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ABM TO INTRODUCE NEW EXHIBIT FOR 2015

The next wave of boating history to be told with pontoons

CLAYTON, New York (April 1, 2015) – The Antique Boat Museum (ABM), North America’s premier freshwater nautical museum based in Clayton, New York, announced today that it will introduce a new and exciting exhibit for the upcoming season. “Partying on Pontoons” will debut on May 1 in what was once known as the Small Craft Building on the Museum campus.

“Partying on Pontoons” will capture the interesting story revolving around the creation of pontoon boats in the early 1950s. Much of the exhibit will highlight the unique characteristics of pontoon boats, including their ability to carry a large number of people and serve as a “party barge,” which is commonly the case in the 1000 Islands region.

“We will shift from mahogany to aluminum and celebrate the important role pontoons have come to play in modern day boating,” stated Emmett Smith, curator. “A total of 10 pontoon boats will be featured in the exhibit and one will be made available for rentals throughout the summer.”

The boats that were on display in the Small Craft Building in recent years will be taken to long term storage to make room for the pontoon boats.

The history of pontoon boats dates back to 1952 when Ambrose Weeres, a Minnesota farmer, placed a wooden platform on two columns of steel barrels which were welded together end-to-end, creating a sturdy deck. Weeres would go on to build a few boats and sell them with the help of dealers before starting Weeres Industries to meet the unexpected demand. Weeres, would later be known as “Mr. Pontoon” and would go on to be elected into the Minnesota Marina Hall of Fame in 1991.

About ABM

Located on the St. Lawrence River in upstate New York, the ABM features a collection of over 300 antique and classic boats, among thousands of recreational boating artifacts. The Museum is home to the world’s largest runabout of its kind and a 112-year old gilded-age two-story houseboat. In 2015, the ABM will host the 51st annual Antique Boat Show and Auction, the longest running such show in North America. For more information, please visit the Museum’s website at abm.org.

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