

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. T 498

Magi No. 2104985733

DOE yes noCHESAPEAKE BAY SAILING LOG CANOE FLEET THEMATIC GROUP

AUG - 5 1985

SEP 18 1985

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic BILLIE P. HALL

and/or common log canoe

2. Location

street & number RFD 1, Box 85, Evergreen Road n/a not for publication

city, town Oxford vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland 024 county Talbot 041

3. Classification

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

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

name Justin T. Callahan, M.D.

street & number RFD 1, Box 85 telephone no.: 226-5475

city, town Oxford state and zip code Maryland 21654

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number folio

city, town state

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland Historical Trust Historic Sites Inventory

date 1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

7. Description

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

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

BILLIE P. HALL is a 34'2" sailing log canoe with two masts and a racing rig. She was built "to beat the MAGIC" in 1903 by Charles Tarr of St. Michaels. Converted to power and used for tonging oysters, she was returned to sailing rig in 1963 and has been racing as No. 5 since then. She is double-ended, with a longhead bow and a sharp raking stern, on which a rudder is hung. Log-built with carvel-fitted rising planks, she has a beam of 7' 1-1/4". Her hull has been fibreglassed over and is finished white with green bottom paint offset by a black strip and light green washboards. The canoe is privately owned.

The boat has typical Tilghman-style log construction, with carvel-fitted rising planks and flat washboards, supported by hanging knees, overhanging the sides to form a rubrail at the sheer. In shape, she has an S-shaped sheer rising to a long, curving, squared-off bowsprit, forming a modified clipper bow. The sharp stern is steeply raking. A frame outrigger, or bumpkin, with wooden grips and a metal frame backrest, overhanging the stern. Seated here a crew member can handle the mainsail. The bowsprit is set up with heavy standing rigging--two wire bowsprit shrouds, a wire bobstay, and a forestay and jibstay leading to the top of the foremast. Like most of the Tilghman canoes, she is built of 5 logs.

The sailing rig consists of two masts with adjustable rake, set into square steps in the thwarts fore and aft. The 47' foremast is stayed with two foremast shrouds, spreaders, forestay, and jibstay, but the 38' high mainmast is unstayed. The boat has a racing rig consisting of main and foresail with clubs and sprits, a large jib, and light sails depending on weather, notably a bright green kite with a gold harp on it. Cleat rails are set atop the washboards.

Lacking auxiliary power, the boat sails or is towed to and from races. Racing gear, in addition to assorted sails, includes springboards for balance. The peapod-shaped interior is open except for narrow, flat washboards (painted light green) lined with a white cockpit coaming, two thwarts, and a large centerboard trunk. The hull is painted white with light green trim. The name BILLIE P. HALL is painted in large black script letters on the hull. The longhead is finished plain white with wooden beading. There are no trailboards.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1903 **Builder/Architect** Charles Tarr

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
and/or

Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G none

Level of Significance: national state local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This vessel is significant as being one of the last surviving traditional Chesapeake Bay racing log canoes that carry on a tradition of racing on the Eastern Shore of Maryland that has existed since the 1840's. In addition, it is a surviving representative of the oldest indigenous type of boat on the Bay--the working log canoe--which was developed in the 17th century by early European settlers from the aboriginal dugout canoe.

Used for transportation and for harvesting the rich bounty of the Bay, log canoes changed little over the centuries. Constructed of from two to seven logs and ranging in length from 20 to 35 feet, they were rigged with one or two sharp-headed spritsails with or without a jib set on raking, unstayed pole masts. Easily and cheaply constructed, some 6300 existed in Bay waters in the 1880's. The working canoes first began to be raced in 1840 and by the 1870's area boatbuilders were building canoes specifically for racing, with lighter, thinner hulls and sharper lines. As mast heights increased to increase sail area the canoes became inherently unstable, necessitating the use of springboards and human ballast. Also part of the racing rig is the out rigger added for balance and to enable the sail tender to sit beyond the overlarge mainsail.

With the invention of the gasoline engine many log canoes were converted to power for oystering, but were then converted back to sail as interest in racing waxed and waned over the years. After peak years of popularity in the 1880's and 1890's, interest in log canoe racing waned in the first two decades of the 20th century only to be revived again in the 1920's. The popularity of racing, spearheaded by the Miles River Yacht Club, continued unabated until the present day, although the number of vessels active in the fleet has varied considerably.

BILLIE P. HALL is significant as having been built by Charles Tarr in 1903, the builder of the well-known MAGIC of 1894. She was built specifically for racing, "to beat the MAGIC," and raced until 1912. In that year she was converted to power by the Dyott family of St. Michaels and was used for tonging oysters until 1963 when she was purchased by Edward Morris and returned to her racing rig. In her first race in 1965 she placed second and in 1966 proved her ability by winning the Governor's Cup at the Miles River Regatta.

She is thought to have been the sister ship of MARGARET P. HALL, whose lines were published in Marion V. Brewington's Log Canoes (1937).

9. Major Bibliographical References

Brewington, Marion V., Chesapeake Bay Log Canoes and Bugeyes (Cambridge, Md.: Cornell Maritime Press, 1963)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Oxford, MD

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	8	4	0	0	8	1	0	4	2	8	1	0	3	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

The historic boundary of this movable vessel is co-terminous with the hull. The vessel is usually stored at the location indicated in Item 2.

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

state	n/a	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Witty and Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward

organization Maryland Historical Society

date May 1984

street & number 201 West Monument Street

telephone (301) 685-3750

city or town Baltimore

state Maryland 21201

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
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