

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USD/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

KATHRYN (Chesapeake Skipjack)

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

T-532

Historic Name: **KATHRYN**

Other Name/Site Number: Chesapeake Skipjack *Kathryn*

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: Dogwood Harbor

Not for publication: N/A

City/Town: Tilghman Island

Vicinity: N/A

State: MD

County: Talbot

Code: 041

Zip Code: 21671

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: X

Public-Local:

Public-State:

Public-Federal:

Category of Property

Building(s):

District:

Site:

Structure: X

Object:

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

 1

 1

Noncontributing

 buildings

 sites

 structures

 objects

 0 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 1

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

- Entered in the National Register _____
- Determined eligible for the National Register _____
- Determined not eligible for the National Register _____
- Removed from the National Register _____
- Other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

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FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: Transportation

Sub: Water-related

Current: Transportation

Sub: Water-related

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: N/A

MATERIALS:

Foundation: (Hull) Wood

Walls: (Hull) Wood

Roof: (Hull) Wood

Other: (Superstructure) Wood

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Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The Chesapeake Bay skipjack *Kathryn*, official number 161189, is a historic working oyster dredge sailboat homeported in Tilghman Island, Maryland. Built at Crisfield, Maryland, in 1901, she is 50 feet long, 16 feet, 8 inches wide, and has a depth of 4 feet, 2 inches.

HULL

Kathryn's hull is a modification of the standard hard chine skipjack design. The hull has the same general form as a standard skipjack with a sharp convex bow, beamy midsection, and counter stern. The difference lies in that *Kathryn*, like a few other skipjacks such as *Susan May* (1901) and *Maggie Lee* (1903), is planked fore-and aft with a rounded chine rather than having a hard chine and being planked athwartships in a herring-bone pattern. *Kathryn* carries the traditional Chesapeake longhead or clipper bow with straight raking stem.

The bowsprit is 22 feet long and sided 12 by 11 inches at the after inboard end. The forward 5½ feet are varnished with the rest painted white. The ornamental trailboards mounted on the longhead identify the boat. The letters are hand-carved and gilded with vines and leaves worked into the design on each end. The flat background around the letters is painted maroon and the rest of the trailboard is dark green. An eagle figurehead is mounted at the end of the trailboards. *Kathryn* also carries two sets of name boards on the hull, one pair just abaft the bow and the other near the stern. They are made of varnished mahogany with gold painted letters.

There are hawse-holes in the knightheads on each side of the bow. The stern is a square or transom stern with a long overhang. The rudder is a plug rudder carried well inboard and beneath the transom on a round rudder stock. The hull is painted white with a red stripe painted along a bead cut in the sides beneath the guards (wales) located at midships to protect against the bumping of the dredges. A push plate to accomodate the bow of the push boat is mounted in the center of the transom of the skipjack. It is 12½ inches wide, 31 feet, 3 inches long and is made of 2-inch stock.

DECK

The deck is flush-decked with fore-and-aft wood decking varying from 3½ to 3¾ inches wide. The king plank is 33 inches wide and runs from the bow to the main hatch coaming with the mast set in the middle. A hand operated anchor windlass painted silver is mounted just aft of the stanchion post. Just aft of the mast is the main hatchway which measures 6 feet, 7 inches wide, 5 feet, 7 inches long, and 8½ inches high. The hatch coaming material is sided 2½ inches. Continuing aft are the dredge winders and the dredge winch box which measures 4 feet, 7¾ inches wide, 3 feet, 4½ inches long, and 3 feet, 5½ inches high. A horseshoe is attached with the open end up on the port side of the winder box. Aft of the winder a second smaller hatch measures 3 feet, 5 inches wide, 3 feet, 5½ inches long and 9 inches high. All stock is 2½ inches thick.

Continuing aft is a low trunk cabin with a three-sided doghouse added to the aft-end. The cabin is 8 feet, 6 inches wide, 7 feet, 10 inches long, and 2 feet, 8½ inches high. There are three windows, one each on the sides and one on the forward end. The window openings are

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19½ inches long and 9 inches high with 4 iron protective rods inserted in the outside framing to protect the two pane glass windows. The dog-house is 5 feet wide, 18½ inches high, 3 feet, 9½ inches long at the bottom and, due to a slanting back of the forward side, the top is 3 feet, 1 inch long.

The deck is surrounded by a low pinrail or toerail forward atop the lograil, and a higher pinrail from the dredge rollers aft. At the stern the pinrail is rounded around the stern. The wooden rails are 3 inches wide and 2½ inches thick. The lograil is 4½ to 5 inches high and the height of the pinrail aft is 2 inches. Below decks, the cabin is covered with 1½-inch varnished tongue and groove panelling. A bunk is located on each side under the deck. At the after end of the deck is the wheel box which is 3 feet, 2 inches long, 1 foot, 11½ inches wide, and 2 feet, 4 inches high. The metal wheel is painted silver and embossed "J.T. Matthews Co. Balt. Md."; along the front end of the outer band around the spokes. The steering gear is hydraulic. A pair of davits made of 2½-inch by 2½-inch square metal stock for carrying the push boat are located at the stern.

RIG

Kathryn carries the standard skipjack rig or a jib-headed mainsail and a large jib. Her single wooden mast measures 12 inches in diameter at the deck and has wire standing rigging of double shrouds, a forestay, jib-stay, and topping lift. A gold leafed wooden ball is mounted on top of the 64-foot mast. All running rigging is nylon line. The mainsail is laced to a laminated, varnished boom and is carried on wooden hoops at the mast. The boom is jawed to the mast. The jib has a club along its foot and rigged out to the bowsprit. The bowsprit is set up with double chain bobstays and double chain bowsprit shrouds.

DREDGE EQUIPMENT

Kathryn carries two dredges, one on each side with the winders and winder engine amidships. Where the dredge comes onboard on each side the hull is protected by a steel roller bar, 4 feet, 11 inches long and 4½ inches in diameter mounted along the rails. A vertical steel roller 2 feet long and 3 inches in diameter is mounted to the hull just aft of the horizontal bar to protect the rail from the dredge wire while dredging and hauling the dredge.

PUSHBOAT

In addition to her sail rig, the *Kathryn* carries a motorized pushboat suspended from davits over the stern. The pushboat is lashed end on to the stern when proceeding under power.

CHANGES IN ORIGINAL PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Until 1967, skipjacks by law were limited to sail power only. Thus the stern davits and pushboat are relatively recent modifications. The present davits were added in 1993. A modern "doghouse" was added to the rear of the cabin for added protection of the helmsman in 1981. The mahogany nameboards were added in 1980. The original trailboards were replaced in 1981 with exact hand-carved copies made by master carver Leroy "Pepper" Langley of Solomons, Maryland. The original trailboards are now in the collection of the

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Calvert Marine Museum. While *Kathryn* originally had an eagle figurehead, it was long gone by the time the present owner, H. Russell Dize, obtained the vessel. Dize had Langley make the figurehead she now displays. The hydraulic steering mechanism was added in 1993. The present owner removed the copper sheathing along the waterline and "C-flexed" the sides in 1991. Overall the *Kathryn* is in good physical condition and retains her original appearance. She reflects only the changes required to allow her to continue working in the last American commercial fishing fleet under sail.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

Nationally: X Statewide: Locally:

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A X B C X D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):

A B C D E F G

NHL Criteria:

1, 4

NHL Theme(s):

- XIV. Transportation
 - B. Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, and Other Structures

- XII. Business
 - A. Extractive or Mining Industries
 - 5. Fishing and Livestock

Areas of Significance:

- Maritime History
- Transportation
- Commerce
- Architecture (Naval)

Period(s) of Significance:

1901-1943

Significant Dates:

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

Unknown

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State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

Soon after its introduction to the Chesapeake in the 1890s, the skipjack became the preferred oyster dredge boat. During the first quarter of this century, the skipjack fleet numbered into the hundreds. Some have estimated nearly two thousand skipjacks were built, all specifically designed for dredging oysters from the Chesapeake Bay. The peak building years were during the 1890s and the first decade of the 20th century. When the skipjack fleet was nominated to the National Register in 1985, it was estimated that 35 skipjacks existed; by 1993 only about sixteen survive afloat. *Minnie V* is preserved by the City of Baltimore, Maryland as a summer floating exhibit at the inner harbor. When oystering was profitable she was leased to watermen for winter dredging. *Rosie Parks* is maintained, interpreted, and sailed by the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. They also use *E. C. Collier* as a dry storage exhibit. Echo Hill School has *Elsworth*, and the Havre de Grace Maritime Museum *Claude W. Somers*, both unfortunately in rather bad condition. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation works with several captains and uses their skipjacks for educational excursions on the Bay. *Dee of St. Mary's*, operated by Jackie Russell, is frequently used by them.

It is estimated that only 7 to 10 skipjacks will oyster during the 1993-94 season.¹ Many of these are in poor condition. The decline in the oyster harvests leave skipjack owners little, if any, profit for properly maintaining their vessels. Nevertheless, the Chesapeake skipjack fleet is the last commercial sail powered fishing fleet in North America and the only "cohesive" sailing fleet in the western hemisphere.² *Kathryn* has the distinction of being the best sailing skipjack in the fleet and is usually considered the favorite among the fleet's captains. She is good in light winds and excellent in heavy winds. As testimony to *Kathryn's* sailing qualities, she has come in either first or second place in her class in every skipjack race she has entered during Chesapeake Appreciation Days with the exception of one, where she came in third.³

Of the approximately 16 skipjacks that survive afloat, two were determined worthy of NHL nomination, *Kathryn* and *Hilda M. Willing*. Of the skipjacks built prior to 1943, most either were in poor condition, or no longer working as oyster dredge boats. *E. C. Collier*, one of the older boats, is now a display in dry storage. The better conditioned skipjacks such as *Lady Katie*, *Herman M. Krentz*, and *Rosie Parks* are younger than 50 years old. *Kathryn* represents one of the earliest extant and one of the few fore-and-aft planked skipjacks; while *Willing* represents one of the smaller, better maintained, and better sailing skipjacks.

¹ Larry Chowning, "Chesapeake buy boats go 'up town'", *National Fisherman* (Volume 74, Number 5, September 1993), p. 33; Robert "Pete" Sweitzer phone interview by Ralph Eshelman, 13 September 1993; and Ed Farley interview by Ralph Eshelman, 10 September 1993.

² Thomas C. Gillmer, *Working Watercraft*, (Camden, ME: International Marine Publishing Company, 1972), p. 54.

³ Herman Russell Dize interview by Ralph Eshelman, Tilghman Island, Maryland, 10 September 1993; and Farley interview.

THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPORTANCE OF THE CHESAPEAKE SKIPJACK

The Chesapeake oyster fishery dates to the early 1800s when vessels from New England and New York and later New Jersey and Delaware came to the Bay to dredge oysters due to the depletion of their own native beds. Concern for depletion of the Chesapeake beds led to conservation laws banning dredging in Maryland waters in 1820 thereby restricting the harvesting of oysters to hand tonging.

In 1828 Thomas Kensett opened Baltimore's first oyster cannery having been awarded the first United States patent for his process "to preserve animal, vegetable, and other perishable goods." Because oysters were an extremely perishable product for which there was wide demand, they proved the ideal first food product to be experimentally massed-marketed through the use of the canning process. Kensett's process, followed by several other canners, allowed for national distribution of Maryland oysters.

Canning increased the demand for oysters and the ban on dredging was repealed in 1865, though dredging was restricted to specific deep water oyster beds and sail-powered vessels only. These resource conservation laws served to help save commercial sailing vessels by banning steam and later internal combustion engine powered vessels from dredging.

Due to the heavy demand for oysters the Chesapeake bug-eye oyster dredge boat reached its popularity. By the 1880s over 700 Maryland licensed dredge boats consisting of pungies, schooners, sloops, and mainly bug-eyes dredged the Bay. In 1884-1885 a record 15 million bushels of oysters were harvested from the Bay. But, as with the oyster grounds to the north, this demand and resulting over utilization of the resource caused the decline of the native Chesapeake oyster population. By the 1890s shipbuilding costs also began to rise due to depleted supplies of large timbers and higher labor costs. Similarly, large trees necessary for the construction of the traditional bug-eye log hull were becoming scarce. These changes in natural resources brought in the age of the skipjack.

A vessel was needed that was cheaper and easier to construct than the popular "chunk" or log built bug-eyes and traditionally framed schooners; that had a shallow draft so it could navigate the shallow waters of the Chesapeake; and had enough sail power and deck space to operate efficiently as an oyster dredge boat. The skipjack, a shallow draft, centerboard sailing vessel specially designed and adapted for use in the Chesapeake Bay as an oyster dredge boat met this need.

The skipjack, according to Chapelle, is the direct descendant of the sharpie which was introduced to the Chesapeake Bay from Long Island Sound about 1868. The sharpie never became popular on the Bay, perhaps because the Bay was larger and required a bigger more burdensome boat than the Sound. Chesapeake oystermen also preferred the sloop rig over the double masted sharpie because the sloop rig was more powerful for dredging in light winds. Thus regional preference and water conditions dictated a need for a sharpie-like craft which was made more beamy by adding a little deadrise aft.

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These sloop rigged vessels, rarely over 30 feet in length, were called Hampton flatties.⁴ The V-bottom or hard chine hull originated after the American Civil War in the Long Island Sound area from the "Northern skipjack" type, but it was the Chesapeake which adopted the hard chine and popularized it.⁵ Thus the skipjack (or two-sail bateau as they were also called) may be the result of a complex evolution, possibly including the sharpie, the northern unframed skipjack from Long Island Sound and the square-sterned and often flat-bottomed Chesapeake crab skiff referred to as the Hampton flattie.

Chesapeake boat-builders enlarged these skiffs to 25 to 50 feet, giving them a V-bottom or deadrise hull covered by a deck, cabin, and powered by a single-masted two sail sloop rig. The resulting skipjack is characterized as unframed, hard chine (angular sided versus a rounded bilge), typically cross or herring bone planked, with a V-bottomed hull form with one mast and two sails. A few of the early hulls were framed with fore and aft planking.

Rules of thumb for skipjack design include, maximum beam on deck equal to 1/3 length on deck, centerboard length is equal to 1/3 length on deck, mast length is equal to length on deck plus beam, boom length is equal to length on deck, and bowsprit length is equal to beam. Skipjacks were comparatively inexpensive to build, easy to repair, and could be constructed by competent house carpenters or skilled oystermen; the skills of boat builders familiar with the more complicated to construct rounded bows and rounded bilges were not needed.

One suggestion for the origin of the name skipjack which certainly seems appropriate is that it is an archaic English word meaning "inexpensive yet useful servant".⁶ The typical cost of a skipjack in 1905 was \$3000. It is said the skipjack is the most economical survivor of the Chesapeake sailing workboats.⁷ The skipjack's wide beam, hard chine, and low freeboard provided a stable, large, working and storage platform. The single-masted rig, with sharp-headed mainsail (a few had gaff rigged mainsails) and large jib, was easy to handle, powerful in light winds, and handy in coming about quickly without losing way, which was so necessary for their continuous "licks" (passes) over the oyster beds.⁸

The first recorded herring-bone planked skipjack is the 1891 built *Ruby G. Ford*, which last

⁴ Howard I. Chappelle, "The Migration of An American Boat Type", (*Contributions from the Museum of History and Technology*, Paper 25, U.S. National Museum Bulletin 228, Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1961), p. 148-149; and Howard I. Chappelle, *American Small Sailing Craft: Their Design, Development and Construction*, (New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 1951).

⁵ Richard J. Dodds and Pete Leshner, editors, *A Heritage In Wood: The Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum's Small Craft Collection* (St. Michaels, Maryland, Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, 1992), p. 45.

⁶ Frederick Tilp, "Did You Know?", *Chesapeake Bay Magazine*, (Volume 15, Number 5, 1985), p. 15.

⁷ Gillmer, p. 54.

⁸ R. J. Holt, Introduction, in *Notes on Chesapeake Bay Skipjacks* by Howard I. Chappelle (St. Michaels, MD: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, reprint of 1944 *American Neptune* article), unpagged and no date.

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sailed about 1986 and is now abandoned and in ruins at Tilghman Island, Maryland.⁹ Holt suggests the *Ford* may have been replanked as most of the early skipjacks were framed with fore and aft planking such as the *Kathryn*, built in 1901. Hard chine boats have no need for bottom frames because of their sturdy cross planked bottoms.¹⁰

By the 1930s a fleet which numbered close to two thousand in the early years of the century had dwindled dramatically as old vessels were abandoned in the face of low oyster prices and an almost non-existent market. This trend continued into the post World War II era which saw a revival of the oyster industry and a group of new skipjacks added to the fleet, bringing the numbers up into the 70s. By 1971 the fleet had dropped to 43 vessels, with a more or less steady decline since. Of the approximately 16 skipjacks still working the Chesapeake, just more than half date from the pre-1930s early period. Most of these have been rebuilt at least once and a few carry the same name although they have been completely rebuilt. A few survivors were built during the 1950s or 1970s.

Recent additions to the fleet include the *Dee of St. Mary's*, built in 1979, the *Connie Francis*, built in 1982, and the *Nathan of Dorchester*, under construction in 1993. Several vessels have been bought by individuals to be converted to yachts - a conversion which is not ideal due to the low hold height. Pleasure boaters often have required more head room which too often resulted in ugly cabin additions on deck.

The skipjack fleet has become a preservation priority in Maryland. The governor and the Maryland Historical Trust prepared a Skipjack Preservation Plan in 1988. One result of this effort was the creation of a shipyard along the waterfront of Fell's Point, Baltimore. Operated by the Lady Maryland Foundation's Maritime Institute, the yard repairs skipjacks using the labor of inner-city children under the supervision of trained shipwrights. Thus far several skipjacks have received repair work in this yard.

With the oyster harvest at an all time low and repeated threats of a moratorium on oystering in a desperate attempt to conserve the depleted oyster beds, the working skipjacks remaining in the fleet are in trouble. With little if any profit being made by their owners, the maintenance of the skipjacks is suffering. A few captains have attempted "dude" charters with mixed, but mostly limited success. Even the skipjack which is considered the Chesapeake's most economical sailing workboat cannot make a living for her owner when the oysters are too scarce to make a profit.

The extinction of America's last commercial fishing sailing fleet is unfortunately possible. This sailing fleet has survived as long as it has only due to the ban on power, although a powered push boat or yawl is allowed to motor the skipjack to and from the beds. Beginning in 1967 the skipjacks were allowed to dredge under power on Mondays and Tuesdays. In fact, most skipjacks today operate mostly on power days. Thus technically, much of the sailing fleet is not truly a working sailing fleet anymore.

⁹ Holt, *Ibid.*; and Fred Hopkins, phone interview by Ralph Eshelman, 1 September 1993.

¹⁰ Gillmer, p. 50.

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CONSTRUCTION AND CAREER OF KATHRYN

Kathryn was built in 1901, at Crisfield, Somerset County, Maryland, just off Tangier Sound. She was built with fore-and-aft planking typical of the early skipjacks and their predecessors and, unlike the more common *Ruby G. Ford*, was perhaps the first herring-bone planked skipjack. The early history of *Kathryn's* builders and early owners is unknown because all the records of the Reedville, Virginia, customs office were destroyed by fire on January 31, 1921. From the annual *List of U.S. Merchant Vessels*, we know she was homeported in Crisfield with a crew of five until 1907 when her homeport changed to Tappahannock, Virginia, and her crew increased to six. In 1914 her homeport changed to Reedville, Virginia. On 21 October 1925, John E. Spriggs of Ewell, Maryland, and John C. Marshall bought *Kathryn* for \$1,800 from J. A. Dodson of Fairport, Virginia, who had owned her since at least January 1921. It was during this period that *Kathryn* was also used as a pound net boat.¹¹ Her homeport was changed back to Crisfield and her crew was reduced to five again.

On 15 October 1938, Wells W. Evans bought *Kathryn* for \$608. Evans claimed that while dredging seed oysters, he loaded up the deck of *Kathryn* so heavily that when the boom went over to one side she almost capsized at Man-of-War Shoal in the upper Chesapeake Bay.¹² Evans sold her for "\$5.00 etc." to Irving F. Cannon on 15 October 1945, who changed her homeport to Cambridge, Maryland. Malcolm "Mac" Wheatley bought a half interest on 19 February 1947, for "\$5.00 etc." and served as captain of *Kathryn*. It was during Wheatley's term as master of the vessel that *Kathryn* received a major rebuild in 1954, including new deck and siding, at the Krantz Marine Railway at Harryhogan, Virginia. Photographs of this rebuild were published in *Chesapeake Sailing Craft*.¹³ Cannon sold his half share to Wheatley on 27 May 1963, making Wheatley full owner.

On 26 August 1975, Johnnie R. Parkinson, Jr., bought *Kathryn* for \$18,000 and changed her homeport back to Crisfield for the third time. Parkinson mortgaged *Kathryn* to Peninsula Bank in 1976. He paid off the mortgage on 19 May 1981, the day after he sold her for \$40,000 to Herman Russell Dize and William James Roe, Jr., each half owners. Parkinson claims that while he worked *Kathryn*, she got caught in a sudden storm with 80 mph winds before the sails could be shortened or taken in, driving the vessel over so far that the port side of the cabin was under water. Only an extraordinarily well built vessel could survive such treatment.¹⁴ Dize, who's 87-year-old father Daniel Dize worked one of the dredges of *Kathryn* at age 16, bought out Roe and became the sole and present owner on 1 October 1991.

Dize intends to work *Kathryn* so long as he can make a living from her. Like most of the

¹¹ Dize interview.

¹² Dize interview.

¹³ Robert H. Burgess, *Chesapeake Bay Sailing Craft* Pt. 1., (Cambridge, MD: Cornell Maritime Press, 1975), pp. 217-220.

¹⁴ Dize interview.

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captains of the skipjack fleet, a share of the oyster profits go back into the maintenance of the boat to prepare her for another season. However, it is the pride Dize has for his boat that gives *Kathryn* the best chance for survival.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
 Previously Listed in the National Register.
 Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
 Designated a National Historic Landmark.
 Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: #
 Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State Agency
 Federal Agency
 Local Government
 University
 Other (Specify Repository):

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property:

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing
 A 18 384240 4285550

Verbal Boundary Description:

All that area encompassed within the extreme length and breadth of the vessel.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary incorporates the entire area of the vessel as she lays at her berth.

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: Ralph E. Eshelman, Maritime Historian
(and heavy use of the Chesapeake Bay Skipjack Fleet National Register Nomination by
Mary Ellen Hayward)

Address: Academy of Natural Sciences
Benedict Estuarine Research Laboratory
Benedict, Maryland 20612

Telephone: 301/274-3134 or 410/326-4877

Date: September 26, 1993

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KATHRYN (skipjack)
Tilghman, Maryland

KATHRYN is a 50' long two-sail, round-bottomed bateau, or centerboard sloop, unusual for her fore-and-aft planking and rounded chine. She has a beam of 16.8', a depth of 4.2', and a net registered tonnage of 12. 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 Crisfield, Maryland KATHRYN 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. KATHRYN is of special interest for being one of the older skipjacks in the fleet and for her unusual sloop-like construction.

Survey No. T-532

Magi No.

DOE yes no

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

CHESAPEAKE BAY SKIPJACK FLEET THEMATIC GROUP

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic KATHRYN

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Gibsontown Road n/a not for publication

city, town Tilghman n/a vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland 024 county Talbot 041

3. Classification

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

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

name H. Russell Dize

street & number telephone no.:

city, town Tilghman, Maryland state and zip code Maryland 21671

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number folio

city, town state

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Survey of Surviving Traditional Chesapeake Bay Craft

date 1983-1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state MD 21401

7. Description

Survey No. T-532

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	n/a
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input 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 50' long two-sail, round-bottom bateau, or centerboard sloop. Built in 1901 in Crisfield, Maryland, the vessel is unusual because she is fore-and-aft planked, with a rounded chine rather than the more usual V-bottom, cross-planked, hard chine deadrise bateau form. She has a beam of 16.8' and a depth of 4.2', with a net register tonnage of 12. She carries a typical skipjack rig of jib-headed mainsail and large jib, and has a longhead or clipper bow and a square or transom stern. The wooden hull is painted the traditional white.

KATHRYN has a longhead bow with a straight, raking stem. Her square stern has a counter with a long overhang, and a plug rudder, carried well inboard of the transom on a round rudder stock. With her fore-and-aft planking, she is among just a few of the "skipjacks" not built by typical Bay cross-planked methods. She was largely rebuilt along her original lines in 1954 and photographs of this process are published in Robert Burgess, Chesapeake Sailing Craft. Her hull has a strip of metal sheathing at the waterline and guards at midships to protect against the bumping of the dredges.

The single mast is set up with double shrouds, a forestay, jib-stay, and topping lift. The boom is jawed to the mast. The mainsail is laced to the boom and carried on wooden hoops at the mast. The large jib has a club along its foot and is rigged out to the bowsprit. The bowsprit is set up with double chain bobstays and double chain bowsprit shrouds. In addition to the sail rig the vessel carries a motorized pushboat which is suspended on davits over the stern.

The skipjack is flush-decked, with several deck structures. These include: a low cabin trunk with a three-sided doghouse added to the after-end; a large box covering the winders; and a yellow-painted hauler frame used for pulling back the dredges. The deck is surrounded by a low pinrail forward atop a lograil, and a higher pinrail aft, rounded around the stern. There are hawse-holes in the bow. The vessel carries dredging gear in season.

KATHRYN is painted white with a red stripe on the sides of the hull beneath the guards. There is brightwork trim on the wheelbox at the after rail. Trailboards with the name KATHRYN painted on in gold, surrounded by vines and leaves, are mounted on the longhead and there is beading surrounding them. There are nameboards, painted in gold, on the hull at the bows.

8. Significance

Survey No. T-532

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 type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	1901	Builder/Architect	UNKNOWN
check: Applicable Criteria:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D
and/or			
Applicable Exception:	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> none
Level of Significance:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national	<input type="checkbox"/> state	<input type="checkbox"/> 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.

KATHRYN is of interest as being one of the older skipjacks still dredging in the Chesapeake fleet. She was built in 1901 in Crisfield, Maryland and was extensively rebuilt, following her original lines, at the Krentz shipyard in Harryhogan, Virginia in 1954. KATHRYN is unusual among the skipjacks because she is fore-and-aft planked with a rounded chine instead of the more usual cross-planked Bay construction which results in a hard chine, or V-bottom. Her rounded chine and the hawse-holes in her bow rails give her the look of a sloop or small schooner and she was registered as sloop-rigged earlier in her career. KATHRYN is one of the 21 surviving working skipjacks to have been built previous to 1912, and like other members of the fleet, she has been much repaired over the years. Lately she has had a modern "doghouse" added to her cabin trunk for the comfort of the helmsman.

See Thematic Group nomination cover form, Continuation Sheets T-532
No. 8-13

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Tilghman, MD

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 17 384240 4285550
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

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

state n/a code county code

state code county code

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

Maryland Historical Trust

State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic KATHRYN

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Gibsontown Rd not for publication

city, town Tilghman vicinity of _____ congressional district _____

state Maryland county Talbot

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
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	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input 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 H. Russell Dize

street & number _____ telephone no.: _____

city, town Tilghman, Maryland state and zip code 21671

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. T-532

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

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<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1901 **Builder/Architect**

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.

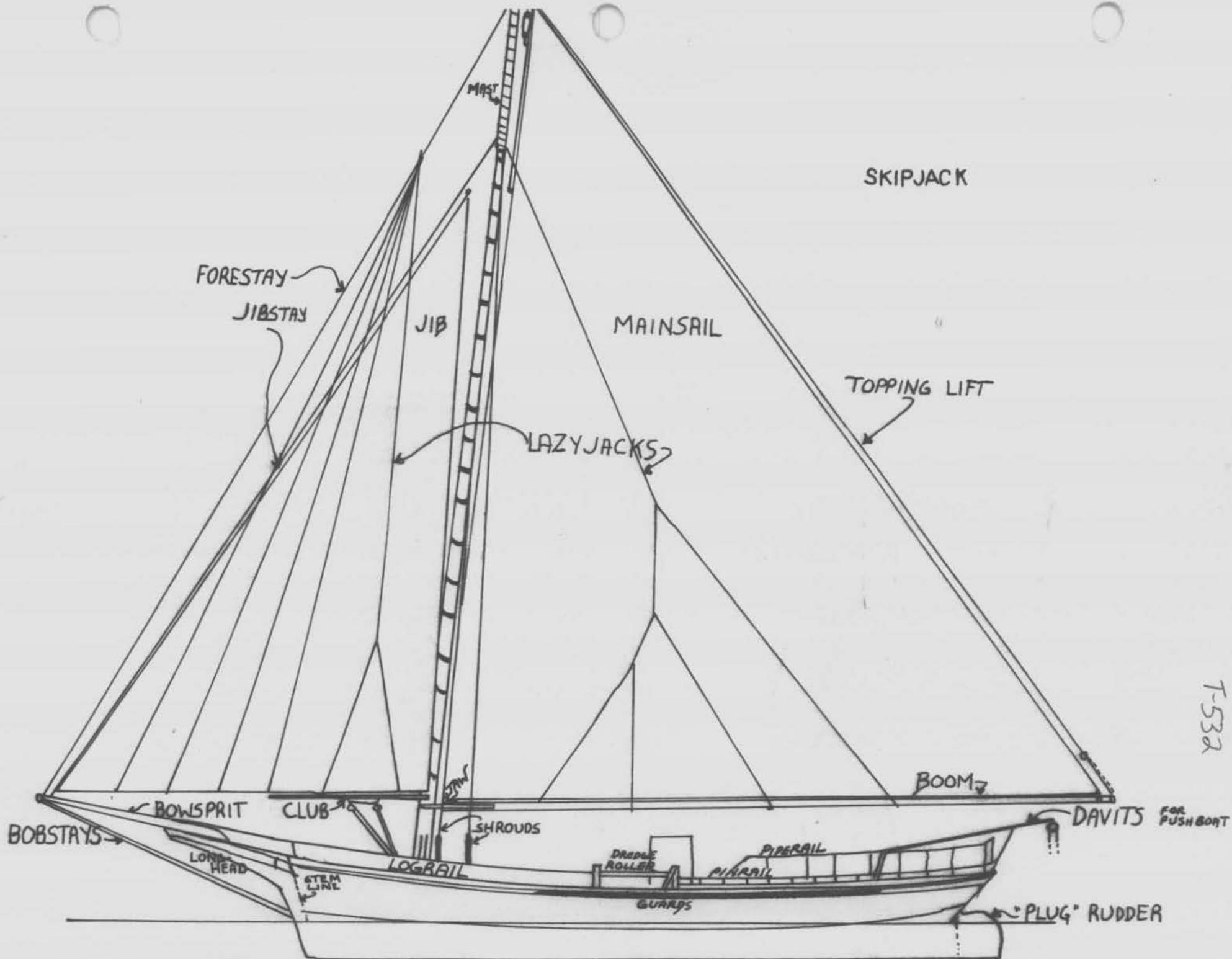
This vessel is significant as being one of the 36 surviving traditional Chesapeake Bay skipjacks and a member of the last commercial sailing fleet in the United States. Out of a fleet of hundreds of skipjacks that worked Bay waters in the early years of this century, today only this small number remain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

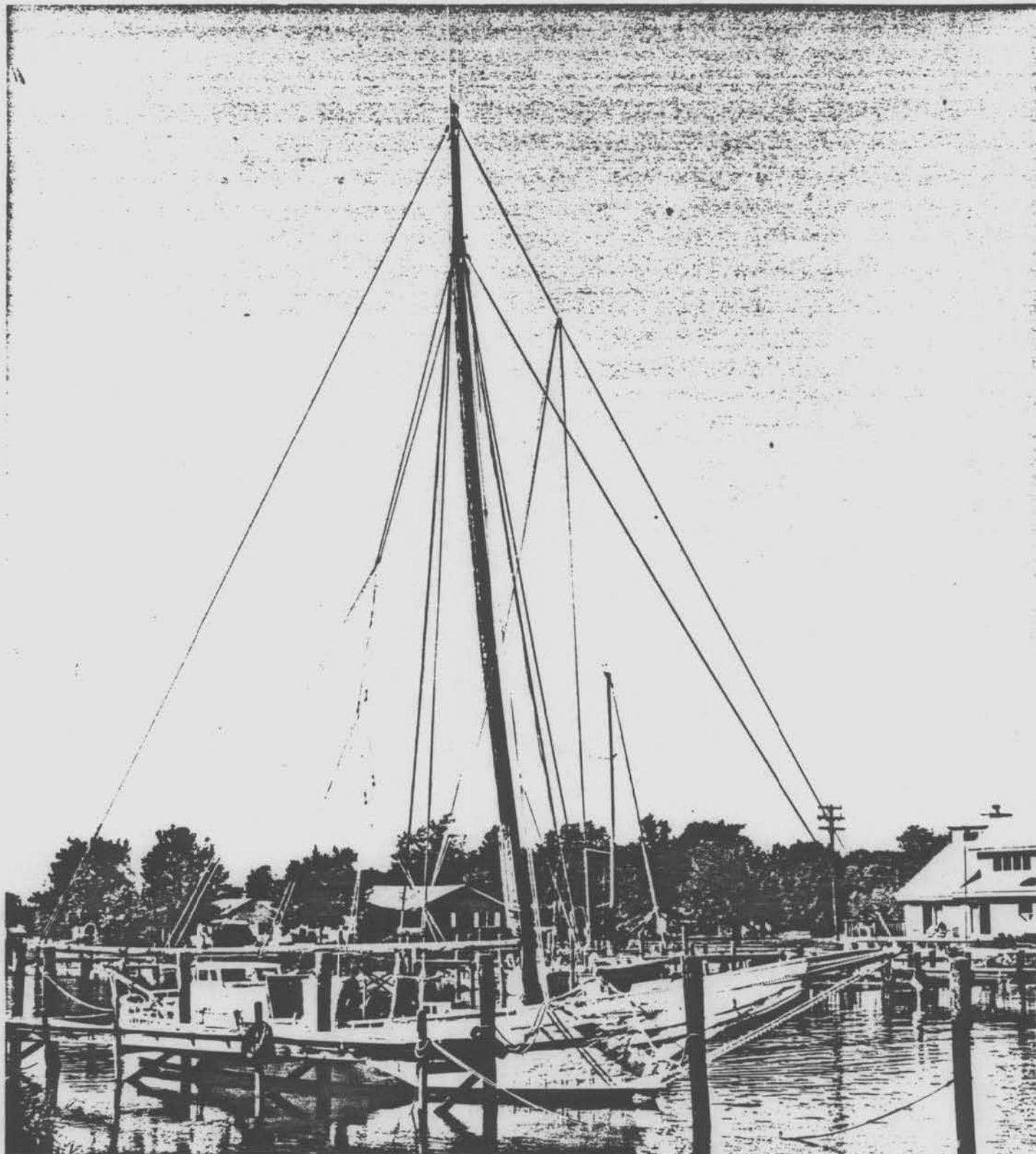
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KATHRYN is one of the 19 surviving working skipjacks to have been built previous to 1912, and like other members of the fleet, she has been much repaired over the years. Lately she has had a modern "doghouse" added to her cabin trunk for the comfort of the helmsman.



T-532



KATHYRN
TILGHMAN ISLAND, MARYLAND
Owner: H. Russell Dize
Starboard Bow Quarter View
Docked at Tilghman Island
Photo #1 by Candace Clifford, 1990
Courtesy of: NPS National Maritime Initiative



T-532

KATHRYN
Tilghman, Md

port side under sail
M.C. Wootton 11/83



T-532

KATHRYN
Tilghman, Md

starboard bow
M. C. Wootton

10/83



T-532

KATHRYN
Tilghman

starboard side
M. C. Wootton



T-532

KATHRYN
Tilghman, Md

port stern
M.C. Wootton

10/83