

CT-794

LET'S SEE (Potomac River dory boat)
Solomons, Maryland

LET'S SEE is a 26' long V-bottomed, power wooden dory boat built at River Springs, Maryland in 1934 by Thomas "Buddy" Gibson. The half-decked, plank-on-frame vessel has a beam of 8'8" and a depth of 2'8", with a sharp, plumb stem and a raking transom stern. It was used for oystering and is now on display at the Calvert Marine Museum. LET'S SEE is significant as a rare survival of a very localized type of Bay-area craft, the Potomac River dory boat. It is of special interest because the vessel type follows the "northern model" of construction, using plank-on-frame methods instead of the more traditional Bay area cross-planked construction methods for small craft. This construction technique is seen on only a few Chesapeake Bay small craft.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic LET'S SEE

and/or common Potomac River dory boat CMM 76-380

2. Location

street & number _____ not for publication

city, town Solomons _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district

state Maryland _____ county Calvert

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Calvert Marine Museum

street & number _____ telephone no.: 326-3719

city, town Solomons _____ state and zip code Maryland 20688

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. _____ liber

street & number _____ folio

city, town _____ state

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title _____

date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records _____

city, town _____ state

7. Description

Survey No. CT-794

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date of move _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

This vessel is a V-bottomed power wooden dory boat used for oystering, built at River Springs, Maryland in 1934 by Thomas "Buddy" Gibson. The half-decked, plank-on-frame boat measures 26' long, with a beam of 8'8" and a depth of 2'8". It has a sharp, plumb stem and a raking transom stern. Painted white, the boat is decorated with red, green, yellow, and brown stripes, and gray and green trim. An unusual survival, the boat is on display at the Calvert Marine Museum in Solomons, where it is exhibited with oystering gear for hand-tonging. The type is known as a Potomac River dory boat.

The boat is planked fore-and-aft over a complete set of double sawn frames. She has hard chines, a sharp, plumb stem, and a straight-sided transom stern with a modified wineglass shape, raked about 30° aft. There is some rocker to the sheer, a short entry, and a long run aft. The sides are well tucked up to the transom. The keel deepens into a skeg aft at the stern, and contains the propellor shaft. The rudder is hung outboard on a free-standing post that straightens the angle of the rake from the transom and provides space for the propellor.

The boat is partially decked and open at the stern; washboards line the sides. There is an enclosed, windowless deckhouse with a door and sliding hatch cover on the foredeck. A 5"-high coaming lines the cockpit. There is a sampson post on the foredeck and a pole mounted inside the transom. Horseshoe-shaped stern sheet line the transom.

The boat was probably built for power and there is an inboard gasoline engine located just aft of midships. The propellor is missing.

After the boat came to the Museum some renovation work was done--the deckhouse had a new roof and slide added, along with new handrails on the cabin roof, and the toe rail was repaired. The metal was replaced around the transom, which was renailed. The boat was also repainted. The hull is white with a brown sheer strake and a red, green, and yellow stripe below the sheer. The stern sheets are green and the cabin roof and culling board are gray. The floorboards are unpainted.

The boat is in fair condition, open at the seams. As displayed, it is set up for oystering, with a culling board laid athwartships, two pairs of hand tongs, and a shovel. A 14"-high bulkhead amidships provides a separate compartment for carrying oysters, away from the engine and steering box. Oyster shells cover the forward section of the floorboards.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1934 **Builder/Architect** Thomas "Buddy" Gibson

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
 and/or
 Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G
 Level of Significance: national state local

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

This vessel is significant as a rare survival of a very localized type of Bay-area craft, the Potomac River dory boat. This vessel type was used for tonging for oysters and is displayed with hand-tonging gear at the Calvert Marine Museum. The vessel type is particularly significant because it follows the "northern model" for construction of a V-bottom boat, using plank-on-frame methods instead of the more traditional Bay-area cross planked construction methods. This construction technique is seen on only a few Chesapeake Bay craft.

'S SEE was built at River Springs, Maryland in 1934 by Thomas "Buddy" Gibson and was used for oystering. Unlike many of the Bay-built small craft, the Potomac River dory boat type was built plank-on-frame rather than with cross-planked construction, although making use of the traditional V-bottom form. According to Howard Chapelle (American Small Sailing Craft), "the northern system required a complete frame system, and the bottom planking was put on fore and aft, as is still done in many small yachts of this hull-form. To allow this build, the hull must adhere to certain fundamental rules and the chine must have quite a sweep in profile forward so that it reaches high on the stem. This feature . . . allows the plank to reach the stempost without a great twist being formed in the lower strakes . . ." Following this model, the LET'S SEE retains a hard chine and V-bottom, but is fore-and-aft planked. The boat is also significant for its distinctive finish: it is decorated with red, green, yellow, and brown stripes on a white hull, and gray and green trim elsewhere on the boat. This vivid coloration is typical of the Potomac River dory boats, as they were characteristically bright in comparison with the majority of the all-white Bay craft.

While this example, the LET'S SEE, seems to have been built for power, the Potomac River dory boats were also built for sail, with two-masted leg-of-mutton rigs.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. CT-794

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

See also, plans of the vessel drawn by W. Hall at the Calvert Marine Museum, Solomons, Md

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification _____

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Witty/ M.E. Hayward

organization Maryland Historical Society date 5/84

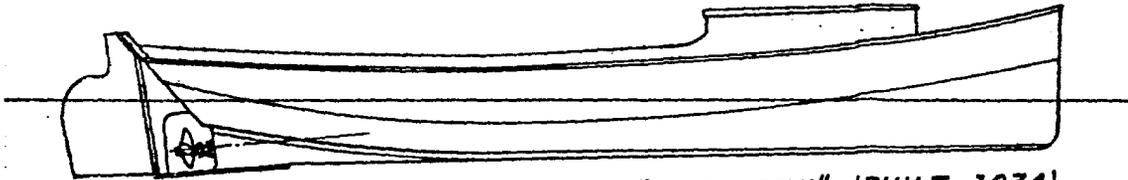
street & number 201 W. Monument St. telephone 685-3750

city or town Baltimore state Maryland

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
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21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438



26' POTOMAC RIVER DORY BOAT - "LETS SEE" (BUILT 1934)

ALAN CHESLEY
1980



CT-794

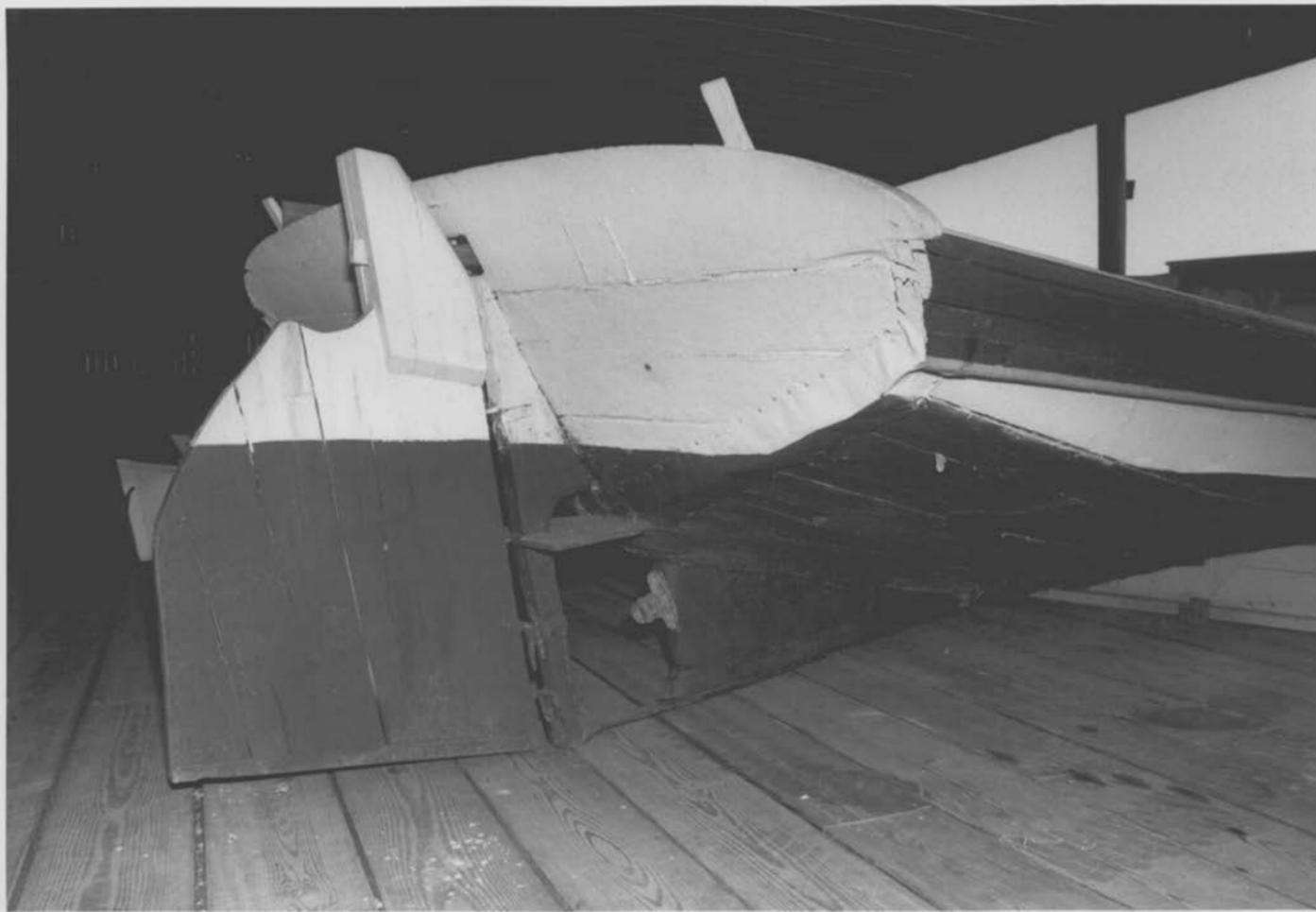
CT-794

LET'S SEE
Solomons, Md

bow

M. C. Wootton

4/84



CT-794

CT-794

LET'S SEE
Solomons, Md

stern

M. C. Wootton

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CT-794

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LET'S SEE
Solomons, Md

stern
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