

A Lonely Southern Wooden Catboat

Doug and Gina McQuilken

After relocating our catboat from Connecticut last year, we set a goal to get enough completed to make a respectable showing for a “project boat” at the 2013 Georgetown Wooden Boat Show. We started by “manhandling” the boat from blocks and stands to the trailer. I forgot what a chore this was!

My wife pitched in, and plugged, epoxied, and varnished the topsides. This turned out to be the most attractive aspect of the boat. Here is Valiant ready to go



At the boat show we attracted a lot of attention. Many attendees have never even seen a catboat. In addition, we were the only project boat. We put out a table with splining gear, clamps, wood plugs, and my trusty flexible backsaw. We had non-stop questions regarding where to source lumber, steaming, SS

vs. bronze fasteners, caulking, epoxy, power options, varnish – just about anything boat-related. Among other artifacts we displayed the original rudder which was a real conversation piece.

Interest was evident beyond the casual show-goers. We were even interviewed by the local cable TV network as we had one of the few very old boats there. In addition, Valiant was included in the artistic photo series published on the Myrtle Beach Sun website.



A few weeks before the show we were dismayed to hear that there was a major fire in the historic waterfront section. It was “touch and go” for a bit as to whether the show would go on. Clearly, this would be important to the community as it’s their most productive fundraising event. Here is a photo of the boat show with the damage in the background. There is a brief article about the fire at this link: <http://www.moultrienews.com/article/20131023/MN01/131029956/0/MN&slid=1>



Despite having a singular catboat entry, the boat show was an overwhelming success by any other measure. There were over 120 boats from as far away as Texas. The awards dinner served 800 exhibitors, sponsors, volunteers as well as friends and family. It was a mad rush to the buffet table but there was enough food and drink for all.

While we didn't win our class, we had a great time meeting new friends and exchanging boat lore. We have our objectives set for next year and met many fans who expressed interest in seeing progress. But what we really need is more catboat participants! For show signup details, please refer to their website: <https://woodenboatshow.com/>