



# Wooden Boat News

Volume 1, Issue No. 4, 2010

Look Aft and Learn

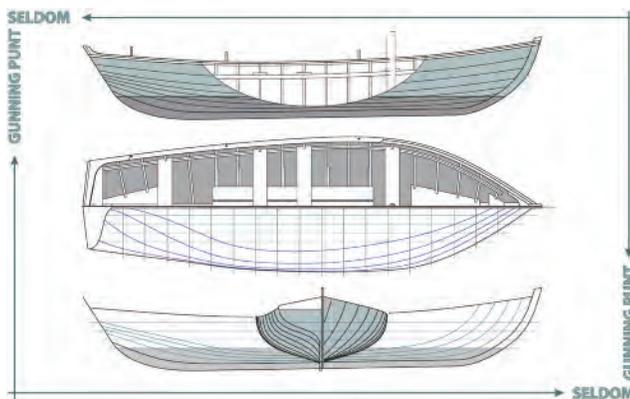
## Museum prepares to launch new traveling exhibit

At the wooden boat conference in October, participants emphasized the need for a museum presence across the province. In response, the museum is pleased to launch the first step in what will become a traveling exhibit for the Wooden Boat Museum of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The first phase of the exhibit, which features ten storyboard panels, will showcase certain elements of the province's wooden boat history and its traditional boatbuilding techniques.

Bruce Whitelaw, chair of the museum's board, explains: "We're very excited about this project. The first ten exhibit panels will tell the story of the importance of wooden boats to the province's First Nations and to our migratory and settler fisheries. They'll also introduce the many factors that have influenced boat designs in this province and the role of wooden boats in our culture and society."

The museum is seeking sponsors to partner on this project. If you or your business would like to demonstrate your commitment to celebrating and preserving our wooden boat heritage we'd like to hear from you.



After "lifting the lines" from a punt in Seldom, Bruce Whitelaw and Jerome Canning were able to generate a 3D drawing of the boat, which others can now use to replicate the design.

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## Preserving the past

By Karen Wells

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The Wooden Boat Museum of Newfoundland and Labrador is striving to collect and catalogue a history of wooden boats in this province. It's not just photos and information about the boatseither. Detailed measurements are being collected as well and turned into a final product that will enable boat builders/enthusiasts to actually go access the lines plan to build their own wooden boat that is entrenched with so much history and heritage.

Bruce Whitelaw, museum chair, and Jerome Canning, wooden boat builder, were in Lewisporte in late 2009 to measure a motorboat to be included in this project.

"What we are doing is lifting the lines," Mr. Whitelaw explained. "This means we are capturing the three-dimensional shape of that hull."

"We take a million measurements and I go off with those 'million measurements' and create a naval architect's drawing of the shape of that boat. We call that a lines plan. So if anyone ever wanted to replicate, duplicate or compare one boat to the other, that lines plan allows them to gain all kinds of information."

Mr. Whitelaw said a lot of the wooden boats that remain in existence in the province were built in a traditional way of just getting out there and building a boat from knowledge

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Wooden Boat  
Museum  
of Newfoundland  
and Labrador

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

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(Government of Newfoundland and Labrador)

#### Website:

[www.woodenboatnl.com](http://www.woodenboatnl.com)

#### Membership:

Individual membership is \$20 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 three times a year. Members contribute most of the information and photos for this publication.

##### Chief Editor:

Bruce Whitelaw, Chair/President

##### Inquiries and Mailing:

Beverley King, Secretary

## Preserving the past (continued)

passed down through generations of boatbuilders. In most cases there were no actual lines plans.

That's why it's so important to get this information on paper now.

Mr. Whitelaw said, "These boats get left on the beach to die or someone comes along and cuts it up for firewood. So all this past history and lore of the province kind of floats away. Some people see no reason to preserve it, but there are a lot of people who are interested, partly because they are romantic, but partly because these boats are so much a part of the heritage of every Newfoundlander."

He added that it is not only a way to preserve the heritage of these boats, but also to honour the people who created and worked from these boats.

"The boat is such a physical representation of all those skills and knowledge," Mr. Whitelaw said.

With all the measurements completed on the motorboat, Mr. Whitelaw will enter that data into a computer program that will create a three-dimensional rendering of the boat, which can then be used to create a traditional lines plan. Some basic construction drawings will also be created which will show the framing, planking, seating and other features for this particular boat. Included with the measurements will be a number of photographs that will give people a vision of what a particular portion of the boat looks like and to put the details in the plan into perspective.

As a boatbuilder himself, Mr. Canning and people with similar interests are especially interested in this project.

"We always have people looking for plans," he said. "This summer we had workshops at the Museum and nine-ten people came out every Saturday to learn the fundamentals of building a boat and everyone was looking for plans."

That information, when completed, will be shared through the Wooden Boat Museum with anyone who would like to access it. A pamphlet will be developed on each boat that is measured that will include the technical information, along with a history of the boat to include who made it, what it was used for, etc.

The hope is to eventually compile a wooden boat field guide of boats from across the province.

The Wooden Boat Museum welcomes anyone with a wooden boat they think would be of interest to be measured to contact them. They also encourage people who are interested in doing measurements themselves and contributing to the project to contact the Museum and they will try to arrange for people to be trained on how to carry out this process in their own neck of the woods.



Bruce Whitelaw (left) and Jerome Canning (right) speak with Harry Stride about the motorboat he owned in the 1970s. Photo courtesy of Barry Porter

# Jim Edwards' new skiff reminds us of our heritage.

By Diana Quinton

(www.storiesworthtelling.ca)

As Jim Edwards puts the finishing touches on his new 20-foot skiff, he thinks about his childhood in Change Islands, Notre Dame Bay.

“Change Islands was a nice little place to grow up in the 1960s and 1970s,” said Edwards. “Everybody knew each other. We didn't have to lock anything up. It's still a lot like that today.”

Like many communities in Newfoundland and Labrador, the main livelihood in Change Islands was fishing. Processing was done in the Change Islands Fish Plant. But the scale of the industry has become much smaller since the cod moratorium in 1992.

“Before the moratorium, there were 100 fishermen and 600 people in Change Islands,” explained Edwards. “Today, there are 20 fishermen and 200 people in the community. I'm one of the 20 remaining fishermen.”

Despite the change to the fishing industry over the years, Edwards has never considered leaving Change Islands. He continues to fish from April to September with his brothers-in-law, Stuart Diamond and David Diamond. They own a 19-foot fiberglass speedboat, a 35-foot longliner and a 45-foot longliner.

“I'll stay here as long as I have something to do to make a living,” said Edwards determinedly.

During the winter months, Edwards is often in his shed building boats. He has built 10 punts, and built and repaired 10 speedboats. He has also built two longliners (36-foot and 42-foot) with Stuart Diamond and David Diamond.

“Years ago, the boats we built during the winter were used for fishing,” explained Edwards. “But now, I build boats for myself.”



Edwards first learned about building boats when he was 15 years old. His uncle, Francis Edwards, asked neighbour Bert White to help him repair his speedboat. Edwards watched the men work and was soon hooked. He tried his hand at building his own boats.

“The boats weren't perfect at first, but I kept trying new things to make them better,” said Edwards. “Boat building is still a learning experience for me.”

When designing his boats, Edwards makes a model using the

**“Years ago, the boats we built during the winter were used for fishing,” explained Edwards. “But now, I build boats for myself.”**

three-quarters scale. His uncle, Arthur Coward from Greenspond, showed him how to do this. Edwards cut his own timbers. He's always on the lookout for good spruce and juniper.

Edwards' new skiff is a smaller version of the 25- to 30-foot vessel traditionally used in the Newfoundland fisheries. “I'm making the skiff to show my young nephews who have never seen one before,” explained Edwards.

To power the skiff, Edwards purchased an old marine engine from a gentleman in Northern Arm. “It's a 4HP Acadia,” said Edwards. “This type of engine is hard to get these days, but fishermen were throwing them over the wharf a few years ago.”

Once Edwards completes his skiff, he will be building a 15-foot punt for the 2010 Fogo Island Punt Race. Edwards and David Diamond have participated in this race since its inception three years ago. Edwards was also part of Shorefast Foundation's documentary Cranky that highlighted participants from the punt race.

“It's a hard 10-miler,” Edwards laughed. “But so far, we've gotten one of each medal: bronze, silver and gold.” Edwards and Diamond placed second in 2007, first in 2008 and third in 2009.

Although he hasn't tried to win any medals for his boat building skills, Edwards gets satisfaction from knowing his work will be enjoyed by his nephews and others in his community. His work will live on for a good many years to come.

# Autoship donation helps preserve the past

In an effort to help the Wooden Boat Museum of Newfoundland and Labrador Inc. preserve 400 years of maritime heritage in Newfoundland and Labrador, Autoship Systems Corporation is pleased to donate a copy of our hull design and surface modeling software Autoship Pro.



## Out and about

### The Indeavour Experience

...Reach back in time - it's 1610 - and you are working side by side with John Guy, as he builds the "Indeavour", a 34-ft vessel, used on his historic voyage from Cupid's to Trinity Bay...

Experiential Learning Package - from June 15th to September 10th, 2010, comespend a day or two working alongside our Exhibit Builder, as he brings to life the skills & tools of the 17th century. Help erect the keel, stem, counter & main frames of this full sized exhibit. Leave your mark in history by etching your initials on the keel - then relive the thrill for years to come as you lift the lid of your unique cedar box filled with wood shavings taken from the experience.....

Relax over night at The Point B & B - Breakfast, box lunch and supper included

### 2010 Building Workshops

Gander River Boat Restoration - May 17th - 21st

Dory Building Workshop - October 4th - 8th

Stay at historic George House or Inn By the Bay - 4 nights - breakfast & supper included

For details call.... 709-583-2070 or 583-2044 or visit [www.woodenboatnl.com](http://www.woodenboatnl.com)

### Canadian Museums Conference

On May 13, 2010, The Wooden Boat Museum of Newfoundland and Labrador will be participating in an Educational Session "Transmission of ICH: Boatbuilding". This session will take place at the Sheraton in St. John's from 10:15 - 11:45 AM

## Members!



### Changes to membership renewals

To simplify our renewal process, all memberships will now be renewed on April 1st. Invoices have been mailed to all members, with membership fees pro-rated accordingly. To all museum members, thank you for your support. Your investment helps safeguard the legacy of our wooden boat building traditions.

### Boat building dictionary What's a...?

**Score Hole or Sculling Hole:** hole in the transom through which the (sculling) oar is worked in steering or propelling the craft.

**With:** A rope formed into a circle and used to hold an oar in the thole-pin

#### Is there a boat-building phrase unique to your area?

If so, we'd like to hear it! Help readers of Wooden Boat News to get to know some new boat-building terms from around the province. Call or email the museum with your suggestion for our next newsletter and we'll put your name in the hat for a WBMNL prize!

### 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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of Newfoundland and Labrador

P.O. Box 59, Winterton NL, A0B 3M0  
Phone (709) 583-2044  
[www.woodenboatnl.com](http://www.woodenboatnl.com)