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SECTION B

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## TUMBLEHOME BOATSHOP BUILDS A FIRST A SPEED BOAT FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY

By Anthony F. Hall

Reuben Smith opened his Tumblehome Boatshop in 2012, intending to build a business restoring antique wooden boats and, when able, constructing new boats based on historic designs.

It was a successful gambit. The boatshop keeps several full and part time craftsmen busy, working on several boats at a time.

In fact, Smith, who operates the business with his wife Cynde, has been so successful that Tumblehome has bought a building adjacent to the shop to house the boats awaiting restoration.

And, after completing the restoration of two Sound Interclubs, the 29 foot, one-design sloops that were raced on Lake George from the 1930s through the 1950s, Smith was able to offer “the true ISC,” an exact replica of one of the boats, the Caprice.

Now Tumblehome Boatworks has expanded its scope to include custom-built speedboats.

The first to be commissioned is a 24’ speedboat inspired by the Gold Cup raceboats of the 1920s.

“The client, who prefers to remain anonymous, visited all the local wood boat builders, looking for something that could do a number of things, reach high speeds but also putt quietly, something that could be taken for an exhilarating spin but also an evening cocktail cruise, something that would handle well at a variety of speeds,” said Smith.

“Something off the shelf wouldn’t meet his criteria,” said Cynde Smith.

The client quickly realized that only a custom designed and built boat would satisfy his requirements, and commissioned Tumblehome to build it for him.

Finding a designer was difficult, Smith said.



“We spoke to a lot of designers, who all said it couldn’t be done, that no one boat could be all these things. I thought they were wrong,” said Smith.

The team at the Maine-based Stephens Waring Yacht Design agreed with Smith, and that firm was selected to design the boat.

The owner became immersed in the process of designing his new boat, said Smith.

“We spent hours on the phone, having long, deep conversations about the boat. Since it was to be built according to his needs, we needed to know everything he wanted from a boat and where and how it will be used,” said Smith. “For instance, since it will be berthed on a small, Adirondack lake, it won’t require a high freeboard.”

“I think he came to feel that the process of designing and building a boat could be as much fun as owning it,” said Cynde Smith.

“It’s a classic looking boat, but below the water line, it’s a fully

modern boat, powered by a Corvette V-8 engine. It’s designed and built in the spirit of a tradition rather than within the tradition,” said Smith.

The design retains the long decks associated with the Gold Cup racers, but it’s supported by a deep-vee hull to help keep the boat stable at cruising speeds.

Other features that make the boat a multi-purpose craft include a stern platform and boarding ladder for use when anchoring and swimming.

“Today, people don’t tend to own a lot of boats, so their one boat has to have a number of features,” said Smith.

Building the boat required the support of many craftsmen and suppliers, said Smith.

“We drew upon the contacts we’ve developed over the years restoring boats,” said Smith. “We needed custom-made hardware and, of course, the right wood. Fortunately for us, we have a good relationship with Northern Hard Woods in Lake George. Tom Devlin was



able to find us a supply of mahogany, half of which went to Martin guitars, the other half coming to us for this project.”

The end result will be “a boat for the generations,” said Cynde Smith. With this boat nearing com-

pletion, Tumblehome Boatworks hopes to attract similar projects.

“We’ll do anything, as long as it’s interesting,” said Reuben Smith.