

THIRD ANNUAL BOAT SHOW SIMPLY "GRAND"

July 27th, 1996 began in the cool gray dawn as what could be described as a perfect day. A cool front had swept through Northeastern Oklahoma on Friday, bringing temperatures that caused several boat show "early birds" to wish they had brought sweatshirts and jeans. Saturday, the scheduled boat show day, brought more customary July weather with light southerly breeze and plenty of warm sun. Several classic wooden boats were seen taking early morning runs on the calm water even before our scheduled breakfast cruise to Cherokee Yacht Club. Back at show headquarters, Arrowhead Marina and Yacht Club, preparations were being completed for what would become the largest assembly of classic wooden watercraft in modern times in the state of Oklahoma. A total of 35 boats were displayed at Arrowhead Marina docks for a free to the public showing of boats dating from 1934 to 1969.

Grand Lake, located in far Northeastern Oklahoma, is one of the state's most beautiful lakes; its miles of waterline are lined with spacious estates and rustic cabins, and is home to many wooden runabouts and cruisers which have been maintained through the years. Once home to two Chris Craft dealerships as well as several other boat makes, the area was an early haven for power boaters during the "golden era" of boating. In almost any marina there will still be seen magnificent old cruisers resting in their slips.

Club officers estimated that well over 1000 spectators visited the show during the hours of 10 am to 4 pm. We had publicity in the Tulsa and Grand Lake area from television, radio and newspaper coverage. Our thanks to those media who helped get the word out to the public.

Participants at this year's show came from not only the local lake area. Boats traveled from Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas and Texas as well as the entire state of Oklahoma to display their beautiful wooden "works of art". The prize for the longest pull went to Guy McCallum of Fort Worth, TX., with a close second going to the Clay Thompson family who brought "Forty Thieves", the 1955 Chris Craft Cobra, from Altus in far southwestern Oklahoma.

New this year was an attempt to raise money for a worthy state charity by allowing spectators and participants an opportunity to vote for their favorite boat by dropping money into collection boxes placed at each boat in the show. When boxes were emptied and counted, results were tabulated by class based on size of boat and certificates were presented for "people's choice" awards. Boat owners were encouraged to start early soliciting contributions from friends, family and businesses and "stuff the ballot boxes" for their own boats. (After all, this is an election year, so anything goes!) On hand representing United Cerebral Palsy of Oklahoma was Ms. "P.J." Pearson who hand lettered the certificates awarded following the banquet and accepted a check from Classic Boat Club for the total proceeds of the people's choice voting.

Banquet diners feasted on a wonderful buffet including smoked beef brisket, ribs, and smoked chicken with corn on the cob and all the fixins including fruit cobbler for dessert. Diners had the option of eating in the dining room of Arrowhead Yacht Club or on the shady deck overlooking the marina. Our sincere thanks to club members and Arrowhead owners Joe and Debby Harwood for giving our club members and guests the red carpet welcome and for hosting the 1996 Antique and Classic Boat Show. Plans are already being made for a return trip to Grand Lake and Arrowhead for next year's event scheduled for July 26, 1997.

Thanks again to the Harwoods and the entire staff at Arrowhead we had a GRAND time!