



Introducing the Jack Walker St. Lawrence Skiff...



The Friends of the Tay Watershed, a community organization dedicated to improving the health of the Tay River and Watershed, is seeking a buyer for this unique craft.

The Skiff is 14' long by 3-1/2' wide. The hull is constructed of marine-grade, Douglas-fir plywood, the benches in pine. It was refurbished in 2000. The oars are original, with counter-weights.



History

“A classic non-powered boat that perfectly combines pleasing design with practical purpose is the venerable St. Lawrence River Skiff. This superb craft, in its present form, emerged more than one hundred-fifty years ago in the Thousand Islands region of the St. Lawrence River. The craft became the principle means for personal river transportation and serious fishing during the mid 1800's during the golden era of River development. The skiff proved to be an ideal boat for local fishing guides who routinely covered long distances in a day's outing. They required a stable craft to haul in their regular large catches. By the 1860s St. Lawrence skiffs had evolved into a truly graceful form that would become universally accepted as the standard design among the River's builders.”¹ Their use expanded into the Rideau Lakes where many of the hotels and fishing lodges had fleets of the craft.



This Skiff was built by Jack Walker of Walker Boats near Perth, Ontario, circa 1960.

It was used by Jack who sold it to Nancy Kenyon, a local resident and township councillor in 2000. Upon moving west, Nancy generously donated the Skiff to the Friends of the Tay Watershed. We have subsequently displayed the craft at our annual public outreach event, Watershed Discovery Day.

Jack Walker

Jack was a memorable character in and about Perth, Ontario. Jack worked at the Perth Courier before and after serving with the Royal Canadian Navy on the North Atlantic 1943-1945. In the 1950's, he started Tay-Craft boats in Perth, and later founded Walker Boats in Port Elmsley, specializing in the building of St. Lawrence skiffs. Jack is remembered for his working replicas of Canada's Tribal-Class destroyers, the last of which (the Haida) earned him an award at Expo '67.

Jack is pictured below on the decks of the Haida, moored in the Rideau Canal in Ottawa for Centennial celebrations.



The Friends believe the craft to be fairly valued between \$2,000-\$3,000. Proceeds from the sale will be used to augment our education and outreach programs. For more information please contact Christopher Stone (cbhstone@gmail.com) - 613.267.1026.