

Ireland's boating heritage – the future?
Oidhreacht Bhádóireachta na hÉireann – Feasta ?

Proceedings of seminar 2004
Imeachtaí an tSeimineáir 2004

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FOREWORD

On behalf of the Heritage Council, I am delighted to present the proceedings of the seminar, *Ireland's boating heritage - the future?* which took place in the Tullamore Court Hotel on 13 November 2004. Over 70 number of people attended, giving their time and expertise to this process. This was the first national event dedicated to heritage boats and it is gratifying to see the great interest in this topic. The traditional and heritage boat sector is notable by the dedication of individuals and voluntary groups who work so hard to ensure this aspect of our heritage survives for future generations.

The Heritage Council intends to follow up on the ideas included in this volume with relevant agencies and voluntary bodies and is including a section on heritage boats in its forthcoming policy paper on maritime heritage.

Nioclás Ó Conchubhar

Chairman

Standing Committee on Inland Waterways of the Heritage Council

March 2005

Thar ceann na Comhairle Oidhreachta, tá áthas orm Imeachtaí an tSeimineáir, *Oidhreacht Bhádóireachta na hÉireann – Feasta ?* a tionóladh sa Court Hotel sa Tulach Mhór ar an 13 Samhain 2004, a chur i láthair. Dhein breis is 70 duine freastal ar an imeacht agus thug uathu a gcuid ama agus a gcuid taithí don phróiseas. Dob é seo an chéad imeacht náisiúnta a chaith go hiomlán le báid oidhreachta agus is tógáil croí é an mhórspéis a léiríodh san ábhar seo. Rud suntasach is ea tiomantacht na ndaoine indibhidiúla agus na ngrúpaí a shaothraíonn go dian in earnáil na mbád traidisiúnta agus oidhreachta chun go mairfidh an ghné seo dár n-oidhrecht do na glúnta atá le teacht.

Tá sé i gceist ag an gComhairle Oidhreachta dlús a chur leis an obair maidir leis na smaointe a chuimsítear sa leabhar seo leis na háisíneachtaí agus na comhlachtaí deonacha cuí agus dá chomhartha sin beidh rannán ar bháid oidhreachta ina páipéar um polasaí ar an oidhrecht mhuirí atá le foilsiú.

Nioclás Ó Conchubhair

Cathaoirleach

An Coiste Seasta um Uiscebhealaigh Intíre ag an gComhairle Oidhreachta

Márta 2005



Participants at the seminar

INTRODUCTION

The Heritage Council's overall intention is to lobby, propose policy, and to raise awareness of Ireland's boats as an important part of our nation's heritage, under its responsibilities as outlined in the Heritage Act 1995.

The preservation of Ireland's boats, be they working or recreational boats, are an aspect of heritage that has not received much official support. Much work in recording and maintaining these boats has been carried out by voluntary groups and individuals while information and examples of boats have been collected by institutions such as the Dept of Irish Folklife in UCD and the National Museum of Ireland.

The Heritage Council, through its Marine and Coastal Committee and its Inland Waterways Committees became concerned about Irish boats, both inland and sea-going, as a neglected aspect of our heritage. To inform itself, the Council commissioned Reggie Goodbody to carry out a scoping study of the heritage boat sector in autumn 2003. Arising from this study the Council decided to host a seminar on Ireland's boats in Tullamore on 13 November 2004, to which people involved in any aspect of inland and maritime boats were invited to attend. The purpose of the seminar was to identify the main issues facing this sector so the format of the day reflected this with half the day being devoted to discussion.

Presentations were made by five people on a range of topics which are reproduced in this volume. Prof. Willie Smyth addressed the overall role of boats as part of Ireland's heritage; Jim Horgan examined the development of boats as an expression of communal genius and discussion how this aspect of heritage can be promoted and kept alive. Donal MacPolin presented the issues arising from Traditional Boats Project on recording and research boats and boat builders. John Kearon presented the ways in which boats can be preserved, and the principles of best conservation practice of heritage boats promoted through the Barcelona Charter. Reggie Goodbody outlined his approach and findings of the survey he carried out of the heritage boat sector.

In addition the presentations, a summary of the ideas arising from the workshops is included, along with the text of the Barcelona Charter on Conservation and Restoration of Traditional Ships in Operation, attendance list and a list of useful contacts.



RÉAMHRÁ

Is é mórintinn na Comhairle é, ag teacht leis an bhfreagracht atá uirthi faoi fhorálacha Achta Oidhreachta 1995, stocaireacht a dhéanamh, polasaí a mholadh, agus feasacht a leathadh ar bháid na hÉireann mar chuid dár n-oidhreacht náisiúnta,.

Is beag tacaíocht oifigiúil atá tugtha do chaomhnú bád na hÉireann mar ghné oidhreachta, cibé acu gur báid oibre nó báid fhóillíochta iad. Tá mórán oibre maidir le taifeadadh sonraí agus cothabháil na mbád seo déanta ag daoine indibhidiúla agus ag grúpaí deonacha, agus tá eolas ar agus samplaí de bháid bailithe ag institiúidí de leithéidí Roinn an Bhéaloidis i gColáiste na hOllscoile. Baile Átha Cliath agus Músaem Náisiúnta na hÉireann.

Tá an Chomhairle Oidhreachta, trína Coiste Muirí agus Cósta, agus trína Coistí um Uiscebhealaí Intíre, éirithe imníoch faoi bháid Éireannacha, báid intíreacha agus báid do na farraigí móra, mar ghné dár n-oidhreacht inar deineadh faillí. Len í féin a chur ar an eolas, thug an Chomhairle coimisiún do Reggie Goodbody chun staidéar a dhéanamh ar earnáil na mbád oidhreachta i bhFómhar 2003.

Ag éirí as an staidéar seo chinn an Chomhairle ar sheimineár a reáchtáil ar bháid na hÉireann sa Tulach Mhór ar an 13 Samhain 2004. Tugadh cuireadh do dhaoine a bhí ag gabháil do ghné ar bith de bháid intíre nó báid do na farraigí móra, a bheith i láthair. Dob aidhm don seimineár sonrú a dhéanamh ar na príomhcheisteanna atá ag cur as don earnáil seo agus léirigh leagan amach an lae é seo agus leath den lá a bheith caite le díospóireacht.

Thug cúigear léiriúcháin uathu ar raon ábhar. Tá siad atáirgthe sa leabhar seo. Labhair an tOllamh Willie Smyth ar mhór-ról na mbád mar chuid de oidhreacht na hÉireann; Scrúdaigh Jim Horgan forbairt na mbád mar léiriú ar éirim chomhchoiteann agus deineadh plé ar an gcaoi ina bhféadfaí an ghné seo den oidhreacht a chur chun cinn agus a bhuanú. Léirigh Dónal MacPolin na ceisteanna a éiríonn as Togra na mBád Traidisiúnta maidir le taifead agus taighde ar bháid agus ar shaoir bhád. Thaispeáin John Kearon na slite inar féidir báid a chaomhnadh, agus prionsabail an deachleachtais maidir le báid oidhreachta a chur chun cinn trí Chairt Barcelona. Rianaigh Reggie Goodbody a chur chuige agus torthaí an taighde a dhein sé ar earnáil na mbád oidhreachta.

Chomh maith leis na léirithe, tugtar achoimre ar na smaointe a d'eascair as na ceardlanna, chomh maith le téacs Chairt Barcelona ar Chaomhnadh agus Athchóiriú Long Traidisiúnta atá ag Obair, liosta tinnrimh agus liosta de theagmhálaithe áisiúla.

THE HERITAGE OF BOATS

Professor Willie Smyth

Go raibh maith agat agus tearaim fáilte do gach duine éinne ar an ócáid stairiúil soe a Nicholás. You are very welcome. I come from a few miles down the road near Roscrea, which is as far from the sea as you can get in Ireland. Some of you here know I am interested in Viking settlement and I have a thesis that the Scandinavians were far more important in shaping Ireland than we have given them credit for.

We have given them credit for destruction, but we have not given them credit for their construction. Anyway my reason for introducing the Viking is that the Vikings said “all Ireland is a coastline”. So from the Viking point of view, all Ireland is near the sea, so Roscrea is not too far away. Some of us from the Heritage Council are staying in a guest house called “Sea Dew” in Tullamore. If that is Tullamore’s view of Ireland, fair enough, we are all near the sea. Last night I heard Jim Horgan, John Kearon and Colin Becker talking about the making of boats, their whole being clearly immersed in the whole business. It made me see the process as an art form, but I was seeing it from the outside.

So I confess from the beginning I am ignorant of the ways of making and living with boats but I admire them from afar. My function here today is to say a little bit about the Heritage Council’s role in all of this. What we seek from this general gathering today? To some extent I am seeking your views as the key players, stakeholders. What functions should the Heritage Council have in this area? As Nicholas pointed out, the Marine and Coastal committee was established during the course of this council in early 2002. We recognised the challenge; it’s only a beginning.

I gather if you stretch out Ireland’s coastline along a line, it equals the Brazilian coastline. If you add to that all our inland waterways, the seas that are being serviced by the GSI Seabed survey, that is the challenge, and it is massive. Beatrice Kelly, a marvellous officer for the Marine and Coastal committee has given me a page of what we have been doing since then.

Perhaps one of the most important things we have done is Bibliomara which is available on CDs for you all and which are a wonderful collection of the secondary sources about the maritime and cultural heritage of Ireland. We have been involved in a maritime resource directory for County Councils and planners for the heritage of the coast. We are in the process of producing a major policy document for the Minister. Reggie Goodbody has recently been involved in surveying this area of traditional boats. I would like to draw your attention to the title of this conference, deliberately chosen *‘Ireland’s Boating Heritage- the Future’*, a very deliberate title.

Notice we are talking about boating, the verb, and not just boats. We are talking about a boating heritage, and I would like to call that a ‘boating culture’. What can we do to enhance the viability of that boating heritage? In a sense we are talking about the plural here, about boating subcultures. There is a host of them and many of them represented here today, for sailing, sporting, recreation, currach racing, fishing, tourism etc. There is a host of regional boating subcultures from Donegal to Wexford, from Fair Head to Cape Clear.

I want to pause a little here, right at the beginning to discuss this notion of culture or subculture, a living heritage. Culture is a total way of life of a people. A boating subculture therefore, is the lifestyle, activities, and values of people dealing with boats and boats with life on the water. But more centrally culture is about learning, about the transmission of skills, aptitudes, attitudes, and about the inheritance of such skills. It is about making, knowing, sharing and loving. Loving boats is interesting. I grew up in a hurling county, but I understand for others its boats. So there is a passion there. When I talk about making, knowing, sharing and loving, culture is not something we can segregate out; it is an interwoven knot. You can not separate the boatman or woman from the craft of boatmaking. Equally the craft of boating. In a sense I hope the Heritage Council can act as one of the knots that ties together all these boating traditions. We hope to be a facilitator, an integrator, a networker. In a sense the purpose of today is for the real players on the ground to

get together and share and go through the issues. If culture is about learning and communication and the transmission of values, skills, ways of knowing and doing, ways of caring, then in a debate today about our boating heritage and its future, I might suggest we should not only focus on the material culture, the boat itself, but also about the communities for whom it is a way of life, a passion.

Look at the way we can enhance the viability of these boating communities, that exist all along our coastlands and along our inland waterways.

There is another strange thing about culture and heritage and its transmission, and that is young people who carry a culture. It is they who transmit the culture. If the young people do not learn the boating tradition; if they do not pick up the skills, the values, the attitudes and the love of boats and the making of them, then all the culture may die. Last night, talking to John Kearon, who is from Arklow, we were talking about our shared interest in the Vikings. We agreed that it is likely that in a place like Arklow there has been an unbroken tradition of boatmaking and boating, a tradition of transmission of skills for more than one thousand years. I understand from John that it is a possibility that two decades ago that long tradition may have been broken in part. It is not irreversible; irretrievable but nevertheless it is interesting that there could be such a break.

On the other hand I am impressed by Reggie Goodbody's report that the traditions of boatbuilding are alive and well in about 50 boatbuilding enterprises around the country, not to speak of the schools and VEC's. Clearly the Heritage Council has to look at this vital area of education and see what we can do to assist and enhance and enlarge Ireland's capacity for this. If we follow through the logic of this argument, that boating subcultures and their future is about transmission and learning, then the emphasis it seems to me should be on the living tradition, on maintaining the vitality of boats whether they are going up the Shannon, the Erne, down the Barrow, in Connemara, South West Cork or wherever.

Our support structure should be geared to maintaining boats on water, either as an occupation, in fishing, recreation or sport. I am going to speak a little heresy, I am speaking personally here; I have to disassociate any other member of the Marine and Coastal Committee from what I'm about to say. The Heritage Council has never considered the question of grant supporting mobile aspects of our heritage such as boats. We allocate through our Architecture Committee quite a significant amount of our budget for the maintenance and restoration of our big houses, churches and institutions and rightly so. We invest, and here I am going to make a few enemies, perhaps too much of our small budget to matters underground and not enough to the living tradition. And in that context, as Colin Becker reminded me last night, boats are like old houses, they need maintenance, restoration and this is an expensive business.

So I think the Marine and Coastal Committee should encourage the Council to consider that out of our limited budget we should try and give some grant support to the direction of the mobile element of the living heritage and likewise seek to persuade other agents, including the Department of the Marine to provide further support for infrastructural facilities, for smaller harbours, piers and boat slips. In looking at the question, *'Ireland Boating Heritage - the Future'*, I am suggesting that the focus therefore is on the living tradition. One could argue that the last place a boat should be is in a museum. If there is a vital tradition of building a certain type of boat, and there is no danger of that tradition disappearing, then the best place for all such boats is on the water.

On the other hand, if the boating type is in danger of total eclipse then the preservation of such a type is essential and there is clearly a case for the preservation of boats with a particular historical or patriotic association. I give the parallel example of when the two physicists Bohr and Heisenberg visited the so-called Hamlet's castle. As physicists they said, "We know this castle is made of stone and we as physicists know what it is as a physical entity. But when we realised that this is where Shakespeare made Hamlet live and speak, and where shared his notion of destiny, then this changes the place. The ramparts speak a different language".

The same applies to historic boats. The deck, the boards speak a different language and we should restore and maintain such historic boats. However, in terms of the debate to day, and here I will create some of the controversy, I am not convinced that we should involve our very scarce resources and energy in this case, in what could be called a national boat museum. If there is to be such a thing, I hope not in Dublin, there is far too much over-centralisation already.

So I am arguing that we should maintain the living traditions of boating in the first place. And if we want to maintain the idea of exhibition area, a civic space, I prefer the term civic space to museum, then let's concentrate our boating heritage in terms of exhibition, in terms of civic space, in terms of our regional cultures in the South West, Donegal and Connemara and not show boats in isolation but in terms of the total way of life associated with those regions. Now to conclude, before coming here this weekend I tried to find a poem of Seamus Heaney's whose imagery I liked and I felt in part enhanced this meeting. The essence of the poem is as follows.

The place is Clonmacnoise which is just across the way - that old inland maritime capital in early Christian times. The monks are chanting their early morning prayers in church and suddenly an anchor descends and gets entangled in the sacred tabernacle. The monks' song is frozen as they gaze at the scene and even more so as a sailor from the other world shimmied down the line to try and extricate the anchor, to free it. There is a moment of awe, of wonder when the sailor and the monks gaze at one another, a moment fraught with tension. Then the monks break into chant again and both the prayer and the anchor is lifted to God and the sailor shimmies back up to the other world.

My final point then is that the Heritage Council should also foster the telling of stories about boats and the sea whether mythological or otherwise; we should foster develop in the proper archives and records both at home and abroad. In a sense an inspirational figure for us all is John de Courcy Ireland. Ted Creedon has just interviewed John about the range of Irish overseas enterprise and records, we have not even touched.

So if we get our priorities right then we can go forward and focus on learning, on transmission of skills and there will be more boats on the water and fewer broken up along our coastlines and destined for other places. So today I think we should try to establish those priorities and the better we establish them, the better the policy we can go forward with. Go raibh maith agaibh agus go néirí go geal leis an obair atá róimh.

TRADITIONAL BOATS / MATERIAL HERITAGE

Jim Horgan

I am writing this essay on 28th October 2004 during one of the worst storms in 50 years. My alarm was set for 4.00 am this morning. As half owner of the 42' hooker yacht, "Cliona Na Toinne", I had to check the boat to make sure she was safe in the old pier in Spiddal. Weighting 13½ tons any pounding caused by the waves could break her up. She is also heavy enough to break any ropes on even chain, used to tie her up.

I only mention this here to emphasize the fact that traditional boats are a constant load of trouble and worry about winter and summer. Besides this, wooden boats are massively expensive – they depreciate and eventually have to be re-built in the meantime they require annual maintenance of maybe €1,000 per year.

Obviously, in many ways traditional boats are not worth the trouble and expense they demand. So, before we even approach the idea of preserving them, we should be definite and clear about what we are preserving and why we are preserving them.

In the interest of being definite, I propose two definitions and that we explore them and see if they work.

Firstly I propose that the measures of this genius is:- The ability to adapt to a particular environment and social conditions, in other words to adapt to their own time and place.

The first definition I will explain is in relation to music. Irish traditional music has been a huge success, respected all over the world making millions of euro and has been a great ambassador for us, attracting in tourists as well as industry. Many industrial top and middle management prefer to raise their families among friendly, musical and entertaining people than among some of our more formal neighbours. This point should never be overlooked in any discussion on tradition.

In the 1950s Irish music was in a bad state. Irish language revivalists felt that Ceilí dancing was the best means to get large numbers of people involved in Irish culture. It was seen as a fun way of introducing large masses of people to the difficult task of re learning a language.

Music and dance, however, suffered badly. The music became little more than a straight rhythm for people to dance to, and all the rhythmic ingenuity and melodic complexity of the music were "straight-jacketed" into a poor relation of classical art music. Sean O Riada was the first one to successfully re-awaken us to the real Irish music. He and a few followers after him, including myself, studied Irish music in university and found it to be a beautifully structured music, complex and interesting, a unique melodic music, relating more to Africa and the East than to European Classical music. Once the original form of music has been re-installed, it gradually became accepted here, with great interest from universities in America and eventually from all over the world. It is at this point that I want to draw comparisons between our musical heritage and our material heritage. First, lets look at the idea of cumulative genius. It is easy to accept a musical genius like Mozart, a composer who wrote the best music of his era, the classical era, and brought that music to its highest peak of perfection. He couldn't be surpassed and composers after him had to think up completely new strategies.

But, when we come to Irish music, there is no composer. 7000 tunes have been collected and as many more lost, yet there was no great composer. Who wrote the music? Most of our tunes are jigs and reels, which became very popular in 18th and 19th century. Musicians, many of whom were blind, had to play for these new style dances. A few reels come in from Scotland, but as reels last only about one minute they had to find new reels quickly. They made variations on the reels they had, they made new reels out of older marches, polkas and even jigs. Whenever a musician had a new tune, he would play it for other musicians. As they could not write down the music, they tried to memories it. On getting home, they often found they could remember only bits and pieces of the tune. What else could they do only make a complete tune out of the bits and pieces.

The result was that they now had a new tune, like the old, but a new tune all the same. Others again took this new tune tried to remember it, got it wrong and we have yet another new tune.

Before long a whole body of reels was built up. Then the polishing process began. Every musician had his own way of playing each popular tune. A box player because of the ins and outs of the box might discover a particularly nice way of articulating a motif. A flute player, running out of breath might phrase a tune in a colourful way. A piper might pop the tune giving it new energy and lift. In this way musicians kept getting new ideas and kept constantly improving each time, until it became like a stone polished by constant rolling on the beach, eventually becoming so polished and perfected that its almost a gem stone.

The process in boat design is similar. There were no great architects or engineers. Every family of fishing people or boat people contributed to the development of their local boat type. When a new boat was to be built the fisherman described to the boat builder what he wanted. Invariably he would ask for a boat like, say Johnny Murphy's, but with a little finer bow or a little longer or shorter or with flatter floor or shallower draught. No two boats were ever built the same. The only constant was a relentless drive to improve, to hone and perfect the design; like the stone rolling on the beach, the boats too became rounded, polished, and perfected, gem stones or national treasures.

The place where the boat worked, the sea conditions in which it worked, and the work the boat was expected to do all came together to influence the shape of the boat. The Galway Hooker needed to be a full-bodied boat to carry a large load. Its underwater lines had to be sharp and efficient while above the water its bow was flared out to rise to the rough Atlantic seas and keep its cargo of turf dry. Who wants wet turf?

The Galway Hooker was also shallow-draughted to lie in harbours which dried out. When the boats were dried out they lay against the harbour wall, with the weight of the boat itself and the weight of ballast and cargo, the structure of the boat come under enormous pressure. The boats had to be stiffened by rounding them or "tumbling them home".

The stiffening effect of this can be easily demonstrated by rolling a piece of paper or by trying to crush an egg between ones palms. Though the egg shell is delicate in the extreme, the rounded structure of the egg resists the pressure. This stiff structure is in sharp contrast to Viking long boats which were flexible to a frightening degree. They bent as much as a foot both left and right as well as up and down.

Speed and aerodynamic efficiency were not always the most desirable factors in developing a traditional boat. Take two examples – Johnny Bailey's "Capall" and Sean O Riada's "Billeachai".

"Billeachai" was a powerful boat built for trade to Galway and so had 6' draught. She was undoubtedly fast and efficient. After some years she was used for the turf trade to Aran.

Imagine Johnny Bailey's "Capall" and "Billeachai" sitting loaded with turf at 6:00 am in Caladh Thaidhg waiting for the tide. After about two hours the "Capall", with the 4'6" draught would float and sail to Aran. "Billeachtai" on the other hand would have to wait another 40 minutes before she would float. The "Capall" though a slower boat was now out of sight and would make a possible three trips on a good day while "Billeachai" might make only two or even only one. "Billeachai" was in fact taken out of the water at one stage and the bottom cut out of her and she was rebuilt with a draught of only 4'6". Sometimes a less efficient design can do a much better job or be a much better adaptation to its environment and social needs. To look at another type of boat and to see how it developed in relation to its environment and its work needs, lets look at the Blackwater Salmon Yawl.

Originally they were probably Drondheims or Norweigan yawls 26' to 28' long and double ended. Because of the strong tide in the Blackwater, and because nets had to be run by law in a straight line with only one angle or turn in the net. It was in this angle that the fish were trapped. This angle had to be made sharply and the longer boats had difficulty turning quickly enough, so the boats eventually shortened to 23' long enough for 4-18' oars, two twarts for the net and a space

bow and stern. The design of these boats evolved slowly over the years with fishermen demanding lighter boats, more rounded hulls for less wetted surface, sharper bows for easy rowing, a small transom for room to run out the net and low free-boards to reduce wind resistance.

The design developed over generations, each new boat being a little better than the one before. Spruce was used for planking and crooked elm for ribs making the boats lighter. Creosote and tar gave the wood a life of up to 100 years. Every family in Youghal has contributed to the development of this unique traditional boat type. The salmon yawl then is a monument to the collective genius of the people of that area. Sometimes the development of the design took a sudden leap forward. A Spanish trawler came into Youghal for provisions. He took a man called Parnell from the Knockadoon Gaeltacht as pilot. The harbour master was Moss Guirey. As the Spaniard spoke only Spanish, Parnell spoke only Irish and Moss Guirey spoke only English, bedlam ensued as they tried to berth the trawler. Panic set in as the tide fell and the trawler began to ground. Somehow in their desperation they managed to berth the trawler but not without trapping John Murphy's yawl and breaking two feet of her stern.

Nobody was admitting responsibility so the Murphys decided to leave the boat 2 feet shorter, and install a transom in what was left of the boat. She was now 21'. There was room for only three oarsmen instead of four, but the Murphys being strong men used a pair of paddles (short oars) from the front seat and the other two men ran out the net. They managed all right with the result that, as the catch was divided into six shares i.e. on boat share, one net share and four crew shares, they now had four shares between the three of them. So they had a 33% increase in wages.

Over the next few years every yawl in the town was either shortened or replaced. Some went up the river and brought smaller 19' boats and fished them. Eventually the 19' yawl became standard and at this length I think she represents the pinnacle of development of the yawl and was one of the most beautiful and refined boats to be seen anywhere. In my time I was asked by Black Healy to build a 17' - two-man yawl, with a wide transom and no quarter knees, so that he could run the net with his left hand and steer the outboard engine with his right. This was the end of the development as the salmon were almost gone.

I have tried to establish that a boat is an icon of a community, a product of the cumulative genius of a people, as well being an ingenious adaptation to a particular environment. It is my opinion that only boats that evolved in this way can be called traditional boats. One other fact needs to be explained, that is the extraordinary emotion that people seem to have for the family boat. Why should they have such feeling for this enormous inanimate heap of trouble and expense?

A boat is basically an idea realised in wood. Before it is launched, it is an inanimate lump of wood, and one feels little for it. But, the minute it begins to sail, it seems to come to life, it shows that it has a character of its own. It leaps over the waves like a race horse. It has its stubbornness, coming about. It slaps you in the face with water when you sail too close to the wind, and even occasionally makes a rainbow for you over the bow wave. After the first sail the boat is no longer an object but almost a family pet. It becomes almost a living creature.

This feeling is bourn out by the use of the word 'she', when referring to a boat. The word 'bád' is a masculine noun. We should say he is a nice boat. But the word she is used when referring to a boat because a boat in Gaelic lore is regarded as being a 'Sí a Siog', meaning fairy or spirit, thus having a soul or life of its own.

From what I said so far, I would have to say that the best way to present and display boats is in its own community or in its own environment, surrounded by stories of its history and providing a model for further development, in living tradition. Connemara & Achill seem to be doing this very well and with more PR the race could attract far more tourism. "Siamsa Tire" has proved that the local heritage is what tourists want.

However using modern technology we can display many types of boats in an area with sheltered waters like Achill Sound, Rosmuc and Claddagh compensating for the lack of their own environment by using indoor displays of video and photographic material of the boats in their own habitat and of people who worked them. With this kind of scenario we could have literally dozens of smaller

boats on display, cheaply built on training courses and 'alive' and sailing so that people could sail them with an insured person and feel the life of them. Even on wet days the indoor video and display section could be busy. With this model it would also be possible to display foreign small boats e.g. a 23' Finnish Seal boat which, as well as floating on the water, could be hauled out onto the ice, skied along the ice like a large sled, even with a couple of tons of seal meat onboard. The Finns would be glad to swap a seal boat for one of our Pucáns, as would many other countries.

As regards to building for inland displays Falmouth must be mentioned. The restaurant features a glass wall, which starts at low water and goes to the ceiling, so that when the tide comes in, you are looking into 16 foot of sea. Even in winter cormorants can be seen diving for shrimp. It is of course spectacular when the mackerel are in.

Having a stock of boats of different types would mean that boats could be loaned to festivals e.g. Kinvara, to provide inshore entertainment when the larger boats have sailed out of sight and even video material could be loaned out to provide indoor alternatives when bad weather threatens to wash out a festival.

I have prepared photos of several different types of smaller boats, which could be used, as it would be cheaper to build twenty smaller boats than a large Hooker. As I have said the histories, development, usage of these boats would be more important than the boats themselves, in presentation of the boats in the public and awakening the public imagination.

Community Boats: In 1997 gleoiteogs were built in Furbo for the community on FÁS course, as well as some smaller boats. I emphasise that these boats belong to the community. These boats give the people of the area an opportunity to sail traditional boats with little cost. A club was formed to run them, "Badoirí Lurgan". Maintenance and repairs are done by the members and it costs only € 70 a year to join – covering costs, safety and insurance. The boats sail at least twice a week and in good weather sail every day. A designated skipper has always to be on board and training is given as a matter of course during our outings. This year the boats have ventured as far as Aran, Carraroe, Kinvarra, Ballyvaughan and even sail with the dolphin in Fenore.

I recommend this use of FÁS courses to any community as it gives any number of people a chance to sail traditional boats, people who otherwise could not afford to buy a very expensive gleoiteog or who just would not have the time to look after one. In fact I was very surprised that other communities in Connemara did not follow our example and build their own community boats.

Boat building classes: Model building classes have been a great success. Some thirty models have been built in Inis Oirr and in Connemara. A small cottage industry in Inis Oirr in model making has been one result. Building models in exactly the same way as one would build a real boat, quickly leads to real boat building classes.

The Inis Oirr class built the "Naomh Gobnait" a 24' yawl with 20HP diesel engine as well as sails. It was the first wooden boat built on the island. It has its own launching trailer and can be pulled out when the weather is bad. The light weight double-ended yawl was the islanders' choice of boat mostly because of the necessity of occasionally hauling out.

Kilalla class built 6 - 16' clinker build day boats, with beautiful traditional craftsmanship above the water, but with modern planning lines below the water. These boats are amazingly successful, being as sea worthy and as safe as gleoiteogs and faster in nearly all weathers. Even though they have modern design these will be the traditional boats of tomorrow. Two more of these boats have been built for Furbo as well!

RECORDING AND RESEARCHING TRADITIONAL BOATS

Donal McPolin

Good morning. My name is Donal MacPolin and after Jim Horgan's talk I really didn't want to get out of the chair. How can you follow that? However, I am here to talk about some aspects of the tradition of collecting and recording traditional boats and also to talk about the project of the "big" book, i.e. the Traditional Boats of Ireland project that is shortly coming to an end and with which I have been involved with over a good number of years. I have a few pictures. Cristoir MacCarthaigh was supposed to be here to talk to you about it and to talk about the Archives of the Folklore Commission but he could not make it.

I have been working with Cris for the last number of years on the collection, recording and archiving of a lot of material to do with traditional boats and I will talk about that, but I also have one or two other things to say. I wanted to explain why I'm here and why I am involved with traditional boats. It begins with Hal Sisk over there, he is responsible. I'm from Co. Donegal, a town called Moville. I've been an art teacher for the last thirty years of my life but I got out before the teenagers finally shot the plane down and I may have a life left yet. I grew up in this little town very close to a boatyard that had been there since 1750, the McDonalds boat builders, first in Moville and now in Greencastle.

It was normal to me to grow up with the sound of boat planks being riveted (or 'rooved') which was the hammering on of copper tops on the nails. I heard that sound all through my childhood.

In 1982 I was mooching around the Dublin boatshow. In those days there used to be traditional wooden boats in the show and I came across an exhibit. There was a boat model there and I asked the person on the stall what was it and he said 'it's a Greencastle Yawl', and I said 'I never heard it called that, I'm from near Greencastle and where I come from they call it a 'Dronthon boat'*. He said to ask Hal, and I asked him what this boat was. He also said it was a Greencastle Yawl. I told him about the dronthon and he suggested I go back to Donegal and see were there any of them left there. The new maritime museum, which they were setting up, would be interested in getting one for its collection. So when I went home for the summer I searched where I knew there were a few old ones left.



Figure 1. The last working drontheim on Lough Foyle, Moville, 1950s. Belonged to Charlie "the Cat" McMonagle, built by McDonalds.

There was an old postcard (Fig. 1) I had from home showing Dronthons and I knew where this old ruin was lying near Malin Head and I began to hunt around for others. I had a friend whose father was a fisherman, Dan Lafterty. I went out one day to talk to Dan about the boats. I then encountered something that changed the whole direction of what I was doing and contributed to me getting out of school last year. Dan started talking about the boats and started to tell me stories about it and the life of the fishermen. I discovered that there was a whole world associated with these boats. It was all mostly unrecorded, that few knew anything about it. It was just there, waiting.

Dan would be talking away to me about some aspects of the boats and his very fussy old wife would come in and say 'I don't know what you are talking about that old stuff for'. Dan would stop talking and discuss something else and then she would go out and Dan would continue on. I realised there was a conflict there with all this accumulated knowledge and some people didn't want to be reminded of it because it was associated with old bad times and poverty and hardship.

I kept on hunting around and then I met a remarkable man called Packie Doherty whom I had heard was a boatbuilder as well. I called into his house in Glengad, in North Inishowen, and straight

*Note: In shipping registers the boat is written as Drontheim, though spoken of colloquially as a Dronthon Boat.



Figure 2. Drontheim racing at Greencastle, Co Donegal, August 1951.

away he came out and handed me this photograph (Fig. 2). He said “it will only go to waste sitting on the mantelpiece”. To this day it is still one of the best photographs we have of the Drontheim, or the Greencastle Yawl. He had a whole wealth of stories. Then he told me about another man up on the top of the hill, Barney MacKeeney.

I started talking to Barney. He was very old, nearly 90 then and he’s dead now. In the midst of telling me about the Dronthon, Barney said he was famous in the area for being a survivor of a terrible storm when a lot of Drontheims had been blown over to Rathlin Island. Barney had survived and no-one was lost but he had been waked at home and all were believed to be dead. The boat was lifted by a trawler and brought back to Glendad and the boys arrived back home with it. Barney said there was a song about it and he began to sing this song about the voyage. I sat there shaking, listening and realised this was something very precious.

Subsequently, I kept the tape and wrote a little book about the Drontheims. I had occasion to go back to the house afterwards to give his people the tape after Barney had died. I could not make out all the words in the song, and wanted their help and they said, “What song? Barney didn’t sing”. He had never sung the song for anybody in his family, but he sang it for me and they didn’t know about it. I had it there on the tape recorder and I realised there was something very strange going on.

So, I wrote this little book and then I found another Drontheim boat and that’s the one we now have in the Greencastle Maritime Museum and it’s the last sailing Drontheim from Inishowen. It comes round to everything that’s been said about museums and what is heritage for? The boat now sits in this museum in Greencastle on a concrete floor inside. Every time I go in and look at it I feel very sad. It is the same sadness I felt one day at Greenwich in London. You see, I was always interested in the old sailing ships and a big treat for me as a child was getting to London and see the Cutty Sark. It’s sitting in a concrete basin in Greenwich. It’s awful. It’s just a dead boat. It was one of the most disappointing days of my life and I feel that way about museums still now and what we decide to do about museums and boats in the future is a very big decision. Boats should not be sitting in dead museums.

There are still lots of boats out there. You can find the boats but they have to be living boats. In Inishowen, we found a small one and then we restored a big one. The local men who originally fished the boats are now using them. There is a very important question to ask, and we asked it in a seminar in Norway recently, ‘Who is the heritage for?’ Because you have to ask yourself, ‘Who is involved in heritage?’ There are historians who are interested in the history of the boat. There are the craftsmen who admire the beautiful accumulated genius of the way the boats have evolved and you can walk around and look at this absolute genius in their craftsmanship. There are the recreationalists, the people who love to sail the boats and have them and learn how they were used and worked. You have the ‘resurrectionists’, the people who drag the bones up and recreate the boat from the bones and they are terribly important too.

But for me the most important people are the fishermen and communities who used the boats, because the tradition will not live properly if it’s not from the local historians and the local people. A lot of the traditional boat people are not coming from the communities from where



Figure 3. Two restored Dronthons (Drontheims) in Lough Foyle, 1998.



Figure 4. Restoration of an Inishboffin yawl with Anton McBride of Meevagh, Rossguill, Co Donegal, 1998.

restored it so well that he ended up having only two boards, one beam and two little pieces of oak left from the original boat, but he still restored it and sailed it. There is not a single person with the boats we have in Donegal who is an outsider and I think that is important because they are the people who carry it on. In Inishboffin, an island in West Donegal, we had six boats sitting there in the 1980's; now they are all gone. Four at the end got broken up and lost, the one nearest was restored by a man called Anton McBride, and that's another story. The people who are able to build the boats are all getting on a bit, but an awful lot of them are not working anymore. McDonalds in Greencastle who were working there since 1750 built the last wooden boat in 1996 and they are now outfitting fibreglass boats that you could water ski with to fish shellfish and crabs off the west Donegal coast. There is no demand for the wooden boats anymore. McDonalds are the only people today who can build a boat with an unique board called a sandstroke. That is not good. There is something wrong when that is happening. Anton McBride was building wooden boats for BIM in west Donegal. He would love to build more wood boats. He restored this one (Fig. 4). He is a master craftsman. Údarás na Gaeltachta asked him to build steel boats and he left. He could not do it. He did this restoration with old farmers who came in on FÁS courses. There was more talk about sheep than there was about boats, but nevertheless an Inishboffin Yawl was magnificently restored. He taught the skills, he is a master teacher, he had young people and old farmers and yet he made this great restoration. Now, he is up there in Donegal fishing but not building any boats.

We have got a little regatta of Drontheims now and we are hoping to extend the numbers but we are having difficulties. Another side of this story is that the boats that were built on the north coast also went over to Scotland. A fisherman in Scotland, on Islay, called Jim McFarlane is the only living fisherman who grew up on these boats. They were built in Portrush and exported to Scotland. They were once the most common boat in use around Islay. Jim is a Scots Gallic speaker. He got McDonalds to build him a new one in 1996, a 'Scoth Eireannach' as the Drontheim was called on Islay. Jim sails her today. It is the only one left in Scotland. (Fig. 5)

I recorded Jim also but he is getting old as well so another aspect of this story is that there is need for a recorded archive of these old men before they are dead. We are just at the point where a lot of them are slipping off. Right not it is almost too late for a lot of them. Nearly everyone I interviewed in the 1980's is dead. One old man up on the Antrim coast is still alive. I have recorded one or two other people but to my knowledge that is the only record of these men and their boats.

So, this is one of the aspects that needs to be addressed here. With the Traditional Boats of Ireland Project (TBI), there are some recordings being done but there is no systematised proper recording being done of the experience and the life

the boats evolved. They are in a sense outsiders, interested, fascinated, enthusiastic, passionate people but sometimes they don't connect with the people who originally evolved the boats. Hardly a fisherman goes near the Greencastle museum and we need to ask why. They are pragmatic men. The Dronthon was a boat they used for generations. When engines arrived they immediately abandoned all the sailing boats. Get a good engine into it, get a Yamaha on the stern and you are away with it." No more rowing hardship. But fortunately in Moville and in Greencastle a small number of them have restored old boats. They have a passion for them, but they rarely articulate it. Racing interests them above all. This is one (Fig. 3) we found in Glenfin in west Donegal. A fisherman who still fishes salmon

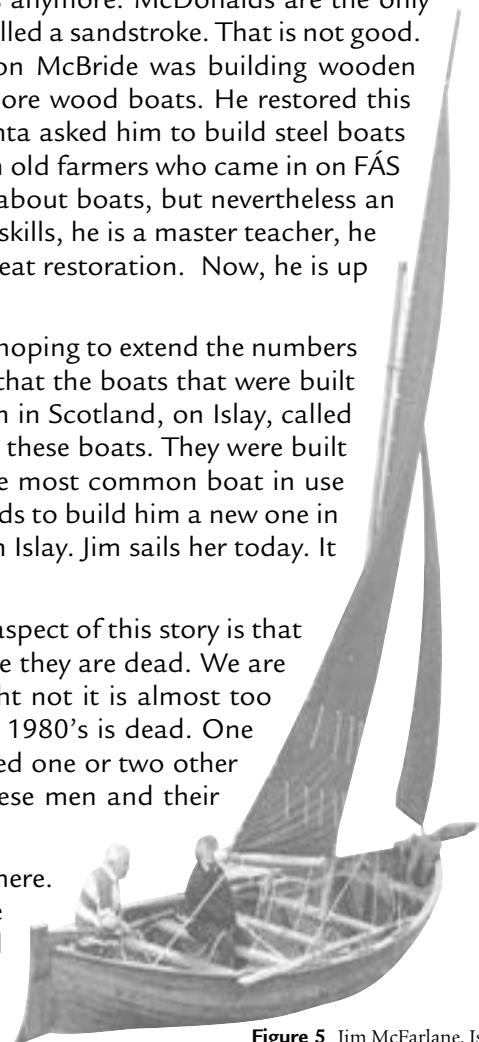


Figure 5 Jim McFarlane, Islay and his wife, Donalda, on their skiff, "Kathleen", built at McDonalds, Moville 1996.

of these people. I was talking to an old fisherman a few days ago with wonderful stories but no one had ever recorded him.

McDonald's shed with its sloping clay floor is now gone. It's now a shirt factory. They are now working out in a big concrete monstrosity in Greencastle building fibreglass boats. There was no record of any kind of them from 1750 to 1985 when I took photos of them building there and recorded Brian McDonald. There is nobody building anymore. My connection today with the Traditional Boats of Ireland Project is that I got asked to do the boat illustrations and to be the 'artistic' director. So along with Cristoir MacCarthaigh of the Folklore Commission and all the rest, I have now been building up a collection of illustrations of all the boats. We have almost all of them recorded now in photographic form, and illustration and in line form. I record one aspect of it, the quirky little details, the nice little differences that each boatbuilder puts into his boat.

One of the McDonalds told me a fisherman would come in and say he wanted a boat like so and so, but he always wanted it a bit wider at the stern or a bit narrower at the bow. They always wanted it slightly different, like a little bit of a competition. They never wanted it exactly the same as the others. While it might be better for their purposes there was a little bit of competition as well. Then you had the 'terrible' problem where those on the East of the Foyle were all Protestant, and in Inishowen they were all Catholic, so you had Protestant and Catholic-style boats as well! And it was in style only they differed.

There is also a need for appropriate maps of the places the different boats come from so I have been working on this for all of the boats if we decide to go this way. It makes it a little bit more personal that you don't get just an ordnance survey copy, that you get something that is more localized, where you can put in the little headlands that might not be mentioned, where you can put in all the details that were important to the fishermen.

So how did TBI begin? In 1996 there was a big meeting organised to set up a committee and a group associated with different boat types to produce a book on these traditional wooden boats of Ireland. I was invited. There were about 36 people at the first meeting.

A group of French publishers, the Cadorets who publish the Maritime Life and Traditions magazine, contacted Donal Lynch of Cork, to put together a definitive book on Irish wooden boats, saltwater, sail and oar, not motor, and not including most of the inland boats, starting about 1850 to today. Some of the members of the committee are here, Hal and Donal and there are some of the contributors, Cormac Levis and Pdraig O Duineen. Since that day the numbers involved have narrowed to a few. The contributions have continued to come in. Wonderful stuff has been written. Sometimes the people who know about the boats can't write about them terribly well. Naturally, not all boatmen are writers, nevertheless their writing has a delightful directness and simplicity, so much better than many boat 'specialists'.

They write as they speak and some are also good at collecting and archiving. Some are wonderful, some of them are not so good. There is often some editing necessary and over the last number of years with Criostoir McCarthaigh I have been involved as well in doing that. Criostoir works with the Department of Folklore in UCD. We are now almost ready to publish, hopefully by Christmas 2005. I was also asked to do the Donegal currachs because there was no one there to deal with them.

That opened up another aspect of Donegal boats for me. There is nothing written about currachs there, apart from Hornell's research in 1936. In fact there is very little written about boats in Ireland. There are only a few volumes. Richard McCullagh's book on currachs, The Galway Hookers by Dick Scott, Cormac Levis's book on the Towelsail Yawls of West Cork, the book I have written and a few others. The published work is very small. There was very little on the Donegal Currachs. I discovered that there were five different types of currach, five different styles in one county. The definitive writer on currachs was Hornell, an Englishman who came over in 1936. The piece that he wrote is still a definitive piece. Again, lots of ruins. The currach is almost extinct in Donegal now.



Figure 6. Andy McGonagle of Kincasslagh, Co Donegal in his currach, “Ceaslá,” 2003

There are two currach builders left there now, one who still builds. There was a wonderful currach tradition on Tory Island but no one builds any new ones today that I know of. I have a particular interest in the Dunfanahy currach because the last man who built a traditional one and worked it died in 2000. Before he died he gave me all the measurements and I was able to build one from those and by referring to some old ruins, I built the first ‘traditional’ Blanchardstown Currach!

The only builder left today is Jim Boyd of Bunbeg. Jim still builds the beautiful small Bunbeg currach which is widely used.

There is one other wonderful builder left, Andy MacGonagle of Kincasslagh (Fig. 6), he won’t allow anybody to record him but he might before he dies. He’s ill and can’t work much anymore. He can just about still build and he ran a FAS course recently to pass on his knowledge. He is the maker of this wonderful machine, the Owey Paddling Currach. There is no one left today who can paddle it except a few old fellows. They rowed their currach in and out to Owey island carrying concrete and sheep and cattle and people and it is only 10 ft. long!

Maybe if I finish now with the state of things with the Traditional Boats of Ireland project. There are lines plans of forty plus of the major boat types. There are recent photos and archive photos, about seven hundred and many illustrations.

I want to say that the project would have collapsed about five years ago without Cristoir MacCarthaigh. He has single-handedly just kept on going and accumulating and editing. I have been fortunate enough to have worked with him in the last couple of years in helping out with it and we have done some field trips down the country to various places. We have no professional photographers. He is an archivist and he is doing a lot of this in his spare time. All the photos have been digitally and properly scanned and archived. So there is a huge archive been built up in UCD of original and current photographs and other material such as interviews with boatbuilders and fishermen, historical documents and written accounts. So what started off as a great project is still there. What is more important than the book itself, of course, is the fact that this material is being archived but there are only a few people doing it and doing it in their spare time. There is no systematised accumulation of all of this material. If it is not collected it is going to be lost. There is urgent need for properly trained and resourced collectors and a central maritime archive. Time is running out.

Another thing I wish to mention in relation to TBI is to make a word of thanks to Hal Sisk who has made a personal donation of quite a considerable amount of money towards the work of the project and the Heritage Council as well. We have them to thank for a lot of what we have been able to do so far. I say ‘so far’ because the work is still being carried out by voluntary people at the weekends and when they have time. It’s not the right way to do it. It needs to be done differently.

In relation to what Jim Horgan was saying about the ‘Polishing of the Stone’, in West Donegal you have Currachs made with hazel rods and then down on Inisturk you have these planked mean machines (Fig. 7), covered in fibreglass and with Yamahas. Yamahas are God for the young fishermen here. They are also rowing these currachs and using them to make a living. For the traditionalist boat lover they would probably think this is heresy but these men are like the fishermen in Greencastle. They are pragmatic people. They want a boat that will function and work and do exactly what they want it to do and if it goes into fibreglass then that is the way. Even if we, the outsiders, historians, traditionalists etc. feel that there is something wrong with that, that has to be celebrated. These are smashing boats. The young people use them and they love them. The old men are still building them. We have archived a lot of photos like this but it would have been great to have



Figure 7. Inishturk Island curragh, fibreglass covered, 2001.

had a professional photographer. Recording the details, with the sketches, are all necessary and hopefully with John Tyrells lines they can always continue be to built.

To finish I just want to make a couple of very important points. In the group that set up TBI, we have had marriages probably births and deaths. One of the latter was Kevin McLaverty, who was the original director of the Fishery School in Greencastle, a flute player, a boatbuilder, who knew and felt everything about what Jim Horgan was talking about. I actually heard the same tune in his house and I t made the hair stand up on my neck the same as it did this morning. That is what is very important about this that

the living tradition be preserved. I think it is wrong to have boats in museums. This summer in Norway I was asked to talk about the Drontheim boat over there, which has a Norse connection. Our boat originally came from Norway.

What was very interesting about it, and it ties in with what Padraig O Duinnín is doing in Cork, is that they have a living museum. They have all the old boats, they have them collected as a kind of reference. The world knows they have the Gokstad ship and the Osenberg ship. But this museum in Rissa, near Trondheim, they have a "Museum of Coastal Life". They have the old boats there and build replicas of all of them. (Fig.8) They also have an association with the local schools and boat building is actually part of an optional curriculum. They are funded by the state and by the local county council to build the replicas with school students or other volunteers. Some go on to become professional boatbuilders and the skills are all passed on.

They have a huge enthusiastic population of people who come and sail them and even practice the old fishing methods, I was lucky enough to be asked to build a Donegal Currach there and here is an art teacher from Dublin going over to build a traditional Donegal Currach for Norwegians! I have no illusions about what part of the tradition I belong to or don't belong to, I'm just interested in the boat because I don't want to see it disappear. They invited me over and kids came from the school and we built a Donegal Currach. I couldn't do it in Donegal because nobody was that interested. These people are very on the ball for their tradition. They build the boats in a living museum, not a mausoleum.

Not alone do they just sail them, they actually use them. They have kept all the nets and the fishing rigs, so one day as part of the festival they all went out and they set nets, lobster pots, long lines and everything that the fishermen did just for the hell of it. You can't be nostalgic and romantic about some great loss. It's gone, that world has passed. The world of those fishermen is gone. What do we keep? We keep the precious evolution that they produced and try to keep it going. We try to celebrate and preserve as much as we can. Thank you.



Figure 8. A fisherman demonstrates old fishing methods at Rissa Museum of Coastal Life near Trondheim, Norway, 2004.

AN OVERVIEW ON PROTECTING THE MARITIME HERITAGE IN THE CONTEXT OF SHIPS AND BOATS.

John Kearon

In the public's mind, the definitive embodiments of maritime heritage are ships and boats. Mention the sea to anyone and it is not fine harbours or naval architects they usually think of but more likely an old square rigger under sail or, perhaps the ferry they travelled to their holiday destination on.

Others, in the UK at least, will name *Cutty Sark*, *Victory*, *et al*. In Ireland it will be Galway hookers or probably Asgard 2 - now better known than her namesake. Ships and boats, well everyone loves them. They conjure up adventure, romance and travel to exotic places.

Over many centuries, seafaring nations developed ships of both commerce and defence that differed widely in design and structure. The diversity of inshore and inland craft types was greater still, with further variations of type within each country and within specific localities. Recreational vessels, in contrast, only really developed through the 19th century, with design, innovation and usage then gaining pace towards its end and mushrooming through the 20th century to the present day.

There evolved, over time, hundreds of different vessel types that served particular functions and tidal conditions, or suited the local geography of rivers and lakes. Development of form and structure can be traced through the various stages of evolution, innovation and refinement as design superseded design. Ireland has more than her share of local and generic vessels, and in an international context the currachs of our western coast are probably the first vernacular craft to spring to mind. But others, such as Wexford cots, are equally valuable in charting regional development.

However, in these Islands generally, after thousands of years of maritime development that took us from the log boat to the nuclear submarine, it was not until the 20th century that maritime technology began to be viewed as worthy of serious consideration as part of a rich and distinct heritage.

For example, in the UK it was not until 1910 that the Society for Nautical Research was established. It was 1934 before the Bill for the establishment of a National Maritime Museum passed through Parliament - and a further three years before the museum opened at Greenwich. I do err somewhat in the recognition of maritime heritage, in England at least - Queen Elizabeth 1 did order that *The Golden Hind* be 'saved for the nation'. Unfortunately, what was not carried away by souvenir hunters, rotted away. Not the only such ship protection project to founder, and a good point at which to consider briefly what action has been taken throughout the UK and in a wider context in Europe, to protect and preserve those ships and boats that are viewed as significant.

Before we move on, the point must be made that there are two distinct approaches to preserving maritime heritage in the form of ships and boats. One is to continue sailing them - using them on water - the other is to protect them out of water in dry-docks or ashore and/or indoors. To say that where both approaches meet can cause some disagreement is an understatement. Not to be daunted, I will attempt to explain and to reconcile both approaches in their correct contexts. As with other potentially contentious areas, there can be an underlying misunderstanding of intent.

The number of vessels deemed to be unique, significant or of major historic importance is in reality quite small when considered against the vast number of old and evocative vessels that remain in use. The great majority of old interesting vessels should be encouraged to continue in use, whether under sail, mechanically driven or rowed, for as long as possible. And there are thousands of them, as can be seen from the increasing number of maritime festivals and gathering throughout the lakes and seaports of Europe.

It is the unique representative vessels of structural, historic or type specimen significance that should be considered for full protection in the longer term - not the simply old and eye-catching - they can continue in use and so delight both users and watchers alike.

In Great Britain there are several organisations that work to keep the floating maritime heritage alive. The principal players include the Old Gaffers Association, who in the main espouse and promote the continued use of gaff-rigged vessels. The vessels involved in membership are predominantly privately owned and maintained. However, they need not necessarily be traditionally built vessels - GRP, steel, ferro concrete hull forms are all acceptable - it is the rig, its derivatives and continuance that mainly count.

Another organisation dedicated to promoting the use of traditional vessels is *Heritage Afloat*, but in a broader context and across most vessel types and forms of propulsion. Many of the associations that promote traditional and historic vessel use are affiliated to *Heritage Afloat*.

A key factor of these organisations is that they have lively web sites that act as both sources of information and as debating venues for the exchange of information between members. They help promote and keep in use not just the vessels concerned, but also the various crafts associated with that use.

In the UK, as in Ireland, there are also regional clubs and groups that promote specific vessel classes and types. An example is the Liverpool Nobby Association that over the past 20 years and through the individual efforts of its members, has successfully restored to sail some 20 Nobbies, which are basically Morecambe Bay inshore sail fishing boats, associated with the North West coast of England and which evolved to their present graceful form through the 19th century.

There is no doubt that these generic vessels would have been lost had the founding individuals not taken action to begin to save and restore the remnants of a once large fleet - a process not unlike that which revitalised the restoration, building and continued use of Galway hookers in Ireland and indeed of other traditional craft around the British Isles. However, none of the restored Nobbies are in original form, all have been altered, with deckhouses in various forms and engines now fitted. That is apart from one, the Daystar of 1894, which is owned by Merseyside Maritime Museum, and has been restored to original form - the only one that shows what these much loved vessels looked like originally. And this reflects what can happen to working vessels that are rediscovered and restored in a leisure use context. Through alteration and addition their original form, and usage, is altered. Protecting and conserving one in original form can give permanence to the type, while the remainder can happily sail on, altered or not.

Many sailing clubs continue to sail their specific class yachts and dinghies. The Mersey alone boasts several one designs in various yacht and sailing clubs, including Star, Hilbre and Opera class vessels.

The UK's extensive system of inland canals and waterways, originally created for cargo transport, have in a similar context to Ireland's waterways, been revitalised by a reversal of usage from commercial trade to leisure use. The corresponding interest in canal barge ownership also mushroomed and has become somewhat of an alternative lifestyle for many, with the majority of barges maintained in original form to a high degree. As I write, plans are afoot to re-introduce a trading element to canal usage as a more environmentally friendly system to the increasingly polluting road transport of goods.

The vessels we have considered so far are in the main not large or individually significant in a historic or structural context. And in this the situation changes quite dramatically. Because there is a clear distinction between vessels, be they large ships or small boats, that have a specific importance in an historic or structural context, as against vessels that may be old and evocative, but in reality have little or no significance historically or structurally.

The more obvious historic and iconic ships in the UK, such as *Cutty Sark*, *Victory* and *Great Britain*, were permanently dry-docked and treated in a preservation context. These ships and others were largely saved by Trusts such as The Maritime Trust, specifically established to save ships that

were viewed as having a high status in a national historic context. *Victory*, however, remains a commissioned ship in the Royal Navy and is treated as such. In consequence, the majority of her original structure has been replaced through a continuous process of maintenance and restoration.

Apart from these and other high profile iconic vessels, there were hundreds of other vessels, ranging from large ships to small boats, that also were significant and historically important, yet there was little co-ordinated effort to categorise or catalogue them, other than through the efforts of individuals in the private and public sectors who honed in on specific vessels and promoted their protection.

In the public sector maritime museums, and regional museums that encompassed coastal areas, did seek out and collect what were considered important vessels. These were in the main smaller vernacular and generic craft and original examples-of-type of both regional and national significance.

The National Maritime Museum, for example, has a large representative collection of boats formed of a variety of materials that reflect both leisure and work usage in a national context. The collection also extends to include type specimens of both ethnic and vernacular origins in an international context. This extensive collection of boats is now housed at National Maritime Museum Cornwall, with a cross section of the collection displayed to stunning effect in a newly created purpose built maritime museum in Falmouth.

Merseyside Maritime Museum also has a large collection of boats, predominantly of wood, that cover both leisure and work usage in the North West of England. They also have two ships in permanent dry dock, one being the 700 ton steel Liverpool pilot cutter, *Edmund Gardner*, which is of national importance. The other ship is the last Arklow schooner, *De Wadden*, which was also the last Irish Sea sail cargo vessel, with a history of continuous use between Ireland and Great Britain from 1922 to 1961.

Both the Scottish Maritime Museum and The Scottish Fisheries Museum have examples of Scottish historic vessels, from Clyde puffers to *Zulus*. The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum has a sizable collection of Irish small craft, including the hull of the Galway hooker, *Fancy*, which, incomplete though she now is, is probably the only authentic original example of the type. They also have the steel trading schooner, *Result*, built in Carrickfergus in 1893, and used as a Q-ship during the first world war. In a similar context to the *De Wadden*, *Result* was one of the last of her type to trade. But even maritime museums, and particularly the Trust dependant ones, can become unsafe havens. The Scottish Maritime Museum, a Trust, is undergoing difficult times through a lack of funding.

The most significant development in the UK in dealing with the protection of larger historic vessels was the establishment in 1992 of the National Historic Ships Committee (NHSC), under the auspices of the National Maritime Museum, English Heritage, and the Department of Culture.

The Main Committee is drawn from a broad reach of maritime related expertise including museum professionals, academics, curators, conservators, naval architects, ship and boat builders, merchant and royal navy personnel and others involved in maritime technology and its history.

A Technical Committee, consisting of main committee members and specific experts in the field of Maritime Technology Conservation, provides expert support to the main committee and deals with the analysing of applications.

The NHSC has produced lists of the most relevant historic vessels in a national context under two separate categories, namely Core Collection vessels, which are pre-eminent in their importance and Designated Vessels, of substantial heritage merit but usually in a regional or local context. In order to create an all-encompassing register that reflects all categories of vessel types, eight primary functional areas have been identified, into which vessels can be placed. These are: Cargo, Experimental, Fighting, Fishing, Leisure, Passenger, Research and Service.

The criterion for acceptance of a vessel onto either list is governed by several pre-conditions, including; being built in the UK before 1955; being 40' or above in length; being located in the UK and being largely original. The overriding criteria are historic or structural significance. The majority of the listed vessels are privately owned, which can lead to problems related to care and continuance. Museums and Ship Trusts own most of the iconic and highly significant vessels.

A source of sound advice on the care and use of large objects in museum collections, and which has a relevance to ships and boats, is the publication *Standards in the Museum Care of Larger Objects*, produced in 1974 by the then British Museums and Galleries Commission (now the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council). They assembled a team of experts across all relevant areas of conservation and curator-ship who contributed to the creation of this extremely helpful book that, through sound advice and good established practice across every aspect of museum care, covers all forms of technology objects from trains to boats, both in a usage and static display context.

It was however felt in some circles that the Standards publication could be somewhat daunting to small museums, societies and individuals. In consequence a second publication in 1997, *Larger and Working Objects – A guide to their conservation and care*, is a more user-friendly version of *Standards* that was broadly welcomed. Both publications should be in the libraries of anyone involved with protecting or using the technology heritage, across all its diversities.

In a broader context the European Common Maritime Heritage Congress was established in 1992 when representatives of 13 European countries maritime museums, maritime Foundations and clubs met to exchange ideas on their intentions to continue the use of traditional vessel types.

The organisation has grown since, with major congresses held every three years where papers are given and subjects discussed that cover every aspect of the maritime heritage and in particular its continuance in the context of promoting traditional vessel usage and the associated craft skills. The Barcelona Charter, a statement drawn up by the Congress and based on the Venice and Athens Charters, which deal with the built heritage and cultural property, outlines the manner in which traditional ships in use should be treated.

Merseyside Maritime Museum is affiliated to the Congress and also has a vessel that is kept in operation, the Liverpool tug, *Brocklebank*. The tug, is owned and largely funded by the museum and is maintained and operated by a team of volunteers associated to the Friends of National Museums Liverpool. *Brocklebank* has, over the past decade, made several visits to other ports promoting the museum, including both Howth and Arklow, where she was open to the public.

There is, however, a real concern that some of the vessels that continue sailing are important in their own right, with many having been extensively restored in order to continue sailing. Furthermore, use creates risk, however small, and with significant vessels, this is of concern.

An example is the *Huff* of Arklow, a unique Uffa Fox-designed and Tyrrell-built yacht. She has survived both fire and grounding, each resulting in a considerable loss of original structure. The fire saw her decks, deckhouses and interior replaced. I rebuilt her in 1986, following the grounding accident, which resulted in all the above-ballast keel bent timbers being cracked and related planking started. The restoration process involved the replacement of much of her double-skinned underbody and related timbers.

The *Huff* is not being put forward as a vessel that should be protected in a conservation context, unique as she undoubtedly is, but as an example of what can happen to a well cared for and sound vessel while in normal use.

Most of what we have considered so far predominantly concerns the use of traditional vessels on water. Now we will consider those vessels that should not continue in use on water but which are best kept under cover or indoors, given their relevance as prime specimens of historic or structural importance.

These vessels, such as the wooden schooner, *Peggy*, of 1789, on display in Castletown, Isle of Man, are in the main within Museum ownership and include the real gems of maritime history, its technology, development and innovation. Here we have unique and historically important vessels and examples of type that are central to the retaining of the physical evidence of both historic association and maritime technology development. They are predominantly in original condition and contain a high percentage of original material. Some, however, may be damaged or have components missing. Some may even have been altered.

Such vessels need not necessarily be of high profile or of superior construction. Many are the only remaining original examples of particular vessel types, be that local national or international in relevance. Many are also of significant historic importance. Most are unique and predominantly original, such as, both in an Irish and French historic context, the unique *Bantry Boat*. The *Asgard*, given her history and her predominant originality, would also fall into a similar category. The approach with such vessels is that of conservation, with the emphasis on retaining and protecting original material and form.

We will now examine briefly three very different vessels and their treatment in a museum context to give an insight to the conservation approach - the schooner *De Wadden*, of 1917, the William Fife designed-*Fricka*, of 1895 and the *Bantry Boat*, of pre-1796.

The *De Wadden* is a Dutch-built steel auxiliary schooner of 1917 that is undergoing a programme of both restoration and conservation, which aims to replicate damaged or missing components in original form where necessary and conserve and protect where possible. As her original masts had been replaced in the past and the replacements were largely rotten, her masting and rigging have been replicated in original form. Her hull, which is largely original, is being conserved as much as is possible.



1. The last Arklow schooner, *De Wadden*, in permanent dry-dock at Merseyside Maritime Museum, Liverpool. The *De Wadden*, a steel three mast auxiliary schooner built in Holland in 1917, was the last merchant schooner to trade on the Irish sea, ending a forty year career in 1961. She is undergoing a programme of restoration and conservation at the museum.

While a largish vessel, the approach deals with the detail of getting it right where replacement is required - and this involves using original methods, including hot-riveting. For example the vessels bowsprit-retaining box, a steel riveted structure of some complexity, had corroded extensively. Given its structural significance, that of supporting the large bowsprit and the jib stays, there was no choice other than to remove the original and replace it with a sound structure. An exact replica of the box was created in original form, using traditional methods of hot-riveting to fix the many component parts together. The original was conserved and will be used in a display context to show the effect of corrosion.

The *Fricka* is a William Fife one-design of a type known as '17 footers', which predominantly sailed in Scotland, competing with others of the class on the Clyde estuary. The yacht is now part of the National Maritime Museum boat collection. I was approached in 2000 and asked to undertake her restoration back to original form and in the process to retain and conserve all remaining original material.

Detailed examination found that the sheers had been raised and her deck, beams and cockpit had been removed and replaced with an altered layout, probably some time in the 1930's.

Both the stem and transom were in very poor condition, with plank hood-end fastenings loose and surrounding wood in both stem and transom split and degraded. Both components were removed. To make a long story very short, by the time that all non-original material had been removed from the vessel, just the bare hull from below sheer level remained.



2. The bare hull of the yacht, *Fricka*, of 1895 after all non-original material was removed. The yacht had been extensively altered during the early 1900's. Her owners, the British National Maritime Museum, wanted her returned to original built form while retaining all existing original material.



3. The yacht, *Fricka*, following the completion of an extensive programme of both conservation and restoration undertaken at Merseyside Maritime Museum, Liverpool. The yacht is now on display at Falmouth Maritime Museum, Cornwall.

The missing components, including sheer planks, deck beams, deck and cockpit carlings and coamings were all replicated, using the same species of woods as those used when she was first built. The yacht was in effect rebuilt in original form. The great majority of the original hull had survived and following careful treatment and consolidation she was returned to her former glory. One point on the extent to which the search for authenticity can go in conservation relates to some short portions of necessary hood-end plank replacements. The *Fricka* was planked with yellow pine. By co-incidence we had some pieces of yellow pine that had been saved from an old demolished dock warehouse in 1982 and which were of similar vintage to that used in *Fricka* - c.1890's. Needless to say, we used them in the hull repairs. *Fricka*, masted and rigged, is now on display at National Maritime Museum Falmouth.

The *Bantry Boat* - that enigmatic old girl with a still hidden history. I will not dwell too much on her, given we are in the middle of her programme of conservation and with respect to the confidentiality owed to National Museum of Ireland, her owners, other than to say that she has undergone one of the most thorough examinations and analysis's of any boat. Suffice it to say that every knot, shake and imperfection has been noted. Likewise a detailed examination has pointed to some aberrations, one being that she may not originally have been built to sail. She still has, however, some more secrets to give up.

Our approach with her is to save, conserve and consolidate virtually all her original structure. All surfaces will be cleaned of dirt, grime and graffiti and will be consolidated. Coatings are in such a condition that she will not look fantastic when her conservation is complete, but this will be as it should be. To try and prettify her would be wrong - something like an 80-year-old person getting a facelift. After all she is over 200 years old and this will (and should) quite rightly be reflected in how she looks.

The main structural problem with the *Bantry* is that the centres of each of her sawn floors have rotted away. The keel, to which the floors were fixed with iron boat-nails, now largely rusted away, has broken into four separate pieces, with the aftermost portion missing. The wood is also largely denatured. There is much to do!

This damage, through rot and wood/metal interaction, has been caused, in all probability, by her being left unprotected and in the open for a long period of time - many years, in fact. This period would be pre-1944, and possibly from the end of the 19th century. This is based on a photograph, probably taken c. 1900, which shows her intact, and on the differences between then and her known condition in 1944 when she entered museum ownership and then remained indoors.

In closing I will introduce one of the most important aspects of preserving our maritime heritage in the form of ships and boats. And that is preserving the related traditional skills as well.

And in this the *Bantry* represents the ideal. Where the unique vessel is fully recorded and preserved indoors, while a replica is created by which all its functions can be experienced, without any effect on the precious original. And in this function the *Bantry* has been more successful than any other vessel in the number of replicas built, and in the number of young people that have learned the arts of both wooden boat-building and traditional sail.

By all means continue to use the maritime heritage, in all its forms, but do so wisely by protecting what should be protected and by not using it to extinction.

John Kearon

Head of Shipkeeping, Industrial & Land Transport Conservation.
National Museums Liverpool.
November 2004.
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5. An interior view of the after portion of the Bantry Boat showing the damage to her floors and keel. The vessel, which is owned by The National Museum of Ireland and is entirely original, is undergoing an intensive programme of conservation at Merseyside Maritime Museum. She will be put on display in Dublin in 2006.



4. The Bantry Boat, a French Admirals barge from the frigate Resule of 1778. The barge and her crew were captured during the failed attempt by a large French fleet to land 14,000 troops at Bantry Bay in 1796.

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Heritage Afloat: www.heritageafloat.org.uk.

SURVEY CARRIED OUT FOR THE HERITAGE COUNCIL

Reggie Goodbody

I was approached by the Heritage Council last year, to survey the heritage boat sector in Ireland, over a period of two months. It was impossible to cover the whole country in the time available, as the report had to be finished by the end of 2003. I know there are interesting boats up in Sligo, and also in West Cork, and I would particularly liked to have gone there and talked to a much wider range of people than I was able to.

I covered south Connemara, Lough Derg, the Grand Canal, up the East coast to Skerries, and then all the way down the coast as far as Waterford, including local ports in the estuary leading up to Waterford Harbour, and then some of the Barrow. It included a total of about thirty-nine ports, marinas or places that held boats. The method was literally to drive there in a car, get out and walk around the harbour with a camera looking for interesting boats and photographing them. In the report for the Heritage Council there are photos of seventy-five boats – not all my own photographs as some people very kindly gave me theirs. The range of boats included those made from iron, steel, timber and GRP, which I thought are of heritage interest.

The second thing I did was to talk to people who are interested in heritage boats and their history. Some people I met, some I spoke to on the telephone, and in other cases we corresponded. I am very grateful for all the help I received.

Some of the most interesting boats are actually on the Inland Waterways. Several were absolutely fascinating, and included some of the oldest boats still in use on these waters. Certainly the oldest timber one is on Lough Ree (over 150 years), and I know of another one on Lough Derg (over 130 years). Of the iron and steel boats the oldest are also on the Inland Waterways.

The Heritage Council asked me to define a heritage boat. I felt this was a rather interesting request, and I thought about it long and hard. As I have actually lived on a heritage boat in my time, and have owned several, I found it a fascinating challenge. This is how I assessed boats when I looked at them: -

1/ A boat or vessel that was important to an inland or coastal community.

2/ A boat built with the materials available at the time, i.e. timber, iron, steel, concrete or GRP, and which reflects the techniques and skills used in the construction of that boat. A lot of skills used in building boats will not be used again, except by enthusiasts to build replicas, but never in an industrial or commercial sense.

3/ A boat or vessel with historic connections of national importance, or associated with prominent national persons. For example the *Asgard*, or a rowing boat used by Sean McBride when he was on the run on Lough Derg – he even camped on it at night!

A heritage boat may have been repaired and still in use, whereas a boat which is no longer usable, for example *Asgard*, becomes a museum piece. In my opinion that is the difference between a heritage boat and a museum piece. These are all my personal views, by the way, and I'm sure many people may well disagree with them.

A boat built, as an exact copy of an original design is, in my opinion, a replica when it is no longer used for the same purpose as the original boat. The newly built Hookers, to give an example, are not actually used to carry turf any longer, or for trading or fishing. They are used for pleasure and, as far as I am concerned, they are replicas.

Time and age are not necessarily critical when defining a heritage boat. For example *Northabout* (built of aluminium in the West of Ireland) sailed through the North West Passage two years ago. She is one of only fifteen boats in the world to have completed that extremely tough voyage, and she will be an important boat from a heritage point of view.

The Heritage Council asked me to consider what were the facts and heritage issues that arose as a result of my survey. These are some of them.

- 1) Wooden fishing boats and half deckers. – as far as I could see these are not being recorded.
- 2) There is no definite place to store heritage boats.
- 3) Some heritage boats are being exported from the country. A lot of you will be familiar with the 24s, five of which are going to France this year.
- 4) Many private individuals are keeping historic boats, which are expensive to maintain.
- 5) One of the things I recommend is that maybe we should look at a tax incentive for people who do keep these boats, and make it a little more attractive for them to do so.
- 6) There is a lack of mooring spaces for some of the larger heritage boats, particularly on the Shannon. A very low cost mooring system could be put in place at harbours if people were interested.
- 7) Interesting Classic boats are scattered around Dun Laoghaire Harbour, and I saw several in the Coal Harbour. Not everybody looks at the Coal Harbour, yet thousands of people walk along the West and East piers. If there were a trot of moorings beside these piers people would see these boats. A small plaque with historical notes and photographs would add to the interest. The Dutch, where I have just been, actually do this in their National Maritime Museum in Amsterdam, where they have a collection of classic boats. At this museum there is a whole quay of classic Dutch barges. Some of them are working boats that have been converted. People are living on some of them, but they are still moored in the one area.
- 8) There is no place to receive archival material that the general public might donate for future research. Several people I met said they have interesting papers, but do not know where to send them.
- 9) The Maritime Museum of Dun Laoghaire is closed at present. I actually got in on some pretext and had a good look round – having first spent an hour trying to park my car! I don't think that that building is the right place to have a very interesting and important collection.

There are thirty-five pages of fairly concentrated information in the report. I photographed and then did a brief history of some of the more interesting boats I came across. I put them into three categories:

- A) Workboats built in Ireland.
- B) Boats built in Ireland for pleasure.
- C) Imported boats of considerable heritage interest.

Some people debated with me that we should not include recreational boats, i.e. Howth 17s, Dublin Bay Sailing Club 21s, 25s and other boats in the survey; however, they were important to the community for their recreation, and they reflect the materials and designs used at the time, and I feel that they are an important part of our heritage.

We have various boats like the Water Wag, and Shannon one design (dinghies), which are still being built. But it is getting more difficult to find people to repair them, and I am told that the 24s, which are going out to France, will be refitted somewhere else.

In Amsterdam yesterday I walked around the Maritime Museum and there were quite a few other people there. Obviously in the summer it is milling with people, and I was glad to be there at this time of year. I think we are losing out on an asset we have in this country by not having some place where we can keep a collection of heritage-classic boats. There are people who are definitely interested in them, and would like to try and save some of this important part of our heritage.

Ireland's boating heritage – the future?

Summary of the Issues identified in the Workshops.

FORMAT OF WORKSHOPS

The participants divided into four groups, each of whom addressed four questions listed below. The feedback from each group was presented at a plenary session and is collated by question in this section.

- What are the core issues in caring for/using traditional boats?
- How do we carry out proper recording and research on boats?
- Should we have a maritime/boat museum?
- How do we foster traditional boat skills including both construction and their usage?

WHAT ARE THE CORE ISSUES IN CARING FOR/USING TRADITIONAL BOATS?

Co-ordination and contacts: need co-ordination and better contact between existing groups, to focus effort of individuals; a centralised secretariat. Data bases – of skills, crafts people and crew would be useful.

Emergency rescue – to secure existing small craft, and to store it

Costs – higher for traditional boats than new boats (insurance, moorings, charges, maintenance, skills, materials).

Funding – there is none for traditional boats, [apart from the Udaras.] A grant scheme, sponsorship, a trust fund, tax incentives for restoration and maintenance could be examined. EU schemes such as INTERREG should be investigated with the Heritage Council acting as a main partner.

Skills – in maintenance and restoration techniques are needed. Need to preserve skills for future generations.

Facilities – moorings, dry docks, storage are needed.

Materials – it is difficult to find appropriate materials of high standard. More communication between the sector would help. They are also expensive.

Insurance – Costs are high and possibilities of group insurance should be looked at

Licensing – these requirements can mean that traditional boats cannot be used for commercial charter thus restricting their owners potential for usage of the boat.

Regulations and by-laws – these need to accommodate traditional boat needs, and to provide for them e.g. bylaws.

Replicas / originals – It is important to distinguish between the two, although the sector should embrace both.

Regattas – a good way to raise awareness, give public access to boats visually and physically but noted that while races might encourage the preservation of boats and skills such events do not necessarily preserve the vessel and people will adapt and change originals to suit and do anything to win at all costs.

Small local boat yards – need to be identified by as repositories of skills, training, research, and boats themselves. These yards need recognition, resources and links to other yards, and sources of high quality materials.

HOW DO WE CARRY OUT PROPER RECORDING AND RESEARCH ON BOATS?

What should be recorded? – boats, boat lines, individuals - skills, stories, a way of life, narrative history of individual boats, and people.

Standards in recording; common methodology – a common standard or methodology is needed, along with a systematic approach. A common forum is needed to ensure this, and possibly a dedicated person.

Archiving – material needs to be stored, catalogued and made accessible. This may not require a central repository but could be web-based.

Local recording – that people record, research in their own areas, “to the mud creeks as well as the harbours” to find and record boats, and interview people.

Use of volunteers – volunteers can be used (as is happening) but their generosity should not be exploited.

Training – training of volunteers and others in a standards methodology, and interview techniques should be set up.

Equipment – recording equipment could be lent out.

Community based projects – community focused projects getting people involved are needed.

Register of boats – heritage boats, but be inclusive rather than listing boats [There is caution over this given the difficulties that owners of protected structures face.]

Photographs – The Heritage Council could work with the National Photographic archive to set up a maritime section.

Photographs should be original, not digital, for longer life.

SHOULD WE HAVE A MARITIME/BOAT MUSEUM?

Types of boats – need to preserve examples of definitive or representative boat types, and these need to be accessible.

Skills/ culture – any boat museum should encourage skills, culture – living heritage

National/regional museums/ Local – a series of different levels of museum is needed.

National museum – needs floating exhibitions; better to have a large collection of small boats than one large one;

Local, community – based museums associated with local boat yards would help build up local interest and pride; local museums would support initiatives that are already in place. Boats make more sense in their local context.

Storage – suitable storage facilities are needed on a regional basis, and with appropriate security.

Funding for museums – visitor income cannot be guaranteed; specialist museums find it hard to pay their way. Insurance and running costs are a problem for museums.

Visitor numbers – may fall after initial enthusiasm; might need to attach it to a bigger attraction.

Floating exhibits – Boats should be displayed with their sails, oars in place, but floating exhibits are not always the answer.

Moorings – moorings for traditional/heritage boats should be available in harbours with interpretative panels on shore.

HOW DO WE FOSTER TRADITIONAL BOAT SKILLS INCLUDING BOTH CONSTRUCTION AND THEIR USAGE?

Formal education – Boat building could be promoted to transition year or gap year students. Alternative education system should be looked at – craft skills e.g. folk schools in Norway and Blacksmith revival in Mayo.

Respect – for the people who used the boats, their knowledge of the waters, and how to handle the boats.

Promotion and awareness – promotion through the media is needed – keep boats in the public eye.

Journeyman craftsman – supplementing around the local boating yards and centres.

Idea of “ mass movement” as in France – Chasse Marée

Use of political lobbying

Before embarking on a restoration/replica project a number of questions must be asked?

Who will own the boat? How will it be maintained? Who will manage the project? Who will sail it? – where and when? Where will it be kept?

Keep the traditional/heritage boat community broad to include those working on original boats, and those using replicas.

People should be encouraged to use boats commercially – charter and tourism.

POINTS RAISED IN THE PLENARY SESSION

- Old Gaffers Association – Future of the Asgard
- Improving communication and co-ordination through web contacts
- The non- monetary value of Ireland’s boating heritage for the nation
- “Use it or lose it.”

IRELAND'S BOATING HERITAGE - THE FUTURE?

Tullamore Court Hotel 13 November 2004

10.00 am	Registration Tea/coffee
10.30 am	Welcome and Introduction - Nioclás O Conchubair Heritage Council, Chairperson of the Inland Waterways Committee
10.40 am	Professor Willie Smyth, Heritage Council – the Heritage of Boats
11.00 am	Jim Horgan <i>Traditional Boats - how do we keep the idea alive?</i>
11.30 am	Donal MacPolin <i>Recording and Researching traditional boats</i>
12 noon	John Kearon, <i>Merseyside Maritime Museum</i> <i>Heritage and historic vessels: care and conservation -examples from the UK</i>
12.30 pm	Questions and Answer session
12.50 pm – 2.00 pm	Lunch
2.00 pm	Reggie Goodbody on the Heritage Council scoping document
2.15 pm	Heritage Council - outline of workshops
2.20 – 3.30 pm	Workshops
3.30 pm	Tea /Coffee – to bring into the feedback session
3.45 – 4.15 pm	Feedback session
4.15 - 4.45 pm	Plenary
4.45 - 5.00 pm	Concluding Remarks

	2nd Name	1st Name	Organisation
1	Algeo	Alan	Lough Ree Yacht Club
2	Bayley	Gerard	
3	Bayly	Robert	
4	Beattie	David	
5	Benson	Mick	Old Gaffers Association
6	Brennan	David	
7	Brennan	Niall	
8	Brown	Kieran	14ft Class Captain
9	Burke	Gerry	Heritage Boat Association
10	Burke	James	
11	Byrne	Edward	
12	Cahill	James	
13	Coote	Susan	
14	Corbett	Arthur	
15	Corbett	Una	
16	Cotter	Claire	
17	Cullen	Sean	
18	Cunnane	Jarlath	
19	Davis	Tim	
20	de Barra	Fionán	Dublin Bay 21 Footer Association
21	de Buitlear	Cian	Cumman Huiceirí na Gaillimhe
22	Dearbhala	Ledwidge	Heritage Officer - Kilkenny County Council
23	Delany	Vincent	Waterwags
24	Farrell	Mick	
25	Goodbody	Reggie	
26	Goggin	Brian J	
27	Griffin	John	
28	Griffin	Marilyn	
29	Hanna	Rachel	
30	Hannevig	Dan	
31	Heineike	Skip	
32	Horgan	Jim	Badoiri Lurgan
33	Kelly	Patrick	
34	Kieran	Eoin	Underwater Archaeologist - Moore Group
35	Kearon	John	Merryside Maritime Museum
36	Lawlor	Ian	
37	Lawn	Charlie	Waterways Ireland
38	Leech	John	Irish Water Safety
39	Lefroy	John	Boat Surveyor
40	Lefroy	Sandra	
41	Leonard	John	
42	Levis	Cormac	
43	Lonze	Holger C	
44	Lowry	Gerard	

	2nd Name	1st Name	Organisation
45	Lynch	Donal	Traditional Boats of Ireland
46	Maca'tSithigh	Sean	Seine Boats of Iveragh
47	Magennis	Tim	Iris na Mara
48	McMahon	Gary	AK Ilen Company
49	McMahon	Tom	
50	McPhilips	Séamus	National Museum of Ireland
51	McPolin	Donal	Dublin Bay 21 Footer Association
52	Meehan	Tim	Heritage Boat Association
53	Mills	Frankie	
54	Mills	Maura	
55	Moran	Tom	
56	Murphy	Diarmaid	Atlantic Challenge Ireland
57	Ní Fhátarta	Sinead	Údaras na Gaeltachta
58	O Carroll	Cliona	Dept of Bealoideas, UCC
59	Ó Ceóinín	Catherine	Cumman Huiceirí na Gaillimhe
60	O Reilly	Seán	Heritage Boat Association
61	O Sullivan	Austin	Irish Agricultural Museum
62	O'Duinnin	Padraig	Meitheal Mara
63	Prior	Michael	Maritime Museum
64	Ruane	Michael	
65	Ruane	Pat	Cork County Council
66	Scally	Georgina	
67	Shaw Smith	David	
68	Shine	Sid	Lough Ree Yacht Club
69	Sisk	Hal	Traditional Boats of Ireland
70	Tully	Darina	Maritime Archeologist
71	Tyrell	Michael	
72	Wynne	Alan	Waterways Ireland
73	Becker	Colin	Heritage Council
74	Delany	Ruth	Heritage Council
75	Smyth	Willie	Heritage Council
76	Creedon	Ted	Heritage Council
77	Daphne	Ledwidge	Heritage Council
78	McMahon	Michael	Heritage Council
79	McNamara	Michael	Heritage Council
80	Boelens	Rick	Heritage Council
81	Mills	Gillian	Heritage Council
82	Maguire	Hugh	Heritage Council
83	O Conchubhair	Nioclás	Heritage Council
84	Kelly	Beatrice	Heritage Council

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THE BARCELONA CHARTER

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF TRADITIONAL SHIPS IN OPERATION

PREAMBLE

The VENICE CHARTER was created in 1964 as a statement of principles for the conservation and restoration of monuments and sites. It opens with the preamble:

“Imbued with a message from the past, the historic monuments of generations of people remain to the present day as living witnesses of their age-old traditions. People are becoming more and more conscious of the unity of human values and regard ancient monuments as a common heritage. The common responsibility to safeguard them for future generations is recognized. It is our duty to hand them on in the full richness of their authenticity.

It is essential that the principles guiding the preservation and restoration of ancient buildings should be agreed and be laid down on an international basis, with each country being responsible for applying the plan within the framework of its own culture and traditions.

By defining these basic principles for the first time, the ATHENS CHARTER of 1931 contributed towards the development of an extensive international movement which has assumed concrete form in national documents, in the work of ICOM and UNESCO and in the establishment by the latter of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property”

Both Charters focus on monuments and sites ashore. Maritime heritage is not covered despite its close affinity. Therefore the 4th EMH Congress, meeting in Barcelona in 2001, resolved to adapt the VENICE CHARTER for maritime heritage in Europe, to be known as the “BARCELONA CHARTER”.

DEFINITIONS

ARTICLE 1. The concept of maritime heritage afloat embraces the single traditional ship in which is found the evidence of a particular civilisation or significant development as well as traditional sailing, seamanship and maritime workmanship. This applies both to larger ships and to more modest craft of the past, which have acquired cultural significance with the passing of time.

ARTICLE 2. The preservation, restoration and operation of traditional ships must have recourse to all the sciences, techniques and facilities, that can contribute to the study and safeguarding of the maritime heritage afloat.

AIM

ARTICLE 3. The intention in preserving and restoring traditional ships in operation is to safeguard them whether as works of art, as historical evidence or for perpetuating traditional skills

PRESERVATION

ARTICLE 4. It is essential for the continued survival of traditional ships in operation that they be maintained on a permanent basis.

ARTICLE 5. Making use of traditional ships for some socially useful purpose always facilitates their preservation. Such use is therefore desirable but it must not significantly change the exterior layout of the ship. Modifications demanded by a change of function should be kept within these limits.

ARTICLE 6. A traditional ship is inseparable from the history to which it bears witness and from the waters it sailed. Therefore its homeport and area of operation ideally should be in the regions of its former usage.

RESTORATION

ARTICLE 8. The restoration of traditional ships will best be accomplished by means of traditional materials and techniques. Where traditional materials or techniques prove inadequate, the consolidation of traditional ships in operation can be achieved by the use of modern materials for conservation, the efficacy of which has been shown by scientific data and proved by experience.

ARTICLE 9. The restoration of a traditional ship does not require that the ship shall be restored to the original building year. Some ships have a great historical value in a later period of their former time of working. Restoration to any period should be executed only after thorough consideration of the quality of the historical and technical documentation available for the chosen period.

ARTICLE 10. Obligatory navigation- and safety equipment must integrate harmoniously with the whole, but at the same time must be distinguishable from the original so that restoration does not falsify the artistic or historic evidence.

ARTICLE 11. Additions cannot be allowed except in so far as they do not detract from the interesting parts of the ship, its traditional setting and the balance of its composition.

ARTICLE 12. In all works of restoration there should always be precise documentation in the form of analytical and critical reports, illustrated with drawings and/or photographs and other appropriate media. Every stage of the work of dismantling, treatment, reassembly and addition of new parts, as well as technical and structural features identified during the course of the work, should be included.

The BARCELONA CHARTER as adopted by the EMH Working Group

28th of September 2002 in Enkhuizen.

Arne Gotved Anders Berg
(Chairman EMH Cultural Council) (President EMH)

Signed March 30th 2003 on board Fregatten Jylland, Ebeltoft DK