

WELCOME HOME! Hague's Henry Family and Friends Celebrate the Return of Gingerly



A: At Gingerly's bow, Rev. Julie McPartlin, left, and Ginger Henry, right. B: John Beekley, Ginger Henry, Ed Henry, John Schubert, Fran Sisca, Jimmy Jordan. C: Ed Henry with Rob Singer.

By Anthony F. Hall

Blessed by Rev. Julie McPartlin, the former rector of Saint James Episcopal Church in Lake George and christened with an eponymous whiskey, a restored 1950s outboard race boat returned to home waters on June 11 after an absence of four decades.

Not coincidentally, the Rev. McPartlin is a relative of the late Jack Henry, the boat's original owner, as are those responsible for her return to Hague: John Beekley, who bought the boat from his cousin and had her restored; Ed Henry, who inherited the boat from his father; and Ginger Henry, after whom the boat – Gingerly – is named, who has kept her family's racing legacy alive through her writing.

As Ginger Henry explained in a feature story for the Lake George Mirror on May 26, Hague hosted hydroplane and outboard racing from 1954 to 1964, hosting sanctioned marathons and regattas that attracted generous purses, national sponsors and racers from all parts of the country.

Jack Henry, his brother Bob and Bill Morgan were among the organizers and participants.

Of the scores of people attending the June 11 homecoming, "perhaps six of us have had actually had a ride in Gingerly," said John Beekley, her new owner.

Among those was Ed Henry, who raced Gingerly on Loon Lake in 1969 and who, a decade or so later, trailered her to his home in Wyoming with every intention of restoring her.

Despite those good intentions, Gingerly hung from the rafters of his Wyoming barn for forty years, until his cousin John contacted him with an offer to purchase her.

"I thought about it for two seconds," said Ed Henry. "My fear was that if left here, after my death, it would end its days in a burn pile."

Both the boat and her original Mercury Mark 55H motor, designed specifically for racing, were badly in need of restoration.

John Schubert, an outboard racing legend and an all-but-retired boat restorer based in East Galesburg, Illinois, was persuaded to bring the motor back to working order and refurbish its bright finish.

Mountain Motors assumed the job of restoring the boat, a job unlike any other undertaken by the



Hague-based business.

"We learned a lot along the way," said owner Fran Sisca, who noted that most of the wood boats that come through the shop are Hackers and Chris Crafts.

According to Sisca, Jimmy Jordan was largely responsible for the restoration.

When she arrived in Hague a year ago, the boat "looked like what it was – a boat that had sat in a barn for forty years," said Jordan.

"Seeing the boat brought back to life makes my heart happy," said Ed Henry.



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