



Newsletter of the Pacific Northwest Chapter Antique & Classic Boat Society

THE WET EDGE

January 2024

Guest Editor(s): Ron Stevenson and Ike Kielgass



By: Ron Stevenson

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas, and I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year!

Maybe you've had the pleasure of seeing the new movie "The Boys in the Boat" that was released in theaters nationwide on December 25. Following this article you will be reading the story of "Conny" that our fellow member, Kirk Knapp owns, restored, and is well used by him. "Conny" is already featured on the Seattle Boat Show website, because we will be featuring it in our booth this year! Please read his story carefully, because as a volunteer in our booth, I'm sure you'll be asked lots of questions about "Conny".

The schedule is also in this newsletter, which I will be sending out frequently in January until we have all the members that we need. Please go to our [website](#) to sign up for a time-slot.

Sign up early so I don't have to continue to send the schedule out. Alternatively, you may send me an email, ronstevensonmiwa@gmail.com, or call me 206-799-1048 with your preferred time slot. Yes, it's OK to be there for more than one shift!

I am pleased to let you know that Ron Wilson is our co-chair this year. I'm thinking this may be the "Duo Ron-Ron show..."

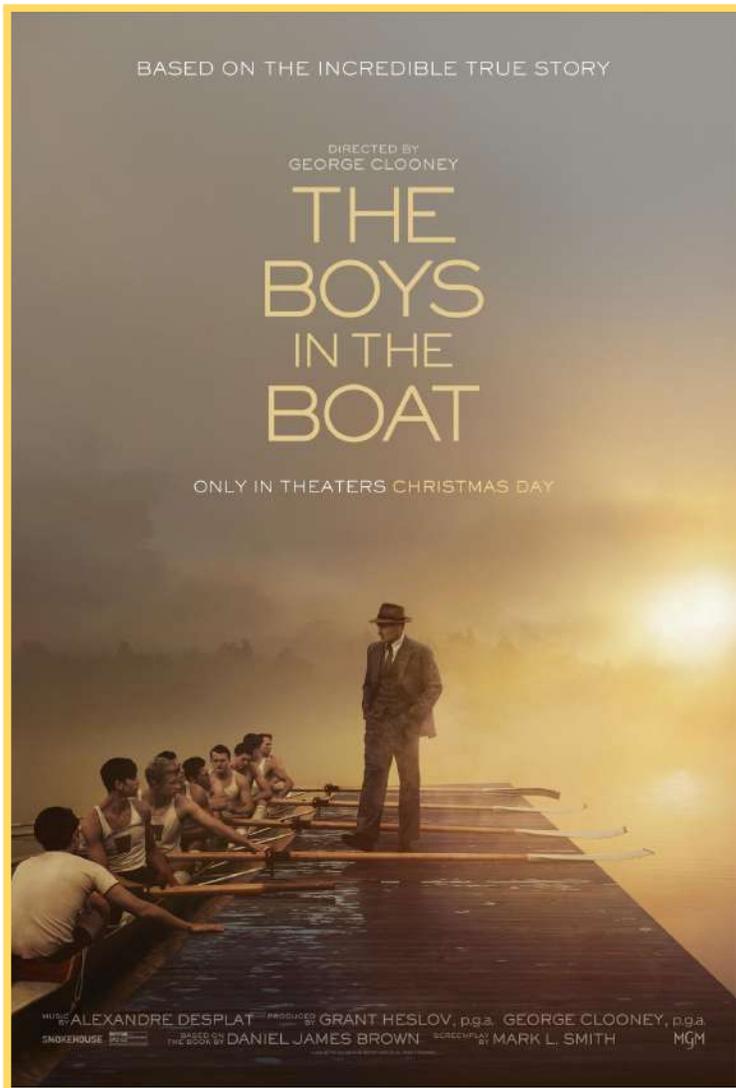
The show starts Friday, February 2, which is also wine tasting night. While you get free admission, you'll have to pay 10 bucks for your tasting ticket for wine, or for the beer tasting event the next Friday. The show ends on Saturday the 10th, we always need extra hands the day before for setting up the booth, and tear-down, which will probably be Saturday night after 8 PM.

I am also very happy to let you know that Katie, the Director of the SBS has given us half of the space that we had in 2022, that's 25' x 90'! I'm working out the details, but I think we can get four or five boats in there.

If you have any ideas for other things to display, as we might have to pull things in at the last minute please let me know.



See you at the Seattle Boat Show!



A History of the “Conny”

By: Kirk Knapp

The CONNY was built for the University of Washington Crew team, and named for famed rowing coach Hiram B. Conibear. Originally cedar on oak, she is now cedar with laminated mahogany frames, she has an overall length of 28 feet and a beam of six feet.

She was probably launched in the spring of 1932, and while it is not known for certain what yard she came out of, a good guess would be Shertzer Bros. on Lake Union. Records indicate that her Scripps F-6 engine was delivered to the Atlas Engine Co. of Seattle in October of 1931. There are numerous photos of CONNY in the archives of the Seattle Times and Post Intelligencer from the front pages of their sports sections. She was featured in photos following the crews through the Montlake Cut on race day, or just out following the crews through their daily workout. Bob Moch, a University of Washington coxswain and winner of the 1936 Gold Medal in the Berlin Olympics tells a story he remembers like it was yesterday. The crews were

heading East to the big IRA regatta on the Poughkeepsie and CONNY was loaded into her own rail car. Bob and a few others that were not eligible to compete, but wanted to be with the team and watch the race decided to “take the train” as well. The doors were left open on CONNY’s car, Bob and his pals climbed in and hid, some in the engine compartment, up in the bow, or behind her hull. It was all done with a wink and a nod, but Bob still remembered sitting in the open doorway of that railcar as it rolled across Kansas.

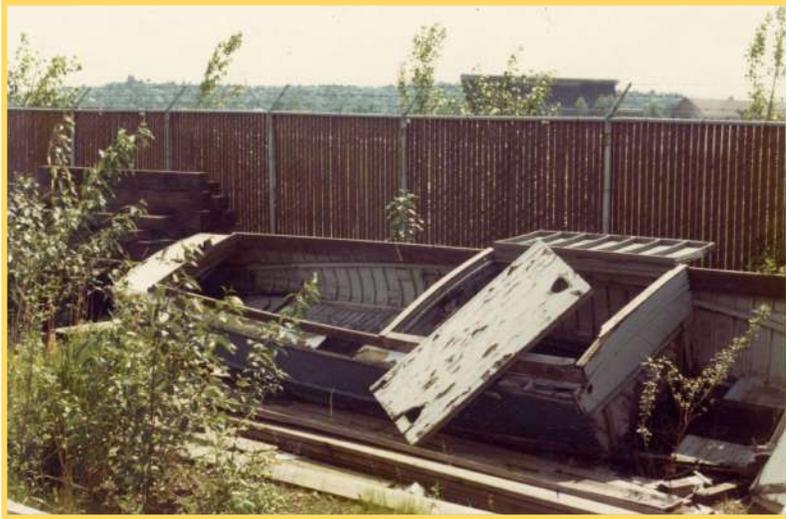
CONNY put in many years of service at the University.



It’s not known exactly when, but probably sometime in the 1950’s or 60’s the Scripps was pulled out and she was re-powered with a Chrysler Crown. She was “the coach’s launch” for some of Washington’s great coaches, from Al Ulbrickson to Dick Erickson. The business of coaching collegiate rowing crews was about turning boys into men. The records reflect who won the races, but other than the memories and stories of former teammates not much is recorded about the launches. CONNY ended her days with the crew team in the spring of 1971 when two members of the team decided to take their dates out for an evening cruise on Lake Washington (the coach will never know...). Chuck Knoll and Norm Green headed out to Madrona, it was a nice spring evening, right at dusk, everything was fine. Then out of the sun came another boat, wham! The other boat hit them in the forward cockpit, CONNY was nearly cut in two, the bow deck was blown clean off. She quickly filled up and lay wallowing just at the surface. Fortunately, no one was up front, or they surely would have been killed, there were injuries on the other boat and it would appear that the fellows in CONNY were at fault for not yielding right of way, the coach was gonna find out!

After the wreck she was hauled out and left to rot in the corp yard on the UW campus (by the golf driving range). Her engine (the Crown) was pulled and put into storage, and there she sat. I started at the University in the fall of

1973 and went out for crew. I rowed the first year, but it was pretty clear by fall of 1974 that I wasn't built to row. I went to Dick Erickson (the head coach) to ask how I could remain involved. When I went to see him, he was muttering about the worn-out engine in one of the launches. I immediately volunteered to rebuild it (after all I was an expert, I had rebuilt...uh one other engine). I got the job, and pulled the Chrysler Royal out of the HUSKY II, and so began my stint as mechanic, rigger, truck driver, etc with the crew team. At some point (probably in 1975) I needed some bits of hardware for



the HUSKY II, Erickson told me to go see what was left on CONNY. What's CONNY? I asked, Dick handed me a large hammer and sent me over to corp yard #2 whereupon I did ruthlessly remove what was needed. But I was immediately intrigued with this boat, and asked Dick why she wasn't being repaired. He thought that was pretty funny. So I got the idea that I would restore her. I probably drove Dick crazy bugging him to give me the boat, but he wasn't the problem. Butch was the lead in charge of the University's Physical Plant, and was responsible for the Storage yards. I had everybody else on board, but Butch wouldn't allow it "Ya can't give away State property no matter what condition it's in." I bugged Butch for two more years, then he had a heart attack (not fatal, but he was "on leave") I was quick to take advantage of it. I was already good friends with the number 2 man (Lars) who took over temporarily. Lars let it slip (with a few winks) that the gate would be left unlocked on a particular Saturday. I built an A frame for the front of my old Landcruiser and stretched out a little trailer I had for my Sunfish, and that Saturday I was in the yard and loaded CONNY up. That would have been in the fall of 1978. I of course didn't fully appreciate what I had gotten myself into, and was not at all prepared. I regret that I was unaware of the ACBS and other such resources.

Through the years I moved CONNY two more times until she ended up in my side pasture in Arlington. I did work to keep the rotting mass well supported and reasonably level. By 1996 I had pretty well given up on ever seeing her float again, but still I was not about to destroy her. Then a friend of mine said he knew of someone that might be interested in her. This fellow showed up, looked her over, made some comments about what his wife might have to say on the subject, and disappeared. Several months later he came back with a "partner", Dave Berg of Bellingham. Now they were serious! I really didn't want to let go, but Dave sent me letters and photographs of other projects he had done. I agreed, I would give them the boat, but I had first right of refusal (should a miracle occur), and they were to make her available to the crew team for Regattas if she was wanted. CONNY was loaded up and hauled up to Dave's house in Bellingham, the other fellow quickly dropped out and Dave proceeded to undertake the restoration on his own. Determined to not let her go, I made numerous trips to Dave's to photograph his



progress. Dave worked in rather spartan conditions, but I was always amazed by his progress and ingenuity.



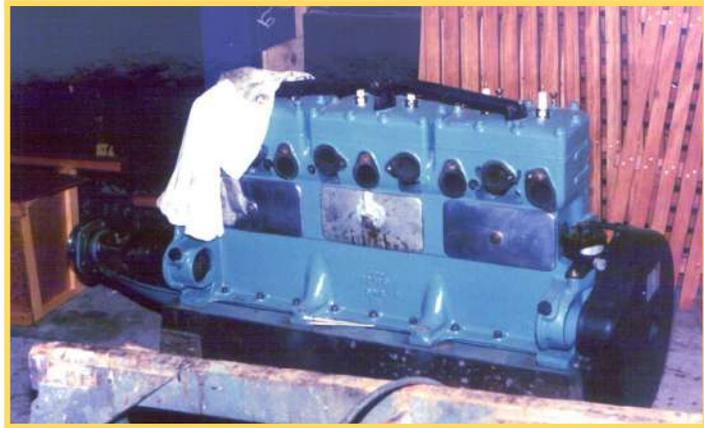
As it got closer to the point where the engine would be needed, I told Dave he could have the Crown. At this point we had no

Idea what or where the original engine was. We could tell that the Crown wasn't original because there were plugged off holes through the bulkheads for exhaust and other such things that didn't match up with the Crown. Also, the original engine bed was still in the boat and it didn't match the Crown at all. Dave asked me several times if I knew what was in there, I kept telling him no!

and you'll never find out either. Anybody who knows is either dead or senile! A month or so later Dave calls me



all excited. Through a friend, Dave had learned of a fellow that had an old Gar Wood for sale, so Dave called him up. As they talked Dave indicated he would like to have the Gar Wood, but that he couldn't take it for about a year or so as he was restoring an old "crew launch". This other fellow replied "You know? I've got an engine that came out of an old University of Washington crew launch". Dave couldn't believe it! Most of you know this fellow with the engine as Curt Erickson. Curt and Dave, through several phone calls compared the measurements on CONNY's engine beds to the mounting holes in the Scripps block, they were a match. A deal was struck, and Dave and I went down to Eatonville together to pick up the engine. Upon



installing the engine it was noted that the shift lever had been cut and welded back together to clear the bulkhead in CONNY's engine compartment. All that could be found wrong with the engine was a bad spline on the output shaft. That was repaired and the engine reinstalled after a 40? Or 50? year period of being passed around. It appears that a UW employee named Rolf Bergman got the motor away from the University, after his death it was sold by his neighbor at a garage sale (Curt said he was at that sale, and didn't buy it). A

young kid from Auburn bought it, and Curt bought it from him a couple years later. Of course, Curt encouraged me to join PNW ACBS for these important connections and fun activities together with other classic wooden craft. CONNY's maiden voyage after the restoration was August 12 1998 on Lake Whatcom. Dave and I launched her together, and I bought her back that afternoon in the parking lot by the boat ramp.



The very next day I took her to Lake Washington, went for a trip around Mercer Island and back to the University of Washington Crew House. Through this



wonderful old boat I have gained many new friends, and I still have to pinch myself to make sure it's not just a dream.



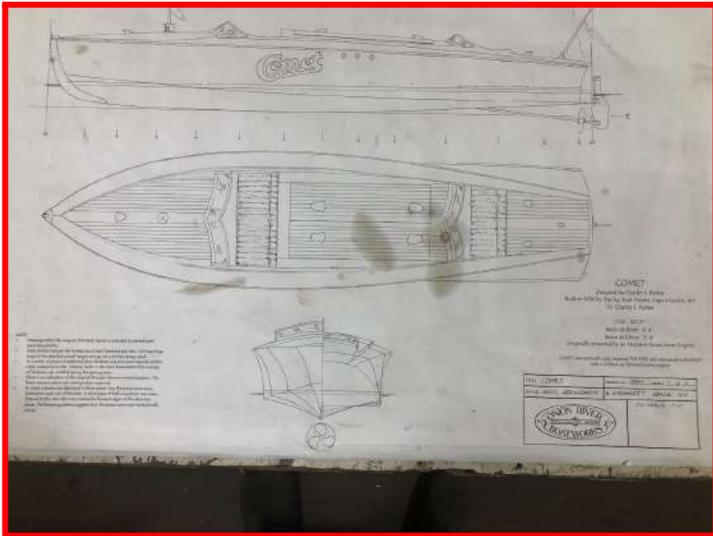


THE COMET '26

And The Work Goes On!

By: Ike Kielgass

As most of you know, I'm very project-oriented. Before I finish one boat I've already planned the next. As I was finishing up the 1936 Gar Wood resto mod earlier this year, Dave Lobb and I were chatting about future projects when he suggested we build a boat together as he already had a set of plans from The Antique Boat Museum in Clayton, New York: Comet, designed by Charles S. Parker, built in 1926 by Stanley Boat Works, Cape Vincent, NY.



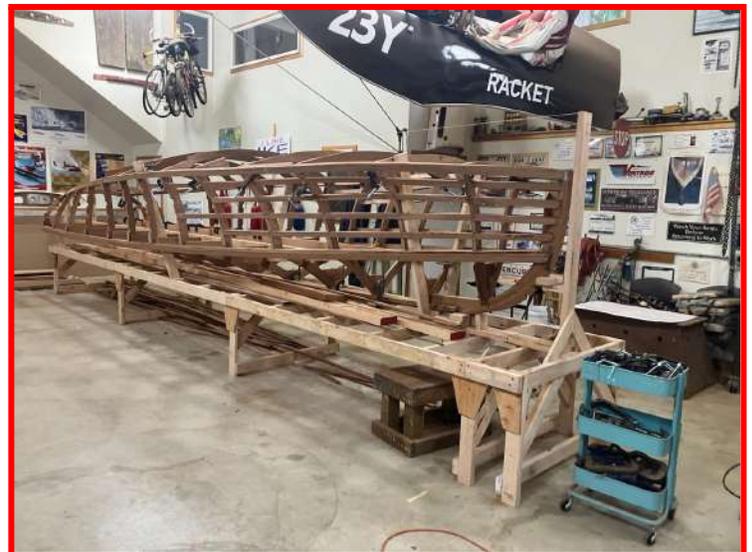
Comet plans

Originally powered by an Hispano-Suiza Aero Engine, Comet was eventually sold and renamed The Fox, and repowered in the 1930's with a 120hp 6-cylinder flathead marine engine.

I knew I'd learn a lot from working with Dave and we started in on the Comet this past summer. After coming up with a game plan and ordering some wood, first up was building a jig, as usual. What was new for me was



The frame patterns and jig that we'd be building the boat right side up! Dave then built the patterns for the frames out of door skins, which we then used to make the mahogany frames.



Next month read about our progress and the motor!



The Fox @ The Antique Boat Museum.



A Note From the President

Seeing so many accounts of restorations is indeed inspiring! If you have a little project, keep these types of articles coming in the new year!! I am an enthusiastic boater all year long, pulling delicious prawns from the briny deep in nearly any weather. This goes along with my word for the Club this year –"Enthusiasm" I look forward to seeing a great deal of enthusiasm in the coming days as the

executive board gathers at my house to plan the years' events. Please reach out to any of us with your ideas and enthusiasm and we will make things happen!

Also, don't forget to check out our website and its new feature! We now have a FORUM!! This will allow anyone in our membership to ask questions, offer advice, and dialogue between each other in a new way! Please post on this board so that we can get the conversation started! There is an important question hanging in the air about the proper adhesive to use for securing one's bungs. We wouldn't want to leave Warren hanging with potentially loose bungs for goodness sake!!

Along with signing up for our booth at the Big Seattle Boat Show, we have the opportunity to join the Gig Harbor boatworks in helping kids to build a 10' wooden dinghy! This hands-on activity will be a big draw and I see the potential for kids to really get into it with the right mentor and spend a great deal of time here. The boat will be finished and raffled off at the end of the show. The sweet part of the deal for us though, is that our PNW Chapter could potentially win the proceeds of the raffle tickets!!! -just for providing volunteers. I like that idea a great deal. Our members are well qualified for this task, so get signed up to take a shift or two! Ron Stevenson has all the information alongside our regular booth signups. There are two types of builds available to help with, a "stitch and glue" plywood sailing dinghy, and a "Toy Boat" building activity.

I am pleased to announce that we have again been awarded the NMTA grant in the amount of \$1,000. Our board will decide where this fits in our budget in the coming year.

Looking forward to another great year of boating!

For Sale: Magazines

Our chapter is now a 501-C3, and eligible for tax deductible contributions.

Magazines are boxed and ready for sale, write your check to ACBS-PNW!

Includes free delivery to the next meeting!

CLASSIC BOATING (6/yr)

One set (from the beginning) 1984-2020 - 37 years \$400

One set 1988-2017 - 30 years \$300

Extra years - 1991,1992,1995 \$10/yr

BRASS BELL (4/yr)

1986-2020 - 35 Years \$350

(Missing 4 - 1988 #1 spring, 2007, 2012, & 2020 #4 winters)

RUDDER (4/yr)

One set 1990-2020 \$300 (Missing 1995 & 1997 winter)

One set 2000-2011 \$100 (Missing 2004 fall)

The best for last (very hard to find)

RUSTY RUDDER - (became Rudder) \$200

1983 Vol 9 #3

1985 Vol 11 #1 spring, #2 summer (2), #3 winter, #4 spring

1986 Vol 12 #4 winter

1987 Vol 13 #2 summer, #4 winter

1988 Vol 14 #1 spring

1989 Vol 15 #4 winter

Please support your chapter with your tax deductible donation!

Want ads? We Want ads!!

Your Ad here: Do you have something to sell?

Email your descriptive text and photos to me and they will appear in our next newsletter.

Also: We can offer advertisement space to benefit our club! Do you know a business that would enjoy a little attention from our members? For \$100 per year, their advertisement could appear in the newsletter (12 months) and they could claim a tax write-off for sponsorship of our club. This money could be earmarked for a special purpose, or go into a special fund as determined by our board.

Contact Corrine Lucas for a donation form.

Pacific Northwest Chapter of the Antique and Classic Boat Society

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