SOUTHWEST ANTIQUE & CLASSIC BOAT SOCIETY

SOU-WESTER

The Southwest Chapter—Antique & Classic Boat Society newsletter serving Arkansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas

Spring/Summer
2010

the Presidents Message: Dear Chapter Members & Friends,

The Keels & Wheels Show at Lakewood Yacht Club in Seabrook on May 1st and 2nd was a great success. I want to thank all who brought their boats to display. We may have set an all time record for the number of boats.

I would also like to thank the following people for their efforts; Bill Nalle, Christie Nalle, & Ed Ueckert for their work placing the boats, Bob Van Guilder for acting as chief judge, Robert Black & Fred Burban for getting the chapter tent set up, Jeff Asmussen & John Stroble for their work at the launch ramp, Dale Lipps & Donna Black for manning the Ship's Store, Ellery Andrew & Bob Macaluso for their work placing the dock signs and cleats, and of course Lisa Robinson for organizing the hospitality tent. I know that there were many others involved; so if I neglected to mention you by name, thank you! We couldn't put on a show of this magnitude without the help of so many volunteers!!!

A special thanks to Dave Parker for opening his home to us on Friday night, and to Guy McCollum for providing the venue for Saturday night's dinner. As always, the chapter would like to thank Bob Fuller, Paul Merryman, and the rest of the Coucours Committee at Lakewood Yacht Club for continuing to invite us to participate in this world class event.

We were very pleased that the current ACBS President Gail Turner was able to attend our show, and that she brought a beautiful Aristo Craft to share with us. She wished to express what a wonderful time she and William had at the show, and to thank each of you for your hospitality.

The Conroe Rendevous has recently occurred. Details and photographs of the event will follow in the next newsletter.

Additional upcoming events that you should put on your calendar are the "North Texas WBA" show in Dallas August 27 – 29; the "Hartland Classic" show in Grand Lake, OK September 11-13; and the "Hill Country/Austin" show at Lake LBJ October 15-17.

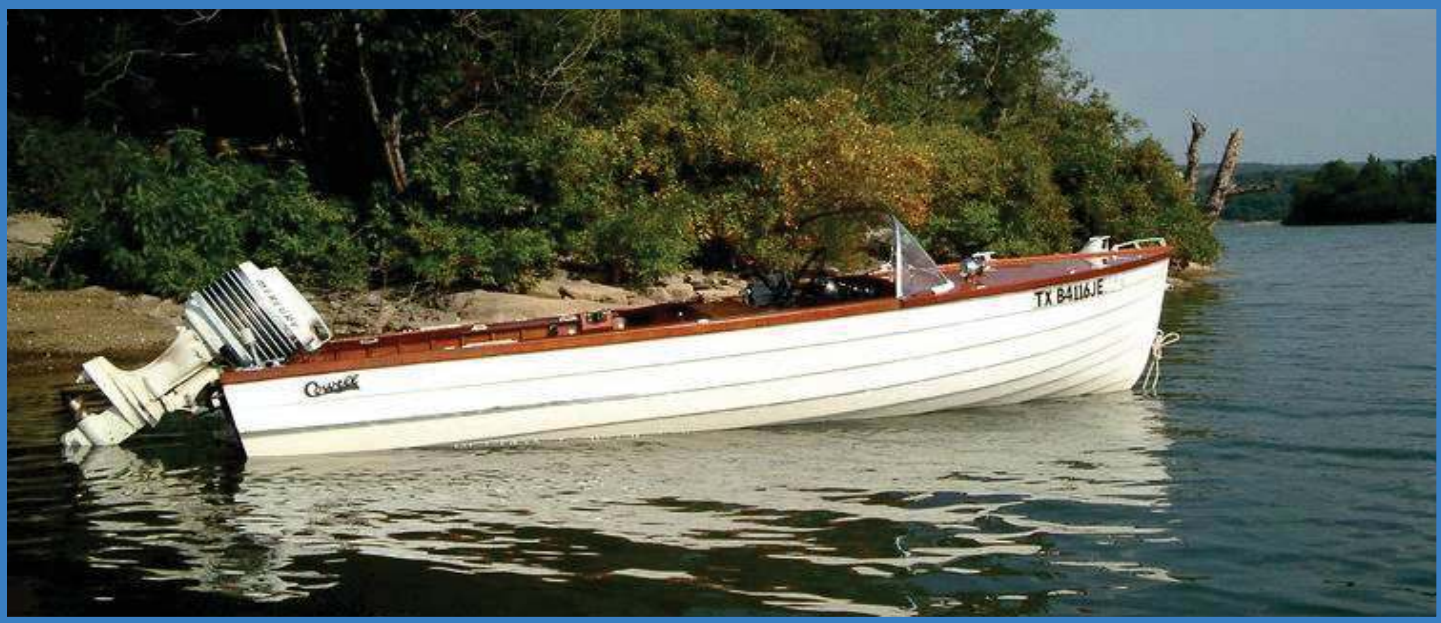
Best Regards, ***Lindy Robinson,***

Cowell Marque Club Finds, Tracks Rare Survivors

For most of the well-known marques of antique and classic boats, ACBS Marque Clubs have hundreds if not thousands of members across the country. These brand-specific clubs hold accurate and detailed information about the history, design and restoration of their boats. These large organizations have their own officers, shows, meets and magazines.

But even for smaller, lesser-known marques like Cowell Boat Works of Erie, PA, a marque club can achieve important goals: like the survival of the marque itself.

The Cowell Marque Club was started a few years back by Cowell owner and SWABC member David Kanally of Coppell, TX. "For years, I thought I had the only Cowell out there," says Kanally. I put up a Cowell website and started doing research. By 1999, we had learned that there are 15 or 20 of the lapstrake outboards surviving."



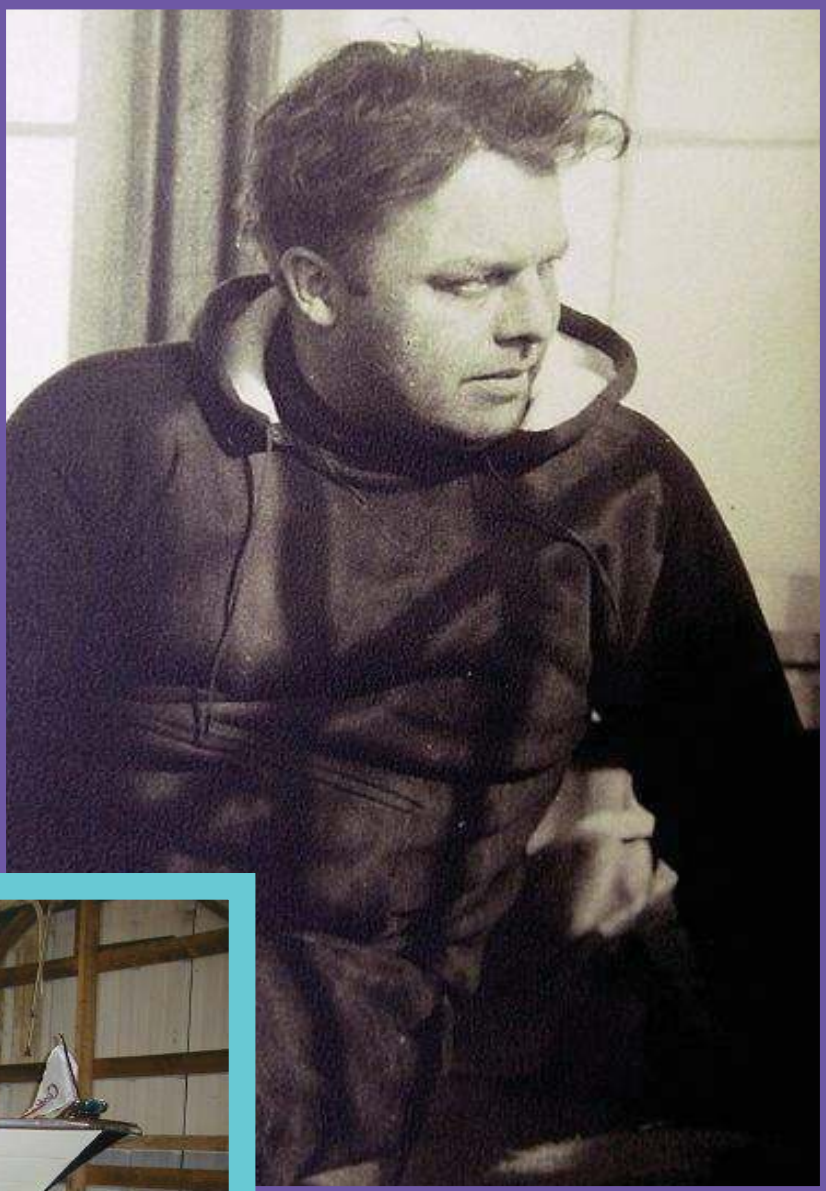
Cowell Boat Works was the brainchild of entrepreneur Thomas Cowell. Tommy, as he was known, had succeeded in a variety of ventures in the '40s and '50s near Erie, PA, including the Lake View drive-in movie theater and a pinball and slot machine company. But of all his endeavors, Cowell Boat Works was the one that allowed him to pursue his love of wooden boats. Cowell began building boats at his boat rental and cottage court business at the mouth of Six Mile Creek near Erie, PA, in the summer of 1953, in part because he couldn't find a 13' boat on the market that was suitable for rental.

By the end of the company's life, Cowell was building mainly 18' V-hulled lapstrake outboards that competed favorably in performance with the better-known Lyman marque of nearby Sandusky, OH. Kanally owns a 1957 16' "King" model, which has made the rounds from Keels & Wheels to the Austin/Hill Country Show to the Wooden Boat Association's Ride 'n Show.

"Whenever someone buys a Cowell now, they can Google the marque and find our site," says Kanally. The owners then contact Kanally with questions about the year, model, and restoration needs of their boats. "We've even made cast resin copies of the Cowell logo for owners to put on their boats," Kanally adds.

Most recently, Howie Thomas of Fairview, PA has completely restored a 15' Cowell to original condition. Thomas and Kanally will be displaying their Cowells at the Chautauqua Lake Twin Tiers Chapter ACBS show in Bemus Point, NY, July 9-11. "We hope other Cowell owners will respond to this opportunity to show their boats," Kanally says, "Some are in better shape than others."

A complete history of Cowell Boat Works and photos of all known Cowell survivors can be found at **http://angelfire.com/tx5/cowellboatworks** .



For more information on ACBS Marque Clubs, go to **http://acbs.org** then click on "**Resources**", the "**Marque Clubs**."

The Jackie II A true tale by Jeff Taner

The "Jackie I" sank – or so I was told – somewhere in Galveston Bay. This was sometime before I was born. Andrew (Andy) Jackson soon replaced it with a new 1956 Proske with an Evinrude Big Twin outboard. The boat was purchased directly from Proske's Boat Co. at 5306 Washington (hey... I live on Washington Ave! Ed.) for $437 and the motor from C. B. Delhome, Inc. at 2101 Leeland for $512. This is probably all the boat is worth now! Last night, relaxing in front of the TV with a cold drink in hand, I saw a '66 Riva go for over $750,000 at a Mecum's auction - now ***that*** boat has appreciated.

The boat's namesake, Jackie, is Andy's daughter Mary Anne, who acquired the nickname at a party. How she got the nickname is a seperate tale I'm not privy to. Anyway, Andy enjoyed taking the Jackie II in and around the Bay/Clear Lake area where the family would go fishing. Andy was a volunteer Sheriff's deputy for Galveston County. Jackie had a daughter, Andrea (named for her grandfather Andrew) that Andy would take on occasion during his patrol in the boat. This usually included stopping off at the local waterfront establishments to enjoy a cold beer or two and relief from the hot weather.

Andy passed away in 1969, but the family continued to use the boat for fishing, skiing and "zip sledding". Finally, in 1980 a new fiberglass boat took over the Jackie II's duties of providing fun on the water. She was then relegated to sharing garage space with the new boat and became a handy container for storing various items.

Jackie II (continued)

So, along about 1985, I start dating my bride-to-be, Andrea – Jackie's daughter, Andy's granddaughter. She had invited my little sailboat and me to their bay house. As I was checking things out I spotted the large wooden storage bin in the garage (aka Jackie II). Recognizing it to be a classic wooden boat, I immediately asked the question many of you have heard before – "Is that a Chris Craft?" Well, the dating matured to love, and we got married. Sometime later, I had this bright idea – "let's get the motor running." After all, if we get the motor running, we'll refinish the boat and use it on lakes. We could use the fiberglass boat at the bay and the wooden boat up on Lake Travis and Canyon Lake, I reasoned to my loving young wife.

When I was in my younger days, I used to be fairly brave about working on engines. As I've aged, I've realized how little I know. Once as a youngster, I bought a Chilton's workshop manual to work on my car's engine. Following the manual carefully, I adjusted the mechanical valve lifters using a feeler gauge to set the gap. "Man, were they set tight!" Satisfied with the work I had done, I started the engine – hmm, lots of popping and backfiring, and the valve stems were all in disarray. Somehow I missed the part about turning the engine before adjusting each valve. The car was towed to a shop for a proper valve adjustment...

So, back to the story of the Jackie II, I looked at this frozen Evinrude and wondered ... "How hard can this be? It is, after all, a pretty simple looking engine." I sprayed some penetrating oil into the spark plug holes – "That ought to loosen it." Okay, it's still frozen. I pulled the head, sprayed more oil around the cylinder and placed a rubber mallet on the piston, giving it a couple of timid taps with a hammer. Jackie's cousin and his buddy came over and gave it a try. The cousin gives it a couple of hard whacks - for which his buddy gives him holy hell. Next, the cousin's buddy proceeded to take over. I don't know what the buddy did differently, but he was smacking it pretty well and damned if he didn't get it moving.

Happy now, I put on new points, plugs, condenser, carb rebuild kit, changed the lower unit oil, new battery and we're ready to go. The moment of truth – I pushed the start button and – nothing. Not even a click. I'm thinking back to that valve adjustment on the car. I towed the boat over to a shop where the family had taken the fiberglass boat for tune-ups. Earl. Earl's been around a while and didn't have too many teeth or fingers left, but he sure was friendly. He said it would be no problem. Turned out, I had broken a glass mercury switch which prevented starting the engine at full throttle. Solution? Forget about the switch and just attach the wire. As the mechanic said when he started it, ***" she just Cadillacs along."***

Now, we are ardent wooden boat owners and want to be around other like-minded people, so we joined WeBOAT – Wooden Boat Owners Association of Texas. Maybe some of you remember this? I was enjoying the boat now. It was so light, it was a breeze to launch, the engine started every time and since it was in bad need of refinishing, I was not too concerned if I bumped something.

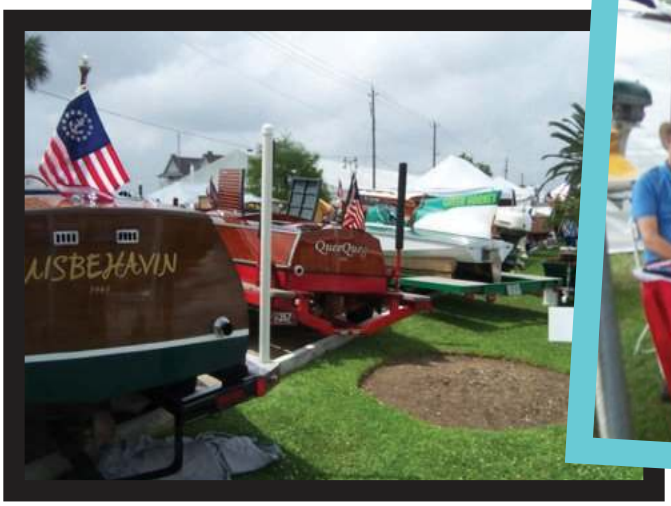
Jackie II (Continued)

Age reared its ugly head, and eventually it was time to repaint the engine and refinish the boat. With everything removed, most of boat was stripped down to bare wood, where we found a couple of trouble spots. Some time passed (a couple of years) when we decided to call an expert, as I wasn't "gettin 'er done." I referred to WeBOAT's Makin Waves newsletter and found the number to Jim Frechette. I think this was around 1998 – you can see this project has been taking a while! Jim suggested we meet at this thing called Keels and Wheels and he'd take a look at the boat. We drove over to Lakewood Yacht Club on the Saturday of the show, maybe a little after noon, unsure of where to park as we had never been there before. The guard waved us past like we were VIP's –" Wow look at all these cool cars!" As we go by the clubhouse a man with a walkie-talkie asks us "Wet or dry?" "Oh, no sir, we're not here to show, just to meet someone. Where can we park?" We drove further back towards the marina – "Wow look at all these cool boats!" Two men in a golf cart approached rapidly, the driver looking concerned. "You are NOT showing ***THAT*** boat in THIS show!" Of course, I informed him we were not; that we were looking for Jim Frechette, and asked him to tell us where we could park the boat so it would be properly hidden. Somehow what I thought I said was not what he thought he heard, as he repeated with more urgency: "YOU ARE NOT SHOWING THAT BOAT IN THIS SHOW!" Man, this guy was serious.

Well, we met Jim, and he performed his magic. Things worked out, and now with the boat looking pretty good, there were details that I needed to deal with including installing a new rub rail. After referring to Makin Waves again, I went to visit Holmes Boat Works. While I was driving along with the rush hour traffic, there was an enthusiastic driver next to me trying to get my attention. I would find out over a year later this was none other than fellow member Ray Balsam, now a very good friend. You meet the finest people with wooden boats.

The year was 2001 and I thought *maybe* we could now show the boat in Keels and Wheels. Thoroughly enjoying ourselves, we go to the awards dinner with the boat's namesake, Jackie. I was not expecting anything as we were just curious to take in the whole experience. When the class for our boat came up, the Jackie II won a ribbon for 2nd place. Cool, I thought – and Jackie sure was happy. I don't think I ever earned as many brownie points with my mother-in-law as I did that night!

There is still more work - and for those of you who know me, I've been a little lazy in getting it done. But as with all of these boats there is a story behind them, and that story and the friendships along the way are what make it all worth while. You can usually find the Jackie II on a trailer at Keels and Wheels – come on by and say HI!



15th Annual Concours d' Elegance Keels and Wheels Boat & Car Show by Robert Black

The 15th Annual Keels and Wheels Show was once again a great success with 90 boats being exhibited. Fortunately, the predictions of heavy parcipitation didn't materialize.

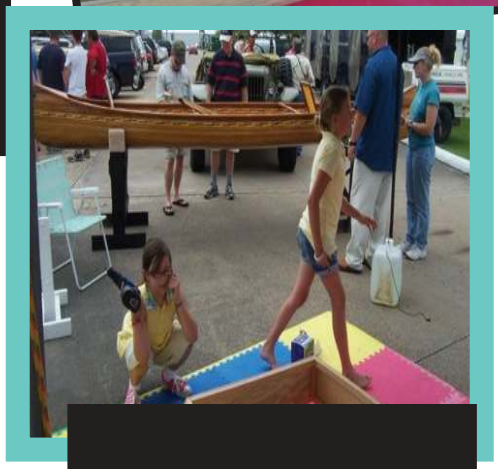
This year the show highlighted Outboards and Yellow Jacket Boats. These popular plywood boats were made in Dennison, Texas and advertised with the help of Roy Rogers (His horse Trigger was no where to be found at the show. Ed.). There was even a "Yellow Jacket Corner" at the show, with one of the North Texas boats winning "Best of Class".

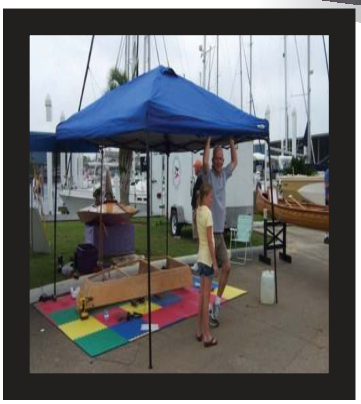
The Tora-Tora-Tora Squadron entertained the crowd on both Saturday and Sunday mornings. Friday night featured a cook- out by the Lakewood Pool, with beer contributed by Paul Merry-man. A desert-fest followed at the waterfront home of Dave Parker. It was a late night...

Saturday afternoon saw the boat awards handed out. Dinner on Saturday night was sponsored by Guy and Jacque Mc Collum. The event was held at the Somerset Estate on Galveston Bay. What an exceptional place to spend the evening with the wooden boat faithful!

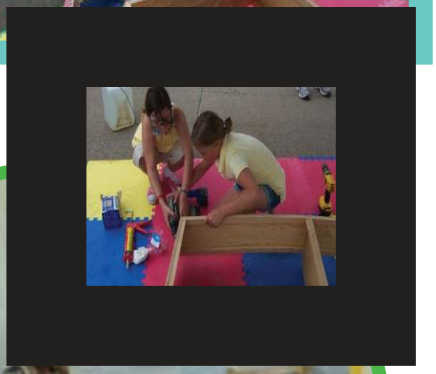
The Keels and Wheels Boat Show supports the Boys and Girls Club and KUHT Channel 8. Our thanks to the many Southwest Chapter volunteers that make the show such a great success.

Tora, Tora, Tora!!!

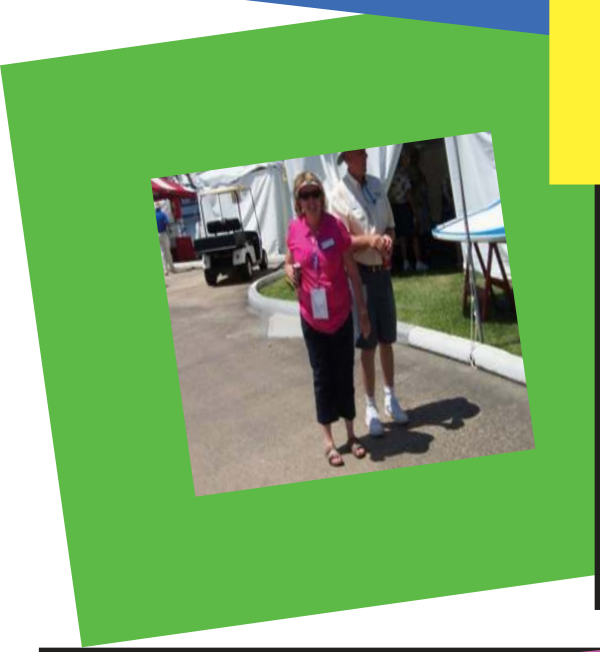




How about youth in their boat building program!!!
Quite a successful program, and one with great visibility for our club and the future of boating.
Thank you JOHN PLATO!

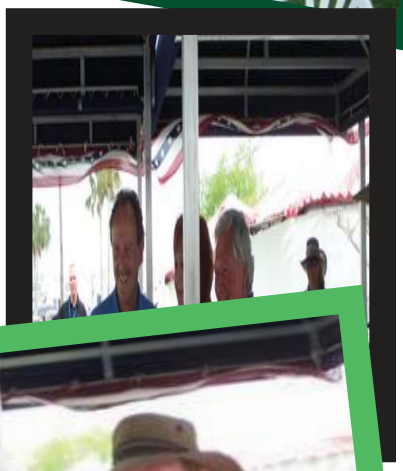


***Notice** the photos of the Friday afternoon Poolside Burger party? The late-night Desertfest at the fabulous waterfront home of Dave Parker? The Saturday night BBQ on the water at the unbelievable Somerset Estate? NEITHER DID THE EDITOR. Someone must have been enjoying himself too much to take pics!*



Just how did they get that aeroplane in the event???

Lots of well deserved hardware being given out.



The Sunday night dinner ritual organized by the Dorflingers.