 winners were:

Cutwater, newsletter of the Southern New England Chapter, for Best Feature Article.

The BoatHouse, newsletter of the Bob Speltz/Land-O-Lakes Chapter, for Most Improved Newsletter.

Waterline, newsletter of the Michigan Water Wonderland Chapter, for Best Newsletter.

Open Letter to the Chapter

August 23, 1997

Dear Friends at Finger Lakes, ACBS, I was so surprised to receive a beautiful vase of fresh flowers so soon after my recent surgery. So great of you to think of me. The flowers brightened my day for sure.

Actually, Connie and I are snug as a bug in a rug out here in Sue & Jedd Dove's camp on the lake -- awaiting later in the fall when we can get on down to Key West and into our "new" abode.

We enjoyed the Boat Show and working with all of you. And playing, too!

In retrospect, I wish I had begun my boat show affiliation sooner, but suffice it to say, a return to Skaneateles at the end of July would be great!

Best wishes to all and to the Chapter in general. You certainly have a dynamite show going and I'm sure you'll want to continue the tradition.

Thank you again for your kindness.

Fondly,
Jan Logan

Speedboat Scrapbooks Available

Speedboat Scrapbook, 1900-20

\$40.

Speedboat Scrapbook, 1920-50

\$45.

Indexes include:

Major Race Boat Races, Boats by Name, Engines, Designers, Builders, Drivers and Owners
William T. Campbell, Jr.
641 Park Road
Downington, PA 19335

Internet Addresses

FLC Website

<http://www.berkshiretv.com>

ACBS Website

<http://www.acbs.org>

Improved ACBS HO e-Mail Address

hqs@acbs.org

The Mariner's Museum

<http://www.chris-crafts.org>

Mystic Seaport Museum

<http://www.mystic.org>

Editor's Column

Thanks for the many comments about the September '97 issue of **Brightwork**. Unfortunately, use of color will probably have to be limited, reserved for use in the fall issue that covers the summer Boat Show. However, it is clear that glossy white paper does provide increased quality especially in the reproduction of photos. Stapling is also an attempt to up the quality a bit. Hence, the changes you see with this issue.

As part of an article on Early Boats and Boat Building on Skaneateles Lake, the March '97 newsletter included a five-paragraph thumb-nail sketch on the history of Bowdish boats. However, somewhere along the way I acquired an extended write-up on Bowdish compiled by **John McGreivey**. It's a very well-written historical essay that reflects John's background as a teacher. In October, I stopped to see John at his canoe restoration shop in Victory, NY. We talked about Bowdish, the loss of much of John's historical boating information through a fire a few years ago, and the Chapter's desire to increase the presence of small craft at the Annual Boat Show. It turns out that John used to be an FLC member. He renewed his membership and gave a green light to use his article which begins on page 7 of this issue. Many thanks, John, for the use of your article and your Chapter membership.

Thanks also go to **Frank Ralls** for the use of his photos accompanying the article on the Chapter's Fall Foliage Cruise. The shots of the **Sherrill's Acapella** and **Piper's Relationship** at speed are particularly striking.

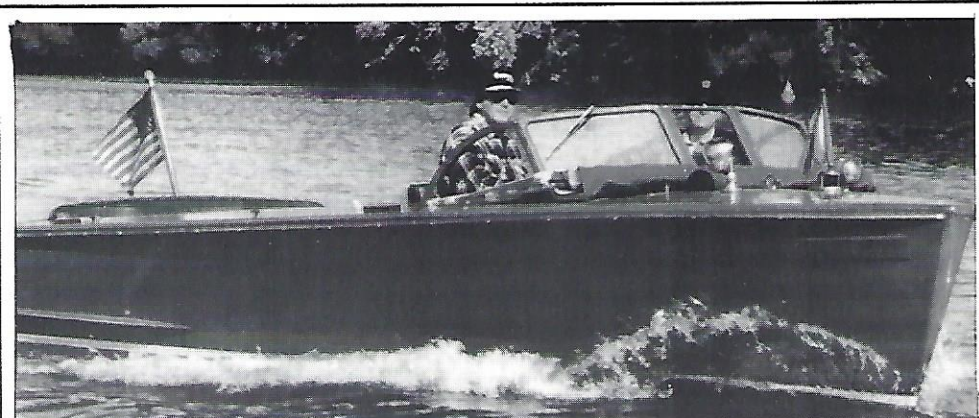
This issue concludes **Morley Smith's** excellent article on finding his mystery boat. The tantalizing line near the end of his story where he mentions a phone call about another boat, sounds like the beginning of another story for a future issue! Thanks, Morley, for your article. Happy Holidays to everyone and hope to see you at the Annual Meeting in January. - Dick

FLC's 1997 Fall Foliage Cruise

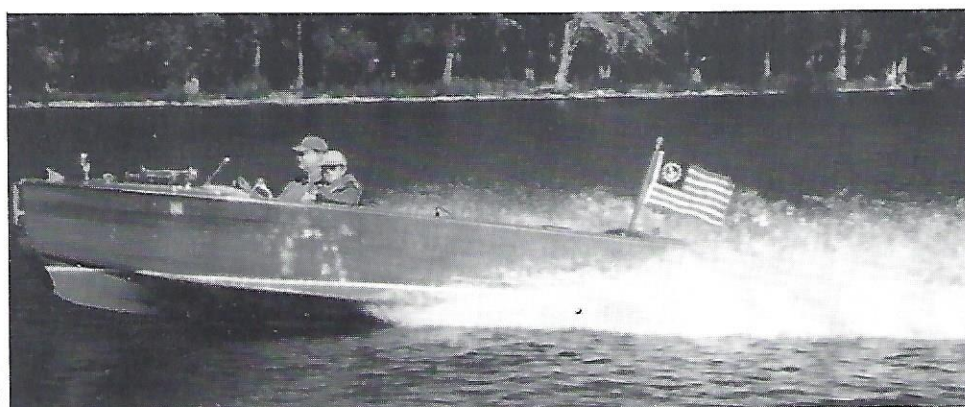
IN 1995 AND 1996, THE CHAPTER'S FALL Foliage Cruise was canceled due to bad weather. But not in 1997!

September 27th was a spectacular day with bright sunshine and just a hint of autumn in the air. Although fall leaves were only beginning to show some color, that didn't detract from the good time had by 29 FLC members and their guests who launched eight boats for a wonderfully relaxing ten mile run down the Seneca River and back.

Launching occurred at Midway Ma-



ALLAN BREESE AND FRIEND IN ALLAN'S 1952 22-FT. HUTCHINSON UTILITY



TERRY & CHERYL PIPER IN THEIR 1952 16-FT. CENTURY RESORTER, RELATIONSHIP

rina north of Weedsport and the flotilla headed east through the southern end of Cross Lake toward Baldwinsville. The eastern end of the run was **Walter & Kay Szczypien's** home a few miles west of Baldwinsville on the river. After some liquid refreshments and a little relaxation in the sun that seemed to magically increase everyone's appetite, Walt served up hot dogs and hamburgers done to perfection and Kay laid out all the trimmings.



MATT SHERRILL & FAMILY IN ACAPELLA, THEIR 1956 19-FT. CHRIS CRAFT CAPRI



ROGER TOWNSEND, ROB KIDD & JOHN LAIDLAW IN ROGER'S 1934 16-FT. CHRIS

After the picnic, it was back into the boats for the return trip to the marina interrupted this time by a quick run at full throttle up the length of Cross Lake and back. Boats returned to the marina by mid-afternoon with plenty of time to pull out and travel home.

The day's outing was a great way to wind up the Chapter's last official function of the year. And no one complained about the cost -- the Chapter picked up all expenses for launching and the picnic.

Many thanks to **Allan Breese** for organizing this event and picking an outstanding day for it. Thanks also to the Szczypien's for hosting the picnic and to everyone else who helped make it possible.

FOUR OF THE EIGHT BOATS THAT MADE THE FALL TRIP DOWN THE SENECA RIVER AND CROSS LAKE.

PHOTOS BY FRANK RALLS

BOWDISH & SON

PART I

by JOHN MCGREIVEY

TODAY ONLY SMALL-BOAT ANTIQUARIANS recognize the names Nelson and Edward Bowdish, and only a handful of these have actually seen a boat or canoe bearing the Bowdish nameplate. Prior to the advent of the wood-and-canvas canoe, however, these Skaneateles, New York builders were renowned as builders of some of the most admired craft of their day. For a time, they eclipsed even the redoubtable Rushton, their great competitor to the north. If time has dealt less kindly with the Bowdishes than with Rushton, it is not because they were not his equals as craftsmen. Instead, their current obscurity stems partly from the ambitions and interests of the Bowdishes themselves, partly from the economics of the 1890s, and partly from the failure of Skaneateles residents to recognize the Bowdishes' importance in the history of small boats.

This last has resulted in gaping holes in the story of the Bowdishes and their operation.

Fortunately, however, local interest in the Bowdishes is growing, making it likely that the more obvious gaps will be filled in. In the meantime, it is possible to draw a tantalizing sketch of two remarkably talented men and of the canoes they built.

The chronology of Nelson Bowdish's movements before he arrived in Skaneateles in 1876, is obscure. Born in 1831 in a village near Cooperstown, the New Yorker appears to have resided for a time in nearby Richfield Springs. He probably had training as an artist, but the nature of the training is unknown. Before or immediately after the Civil War, in which he served as an officer with his local regiment, he began building organs. In the early 1870s, he appears to have spent some time in

Clayton, supporting himself as an artist, organ builder, and photographer. During his stay in Clayton, he was undoubtedly exposed to the area's considerable boat-building activity. Quite probably, he saw boat building as a satisfying way to combine his woodworking and artistic skills, and allied himself with a Clayton builder.

Where or how he picked up his knowledge of boat building is unclear, but one fact is indisputable: He arrived in Skaneateles fully equipped in tools and knowledge to

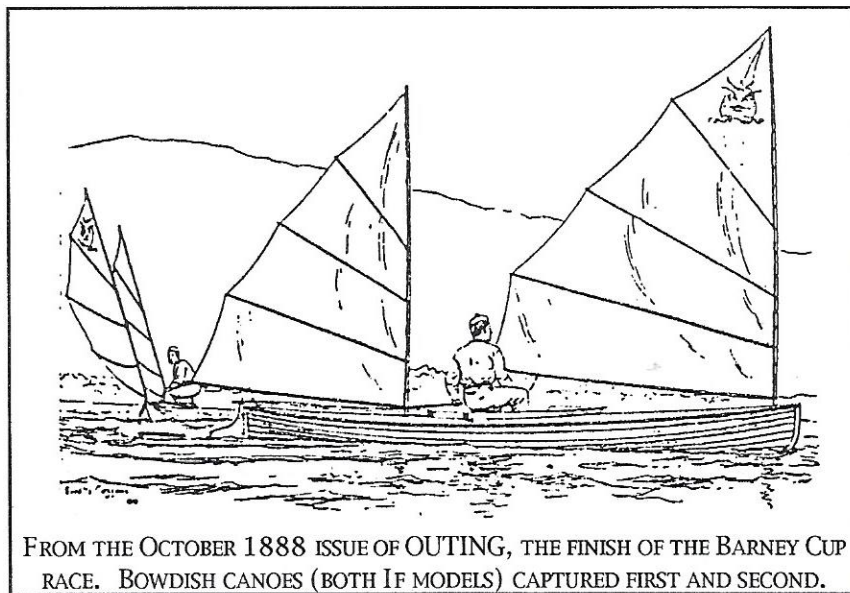
Edward, built under the name Bowdish and Son, beginning in 1876. But considering the large bodies of water in central New York, they probably concentrated in their early years on rowing and sailing craft similar to those Nelson had seen along the St. Lawrence. Whatever they were building, they evidently did a good job of it, for Bowdish and Son became Bowdish and Company in the early 1880s.

Building for the local market then, the Bowdishes probably saw little potential in making general-purpose cruising canoes. Large bodies of water --and the Finger Lakes are extremely large lakes -- have never been too attractive to paddlers. As the popularity of decked sailing canoes swelled, however, the Bowdishes could not have failed to perceive both the local and long-distance sales potential of these "miniature yachts."

By the late 1880s, the Bowdishes had developed sailing canoes so finely tuned that Paul Butler, the Massachu-

setts munitions manufacturer and innovator in canoe rigging, forsook his Rushton for a Bowdish "If" in the 1888 Barney Cup race, finishing second to another canoe of the same model sailed by Morton Brokaw. The following year, Ifs also won the Gardner Challenge Cup in the Western Canoe Association meet. "Jabberwock," another popular Bowdish model, won the Longworth Cup in the WCA's meet on Lake Erie in 1890. Although old periodicals devoted to canoeing frequently neglect to mention builders' names, it is safe to assert that Bowdish canoes dominated the racing world from 1888 until the demise of the fad in the second half of the 1890s.

(To be continued)



FROM THE OCTOBER 1888 ISSUE OF OUTING, THE FINISH OF THE BARNEY CUP RACE. BOWDISH CANOES (BOTH IF MODELS) CAPTURED FIRST AND SECOND.

begin building boats. In addition, he arrived with a fully developed business sense, for Skaneateles was an excellent spot for a shop. A dozen miles from the city of Syracuse, the village was located on one of New York's eastern Finger Lakes. This meant that Bowdish had a sizable potential market. It also meant he was centrally located in an area bounded on the north by the St. Lawrence River, on the east by the Hudson, and on the south by the Delaware. With the heart of the Adirondack region an hour or two away by rail, he was able to compete directly with builders in that area, including Rushton.

No catalogs or advertisements have surfaced to reveal what kind of boats Bowdish and his 20-year-old son,

The Other Kind of Boat Restoration

Part II

by MORLEY SMITH

I had the opportunity to take an old wooden race boat that was discovered under a collapsed shed. The shed had to be cut away in pieces with a chain saw. When the boat was fully exposed, its condition became more obvious. The boat was about 21 feet long. The overall height was only about 18 inches, and that was mostly at the bow. The deck wood was relatively intact, but was badly gouged and had caved in so that it rested on the keel in places. One side had collapsed completely in the crush so that most of the side planking was splintered and the side frames were broken. The aft portion of the bottom had sunk into the mud and some of it had rotted away. There was no engine and no hardware.

In spite of the collapsed condition of the boat, there seemed to be some unique lines to it. The sheer line appeared to drop off nicely aft. This made it rather unique and encouraged me to continue with the project. There was also the thrill of the detective work required to find out the history of this boat.

I was beginning to have doubts as to whether there was enough structure from which to make patterns. The hull was pulled from the mud and onto a flat-bed car-hauler trailer so that I could make it home and put it in the barn. Then the disassembly and detective work began. Each piece of planking was numbered as were the frame pieces. Screw hole locations indicated the frame spacing. As things developed, a second step was discovered about two feet forward of the transom. This could mean that the hull had a false transom.

The frame pieces were laid out on a flat surface in their approximate positions, and measurements were taken. Since I was working mostly with broken pieces, the measurements on the left side rarely matched those on the right side. Compromise dimensions were recorded. All of the frames have been measured. The next step will be to draw a set of

hull lines from these dimensions and then fair the lines to produce smooth surfaces.

Detective work during the disassembly has revealed some interesting facts which have led to speculation about the history of his boat.

The words "R.F. Special" are written on the back side of one of the deck beams. Was that to be the name of the boat or was "R.F." the builder? The numbers "19" and "22" also appear. Did this refer to the year it was built or to the length of the boat?

There is no evidence that the hull ever had a name or racing hull number painted on it. This led me to speculate at first that the hull might have been built and tested and found to be either slow or dangerous. The engine and hardware would then have been removed and put into a "new and improved" racing hull. If this were the case, why would anyone want to make a replica of it? I might as well end the project now.

Further investigating indicated that there had been quite an accumulation of old oil in the bilge. There were many signs of wear which seemed to indicate that the boat had seen considerable use. In addition there was the large opening in the forward deck. This opening had been cut into the deck after the original construction, as though someone had converted the boat into a gentleman's racer. More detailed inspection indicated that there had never been any seats in the forward compartment, although there were extensive floor boards.

All of this led me to envision this kind of history: The boat had been built for Gold Cup racing in 1922. Before the boat could be named or given a racing number, the racing committee put a ban on stepped hulls for future races in the Gold Cup class. The boat's racing career had ended before it had begun. My guess is that the opening was made in the front deck for loading liquor, and the boat became a 'Rum Runner.' The stepped hull would have made

her very fast even with a full load of the illegal. There were a number of places on the Finger Lakes which would take regular night time deliveries of merchandise which had been ferried across the St. Lawrence River.

There are several other factors which seem to substantiate a rum-running career. The exhaust pipes exit through the bottom of the hull just aft of the step. This would help deaden the engine noise and make it difficult to see the flames coming out of the exhaust pipes at night.

My "mystery boat" had a surface propeller aft of the second step. This would have thrown a great cloud of spray or "rooster tail" behind the boat. On a moon-lit night all that would be visible of this black boat would be this ghostly cloud running down the lake. During prohibition there had been a rum-runner that was known locally as "The Gray Ghost." Is this the same boat?

If there is any truth to this rum-running theory, then any type of documentation has long since been hidden or destroyed. This boat may forever remain a mystery.

The presence of the surface piercing propeller on a boat built in 1922 might seem to indicate that it was a Canadian-built boat. It was a Canadian, Albert Hickman, who first tested and promoted surface piercing propellers in about 1910. A Canadian origin might also explain why the boat had originally been built fully decked. Race boats of that period built in the US left the engine out in the open.

Now you know about "the other kind of boat restoration." These projects are time consuming more than anything else. All I have to show for my efforts to date, are pages and pages of notes and dimensions, but this is the very soul of a unique race boat. Now all I have to do is draw up the lines and start cutting wood. Unfortunately, before that took place, I

(Continued on page 9, column 1)

The Dock Market

FOR SALE: 1930 18-ft. Fay Bow runabout. Structural restoration completed 1995. 60 hp Chris Craft B rebuilt 1993. Runs great! New EZ Loader trailer. Beautiful boat! Doug Knapp, 607-869-9271 (Romulus, NY)

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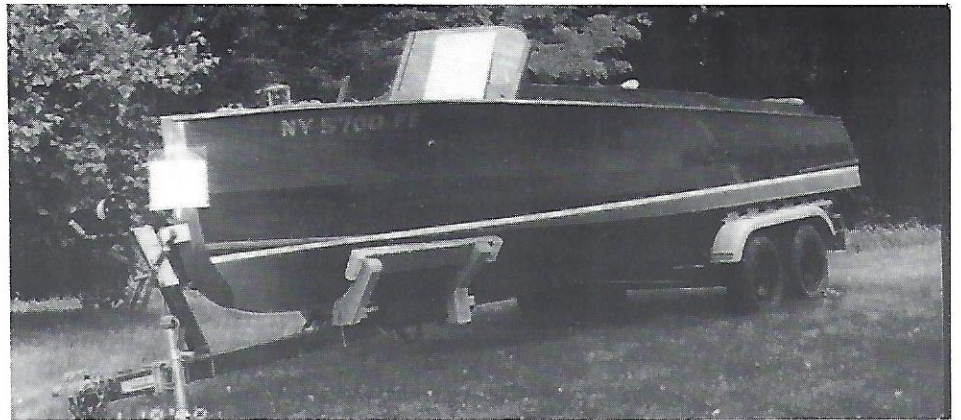
The Other Kind of Boat Restoration

(continued from page 8)

received another one of those phone calls from someone who knows someone else who knows the whereabouts of an old wooden boat. That's another story.

If anyone has any further information regarding the "Gray Ghost" or information which might help solve the "mystery" of this boat, I would appreciate hearing from you.

Morley Smith
 129 Sheldon Road
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FOR SALE: Rare 1927 20-ft. Gesswein Sportabout (hull #7) with original 6 cyl. Van Blerck engine. Twin cockpit with unusual facing rear seats. Brass hardware; leather upholstery. Boat & engine fully restored; both in excellent condition. Trailer included. Asking \$40,000. Make offer. Geno or Barbara Giovannetti, Box 84, Fair Haven, NY 13064; 315-947-5532 eves.

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WANTED: 16 to 18-ft. wooden outboard to restore for use as a family fishing boat. Dave Moskin, 1 Wampanoag Drive, Hadleigh, MA 01035, 413-253-9100 (days).

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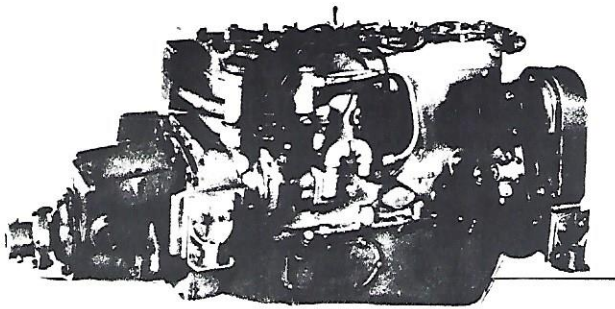
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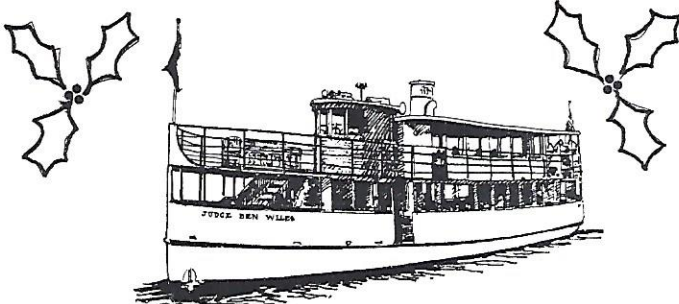
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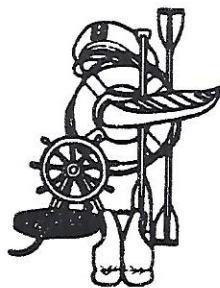
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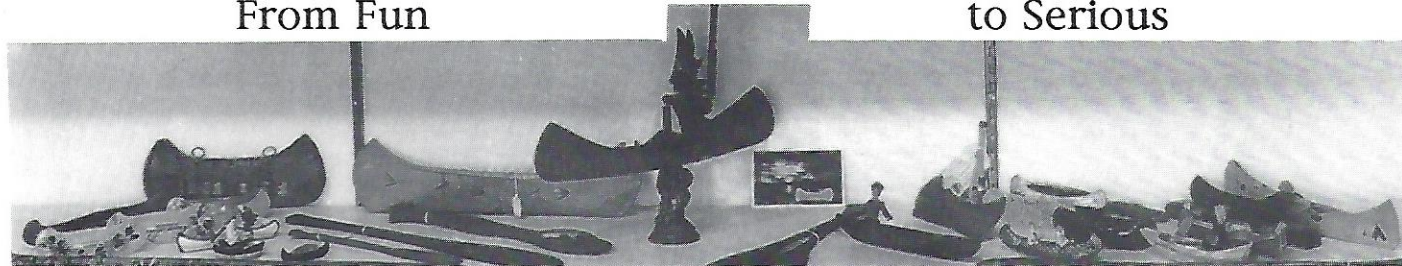
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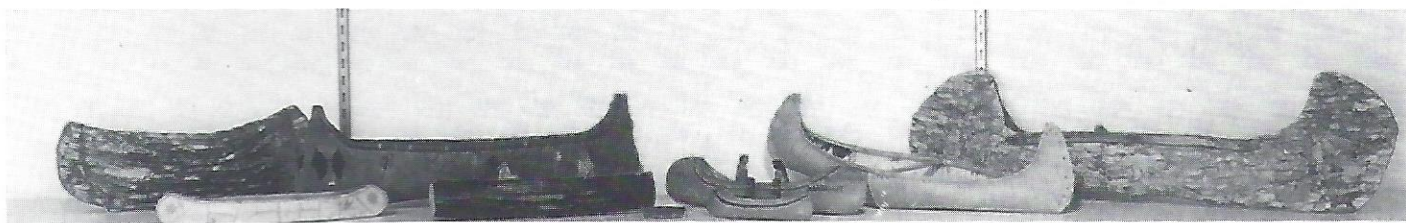


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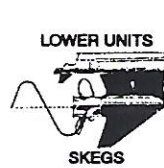
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