



Wooden Boat News

Volume 2, Issue No. 3, 2011

Look Aft and Learn

Before Fibreglass The Wooden Boats of NL

The new Provincial Exhibit of the Wooden Boat Museum sets out to chronicle the development of the traditional wooden working boats of Newfoundland and Labrador. Over several centuries the design and construction of our commercial craft have been influenced and moulded by the seasoned designs of European boatbuilders, new ideas from the eastern seaboard of the United States and Maritime Canada as well as the indigenous skin and bark boats of our First Nations' people.

Our exhibit seeks to interpret a tale of evolution. A story of gradual change and subtle adaptation punctuated by great leaps of faith and technical innovation. Characters in the story include the schooner rig, the first internal combustion engine coupled with the screw propeller, the cod trap, the outboard motor and refrigeration. All in context with a backdrop of socio-economic growth in Newfoundland.

Events of the 1980's conspired to end the age of the wooden boat. Fibreglass reinforced plastic became the construction material of choice and the Cod moratorium signaled the demise of the inshore fishery. A traditional way of life for many coastal communities lost its purpose - so too, the wooden boat.

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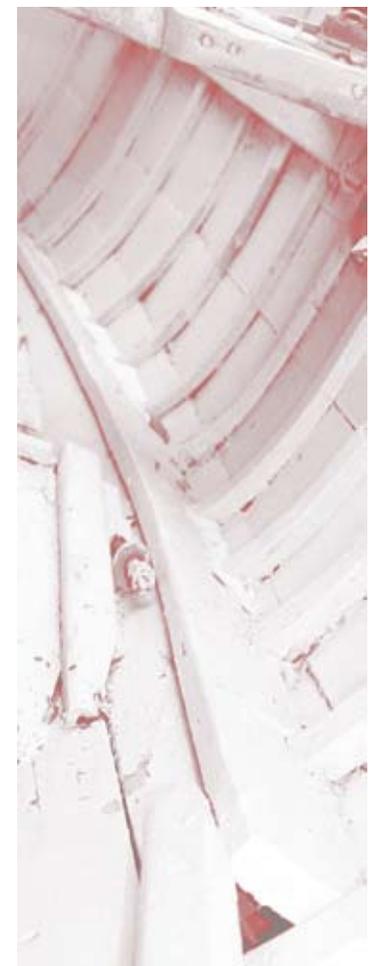
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Designed to Travel

Our broad brush historical picture of Newfoundland's wooden boats has two very different GOALS.

One is **TO TEACH** - to inform and intrigue our audience with historical insights and technical talk.

The other is **TO LEARN** - to provoke conversation and challenge the people of communities around the coast to share knowledge and memories of their particular wooden boat fishery of years past.



A four oared punt from Trinity Bay, make and break engine, boat models, fishing nets and boatbuilding tools, storyboards and display cases all packaged to go. The exhibit is to be accompanied by professional staff prepared to interview, listen and record the local maritime lore shared by people of each community. Alone or in partnership with local Museums and Heritage Societies, the exhibit will welcome visitors to learn from us and allow us to learn from them.





Wooden Boat
Museum
of Newfoundland
and Labrador

The Wooden Boat Museum of Newfoundland and Labrador archives, conserves, exhibits and transmits our wooden boat history and its contribution to the province's economy and way of life.

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Website:

www.woodenboatnl.com

Membership:

Individual membership is \$30 and includes unlimited free admission to the Wooden Boat Museum in Winterton for one year (and 10 per cent discount on guest admissions); 10 per cent discount at the museum store in Winterton; and free subscription to Wooden Boat News.

For information on other membership categories and benefits, contact Beverley King. Phone 709-583-2070 or email bkingheritage@gmail.com.

Newsletter:

Wooden Boat News is published four times a year. Members contribute most of the information and photos for this publication.

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WBMNL Half Hull Model, Three Piece Mould & Boat Research Program

By: Jennifer Gushue

The WBMNL carries out various research projects in its mission to safeguard and protect the history of Wooden Boats in this Province. One such project involves documentation of historically significant traditional boats. For many early boats the only remaining evidence of their design and use lies in the half models and three piece moulds used to build them and the stories behind them from a bygone era.

Our research involves identifying, photographing, and collecting history behind each artefact.

Boats of note are documented in more depth:

1. Half models have lines lifted and presented as drawings;
2. Noteworthy three piece moulds are replicated;
3. Historically significant boats are photographed, lines lifted, lines plan and construction drawings created and stories recorded.

To carry this out the WBMNL needs to be able to have the moulds and models in its possession. This can be achieved through owners donating, loaning or simply allowing the WBMNL to come view the model, mould or boat.

Our efforts have just begun and we have only scratched the surface.

Now documented are a gunning punt from Fogo Island, a Grand Bank dory, a motorboat from Black Island, a Gander River boat and lifted lines from a four oared Winterton punt, a cupids punt and a Jack boat in Arnold's Cove.

Our most recent project - to record the hull forms from half models and moulds - has just been launched.

It is only through documentation of these moulds and models that we can preserve and pass on the stories of boats which have long disappeared. The eventual outcome of this research is to not only preserve the history behind these early workboats but also to analyze, interpret and present the research & stories for public education.



If you or someone you know have a half model, three piece mould or significant wooden boat which you feel the Museum should know about please contact Howard at hwr.d.cooper@gmail.com or 709-583-2065.



Howard Cooper & Jerome Canning document a 117 year old punt originally built in Cupids, NL.

If it's not right, it don't go out the door.

By Jean Knowles

Gene Maloney is putting the finishing touches on a 15' rodney in his shed in Bay Bulls. It's the 54th wooden boat that Gene has completed; the first was built in 1954 — a 27-footer that sold for \$400, a tidy sum in those days.

In between there's been a string of vessels of various shapes and sizes: speedboats, skiffs, longliners, punts, and even the occasional miniature dory for the tourist trade, although the models are not numbered among the 54. The largest was a 36' longliner built for son Ken, one of Gene's five children. Gene's a man who's always on the lookout for the right bit of wood for a stem or a knee, and the rule that governs work in the shed is, "If it's not right, it don't go out the door."

“ The largest was a 36' longliner built for son Ken, one of Gene's five children. ”

Inside the shed, there's a roaring fire in the stove and a sleeping cat curled nearby; on the galvanized tin panel behind the stove is a series of weather observations: "February 15, 2011 SE Wind Rain Fog" Gene reaches up to a high shelf and brings down a model, painted in red and white, of the skiff Rosemary. Other models can be found on shelves and in the rafters, along with photos of the old stages in Bay Bulls, carried away by heavy ice in 1987, snapshots of boats built in Gene's old shed, the predecessor of this one, before it burned, and of course the tools of the trade. Those tools have come a long way since the days when he worked with an axe, a brace and bit, and a home-made bandsaw. The most important rule,



Gene planking his 15' Rodney.

though, in building boats and in everyday life, is, "Use your head — it's good for more than keeping your ears apart!"

Boats built by Gene's hand can be found from Flatrock to Cape Broyle, Woody Island and Red Island, and many are in regular use. In addition, a few have no doubt found their way to the Mainland, bought by tourists passing through who stopped to admire the array of barrel chairs, birdhouses, flower tubs and grub boxes offered for sale in the summer months and ended up making a bigger purchase.

When his next birthday rolls around, Gene Maloney will be 79 years old. By that time, though, you can be sure work will be well under way on boat number 55.

WMBNL Member begins construction of 18' motor boat



Kevin Piercey recently began construction on an 18' motor boat. The boat is being constructed using local timber (juniper) that Piercey has harvested and sawn himself. Coming from a boat building family in the Heart's Content area, Kevin has built approximately 25 boats with his father & brother. This boat will be a pleasure craft for his family.

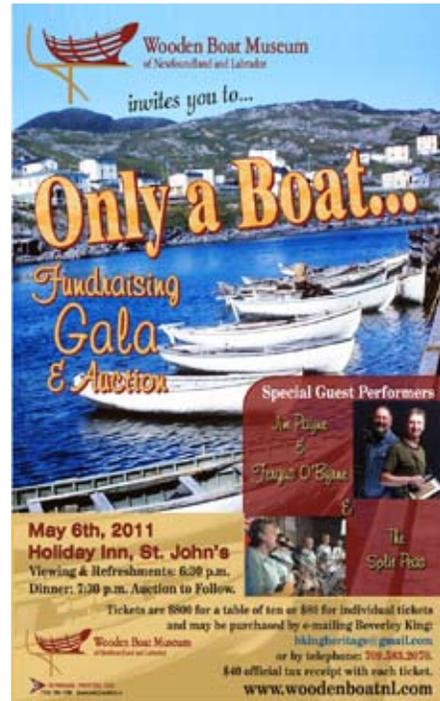
Out and About

“Only a Boat” Fundraising Gala and Auction

The Holiday Inn in St. John's has been booked for May 6th to hold our 1st Fundraising Gala and Auction! We are very excited and hope to make it an annual event. To make the event a success we need your help!

There is an important role for everyone! **Ticket Sales? Items for our Auction? Sponsorships?**

If you require any further information, or to arrange to purchase tickets, please contact Beverley at 709-583-2070 or email bkingheritage@gmail.com.



Corporate Sponsorship

The Museum will be encouraging Corporate Sponsorship of its Projects and Programs. Our traveling exhibit, boat restoration, documentation, workshops, communications and outreach initiatives will be presented to potential Sponsors. Please pass along any possibilities to Beverley King.

4th Annual Wooden Boat Conference

Our 4th Annual Wooden Boat Conference will be held in Trinity on September 23-25, 2011. If you have any suggestions for our agenda, please contact us.

Members



Memberships

Membership renewals are due April 1, 2011. Renewals can now be paid on our website www.woodenboatnl.com through PayPal. Renewal notices will be sent out to members in early March. Please take time to renew your membership!

Look Aft and Learn is our motto.

Seafarers commonly say “look aft” to mean look behind, to the rear and the wake of the vessel. As a wooden boat museum, we feel it is a fitting expression that shows our commitment to looking to our history and heritage as a means of learning for the future.



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