

Survey No. T-535

Magi No.

DOE yes X no

Entered in N.R. 5/16/85

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

CHESAPEAKE BAY SKIPJACK FLEET THEMATIC GROUP

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic MAGGIE LEE

and/or common skipjack

2. Location

street & number Gibsontown Road n/a not for publication

city, town Tilghman n/a 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input 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 Bill Bradshaw

street & number telephone no.:

city, town Tilghman, Maryland state and zip code 21671

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 Survey of Surviving Traditional Chesapeake Bay Craft

date 1983-1984 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state MD 21401

7. Description

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Condition		Check one	Check one	
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	n/a ___ original site	
<u>X</u> good	___ ruins	<u>X</u> altered	___ moved	date of move
___ fair	___ unexposed			n/a

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

This vessel is a 51-foot long two sail bateau, or V-bottomed deadrise centerboard sloop, commonly referred to as a "skipjack." She was built in 1903 in Pocomoke City, Maryland for the oyster dredging fleet. She has a beam of 16 feet, a depth of 3.8 feet, and a net tonnage of 8 register tons. She carries a typical skipjack rig, with a jib-headed mainsail laced to the boom and carried on wood hoops at the mast, and a single large jib with a club on its foot. The vessel is painted white, as are her spars.

The vessel has a straight stem with little rake and a modified longhead bow. The transom stern has a steep rake, quite low to the water, with a very slight, straight tumblehome to the sheer. There is a long, shallow tuck to the stern--the transom and chine meet just above the waterline. The boat is beamiest at the work area amidships. The horizontal rudder is carried inboard. A jig for the pushboat is centered on the transom, while the pushboat is carried on davits over the stern.

The vessel is flush-decked, with several deck structures. From the stern forward, these include: a tall cabin with three windows fitted with a slide, a full door, and a ventilator cap; a small deck hatch; a plywood box over the winders; and a large deck hatch with a plywood cover. Other fittings are a taffrail, carried around the stern and also at the bow (the boat is open amidships), and a gear box, mounted on the after-wall of the cabin, which controls the pushboat. A "horse," or bar for the self-tending jib, is mounted athwartships on the foredeck. The winder boxes are painted green.

The single mast is well-raked aft (about 15° to 20°), and is set up with triple shrouds and deadeyes. A forestay, jibstay, topping lift, and lazyjacks make up the rest of the rigging. The boom is jawed to the mast. The bowsprit is hexagonal, with runners of wood added along its length for grip. It is set up with double chain bobstays and chain bowsprit shrouds.

Decorations include trailboards on the longhead with the name MAGGIE LEE carved and gilded on a blue background. The boards are green with gilt scrolls, vines, and flag shields with cannon.

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	Unknown
check: Applicable Criteria:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D		
and/or			
Applicable Exception:	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> none		
Level of Significance:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> state <input type="checkbox"/> 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 35 surviving traditional Chesapeake Bay skipjacks and a member of the last commercial sailing fleet in the United States. Out of a fleet of hundreds of skipjacks that worked Bay waters in the early years of this century, today only this small number remain to carry on the tradition of working sail.

The skipjack evolved as a distinct type of Bay vessel in the 1890's as a cheaper-to-construct alternative to the earlier bugeyes and other traditional framed craft, in a period when shipbuilding costs were rising and the oyster catch was diminishing. The type was devised by enlarging (to 25 to 60 feet) the hull of the ordinary, unframed, square-sterned Bay crabbing skiff, and giving it a deadrise bottom, a-deck, a cabin, and a sloop rig. The result—with its unframed, hard chine, cross-planked, V-bottom—proved inexpensive to build, easy to repair, and could be constructed by a competent house carpenter. Skipjacks were specifically designed as oyster dredge boats, with wide beams and low freeboard lending stability and providing a large working space on deck. The single masted rig, with sharp-headed mainsail and large jib, was easy to handle, powerful in light winds, and handy in coming about quickly for another pass over the oyster beds.

The Maryland oyster season begins November 1 and ends March 15. Skipjacks must dredge under sail on all days except Mondays and Tuesdays, when they are allowed to use their motorized pushboat for dredging. The pushboat, normally carried on davits at the stern, is lowered into the water and literally "pushes" the skipjack along from behind, the nose of the pushboat resting against a "jig" on the stern of the skipjack. The pushboat can also legally be used to get the skipjack to and from the oyster beds each day. Each skipjack's crew is made up of the captain, who is often also the owner, and five crew members.

MAGGIE LEE is of interest as being one of the older skipjacks still dredging in the Chesapeake fleet. She was built in 1903 in Pocomoke City, Maryland following traditional Bay-area design and construction methods. She has worked in the oyster-dredging fleet since her building and is presently based at Tilghman Island. The vessel is one of the 21 surviving working skipjacks to have been built previous to 1912, although, like the other members of the fleet, she has been much repaired over the years in true Chesapeake fashion.

See Thematic Group nomination cover form, Continuation Sheets
No. 8-13.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Tilghman, MD

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 18 384240 4285550
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

This working vessel is usually docked at the location indicated in Item 2. Historic boundaries are coterminous with the hull.

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

state n/a code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Witty/ M. E. Hayward

organization Radcliffe Maritime Museum
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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