SUSAN MAY is a 46' long fore-and-aft planked sloop with a skipjack rig. She has a beam of 15.9', a depth of 1.6', and a gross registered 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 1901 in Pocomoke City, Maryland SUSAN MAY 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. SUSAN MAY is of special interest as being one of the oldest skipjacks and for being among the few members of the skipjack fleet not built with typical Bay-area cross-planked construction methods.
1. Name  
(indicate preferred name)

historic  SUSAN MAY
and/or common

2. Location

street & number  LOWER THOROFARE  N/A  not for publication

city, town  Wenona  n/a  vicinity of  congressional district

state  Maryland  024  county  Somerset  039

3. Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Present Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>district</td>
<td>public</td>
<td>occupied</td>
<td>agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>building(s)</td>
<td>private</td>
<td>unoccupied</td>
<td>commercial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>structure</td>
<td>both</td>
<td>work in progress</td>
<td>educational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>site</td>
<td>Public Acquisition</td>
<td>in process</td>
<td>entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x object</td>
<td>x not applicable</td>
<td>yes: restricted</td>
<td>government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

name  Captain Clifton Benton

street & number  

city, town  Wenona  state and zip code  Maryland 21870

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.  n/a  liber

street & number  

city, town  

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title  Survey of Surviving Traditional Chesapeake Bay Craft

date  1983-1984  

depository for survey records  Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town  Annapolis,  state  Maryland  21401
Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This vessel is a fore-and-aft-planked sloop with a typical two-sail skipjack rig. She works in the Maryland oyster dredging fleet. Built in 1901 in Pocomoke City, Maryland, she measures 46 feet long, with a beam of 15.9 feet and a depth of 1.6 feet; her gross tonnage is 10 register tons. The wooden hull is painted white, with dark tan trim on the taffrail, cabin door, and hatch covers.

In shape the vessel has a longhead bow, with a sharply raking stem and hollow, clipper-like lines. She has a shallow, steeply raked transom stern with a modified platform similar to a patent stern built over the transom. The rudder is carried inboard, well below the waterline. There is a jig for the pushboat on the middle of the transom.

The deck is flush, with several deck structures. From the stern forward these include: a box over the steering gear, located well forward of the after rail; a tall trunk cabin with a slide and a central, full-length door; a main hatch; a box over the winders; and a hatch laid across the deck just aft of the mast. The boat carried dredging gear, rollers for the dredges, and davits for a pushboat suspended over the stern.

The single mast is well raked aft, and bows a bit aft as well. It is set up with shrouds, forestay, jibstay, and a topping lift. The boom is jawed to the mast. The jib-headed mainsail is laced to the boom and carried on wooden mast hoops. There is a club-footed jib. The bowsprit is squared off on top, and rigged with bobstays and bowsprit shrouds.

Decorations include trailboards with the name SUSAN MAY in gold/yellow on a blue ground, in addition to the tan paint trim on the rails, hatch covers, and cabin door.
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.

SUSAN MAY is of interest as being one of the older skipjacks still dredging in the Chesapeake fleet. She was built in 1901 in Pocomoke City, Md. and is among the few members of the skipjack fleet not built with typical Bay-area cross-planked construction. Her hull is that of a sloop, fore-and-aft-planked, with the typical skipjack sailing rig. The vessels KATHRYN (1901) and REBECCA RUARK (1896) are the only others in the fleet to be fore-and-aft planked. SUSAN MAY is one of the 21 surviving working skipjacks to have been built previous to 1912. She has worked in the oyster dredging fleet since her building and is presently based at Deal Island.
10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property: less than one acre.

Quadrangle name: Deal Island, MD

Quadrangle scale: 1:24000

UTM References: do NOT complete UTM references

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Easting</th>
<th>Northing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>41 48 70</td>
<td>4 2 2 4 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>state</th>
<th>code</th>
<th>county</th>
<th>code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Anne Witty/ M. E. Hayward

Organization: Radcliffe Maritime Museum

Maryland Historical Society

Date: May, 1984

Street & number: 201 West Monument Street

Telephone: (301) 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

PS-2746
1. Name  (indicate preferred name)

historic       SUSAN MAY

and/or common

2. Location

street & number _________________________________________________________ not for publication

city, town       Wenona       __ vicinity of       congressional district

state           Maryland       county       Somerset

3. Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Present Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>district</td>
<td>public</td>
<td>occupied</td>
<td>museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>building(s)</td>
<td>private</td>
<td>unoccupied</td>
<td>commercial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>structure</td>
<td>both</td>
<td>work in progress</td>
<td>educational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>site</td>
<td>Public Acquisition</td>
<td>in process</td>
<td>entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>object</td>
<td>being considered</td>
<td>yes: restricted</td>
<td>government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>not applicable</td>
<td>yes: unrestricted</td>
<td>industrial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accessible

Present Use

x    agriculture
x    commercial
x    transportation

X    occupied
X    work in progress
X    unoccupied

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

name       Captain Clifton Benton

telephone no.:  ____________________________

street & number  ____________________________

city, town       Wenona       state and zip code       Maryland 21870

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

pository for survey records

city, town       ____________________________ state
### 7. Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Check one</th>
<th>Check one</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>excellent</em></td>
<td>deteriorated</td>
<td>unaltered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>good</em></td>
<td>ruins</td>
<td>altered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>fair</em></td>
<td>unexposed</td>
<td>original site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>moved date of move</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

This vessel is a fore-and-aft-planked sloop with a typical two-sail skipjack rig. She works in the Maryland oyster dredging fleet. Built in 1901 in Pocomoke City, Maryland, she measures 46 feet long, with a beam of 15.9 feet and a depth of 1.6 feet; her gross tonnage is 10 register tons. The wooden hull is painted white, with dark tan trim on the taffrail, cabin door, and hatch covers.

In shape the vessel has a longhead bow, with a sharply raking stem and hollow, clipper-like lines. She has a shallow, steeply raked transom stern with a modified platform similar to a patent stern built over the transom. The rudder is carried inboard, well below the waterline. There is a jig for the pushboat on the middle of the transom.

The deck is flush, with several deck structures. From the stern forward these include: a box over the steering gear, located well forward of the after rail; a tall trunk cabin with a slide and a central, full-length door; a main hatch; a box over the winders; and a hatch laid across the deck just aft of the mast. The boat carried dredging gear, rollers for the dredges, and davits for a pushboat suspended over the stern.

The single mast is well raked aft, and bows a bit aft as well. It is set up with shrouds, forestay, jibstay, and a topping lift. The boom is jawed to the mast. The jib-headed mainsail is laced to the boom and carried on wooden mast hoops. There is a club-footed jib. The bowsprit is squared off on top, and rigged with bobstays and bowsprit shrouds.

Decorations include trailboards with the name SUSAN MAY in gold/yellow on a blue ground, in addition to the tan paint trim on the rails, hatch covers, and cabin door.
8. Significance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</th>
<th>Builder/Architect</th>
<th>Specific dates</th>
<th>Check: Applicable Criteria:</th>
<th>and/or</th>
<th>Level of Significance:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>— prehistoric</td>
<td>— archeology-prehistoric — community planning — landscape architecture — religion</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>__ A __ B __ C __ D__ E</td>
<td></td>
<td>national __ state __ local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1400-1499</td>
<td>— archeology-historic — conservation — law — science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>__ A __ B __ C __ D__ E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1500-1599</td>
<td>— agriculture — economics — literature — sculpture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>__ A __ B __ C __ D__ E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600-1699</td>
<td>— architecture — education — military — social/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>__ A __ B __ C __ D__ E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700-1799</td>
<td>— art — engineering — music — humanitarian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>__ A __ B __ C __ D__ E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800-1899</td>
<td>X commerce — exploration/settlement — philosophy — theater — transportation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>__ A __ B __ C __ D__ E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>X</strong> 1900__</td>
<td><em>X</em> communications — industry — politics/government — invention — other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>__ A __ B __ C __ D__ E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

SUSAN MAY is of interest as being one of the older skipjacks still dredging in the Chesapeake fleet. She was built in 1901 in Pocomoke City, Md. and is among the few members of the skipjack fleet not built with typical Bay-area cross-planked construction. Her hull is that of a sloop, fore-and-aft-planked, with the typical skipjack sailing rig. The vessels KATHRYN (1901) and REBECCA RUARK (1896) are the only others in the fleet to be fore-and-aft planked. SUSAN MAY is one of the 19 surviving working skipjacks to have been built previous to 1912. She has worked in the oyster dredging fleet since her building and is presently based at Deal Island.
9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property ____________________________

Quadrangle name ____________________________ Quadrangle scale ____________________________

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Easting</th>
<th>Northing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verbal boundary description and justification

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>state</th>
<th>code</th>
<th>county</th>
<th>code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>state</th>
<th>code</th>
<th>county</th>
<th>code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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

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
S-241

SUSAN MAY
Wenona, Md

port side sail
M. C. Wotton   11/83
S-241

SUSAN MAY
Wenona, Md.

Port bow
M.C. Wootton 7/84
S-241

SUSAN MAY
Wenona, Md.

Stern
M.C. Wootton 7/84
S-241

SUSAN MAY
Wenona, Md.

Bow (vessel at dock)
M.C. Wootton  7/84
S-241

SUSAN MAY
Wenona, Md

port bow sail
M. C. Wootton  11/83