

# "Moxie"

A little over two years ago, Larry Hinton and I were having a telephone conversation about, of all things, old boats. I believe I mentioned that I was looking for a new project, but this time was in search of a very old model, something prior to 1930. Larry told me about a boat that had been around the Oklahoma City area for some time and might be available. It was supposed to be about a 1930 Chris Craft triple cockpit in rough condition, but did have most of the hardware. This sounded promising so Larry tracked it down to an exotic car dealer in downtown Oklahoma City. It was a 1930 Chris Craft Model 100, 20 feet long so I made contact with the owner and made an offer dependent on my inspection of the boat. The inspection was really not necessary because I could see from the photos the owner had sent the boat was going to need a total overhaul. The only thing important to me was that the hardware was complete, or nearly so. Tracking down hardware, especially for an early boat, is difficult or expensive, or both. Fortunately most of it was there so we closed the deal and dragged the boat to Austin. I say dragged because we hadn't gone two miles before a wheel fell off the trailer, but that's another story.

I displayed the boat at the Austin boat show that year in its unrestored condition to show the public what our projects look like at the beginning. I then brought it back to the shop to begin a two-year part-time restoration, working into the spaces between other restorations.

First came lots of photos because these early models were not built like the later ones most of us are used to. Lots of softwoods (pine or ash) were used for framing and steel screws (ugh!) on the deck. The engine, a Chrysler 6 (75 HP) was removed and the boat rolled over. After a new keel was installed and many frames replaced, doubled and even tripled, a new bottom was installed using two layers of 1/4" marine plywood and epoxy. I wanted it stout because it was going to have to take much more stress than it was designed to handle.

Even though this was a very "gray" boat, I was able to save all but three planks on the sides. These were replaced only because of splits or severe gouges. The decks came off with a crowbar because the steel screws would not budge. After an underlay of 1/8" plywood, new decks were epoxied and screwed down. Then came the usual staining and varnishing.

Somewhere near the beginning of this project, Larry asked me to refinish his Capri. I was happy to do so, but in the course of the conversation I mentioned that I was looking for a larger engine for my boat. I had a Chris Craft KFL I was considering using, but someone had said to me that if I was not going to use the original engine, it didn't matter (for judging) what I put in it. Larry had a Chevrolet 350 taking up space in his shop so I ended up with that. Overkill maybe, but what the heck. I had never had a "new" engine and this sounded like fun.

The motor would not fit through the engine hatch so I had to lower it into the middle seat space and then slide it back into the engine room. Just another typical day in the restoration shop.

There are many stories and problems that come up in a major restoration but I can't list them all here. I will give you just one more. After spending a great deal of time finding a new steering column, having parts welded and machined and then finally getting it installed, the wheel on, with the throttle and working ! horn button, when I turned the wheel right, the rudder would make the boat turn left!! Back to the drawing board.

The boat is now complete and running (quite quickly I might add). It is a narrow boat and therefore rides a little rougher than some but that just makes us search out the nicer days and smoother waters. It was a long restoration but to end up with such a nice boat, I would do it again in a minute.

See you on the lake!!

**Jim Frechette**

**Austin, TX**