



# Wooden Boat News

Volume 4, Issue No. 1, 2013

Look Aft and Learn

## WBMNL Community Partnerships

The Wooden Boat Museum of Newfoundland & Labrador has embarked on a province-wide project to record and display the traditional boatbuilding skills and techniques that can be found throughout Newfoundland & Labrador. With the help of community partners, WBMNL researchers have taken on the task of preserving and exhibiting the design, construction, and use of wooden boats once active in our historic fishing industry.

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## Boats & Builders in Glovertown

In summer of 2012, the Wooden Boat Museum's folklore researcher Crystal Braye and naval architecture student Mitchell Cooper conducted field work investigating the wooden boat building traditions in the Glovertown area. As part of our Community Partnership Project, this work included recorded interviews with boat builders, video footage of punt construction, and several hundred photographs of wooden boats, builders and their tools. Lines were lifted and construction measurements were taken from numerous boats including a dory, speed boat, rodney and punt - all the information needed for boat builders and model makers to replicate these designs.



Mitchell Cooper talks with boat builder Tom Abbott

“We were able to meet seven boat builders and talk to them at length about growing up in the area, their experiences on and around boats, how they learned how to build, and their methods, techniques, and tools,” says Crystal.

One builder, Sam Feltham, was building a punt while our researchers were in town. A carpenter by trade, Sam learned his craft as boy on Deer Island, Bonavista Bay. He welcomed Crystal and Mitchell to watch as he worked on his boat, often laying down his tools to answer their questions or talk about the work he was doing.

“The boats & builders partnership project lead by the WBMNL not only reignited interest in preserving an important part of our local heritage but rekindled fond memories and stories of family and friends,” says David Saunders, Janes House Museum.



Sam Feltham sanding the hull of his punt before painting





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](http://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](mailto:bkingheritage@gmail.com).

#### Newsletter:

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

##### Chief Editor:

Chris Osmond

##### Inquiries and Mailing:

Beverley King, Secretary

The WBMNL is in the final stages of preparing material collected for presentation. In the coming weeks, Janes House Museum in Glovertown will have six new museum display panels capturing this work, and duplicate copies of all field notes, audio recordings, transcriptions and photographs will be added to their collection. Profiles on builders, their boats, tools & techniques, materials and more will also be available on the WBMNL website:

[www.woodenboatnl.com/boats-builders](http://www.woodenboatnl.com/boats-builders)



Glovertown display panels

## Become a Partner

The 2013 documentation team is currently seeking community partners in the western region of our province as we continue to expand our knowledge of wooden boat traditions in Newfoundland & Labrador. For more information about how to become involved contact **Crystal Braye** at [folklore.wbmn1@gmail.com](mailto:folklore.wbmn1@gmail.com) or (709) 699-9570.

## Boats in the Harbour

Over the last number of months we have continued work on our Boats in the Harbour initiative, with current emphasis on organizing integration of content such as pictures, video, as well as other data, into our new website.

There are also links from that site to others like the Memorial University Digital Archive Initiative (DAI) as well as the forum

<http://www.oldmarineengine.com/discuss/messages/5/258791.html>.

Make N' Break engines will be a major component within this topic and it is our hope to offer workshops on engine operation as well as repair and maintenance before the summer is over. Of course having wooden boats of all types in the harbours and coves of the Province, powered by everything from paddles and oars to sail and the Make N' Break engines, is what we all want to see, (and hear!). The next phase of our planning will deal with these items.

A number of Board Members and staff, as well as volunteer members Kevin Price and Charlie Donnelly have been involved in the initial organization and development. No doubt we will possibly need more help as we move forward.

So plan to get your wooden boats in the water this summer; let us know where and when it will be happening so we can post it on our site; hopefully others will be encouraged to join in. Send your pictures and video, as well as any technical information to [kprice56@gmail.com](mailto:kprice56@gmail.com).

## Who's Building?

Are you building a wooden boat? We've reserved this section in our newsletter for you! Send us your name, address, along with photos and details of your boat and we'll include it in this section.



– Ray Boone, Summerford  
Motorboat ready for painting

# Meet Cal Meadus of St. Jones Within

Calvert Meadus was born in Loreburn, Trinity Bay on December 23, 1927. As a boy Cal recalls watching Uncle Lige [Elija] Price and others as they built boats, using a three piece mould to shape every frame before assembling onto the keel. When Cal was fifteen, he used this three piece mould method to build his first boat. The day he had her out on the water for the first time, someone came along and wanted to purchase her.

“Harold and Francis were down by the wharf when a man came along asking about my boat. Harold came up to the shed where I was and told me I was wanted. But I was a shy boy and I didn’t want to go out, so Harold came back in again and said, ‘You better come out, the man already has your boat tied on.’ It was Mac Rogers, he had a schooner called The Cutler. So I went out but I didn’t say anything, I was too shy. By-and-by Mac asked, ‘When’s the man coming along for that boat?’ Francis said, ‘He’s here now.’ He looked over at me and said, ‘My son, did you build that boat?’ ‘I ‘spose,’ I answered. ‘Well sell her now, I want her.’



Cal Meadus talks to WBMNL folklorist Crystal Braye during a visit to St. Jones Within this past fall



19'6" motor boat built by Cal Meadus in 1989 and now owned by Kevin Price

I didn’t really want to sell her. She was my first boat. I knew that Uncle Lige was getting \$120 for his boats, so I told him that I wouldn’t let her go for less than \$75. ‘Good enough,’ was all he said, but by-and-by and took the money out and put it on the table. A little later I saw Uncle Lige coming in the road, and when I went out he asked, ‘Is Francis telling me lies? I heard you got \$75 for your boat.’ ‘That was no lie,’ I said. ‘My oh my,’ he said, ‘I built two and I only got \$120.’ It turned out that Uncle Lige was selling his boats \$120 for two!”

In 1942 Cal went to work building boats at the Clarendville Shipyard – the same year they built the shipyard itself.

“The first thing I built was the office,” he tells me. As his first hourly wage job, Cal was making 40 cents an hour with 75 cents a day going to pay his board. He worked at the shipyard for two or three years, playing a role in the construction of ten identical 500 tonne vessels known as the Splinter Fleet, operated by the Newfoundland Government.

Cal spent most of his life earning his income as a fisherman, building boats in the off-season. “It was like doing everything else,” says Cal about building a boat, “just put it together and go on. It was just handed down I suppose.”

While circumstances preventing Cal from harvesting timber have led him to retire from boat building, we know that at least one of his boats continues to be enjoyed by its owner.

Kevin Price of St. Jones Within, where Cal himself now resides, can often be found putt-putting around the harbor in his motor boat built by Cal twenty-four years ago.



Kevin Price with his 3 HP Acadia make-and-break engine putt-putting around St. Jones Within

# Out and About

## Glovertown host of 2013 Wooden Boat Conference!

Mark your calendars – the 6th Annual Wooden Boat Conference will take place in Glovertown on September 13th-14th, 2013. Plan to bring your boats to participate in our Boats in the Harbour event on Friday afternoon.

We invite members to suggest topics and speakers for Saturday's sessions – become involved in planning our agenda! Maybe we can even entice Clayton to make an appearance!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFcJV8g76YE>

Details of the conference will be available by early summer.

## Come Build a Boat with Us

Looking for a great introduction to traditional wooden boat construction? Join us at our upcoming summer Workshops!

One day workshops are offered each Saturday in July and August. Weeklong workshops will take place June 25-29th, July 24-27th and August 20-24th.

Register early to reserve your seat! For further information, or to register, please contact **Beverley** at **709-583-2070** or email: [bkingheritage@gmail.com](mailto:bkingheritage@gmail.com).

## “Only A Boat” Fundraising Gala is Fast Approaching

Our 2nd Only a Boat Fundraising Gala and Auction is now only 6 weeks away! The event will be hosted by Wayne Bartlett – one of the most experienced organizers in NL!

Auctions items are starting to complete quite an impressive list which includes; original artwork, VIP Tickets to Great Big Sea's concert at Toronto's Amphitheatre, vacation packages and even your favorite wool mitts. Fun raffles will be held throughout the night – the entertainment of these raffles themselves is worth being there.

There are many ways you can help us make this Gala a success:

1. Purchase tickets to attend the event
2. Donate items for our auction
3. Donate a dessert for our Dessert Raffle – If you're a baker or know someone who is, please let us know!
4. Volunteer your time – we need helping hands the night before and the day of the event

Purchase your tickets by contacting **Beverley King** at **709.583.2070** or [bkingheritage@gmail.com](mailto:bkingheritage@gmail.com), or on line at [www.woodenboatnl.com](http://www.woodenboatnl.com). We hope to see you there!

## Woodenboatnl.com

We have a new look – check out our new website! Our Boats and Builders section highlights the work of our Boat Documentation Team. This new section of our website is always growing, so check back for new information on boats and builders in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. If you know of a builder that you would like to see featured in this section, please contact our Folklorist, **Crystal Braye** at [folklore.wbmn@gmail.com](mailto:folklore.wbmn@gmail.com).

## 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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