



# MUSEUM BOATSHOP BUILDING MORE THAN JUST BOATS

Story by Tracey Munson

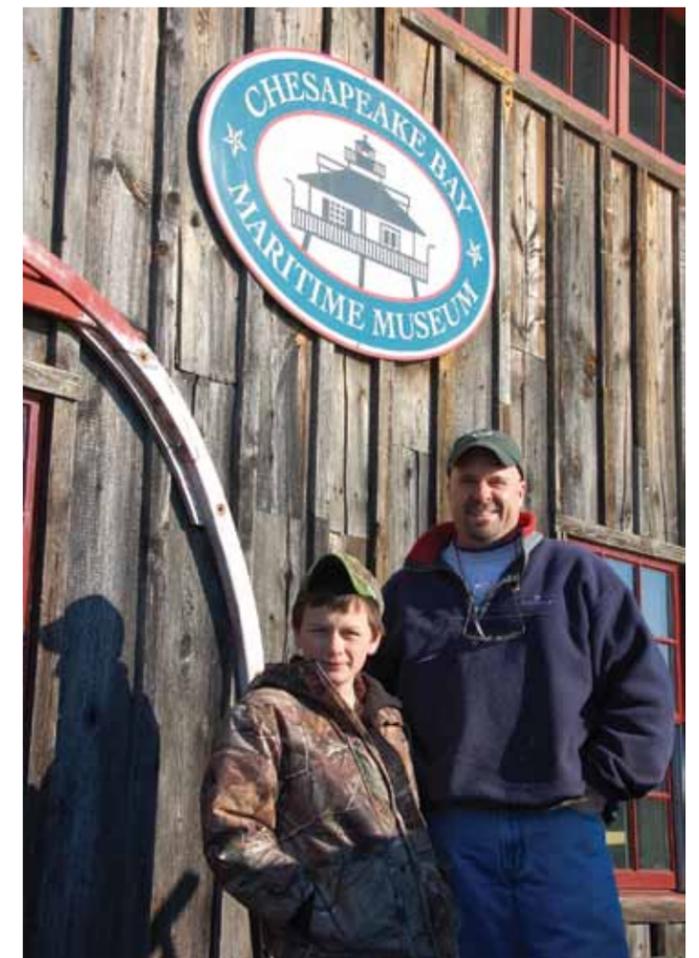
## Along a misty harbor on a cold winter's morning,

the Museum's boat shop is turning out more than just traditional Chesapeake wooden boats. As the saws spin and the fire crackles in the wood burning stove, the shop is also turning out a legacy of memories for the Northrop family. While many kids are playing video games or watching television, 12-year-old Mackenzie Northrop—or Mack as he's known to family and friends—is up early with his father, eager to head to the boat shop to build a Smith Island flat bottomed skiff. It's all part of the Museum's Apprentice for a Day public boatbuilding program, and in this case, the finished product will be a boat that Mack calls his own.

"Mack's been crabbing on a 12-foot Jon boat since he was nine," explains his father, John Northrop. An only child, Mack relishes his time trotlining for crabs on Royal Oak's Irish Creek. Logan Hammon, a friend and fellow 7th grader at St. Michaels Middle School, often accompanies Mack on his fishing trips. "The boys will crab every weekend, all summer long. They're both true Eastern Shoremen," says John.

A financial consultant with RBC Wealth Management in Easton, MD, John came to the boat yard in April 2010 with hopes to commission the Museum's shipwrights to craft a larger boat for Mack. "The Museum had just been commissioned to build a Smith Island flat bottomed skiff for someone," recalls John Northrop. The buyer stipulated that he wanted kids to be primarily involved in the construction of the skiff, with work commencing over the summer.

*(left) Mack Northrop and Logan Hammon paint the bottom of Mack's crabbing skiff in the Apprentice for a Day Public Boatbuilding Program while Boat Yard Program Manager Dan Sutherland and John Northrop look on.*



*Mack and John Northrop arrive at the Boat Shop bright and early on the weekends.*

The Museum regularly sells the boats built through its **Apprentice for a Day Public Boatbuilding Program** as a way to support the non-profit Museum. "We usually sell the boats at fair market value," commented Boat Yard Program Manager Dan Sutherland. "It's a great way to pass on the traditions of wooden boatbuilding to the public, and it's a lot of fun."

The programs run year-long on Saturdays and Sundays, with individuals participating for just a day or throughout the whole boatbuilding process. Experience is not necessary. Kids under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Led by Sutherland and docent volunteers like Dr. John Hawkinson and Mary Sue and Bob Traynelis—all the work is done as Museum visitors ask questions and roam about the boat shop.

Since June, John and Mack have come to the boat yard every weekend to learn all the steps of traditional, wooden boatbuilding. "I also come for Mr. Bob's donuts," added Mack.

## Volunteer Profiles by Marie Thomas



(From left) Boat Yard Manager Richard Scofield, Boat Yard Volunteer Dr. John “Doc” Hawkinson, Boat Yard Program Manager Dan Sutherland, Mack Northrop, Boat Yard Volunteer Mary Sue Traynelis, Floating Fleet Assistant Don McLeod, Shipwright Apprentice Jennifer Kuhn, Vessel Maintenance Manager Marc Barto (standing), Shipwright Apprentice Joe Green, and John Northrop, in front of the Museum’s skipjack Rosie Parks. Photo by David Harp/ChesapeakePhotos.com.

The Traynelises bring homemade bakery treats to share with Mack and the others each weekend. Mack’s friend Logan occasionally helps in building the boat as well. The second skiff also came with some customization, at the request of Mack himself.

“He thought he needed more room,” explains Sutherland. “So Mack’s boat is two feet longer—20 feet, and has wider washboards for Mack’s crab baskets. We worked together to make it all happen.” Two-station steering and a small cabin up forward have also been added. “Mack is basically designing the layout of the boat and the cabin, with our guidance.”

Immersed in the project, Mack often stops by the boat yard after school, and has helped on other boats like the Museum’s bugeye, the *Edna E. Lockwood*. “We love Mack,” said Vessel Maintenance Manager Marc Barto, who is leading repair work on *Edna* through the spring. “He’s come on board to help paint and do other jobs and is accepted as one of the crew.”

Mack’s experience also extends beyond the Museum’s bulkheads. At home in Royal Oak, he’s using what he has learned to craft model workboats out of Popsicle sticks.

“Mack finally ‘gets’ why it’s so important for him to learn and understand math and science since it all goes hand in hand with his boatbuilding,” commented his mom, Laura Northrop. “In fact, a couple of his teachers have used boats as examples in their lessons to keep Mack engaged in his classroom studies.”

They see him drawing boats and he has even brought his Popsicle stick boats into the classroom to share with his teachers and friends, so they also know of his love of boats and boat building.” Laura went on to say that what started out as building boats has ended up building a lifetime of memories for the entire family. “We’re so grateful for this experience.”

Mack’s boat is expected to be ready to launch this spring. Just in time for this year’s crabbing season. Mack adds, “I’m looking forward to being able to go out further in the river than I was able to go in my Jon boat.”

Gift certificates are available—Museum members \$35 and non-members \$45. To find out more about the Apprentice For a Day Public Boatbuilding Program, visit [cbmm.org/l\\_boatyard.htm](http://cbmm.org/l_boatyard.htm) or call 410-745-2916 and ask to speak to someone in the Boat Yard. You can also email questions to [dsutherland@cbmm.org](mailto:dsutherland@cbmm.org) or [rscofield@cbmm.org](mailto:rscofield@cbmm.org).



### Pat Scott

Pat Scott and her husband moved to Easton from Berwyn, PA this past summer after visiting the Eastern Shore regularly for over 25 years. “Everything is much more relaxed on the Shore and it’s incredibly beautiful,” says Pat. After hearing about the Museum from a friend, Pat wanted to find out more and thought it’d be a good way to give back to the community.

A retired real estate agent, Pat helps out with visitor services, manning the reception desk, answering phones, and helping the membership department when needed. Pat is currently attending the docent training and is looking forward to giving tours of the Museum in the future. Pat and her husband also enjoy volunteering for the Museum’s special events.

“I enjoy working in visitor services because I get to meet everybody. It’s really the hub with everyone passing through all the time,” says Pat.

### John Lindinger

“Docent jobs are just really great because you’re always expanding on what you already know,” says volunteer docent John Lindinger. Originally from Newark, DE, John retired to the Eastern Shore three years ago. Before moving to the Shore, John worked as an instrument process control technician at the Delaware City Refinery.

“I’ve kept a sailboat in Cambridge for 25 years, so I was familiar with the area and this Museum. I’ve always thought it was a special place—different from other Museums—it’s much more hands-on,” comments John. Shortly after moving, an article in the paper about docent training at the Museum caught his eye, and he decided to give it a try. John now leads both adult and youth tours, mainly Bay Bounty Tours and Ecology Cruises, as well as lending his former professional skills as an electrician to help out when needed in the Boat Yard.



### Jody Stumpf

As spring approaches and the Museum is once again filled with hundreds of school children, you’ll most likely find docent Jody Stumpf walking through campus, trailed by a large group of eager third-graders. Specializing in youth tours and programs, Jody enjoys assisting with the Crab Cakes program, ecology cruises, Bay Bounty, and Bay Discovery tours.

Before becoming a volunteer at the Museum, Jody chaired a nursery school and worked as a buyer and consultant for a floral design company. Jody and her husband John (who also volunteers at the Museum) moved to St. Michaels from Westchester County, NY, 10 years ago. The Stumpfs began spending their summers on the Eastern Shore more than 20 years ago.

“One of the very first things we did was to come to the Museum and we decided that when we did retire, that’s where we wanted to put in some time,” recalls Jody. “Right after moving to St. Michaels we began volunteering and in the process met friends—other docents—who were very much interested in the same things we were. So it really was a great way to meet people and a wonderful introduction into the community,” says Jody.

Here at the Museum, we are fortunate to have a talented and dedicated cadre of volunteers who sustain us and help us to do the important work of telling the stories of the Chesapeake Bay. To this end, we are always looking for new volunteers to join our team. Whether you would enjoy helping with special events, leading a tour, working in the library, interacting with kids, assisting with staff projects or spending time in the Museum store, we have a volunteer opportunity for you. For further information about volunteering, contact Diane Taylor, 410-745-2959 or [dtaylor@cbmm.org](mailto:dtaylor@cbmm.org).