

THROWBACKS TO A GOLDEN AGE OF NORTHWEST BOATS

*A Tribute to the Designers who Penned the Lines,
To the Builders who Bent the Frames and to the Owners who Labor in their Care*

For more than a hundred years, the Pacific Northwest has ranked as a world center for vessel design, construction and preservation. Beginning with the advent of the Pacific cod fishery in the 1880s, utilizing the raw material afforded by the vast Northwest forests, Seattle-area boat builders began creating one of the world's great fishing fleets. Soon,



Motor yacht Kensington on the ways at Jensen Motor Boat Company, circa 1929.

they would craft sailing ships to support the lumber trade, and work boats that sustained Pacific commerce.

Early in the 20th Century, a related industry took advantage of the same natural resources and human talent to design and build air ships. But the designers and builders of the Pacific Northwest didn't focus entirely on the *business* of transportation. Early on, they began crafting some of the world's most distinguished pleasure boats. The pre-World War II era ranked as nothing less than a *Golden Age* of boatbuilding in Seattle and the Pacific Northwest. *Throwbacks* is a documentary film that profiles the great naval architects of Seattle's early years, and the famous boatyards and shipwrights that applied world-renowned craftsmanship to their nautical visions. It follows the classic boats and yachts through the decades, the rowdy

1920s when *every man* dreamed of owning a boat, the grim Depression years when Hollywood wealth was all that sustained Seattle boatyards, the War-era when even the most lavish pleasure craft were pressed into hard military service, the decades of neglect when signature vessels languished in obscurity and the contemporary fascination with the restoration of these stylish relics of the bygone age.

Spend the afternoon at Toad's Landing, the secluded island in southern British Columbia where builder-designer William Garden still crafts signature vessels in a *Santa's workshop for older boys*. Take a ride aboard the steamers and paddle wheelers that comprised Puget Sound's *Mosquito Fleet*. Sit down with Norm Blanchard aboard the lavishly restored fantail yacht *Malibu* as he reminisces about the Seattle boatyard where his father and the celebrated designer Ted Geary collaborated on classic after classic.

Board the 86-foot motor vessel *Westward*, circa 1925, for an excursion with the rich and famous clientele that stalked big game as guests of Campbell Church, Jr.'s Alaska Coast Hunting and Cruising Company; meet Leigh



Winifred, one of Otis Cutting's Lake Union Dreamboats, and Virginia V, last steam powered remnant of the Mosquito Fleet, celebrating Opening Day of yachting season.

Coolidge, the imperious *Duke* with the Homburg hat and the Van Dyke beard who conceived elegant workboats, pleasure boats, rum runners and rum chasers. Marvel at the restoration of the *Glorybe*, one of the oldest classics of them all that burned to a cinder in the Seattle Yacht Club fire but will soon cruise into her second century on the Puget Sound. Experience the luxury of the *Thea Foss*, christened *Infanta* after the first child of actor John Barrymore, who built her for his wife only to lose her when alcohol consumed his fortune. Meet Tony Jensen, the concert violinist who opted for the craft of boatbuilding over music, and Ruth Franck, the grandmother who supplied the grit that kept the family boatyard in operation after her husband's death.

Recline aboard the *Lake Union Dreamboats* that have supplied waterborne enjoyment for eighty years. Experience the mystical quality of the *Come to Jesus Boats* that ministered to the spiritual, medicinal and nutritional needs of the remote villages, lighthouses and mills along the British Columbia coast.



Stylish stern of the newly refurbished Malibu, designed by Ted Geary and built by N.J. Blanchard.



Former mission ship Meander buffed and polished for the Victoria Wooden Boat Festival, 2004.

Listen to the rumble of the old Atlas engines as they wind out at 285 revolutions per minute. Take the wheel of the *Deerleap* or the *Blue Peter* or the *Argonaut II* or any one of dozens of historic yachts. Seat yourself in a deck chair on a graceful fantail where flapper girls once gathered. Meet authors Ron McClure and Steve Wilen, and maritime historians Rick Etsell and Scott Rohrer.

Slated to premiere in November, 2004, at a Seattle venue to be announced, *Throwbacks* was commissioned by Seattle maritime enthusiast Cary Swasand whose Aleutian Spray Fisheries Company operates a fleet of high seas fishing vessels including the 240-foot *F/V Starbound*. The program was written and produced by John Sabella, whose Seattle firm has produced a series of award-winning documentaries focused on the maritime history of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. Paul Sharpe of Seattle's Sharpe Productions served as director of photography and editor.

Copies of the hour-long program will be available on VHS videocassette or DVD at a cost of \$19.95 plus shipping. For further information contact the following:

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