T-530

Skipjack ESTHER F.

Architectural Survey File

This is the architectural survey file for this MIHP record. The survey file is organized reverse-chronological (that is, with the latest material on top). It contains all MIHP inventory forms, National Register nomination forms, determinations of eligibility (DOE) forms, and accompanying documentation such as photographs and maps.

Users should be aware that additional undigitized material about this property may be found in on-site architectural reports, copies of HABS/HAER or other documentation, drawings, and the "vertical files" at the MHT Library in Crownsville. The vertical files may include newspaper clippings, field notes, draft versions of forms and architectural reports, photographs, maps, and drawings. Researchers who need a thorough understanding of this property should plan to visit the MHT Library as part of their research project; look at the MHT web site (mht.maryland.gov) for details about how to make an appointment.

All material is property of the Maryland Historical Trust.

Last Updated: 04-05-2004

T-530 ESTHER F. (skipjack) Tilghman, Maryland

ESTHER F. is a 39.5' long two-sail bateau, or V-bottomed deadrise type of centerboard sloop, commonly referred to as a skipjack. She has a beam of 13.3', a depth of 3.8', and a net registerd tonnage of 10. She carries a typical skipjack rig of jib-headed mainsail and a single large jib with a club on its foot. Built in 1954 in Fairmount, Maryland following traditional Bay design and construction methods, ESTHER F. is significant as being one of the 35 surviving traditional Chesapeake Bay skipjacks and a member of the last commercial sailing fleet in the United States. ESTHER F. is of special interest as having been built during the post World War II revival of skipjack building for the working oyster fleet.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Magi No.

DOE __yes _x no

CHESAPEAKE BAY SKIPJACK FLEET THEMATIC GROUP

1 N:	ame	findic	ate pref	erred name	<u> </u>				
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historic				•					
and/or com		ipjack						······································	
Z. L	ocatio)N							
street & nu	ımber (Gibsontov	m Road				n	/a_not for public	ation
city, town	Tilg	hman		vici	nity of	congressiona	al district	First	
state	Mary	land	024	This way to the same way to the same particular to the same to the same that the same	county	Talbot	041		
3. C	lassif	icatio	n						
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4. 0	wner	of Pr	oper	ty (give	names ai	nd mailing	addresse	es of <u>all</u> own	ers)
name	Buck Ga	rvin	·. ·						
street & nu	ımber					tele	ephone r	no.:	
city, town	Tilghm	an			state	and zip coo	ie Mary	yland 21671	
	ocatio	on of	Lega	l Desc	riptio	on			
courthouse	e, registry of	deeds, etc.	n	/a				liber	
street & nu	ımber							folio	
city, town		-					state		
6. R	epres	enta	tion i	n Exis	ting	Historica	al Sur	veys	
title	Survey o	of Surviv	ing Tra	ditional C	hesapeak	e Bay Craft			
date	1983-1984	4				federa	I <u>×</u> sta	ate county	local
depository	for survey r	ecords	Marylan	d Historic	Trust,	21 State Ci	·		
city, town		Annapol	is		<u> </u>		state	MD 214	01

Condition excellent good fair	deteriorated ruins unexposed	Check one unaltered altered	Check one n/a original si moved	te date of move	n/a
IQII	unexposed				

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This oyster dredgeboat is a 39 1/2' long, two-sail bateau, or V-bottomed deadrise centerboard sloop, commonly referred to as a skipjack. She is built by cross-planked construction methods, has a beam of 13.3', a depth of 3.8', and a net registered tonnage of 10 tons. The ESTHER F. was built in 1954 in Fairmount, Maryland. She carries a typical skipjack rig-a jib-headed mainsail laced to the boom and carried on wood hoops at the mast, and a single, large club-footed jib. The wooden hull is sheathed with copper at the waterline to protect against ice, and is painted white, with red copper bottom paint.

In shape, the vessel has a longhead bow with a raking stem and a squared bowsprit. The transom stern is almost square, with little rake and small "tucks" at the waterline. The hull shape is relatively straight, with little sweep to the sheer or flare to the sides. The rudder is carried outboard on pintles.

The vessel is flush-decked with several deck structures, both original and added. From the stern forward these include: a box over the steering gear; a tall plywood cabin, with a "doghouse" added for the skipper (a new addition); and a small hatch forward. When surveyed, the winders and winder-box were not on deck, which was stripped down for repairs. However, these fittings, along with dredges, are carried when the boat is working. Other fittings include a high pinrail aft, although none was present on the foredeck (possibly because of deck repairs); davits over the stern for the pushboat; and a capstan located at the sampson post on the foredeck.

The single mast is raked slightly aft and is supported by mast partners extending about three feet above deck level. The mast is painted white on its top half but the bottom is bright. It is set up with double shrouds and turnbuckles, rather than the more traditional deadeyes, as well as a forestay, jibstay, and topping lift for the boom. The square bowsprit is set up with a double chain bobstay and wire bowsprit shrouds.

The vessel is decorated with a bright red stripe below the sheer and on the longhead below where the trailboards would fit. Her name is carried on nameboards on the transom, picked out in blue. The name is also painted in blue on her bows.

8.	Si	gn	f	ca	nc	e

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899 X 1900–	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agriculture architecture art commerce communications		•	lawliterature military music	re religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater X transportation other (specify)
Specific dates	1954	Buil	der/Architect	Unknown	
a Appl	icable Criteria: XAnd/or icable Exception: A	<i>I</i>	BCD	E _F _X G local	

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This vessel is significant as being one of the 35 surviving traditional Chesapeake Bay skipjacks and a member of the last commercial sailing fleet in the United States. Out of a fleet of hundreds of skipjacks that worked Bay waters in the early years of this century, today only this small number remain to carry on the tradition of working sail.

The skipjack evolved as a distinct type of Bay vessel in the 1890's as a cheaper-to-construct alternative to the earlier bugeyes and other traditional framed craft, in a period when shipbuilding costs were rising and the oyster catch was diminishing. The type was devised by enlarging (to 25 to 60 feet) the hull of the ordinary, unframed, square-sterned Bay crabbing skiff, and giving it a deadrise bottom, a-deck, a cabin, and a sloop rig. The result—with its unframed, hard chine, cross-planked, V-bottom-proved inexpensive to build, easy to repair, and could be constructed by a competent house carpenter. Skipjacks were specifically designed as oyster dredge boats, with wide beams and low freeboard lending stability and providing a large working space on deck. The single masted rig, with sharp-headed mainsail and large jib, was easy to handle, powerful in light winds, and handy in coming about quickly for another pass over the oyster beds.

The Maryland oyster season begins November 1 and ends March 15. Skipjacks must dredge under sail on all days except Mondays and Tuesdays, when they are allowed to use their motorized pushboat for dredging. The pushboat, normally carried on davits at the stern, is lowered into the water and literally "pushes" the skipjack along from behind, the nose of the pushboat resting against a "jig" on the stern of the skipjack. The pushboat can also legally be used to get the skipjack to and from the oyster beds each day. Each skipjack's crew is made up of the captain, who is often also the owner, and five crew members.

ESTHER F. is of interest as having been built during the post World War II revival of skipjack building for the working oyster fleet. She was built in 1954 in Fairmount, Md., following traditional Bay design and construction methods for skipjacks. At some point in her career she was converted to a pleasure boat and renamed SNOW WHITE and eventually given to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. Museum officials sold the vessel to Buck Garvin of Tilghman Island. Garvin re-furbished the vessel, restored her original name, and returned her to the working dredge fleet. The vessel is one of ten skipjacks built after World War II during a boom in the oyster business, all of which are still active except for the ROSIE PARKS. It is of great interest that even though these vessels were built 50 years after the peak skipjack-building years, their design and construction closely

See Thematic Group nomination cover form, Continuation Sheets No. 8-13.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000					
ne Easting Northing					
Verbal boundary description and justification This working vessel is usually docked at the location indicated in Item 2. Historic boundaries are coterminous with the hull.					
or county boundaries					
code					
date May, 1984					
telephone (301) 685-3750					
state Maryland 21201					

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle

Annaralis, Maryland 21401

(30. 269-2438

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Magi No. 2105305833

DOE __yes __no

1. Nan	1e (indicate p	referred name)		
historic	ESTHER F.			
and/or common	skipjack			
2. Loc	ation			
street & numbe	Gibsontoun Road			not for publication
city, town	Ti1ghman	vicinity of	congressional district	
state	Maryland	county	Talbot	
3. Clas	ssification			
Category district building(s) structure site object	Ownership public private both Public Acquisition in process being considered not applicable	Status X occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible X yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park private residence religious scientific X transportation other:
4. Owi	ner of Prope	erty (give names a	nd mailing addresses	s of <u>all</u> owners)
name Bu	ıck Garvin			
street & numbe	r		telephone no) .:
city, town	Cilghman	state	and zip code Maryl	Land 21671
	ation of Leg	gal Descripti	on	
courthouse, reç	gistry of deeds, etc.			liber
street & numbe	r .			folio
city, town			state	
6. Rep	resentation	n in Existing	Historical Surv	eys
title				
date			federal state	e county loc
pository for s	survey records			
city, town		•	state	

7.	Des	crip	tion

Condition		Check one	Check one		
excellent good fair	deteriorated ruins unexposed	unaltered	original site moved date	of move	

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Period prehisto 1400-14 1500-15 1600-16 1700-17 1800-18 1900-	oric _ 199 _ 599 _ 599 _	Areas of Significance— archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agriculture architecture art commerce communications	ic 	cck and justify is community please conservation economics education engineering exploration/se industry invention	anning	law 	ature tary	chitecture	x	religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific da	tes	1954	E	Builder/Architec	t	Unknown				
check: Ap		able Criteria:	_A	В С	D					
A	pplic	able Exception:	A	BC	_D	EF	G			The second second
Le	eve1	of Significance:	n	ationals	tate	local				
- ·										

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This vessel is significant as being one of the 36 surviving traditional Chesapeake Bay skipjacks and a member of the last commercial sailing fleet in the United States. Out of a fleet of hundreds of skipjacks that worked Bay waters in the early years of this century, today only this small number remain to carry on the tradition of working sail.

The skipjack evolved as a distinct type of Bay vessel in the 1890's as a cheaper-to-construct alternative to the earlier bugeyes and other traditional framed craft, in a period when shipbuilding costs were rising and the oyster catch was diminishing. The type was devised by enlarging (to 25 to 60 feet) the hull of the ordinary, unframed, quare-sterned Bay crabbing skiff, and giving it a deadrise bottom, a-deck, a cabin, and a sloop rig. The result—with its unframed, hard chine, cross-planked, V-bottom—proved inexpensive to build, easy to repair, and could be constructed by a competent house carpenter. Skipjacks were specifically designed as oyster dredge boats, with wide beams and low freeboard lending stability and providing a large working space on deck. The single masted rig, with sharp-headed mainsail and large jib, was easy to handle, powerful in light winds, and handy in coming about quickly for another pass over the oyster beds.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. T-530

21201

Maryland

state

Howard I. Chapelle, American Small Sailing Craft (New York: W.W. Norton, 1951)

H.I. Chapelle, Chesapeake Bay Skipjacks (St. Michaels, Md: CBMM, n.d.)

10.	Geographical Data	
Quadran	of nominated property igle name ferences do NOT complete UTM reference	Quadrangle scale
AZone	Easting Northing	B
C E G		D
Verbal l	boundary description and justification	
List all	states and counties for properties overlapp code	county code
state	code	county code
11.	Form Prepared By	
name/title	e Anne Witty/ M.E. Hayward	
organizat	tion Maryland Historical Society	date 5/84
street & ı	number 201 W, Monument St.	telephone 685-3750

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return to:

Baltimore

city or town

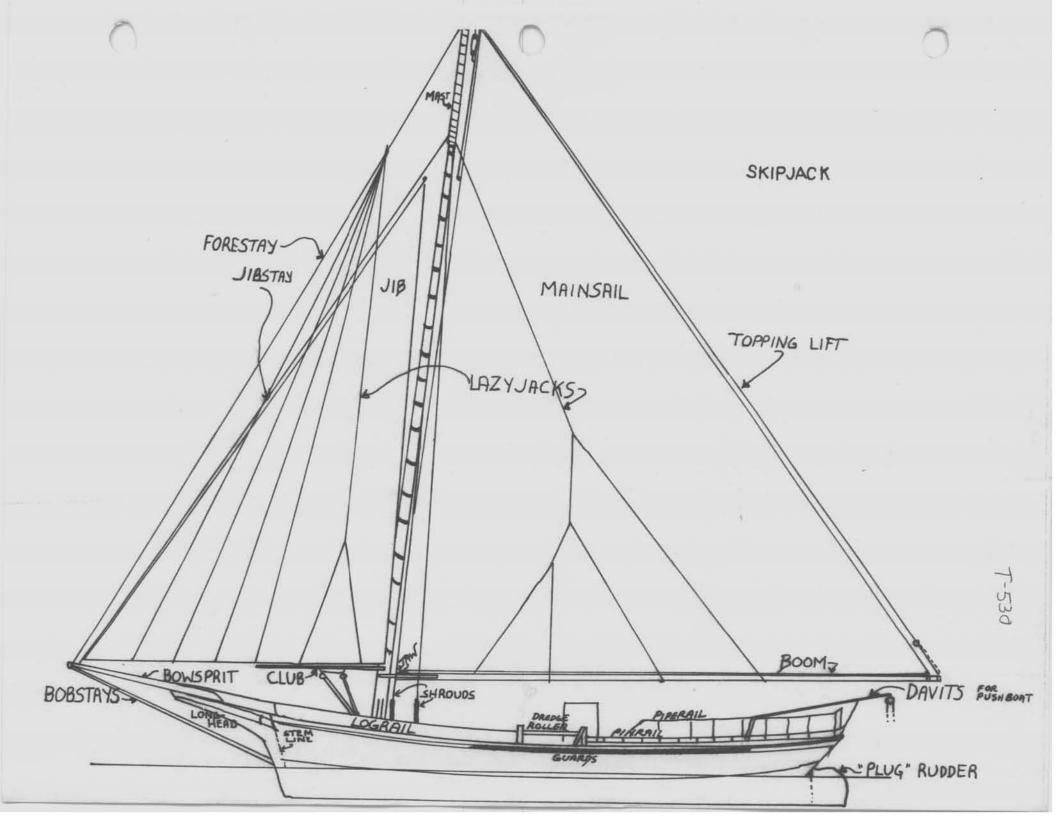
Maryland Historical Trust

Shaw House

21 State Circle

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

(301) 269-2438





402-7

T-530

ESTHER F. Tilghman, Md.

Starboard bow M.C. Wootton 7/84



402-17

T-530

ESTHER F. Tilghman, Md.

Starboard stern
M.C. Wootton 7/84



T-530

ESTHER F. Tilghman, Md.

Starboard side-deck, bow M.C. Wootton 7/84

8-704



402-13

T-530

ESTHER F. Tilghman, Md.

Deck view - stern M.C. Wootton 7/84