

Niagara Frontier Antique & Classic Boats Newsletter

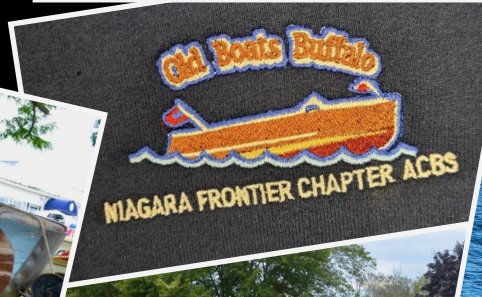
A Chapter of The Antique & Classic Boat Society, Inc.

ANTIQUÉ MAHOGANY

JANUARY 2026

www.OldBoatsBuffalo.org

LOOKING BACK



President's Message

I hope you enjoy our first newsletter edition of 2026. Special thanks to Sharon Dickinson and her daughter, Susan Dickinson, for compiling and publishing the articles and photos submitted by so many of you. Great job! Shortly, we will be emailing the proposed schedule of workshops, meetings and social events for this year. Planning is already underway for the 2026 boat show; date and details to be announced shortly. Check out the great photos of last year's show at www.oldboatsbuffalo.org.

Our restoration facility is full, with fifteen woodies currently being worked on in the shop. Our club project, the 1962 Duke "Lady Cameron", is in full swing. Stop down at the shop any Tuesday afternoon or Saturday morning to see what's happening – and/or lend a hand! We are at 90 Arthur St. in the Buffalo Maritime building.

The Club continues to evolve since its founding in the spring of 1978. Only two years to go until we celebrate our fiftieth anniversary! **Changing demographics (think youth), expanded recognition of "Classic" (think twenty five years), and personal preferences (think fiberglass), have, and will continue to influence the membership and future of the Club.** Today, the Club remains strong with over 120 members and growing.

The Board of Directors meets at 6:00pm on the second Thursday of every month at the Buffalo Maritime Center. All are welcome to attend. Please feel free to call me, or any of the board members listed below, with any ideas or events you might like to propose for 2026!

Hope to see everyone soon,
Rocky Nagel, NFACB President

Your 2026 NFACB Board of Directors:

President	Rocky Nagel	(716) 523-2143	cen70@aol.com
1st Vice-President	Sharon Dickinson	(716) 574-0435	sldned@aol.com
Secretary-Recording	Steve Rubach	(716) 574-1528	smrubach@gmail.com
Secretary-Corresponding	Elaine Rubach	(716) 604-5765	earubach@gmail.com
Treasurer	Jennifer Frederick-Kelly	(716) 698-0943	jennifer@frederickmachine.com
2026-2027 Director	Andy Chudy	(716) 481-3501	chudyandrew@hotmail.com
2026-2027 Director	Pat Murphy	(716) 861-8749	litetrix@gmail.com
2025-2026 Director	Tom Rusert	(716) 704-9644	terusert@yahoo.com
2025-2026 Director	Craig Perkins	(716) 866-3052	67redline41@gmail.com
Director-at-Large	Mike Schalberg	(716) 693-2835	mschalbrg@aol.com
Director-at-Large	Doug Benz	(716) 510-0244	dbenz@newbuffaloinsurance.com
Director-at-Large	Pete Lane	(716) 465-1730	oilfence@aol.com
Director-at-Large	Michele Potter	(585) 703-4887	mkenpot@gmail.com

The Board meets on the second Thursday of each month (except for December) at 6:00 p.m. in the Buffalo Maritime Center library, 90 Arthur Street, Buffalo.

All members are invited to attend and we welcome your input and involvement in our events.

NIAGARA FRONTIER & ANTIQUE CLASSIC BOATS, INC.

A Chapter of The Antique & Classic Boat Society, Inc.

The Niagara Frontier Antique and Classic Boats Club is a not-for-profit organization focused on the appreciation of and dedication to the restoration of Antique & Classic Boats, and is a Chapter of the Antique & Classic Boat Society, an international organization of wooden and classic boat lovers from around the world. The NFACB's membership hails mostly from the Western New York area including Buffalo, NY and its surrounding areas, as well as Southern Ontario, Canada.

We also produce one of the largest Antique and Classic Boat Shows in the United States and Canada each September.

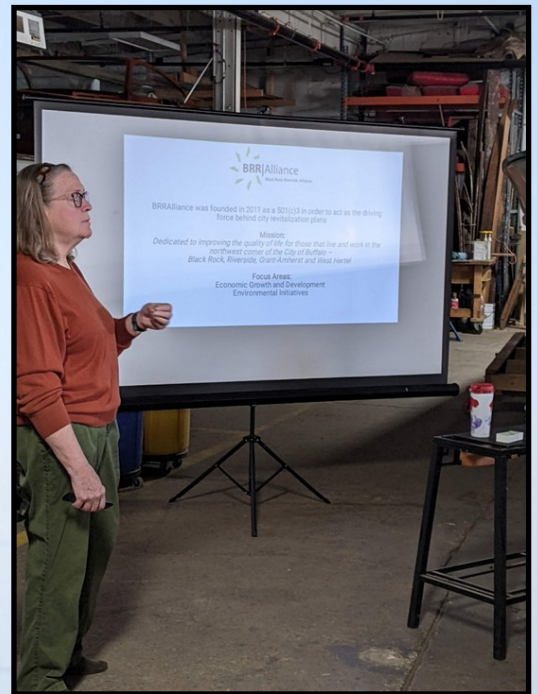
If you love Classic and Antique Wooden and Fiberglass Boats, Classic Hydroplanes, Jersey Skiffs and other Race Boats, WELCOME!

Events Recap

Old Boats Buffalo Fall Workshop - 11/09/2024

Our Fall 2024 Workshop started with a presentation by Anne McCooley with the Blackrock/Riverside Alliance. Her talk focused on the history, preservation, and improvements to these neighborhoods. Our chapter presented Anne with a check to help with their programs.

Next up was pulling the 95hp Buchanan engine from the Duke. Our usual crowd of attendees enjoyed a delicious lunch of pizza and wings to conclude the workshop.



Annual Meeting & Holiday Party - 12/07/24

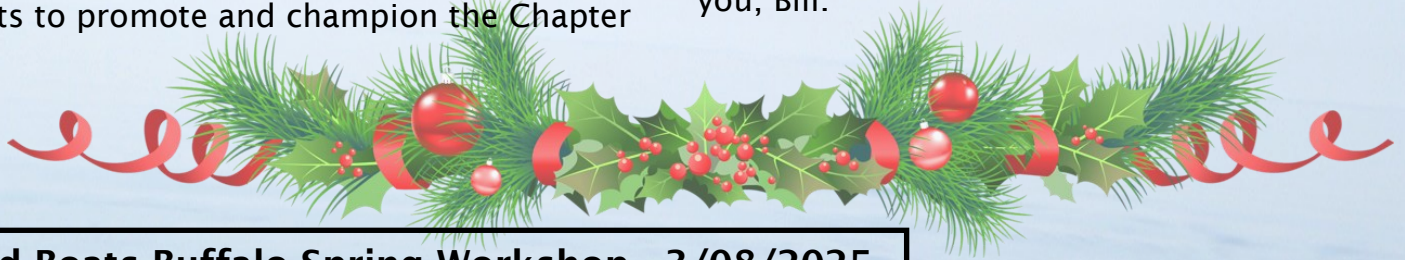
The Annual Meeting & Holiday Party for the Niagara Frontier Chapter of the Antique and Classic Boat Society, was held at Ellden's Grill & Banquet on Grand Island. Sharon Dickinson, President, called the Annual meeting to order at 1:20 p.m. She thanked all for coming and presented the slate of board members for 2025.

The NFACB Committee Award was presented to Pete Lane for the contributions he has made to the Chapter and the Buffalo Maritime Center. The Spirit of Antique Boating Award was presented to William Kistner for his efforts to promote and champion the Chapter



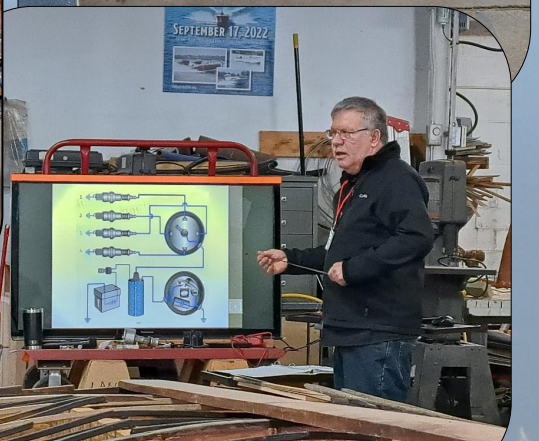
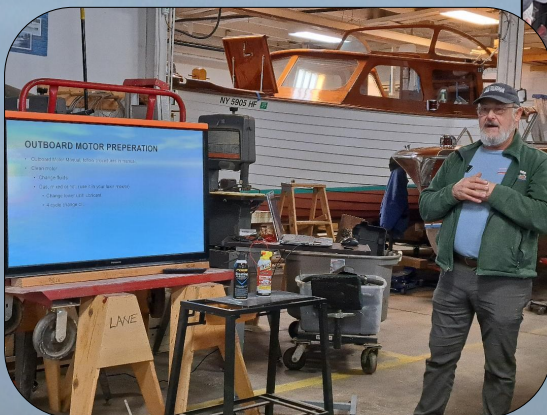
Pam and Craig Perkins's Chris Craft at the NFACB Boat Shop.

and antique boating, and the continuous new boats that he brings to all the shows. Thank you, Bill.



Old Boats Buffalo Spring Workshop - 3/08/2025

On Saturday, March 8th, several members of the Chapter gathered for our annual Spring Workshop at our boat workshop/headquarters located within the Buffalo Maritime Center. Coffee and donuts greeted 30 member attendees. At 9:00 a.m., members Tom Gruenauer, Tom Rusert and Steve Rubach discussed the ins and outs of tuning up vintage inboard engines and outboard motors (respectively), and members Rick Vantine and Ron Root discussed the progress on our Chapter's restoration of *Lady Cameron II*, the 1962, twenty foot Duke Playmate which was donated to the Chapter late last summer. After the presentations, attendees checked out member boats being restored in the workshop. The morning ended with pizza, wings and Elaine Rubach's homemade cookies.



*(clockwise from left)
Steve Rubach; Tom Rusert;
workshop attendees; Tom
Gruenauer*

Summer Picnic - 7/16/25

On one of the hottest days of the summer, Chapter members gathered at the Buffalo Launch Club's pavilion for the annual summer picnic. As always, the Chapter provided hot dogs, Bubba Burgers and drinks, and members contributed side dishes and desserts.



Bob and Karen DeGlopper from the Buffalo Launch Club flipped the burgers and rolled the hot dogs. Following dinner, Boat Show Chair Sharon Dickinson, unveiled the boat show poster.



Tuesday Night Summer Boat Rides

(Reflections by Michele Potter)

Tuesdays at the Niagara Frontier Antique & Classic Boats boat shop in the Buffalo Maritime Center is often a day that members work on their boats and later enjoy the weekly weenie roast. As the boating season begins, the boat restoration slows down and the focus is to enjoy the waterfront and the lovely, but too short, Buffalo summer.

This year I was lucky enough to join in on a number of Tuesday night boat rides which launch from Rich Marine around 5:30 p.m. The crew of participants varies each week as does the members who take on passengers and venture to one of the areas waterfront restaurants. Venues which I enjoyed on the Tuesday night cruise include Swiston's Beef & Keg, Dock Side, The Shores and Liberty Hound. One week Ed Bobowicz traveled to Swiston's via car and met us for dinner and another Tuesday Elaine Rubach drove to The Shores to meet up with the gang.



Fun was had by all. Maybe we'll see YOU for a Summer of 2026 Tuesday adventure?



(l) Andy Chudy & Elaine Rubach; (r) Pam & Craig Perkins

Summer Outing - 8/08/25 (by Steve Rubach)

What a beautiful day August 8th was for a fantastic open house at Gail and Ed Bobowicz's outstanding residence and shop/showroom. It was well attended, and the hosts and members provided a great luncheon. Ed has amassed quite a collection and awards and is a great asset to ours and other antique and classic boat club chapters. Ed is also the coordinator of the boat shows car component. We got to see a new hot rod that he has started; wow what detail! Thank you Ed and Gail for your hospitality and to all the Club members who attended. We hope you enjoyed the day.



Summer Outing cont.



Old Boats Buffalo Fall Workshop - 11/08/2025 (by Tom Rusert)

Chelsea Moore with the Buffalo Maritime Center gave a wonderful presentation of her experience on the *Seneca Chief's* voyage to New York City. She also informed our attendees about the BMC Hand-to-Hand student boat building program.

NFACB member and BMC mentor Larry Robinson followed with his talk about the program and how important it is to the students. They not only build canoes but build character and confidence in themselves.

We then split into three groups so our members could lend a hand laying on a coat of varnish on the student-built canoes. Everyone enjoyed the hands-on aspect of this activity. A delicious pizza, wing and salad lunch followed to cap off a well-attended workshop.



NFACB 46th Annual Boat Show - 9/06/2025 (by Rocky Nagel)

The 46th Annual Niagara Frontier Antique and Classic Boat Show kicked off on Saturday, September 6, 2025, again held at the Buffalo Launch Club. Our theme this year featured the 200th Anniversary of the opening of the Erie Canal. To celebrate, the seventy-three foot, forty-four-ton Erie Canal Boat, *Seneca Chief*, was on full display and toured by hundreds of spectators prior to its epic 31 day voyage from Buffalo to New York City, recreating the famous “Wedding Of The Waters”. A standing room only crowd enjoyed a fascinating presentation by Dr. John Montague, founder of the Buffalo Maritime Center, on the history of the Erie Canal and its significance to the development of Buffalo and the entire Midwestern United States.

After a somewhat drizzly opening ceremony and cannon salute, the skies cleared to the announcement, “Let the Show Begin”! In spite of the damp weather and overlapping International Show in Clayton, a total of 75 boats, 51 in water and 24 on land, greeted a constant flow of spectators. The Kid’s Camp, working model boats, Ship’s Store and Classic Car Show (with over 100 cars) rounded out a very enjoyable afternoon.

The Saturday night awards dinner featured a new twist. Instead of following the traditional ACBS judging standards, each Captain was asked to judge their favorite boat in each of six categories according to some very non-official judging criteria! Every boat had a chance to win, whether a “show boat” or a “user”. Judging by the applause, the concept was well received and certainly made for a very relaxed and enjoyable evening.

The traditional Sunday morning 27-mile cruise around Grand Island featured a great “up close” (or as some may have thought “too close”) view of the mist above Niagara Falls.

And then, that was it for another year!



46th Annual Boat Show Award Winners

The Captains attending the 46th Annual Boat Show selected their favorite boat in the following categories:

Runabout Pam & Craig Perkins
1947 27' Chris Craft - *Wait for Me*

Utility Niagara Frontier Antique & Classic Boats, Inc. -
Half Boat *One Half*

Cruiser Eileen Flaherty
1970 31' Chris Craft - *Avalon*

Outboard Boat & Motor
Elaine Rubach
1956 14' Elgin - *Tini*

Made on Niagara Frontier
Aurelia Chudy
1960 16' Cayuga

Non-Powered Boat
Buffalo Maritime Center
2020 - 2025 73' Custom Built Replica Erie Canal Boat - *Seneca Chief*



46th Annual Boat Show Special Award Winners

Boat Furthest Traveled - From Burlington, New Jersey
Jay Pew
1961 16' Moulded Products, Whirlwind - *Ray's 1st*

Oldest Boat Brad Rauch
1928 24' Chris Craft Model 3 Triple - *Hannah B*

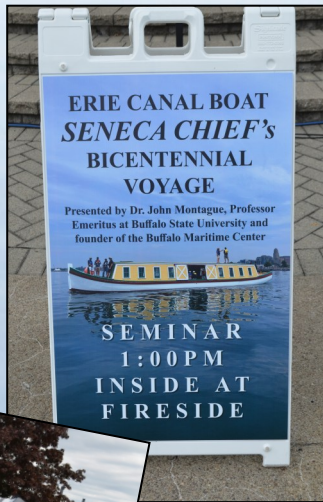
Buffalo Launch Club - Commodore's Award
Gail & Dickie Pisa
1957 19' Chris Craft Capri - *Classic II*

People's Choice Jay Pew
1961 16' Moulded Products, Whirlwind - *Ray's 1st*

Junior Judging - 1st Place
Bob Umhauer
1954 15' Schweizer - *Driftwood*



Congratulations to all our winners!









Junior Judging

(by Margie Marasco)

I have had the opportunity to coordinate panels of junior judges at our annual boat show for the past ten years. I am grateful for the captains who have generously and enthusiastically welcomed our junior judges aboard their boats. Each boat was evaluated on criteria that included boat safety, engines, aesthetics, boat class function, and chosen boat name. Among the many memorable junior judging experiences, a few stand out.

Learning the story of Canadian boat builder, Jeff Breen, and his beautiful custom built 2016 25' gentlemen's racer "*The Apprenticeship*" stands out. Judges peppered Jeff with questions in rapid fire:

- Did you really make this boat all yourself?
- How did you make all the metal?
- How did you know how to build a boat?
- What does apprenticeship mean?

Jeff shared the story of his apprenticeship with his Dad and mentor. He honed his boat building skills with the masterful creation of "*The Apprenticeship*". Amazing craftsmanship notwithstanding, the judges appreciated Jeff's opportunity to learn alongside his Dad and continue his family's wooden boat building tradition.

Another year, junior judges chose Joe Stallone's beautiful 1963 20' Chris Craft Caravelle, Utility, "*Rosie*" for detailed examination. They excitedly asked:

- Can you have some kids and a picnic on this boat?
- How 'bout waterskiing?
- How many kids and parents fit on here?

The lure of imagining the day spent on the water aboard "*Rosie*" picnicking, swimming, and waterskiing with family, wow! "*Rosie*" was award winning!

Sometimes, it is the modest, unadorned boat that merits judges consideration. Aptly, for this year's show featuring Boats Built on the Niagara Frontier, Bob Umhauer's locally built 1954 15' Outboard Schweizer Brothers Boat "*Driftwood*" captured our judges attention. Inquiring judges wanted to know:

- Did you fish off this boat when you were a little kid?
- Can you pull up to shore?

She was perfect in all judging categories: size and function of a little fishing boat, perfect name, but wow the horn was the clincher!



(above) Juniors judging Rosie
(far left) Juniors judging Driftwood
(left) The Apprenticeship

Boat Show 2025 Personal Reflections

(by Mike Schalberg)

Since the weather report Friday evening was less than favorable for Saturday's boat show, I was not surprised to hear the sound of rain drops the following morning, but disappointed never the less.

Driving to the Launch Club did little to improve my mood while the windshield wipers kept moving back and forth.

When I arrived, I was sarcastically mumbling Marv Levy's "Where would you rather be" quote when something happened as I was walking to the register booth. It was the music. Those old familiar songs suddenly made my mood change, and do a 180, and slowly,

so did the weather.

Not only that, but as I walked by one of the vendors, I found a part for the bow light of my 1956 Chris Craft that I had lost. I had been searching for that part for almost 40 years!

When I launched my boat, the river was so calm I couldn't resist taking a little ride, and thanks to the tune up that Tom Rusert did, the boat performed flawlessly, and I am eternally grateful for his help.

As I said before, the weather improved and the sun came out — as did all the people walking

around and admiring the boats, and also attending Phil Sullivan's demonstrations of the Sterling engine, which never cease to amaze me.

It was great to see the Junior Judges under the guidance of Margie Marasco. Their enthusiasm shows me that the future looks bright and I can't wait for our next show.

What a Day!!



Grand Tour Around Grand Island

(by Craig Perkins)



The morning after the show was glorious - cool, brisk and clear. With coffee and sweatshirts in hand, we headed out on the Niagara River for the closing event of the 2025 Boat Show: a twenty-seven mile cruise around Grand Island. Eight boats - two skiffs, two cruisers and four runabouts - joined in the fun. After a run down the East River, we rounded the north end and reconvened with the mist of the Niagara Falls in the background. What an exciting morning as we were cheered by other boats, obviously impressed with such beauty on the water!



Seneca Chief Canal Bon Voyage (by Tom Rusert)

(right) ACBS-OBB members Phil Sullivan, Tom Frauenheim, Rocky Nagel, Larry and Mike Robinson, Rick and Keith Vantine and Tom & Peggy Rusert provided escort to the Erie Canal Gateway Harbor in Tonawanda, NY, 9/24/2025.

(below) Tom & Peggy Rusert cruised to Medina, NY, to welcome the Seneca Chief, 9/25/2025.



Annual Meeting & Holiday Party - 12/06/2025

Over fifty club members and guests attended the **Annual Meeting and Holiday Party** held at the Pearl Street Grill and Brewery on Saturday, December 6, 2025. Following a wonderful buffet lunch, (the pot roast was terrific!) the Annual Meeting was called to order by President Nagel, followed by the election of officers and directors for 2026. (Election results are on page 2.)



Guest Speaker Chelsea Moore and several of the staff from the Buffalo Maritime Center gave a fascinating slide presentation of the five year project to build and eventually launch the canal boat, *Seneca Chief*, a replica of the 1825 Erie Canal boat used to transport then Governor Dewitt Clinton from Buffalo to New York City, celebrating the famous “wedding of the waters” from Lake Erie and the Atlantic Ocean and commemorating the 200th anniversary of the opening of the Erie Canal.

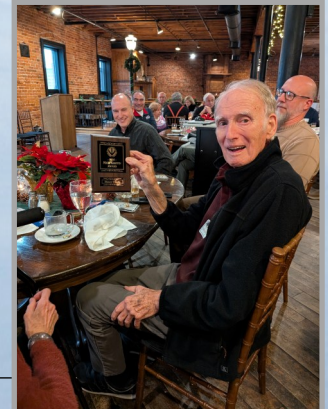
AWARD PRESENTATIONS

Sharon Dickinson presented the **46th Annual Boat Show’s Captain’s favorite Non-Powered Boat Award** to the Buffalo Maritime Center for its 2020 – 2025, 73’ Custom Built replica, the “Erie Canal Boat *Seneca Chief*”. Chelsea Moore, Education Director at the Buffalo Maritime Center accepted the award on behalf of the Center.

The Niagara Frontier Chapter Committee Award was presented to Steve Rubach for his ongoing dedication of time and effort to promote and assist the Niagara Frontier Chapter as well as his contributions to the Buffalo Maritime Center throughout the year.



The Mick Griffin Memorial Award was presented to Henry Chudy for his many years of promoting and participating in all of our club’s events. Always willing to help and offer advice, Henry has been a friend to so many of us over the years. Thank you, Henry, for being a great ambassador for our hobby!



The Spirit of Antique Boating Award was presented to Andy Chudy for his years of service to the Niagara Frontier Chapter and enthusiastic promotion of the club. The boat show, workshops, road trips, Board of Directors, boat shop - Andy is involved in pretty much everything. If you’ve got a few minutes, ask him how many Century boats he has, or has had!



The President’s Cup is provided each year to the ACBS chapters by ACBS Headquarters. The Cup is awarded to an individual or organization, as selected by the chapter president, who merits special recognition for their accomplishments relating to maritime events and history on the Niagara Frontier. President Rocky Nagel presented this year’s President’s Cup to Chelsea Moore, Education Director for the Buffalo Maritime Center, for her outstanding efforts to plan, organize, implement and communicate the historic Voyage of the Canal Boat *Seneca Chief* in celebration of the 200th anniversary of the opening of the Erie Canal. Thank you Chelsea!



Membership News

WELCOME ABOARD!

John Boczar
Christopher Gaul
Michele Potter
Gregory & Nicholas Sutton
Brian Trzeciak
Tom Weber
Gary White
Harris & Lisa Witkin

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

A friendly reminder: Please keep your membership renewals and contact information up to date with ACBS. Renewing your membership ensures that you will receive emails from the Chapter. We use the ACBS portal to send newsletters and emails regarding Chapter news and events. When your membership lapses your email is automatically removed from the portal.

CONGRATULATIONS to Chapter member, Tom Gruenauer who received the Best of Show Restored award for his 1928 24-foot Chris Craft Model #3, *Forever*, at the ACBS 2025 Vintage Boat Week & 50 Years Celebration held September 15-20, 2025, in Clayton, New York.

The Antique Mahogany newsletter is now being distributed digitally and will be available on our website OldBoatsBuffalo.org. A limited number of printed copies will be available if you are unable to download and view the newsletter online. Contact Sharon @ 716-574-0435 for your printed copy.



Around the Boat Shop (by Tom Rusert)

The NFACB boat shop at the Buffalo Maritime Center serves as the center of activities for our club including workshops, board meetings, event planning, etc. All members are encouraged to stop in at any time and get involved in our projects and club operations.

We are very fortunate to have a “clubhouse” to serve as the center of our antique and classic boating world.

This is the heartbeat of NFACB-OBB.



The “Duke” is just hanging around waiting for some more love from its restoration crew. Stop by and lend a hand Tuesdays and Saturdays.



The shop is in its winter state of fulness.



All shapes, sizes and various states of repair!

Looking back on the Chapter's first Boat Show!

The following article appeared in the Tonawanda NEWS on Monday, September 11, 1978.



59 Show up for 1st Antique Boat Show

By Chuck Clemons, News Correspondent

FROM THE WATERWAYS of Western New York they came. From out of the past they came. A grand total of 59 antique and classic boats rendezvoused at the Buffalo Launch Club on Grand Island Sunday for the first antique boat show ever presented in this area.

The oldies who participated are antique in name only. Just about every boat displayed is operational and in every-day-use throughout the season. A surprising number are still powered by their original engines.

CO-SPONSORS OF THE show were the Niagara Frontier chapter of the Antique and Classic Boat Society and the Buffalo Launch Club in celebration of the Launch Club's 75th anniversary. The first time out on a venture such as this could prove to be a bit hairy, but due to some very careful planning by both groups this was a first-annual which hit the water with a high polish.

All who attended clocked it in as a definite success and left with the feeling that the show next year would be even better. And there will be another show next year. The enthusiasm which walked the docks spoke loudly of making a Niagara River antique boat show an annual thing.

MOST BOATS HAD ASSEMBLED by noon and the boat-talk chatter from one to another was spoken with a nostalgic accent. Two teams of judges ranged the categories with a thoroughness born of long experience. Included were Joe Glaser, Kearn McGroder, Ed Smith and Bob Howard.

At mid-afternoon, the combined fleet headed out into the Niagara, circled downstream and headed back up past the Launch Club in an impressive parade formation. Each in turn was described to the shoreside spectators via public address speakers as the fleet moved past the club docks. This commentary was enriched by the expertise of Ray Nelson, editor of Antique Boating magazine and founder of the Antique and Classic Boat Society.

AWARDS WERE PRESENTED at a buffet supper meeting in the Launch Club dining room later for excellence in the various categories.

Plaques awarded were as follows:

- Best maintained pre-war cruiser – Paul Schmidt, 1937 Richardson, “Babe”
- Best maintained pre-war runabout – Albert Damiani, 1937 Gar Wood, “Terra-Nova:
- Best maintained post-war cruiser – Jonn Dubickas, 1954 Richardson, “Billow”
- Best maintained post-war runabout – Jack Barron, 1948 Chris Craft, “Queen B”
- Oldest boat at the show – James McCloskey, 1906 launch built by the Detroit Shipbuilding Co., “Jay-Den”
- Best varnish finish – Thomas and Joseph Frauenheim, 1910 Minett launch, “Rolo”
- Most unique boat – Albert Diminian, 1959 Chris Craft Silver Arrow (no name)
- Best paint finish – Ronald Sontag, 1942 Lyman Islander, “Louise”
- Best maintained engine compartment – William Plants, 1930 Dodge, “Daisy”
- Best Canadian entry – Fred DeBoer, 1947 Port Carling launch, “Anticipation”
- Best appointed post war cruiser – Herbert Kurchoff, 1951 Chris Craft Challenger, “Karen K”
- Best outboard – Michelle Holler, dinghy with 1957 Evinrude

ARNOLD NOGLE MEMORIAL AWARDS presented by the people of Jafco Marina went to Commodore Claude Shanton and the Buffalo Launch Club for co-sponsoring the show, Ray and Jean Nelson for their role in founding the Antique and Classic Boat Society and to John Dubickas for his continuing efforts in promoting an interest in antique boating.

Harold and Richard DeGlopper were co-recipients of the Chris Craft award for their 1936 and 1938 Chris Craft runabouts. The Richardson Boat Owners Association award for best Richardson at the show went to John Dubickas and his 1954 sedan cruiser “Billow”.

Tom Frauenheim and Jack Barron were co-chairmen of the show assisted by able committees from both ACBS and the Launch Club. Spectators who viewed the show numbered well over 500.

THE NIAGARA FRONTIER
 ANTIQUE & CLASSIC BOAT SOCIETY
 WOULD LIKE TO THANK ITS
 SPONSORS AND ADVERTISERS!

