Survey No. S-238

Magi No. 2002385733

DOE __yes __no

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic IDA MAY

and/or common

2. Location

street & number ____ not for publication

city, town Chance ____ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Somerset

3. Classification

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

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

name Captain Elbert Gladden

street & number telephone no.: 784-2180

city, town Chance state and zip code Maryland 21816

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

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Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	___ original site
X good	___ ruins	___ altered	___ moved date of move _____
___ fair	___ 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 42.2' long two-sail bateau, or V-bottom deadrise type of centerboard sloop, commonly referred to as a skipjack. She was built in 1906 in Urbanna or Deep Creek, Virginia, using typical Bay cross-planked construction methods, and is a member of the working fleet of sailing oyster dredgeboats. She has a beam of 14.4', a depth of 3.3', and a net register tonnage of 7. She carries a typical skipjack rig of jib-headed mainsail and large jib, and has a longhead or clipper bow and a square stern. The wooden hull is painted the traditional white.

IDA MAY has a sharp, slightly raking stem with a longhead mounted beneath the bowsprit. At her stern, the chine meets the transom below the waterline in an unusually low "tuck." The transom is steeply raked with a rudder carried on pintles and mounted on an outboard skeg. There is a chock or jig for the pushboat mounted to starboard of the rudder. Guards are mounted on the sides of the hull to protect it from the bumping of the oyster dredges.

The single mast is raked somewhat aft, set up with double shrouds, forestay, and jibstay. A topping lift leads to the end of the boom, which is jawed to the mast. Lazyjacks are used for furling both mainsail and jib. The mainsail, laced to the boom, is jib-headed; the large jib has a club on its foot. The bowsprit, braced with headrails (flying wooden braces) is rigged with double chain bobstays and chain bowsprit shrouds. In addition to the sail rig, typical of the skipjack, the vessel carries a motorized pushboat suspended over the stern on davits; this can be "chocked" into the stern in order to push the larger boat.

The skipjack is flush-decked. There is a tall trunk cabin aft with a "doghouse" addition with large windows at its forward end, and a companionway slide in the after end. There is also a slant-topped, low cuddy hatch forward, with a slide providing access to the forepeak. The deck is surrounded by a high pinrail around the stern quarters, and a low pinrail atop a lograil at the bows. The vessel carries dredging gear including oyster dredges, rollers mounted on the rails amidships, winders, and a winder engine.

The vessel is painted white and the name, in applied letters on the transom and on the bow, has been painted over in white. The name is also carried on nameboards near the stern. Trailboards mounted on the longhead have the name IDA MAY in gold letters on a lozenge with three flag shields in red, white, and blue, and an eagle/shield/arrows motif on a dark ground. There is a red stripe carried from the longhead back onto the hull below the sheer.

8. Significance

Survey No. S-238

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

Specific dates 1906 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

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 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, 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.

IDA MAY is of interest as being one of the older skipjacks still dredging in the Chesapeake fleet. She was built in 1906 in Deep Creek, Virginia following traditional Bay-area design and construction methods. She has worked in the oyster-dredging fleet since her building and is presently based at Deal Island. The vessel is one of the 19 surviving working skipjacks to have been built previous to 1912, although, like other members of the fleet, she has been much repaired over the years. She has some modern additions, including a "doghouse" built onto her cabin trunk for the comfort of the helmsman.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Robert Burgess, Chesapeake Sailing Craft, Part I (Cambridge, M.D: Tidewater Publishers, 1975)

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

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____ **Quadrangle scale** _____

UTM **References** do NOT complete UTM references

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A				B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

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 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
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

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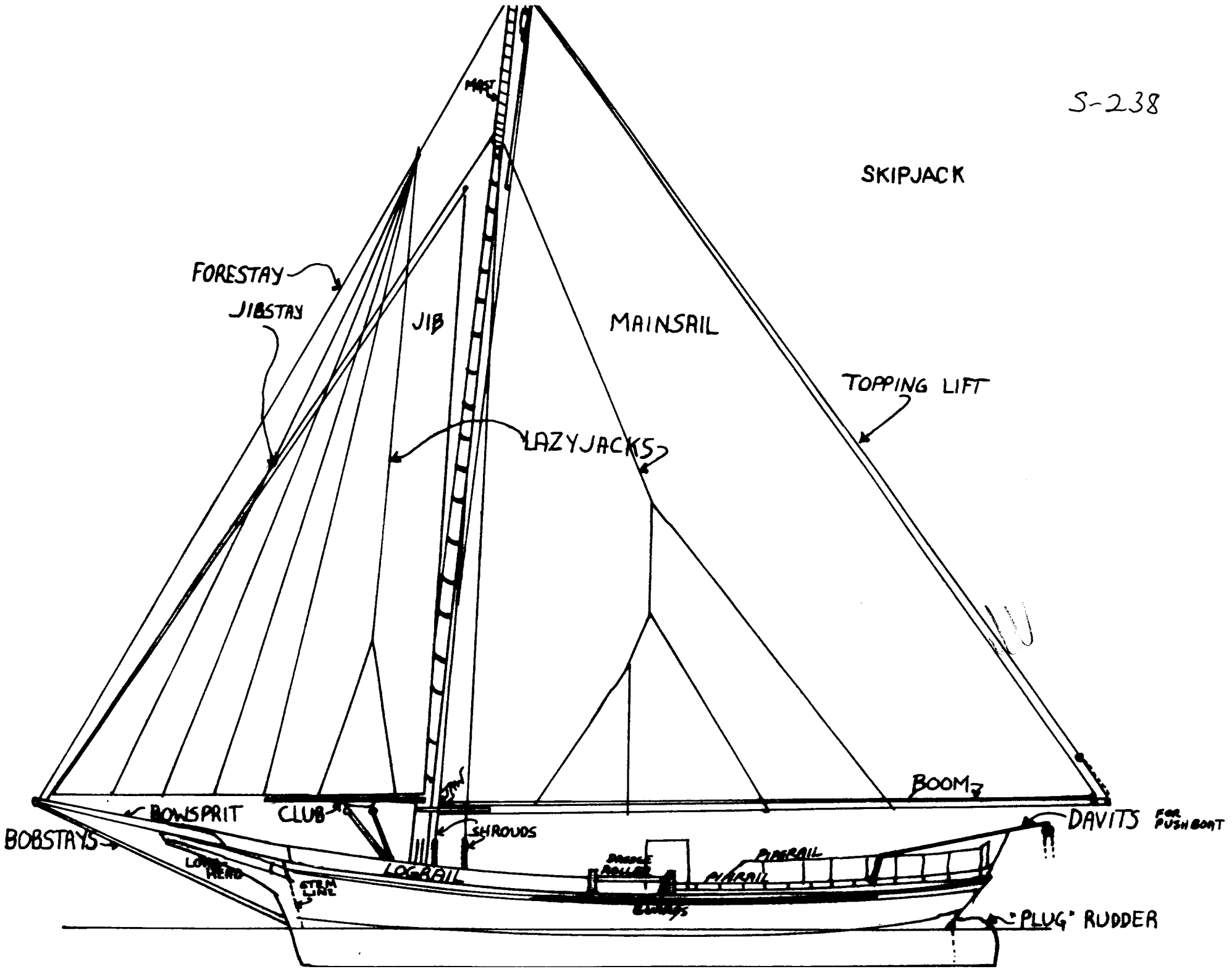
SKIPJACK
MAST
FORESTAY
JIBSTAY
JIB
MAINSAIL
TOPPING LIFT
LAZYJACKS
BOOM
BOWSPRIT
CLUB
SHROUDS
DAVITS FOR PUSHBOAT
BOBSTAYS
LOGRAIL
PIPERAIL
PIPERAIL
STEM LINE
"PLUG" RUDDER

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1D M

S-238

IDA MAY
Wenona, Md

~~starboard~~ port bow sail
M.C. Wootton 11/83

41
DE MAY

S-238

IDA MAY
Wenona, Md

starboard side
M.C. Wootton

10/83

S-238

IDA MAY
Wenona, Md

stern
M.C. Wootton 10/83

DA MAY

S-238

IDA MAY
Wenona, Md

starboard bow
M.C. Wootton 10/83