

San Diego race canceled.



Chris Denslow

Jimmy Shane in *Miss HomeStreet* leads Jeff Bernard in *Miss Goodman Real Estate* as the two pass the crowd on the sandy beaches of San Diego's Fiesta Island last year.

The Board of Governors for San Diego's Bayfair festival has announced that this year's event has been postponed until 2024. According to their statement, the board voted to pause the event because they faced steep increases in production costs due to inflation and expected sponsorship losses.

Bayfair said the decision was made to ensure that the nonprofit organization's fiscal health would not be negatively impacted long term. In an article published in the *San Diego Union Tribune*,

Bob Davies, Bayfair's race director, said that if they had held the event this year, the organization would have finished the year upside down and would have been done. He said it was time to re-evaluate and look at their options.

"While we know our supporters will be disappointed with this difficult decision, the Board of Governors wants to ensure Bayfair continues for decades to come," Davies said. "We're working hard to continue the Bayfair tradition of the past, and its San Diego legacy as the na-

Peabody wins in Guntersville.

It was quite a weekend. The Guntersville race had a little of everything: record-breaking speeds, deck-to-deck battles, a heart-stopping accident and collision between two boats, and then a massive thunderstorm that brought the event to a stop and forced everybody to evacuate. In the end, Corey Peabody came away with his second-straight victory on Lake Guntersville. Full details about the event will be in next month's issue of the *Unlimited NewsJournal*.

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tion's premier beach festival and powerboat competition."

Bayfair staged its first festival and Unlimited hydroplane race in 1964, the year construction was completed on Mission Bay Park. Boat racing on Mission Bay is in San Diego's city municipal code and Bayfair's efforts each year generate tax dollars and benefit the San Diego economy.

Held every September, Bayfair is a family-friendly beach festival that offers a variety of events, as well as the hydroplane races. Davies said the Bayfair group is committed to keeping the festival an affordable family event and that wasn't possible in the current economic environment.

"This is very unfortunate news," said Tim Austin, chair of the H1 Unlimited Board of Directors, "especially coming at this late date when our race teams are already on the road headed to Guntersville, Alabama, for the season's first event. I'm also thinking about our fans who might have already put deposits down on hotel rooms in San Diego or purchased airplane tickets."

Austin said San Diego has been an important part of H1 Unlimited for nearly six decades. "The city has been an ideal venue for Unlimited hydroplane racing," he said. "The annual race in San Diego will be greatly missed."

The racecourse on Mission Bay is one of the fastest on the H1 Unlimited Racing Series circuit. As for the race itself, the winner has been awarded with the Bill Muncey Trophy, named in honor of one of the sport's greatest champions and a resident of the San Diego area.

In the *Union-Tribune* article, Davies expressed frustration about the number of hydros that have competed in San Diego in recent years. It also should be pointed out, however, that because of Bayfair's tight financial situation, the funding package they have offered to H1 Unlimited for the past several years provided tow money for no more than six Unlimited entrants.

In the newspaper article, Davies also had to admit that although the number of boats has been disappointing, the hydros still cover a lot of real estate.

"H1 Unlimited will be committed to making sure that San Diego will host the world's fastest race boats again as soon as possible," Austin said. "We'd like to offer any help that we can to the event organizers at Bayfair because it's important that we be back again next year and cel-

brate the 60th anniversary of Unlimited racing on Mission Bay."

"We thank our fans, volunteers, and sponsors for their support and passion for San Diego Bayfair," Davies added. "Rest assured, we'll return in 2024 even better."

Bayfair has scheduled next year's festival for September 13 to 15. ❖

Sport mourns death of Bob Hughes.

Hydroplane fans around the country, and especially in Madison, Indiana, are mourning the passing on June 14 of Bob Hughes, the patriarch of the Miss Madison Racing Team. Hughes died in a health center in Sandusky, Ohio, at the age of 89.

He was the founder of Clifty Engineering in Madison, a full-service tool and die business. He started with the Miss Madison team by volunteering parts and services.

Because Hughes and his wife, Carol, (who passed away in 1998) had no children of their own, he adopted the race team and, beginning in 1972, joined the board that governed the Miss Madison. He was president of that organization for more than 30 years—ending his active involvement in the early 2000s. During his tenure, Hughes was also active on the boards and committees of the governing bodies and helped the guide the sport and its finances.

The Miss Madison Racing Team is now the longest continuously active team in the sport's history, has won a total of 40 races, and has won 11 national titles—all within the past 14 seasons. It's safe to say it would be a completely different organization and would most likely not be nearly as successful without the financial and logistical support of Hughes and his



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

company.

According to Charlie Grooms, president of the Miss Madison team, Hughes contributed millions of his own dollars and untold millions in parts and services through Clifty Engineering, which allowed the team to stay afloat and actively campaign for both race wins and sponsors. "Bob was one of a kind," Grooms said, "and the team and the town owe him a big debt of gratitude for all he has done for Miss Madison over the years. He will be missed." ❖

INTRODUCING: Brent Hall

For most of his life, Brent Hall has been around boat racing. Born in Seattle, he grew up in a house on Mercer Island. He was captivated by the sound and sight of hydroplanes, and as a young adult, he began racing. In the spring of 2023, he was named driver of the U-440, owned by Kelly and Sharon Stocklin. The following interview with Hall was conducted by Craig Fjarlie on June 2, 2023, during the test day at the Tri-Cities.

UNJ: You grew up on Mercer Island?

Hall: That Mercer Island house that we lived in had a very small view of the boat races and every year my mom would have these Seafair parties. We had family and friends, everyone would come over and we would hang out and watch the races. I'd run down to 7-Eleven and get the Seafair magazine for that year, look at it, try to figure out who my favorite boat was going to be. But, it was always just a part of what we did. So, being able to touch one, let alone drive one, is absolutely amazing.

Yeah, the first time you get in the pits and get up close.

Exactly. I remember I started with radio control. Fran Muncey used to run the concession stand and all the swag. They had this boat called MRP Hydro-sport and I remember saving up all my money to get this boat. I had it painted up just like the *Pay 'n Pak* turbine.

Were you around when it was mostly all piston engines?

I was. Let's see, definitely I remember 1980. You think about the boats we're restoring now—*Squire Shop*, *Circus Circus*. Loved Steve Reynolds, one of my favorite drivers. He always teases me. He's like, "You're my MI brother," because we're both from Mercer Island. It's been neat, because with Facebook I've been able to connect with Steve Reynolds. He texted



Vic Wright

me on the way here, and just said, “Hey, man, good luck and keep doing your thing. Get it on the water.” So, I appreciate that. Then, John Walters. Got to see him in the pits and give him a hello and remind him of the first time we chatted. To be able to connect with those folks that I really looked up to is absolutely amazing. The only person I never got a chance to meet was Bill Muncey, and that would have been amazing.

Just for background, when you were in school, did you have favorite subjects or things that you liked to study? Things that relate to boat racing?

Well, I loved art, and the funny thing is a friend of mine, Leslie, sent me a picture that I’d drawn in sixth grade. It was of two hydroplanes and I think I’d actually done a book report on it. But down at the bottom were these two hydroplanes deck-to-deck, goin’ at each other. She said, “Boy, it’s obvious you haven’t changed.” [Laughter.] Like, wow, to see that it started back then. It’s great, I was already drawing boats and I loved art.

So, getting into racing, you said you did radio control first?

I did. And really, I may have said this before, but my plan wasn’t to go out and be in a boat until I saw Harold Mills.

Oh, yeah.

Harold Mills was the first African American to win a trophy at Seafair as an Unlimited Light driver. I got to be on his crew in 2005. Skip Young introduced me. He’s from the museum, and he said, “Hey, how would you like to meet Harold Mills?” It’s like, “Let’s go, let’s meet him,” and got a chance to be on his crew. I worked on that for a while. He wasn’t just like, “Oh, c’mon, I’d love to have you.” It’s like, “Let’s see what this kid’s all about. Is he gonna show up? Will he work? Does he mind getting dirty?” I didn’t mind any of those, so proved myself and worked for him in 2005. Then he retired. I was like, well, shoot, maybe I should try getting in a boat. Made it a fundraiser for Friends of the Children, a kids’ organization. Raised, like, \$4,000. Then I got in a

boat at Tastin’ and Racin’.

What was the first boat you drove?

It was Bud Mckay’s 5-litre, and I think at the time it was sponsored by Geico. I guess that’s the first boat in competition. Previously, the very first boat was an outboard in 2006 and that was at “New Folks in Boats.”

A Seattle Outboard Association event at Eatonville.

Yeah. Dwight [Malhiot] helped me get it around the course and gave me a big smile at the end, and that was really cool. I think my mom even saw that one.

And you’re still involved with outboards.

I am, yeah. I race an F500 tunnel hull, and those have a 45 Evinrude on it. Hits about 65 to 75, sometimes maybe 80 miles an hour. They’re really underpowered. I’ll tell you that’s one of the hardest boats I’ve ever driven, especially when right next to me is J. Michael Kelly. So, you know, we get in those boats and it’s all about being really efficient through the corners—keeping your speed up. It helps with these big ones, too.

Well, that’s the place to learn.

That’s right.

You did drive some inboards.

I did, a lot.

Did you have a favorite class?

I think, for me, when I got my own boat, was really nice. I bought a 2.5 Stock in 2011 that was built by Jamie Auld. That felt like the right size. I could fit it in our house, meaning the garage or covered area. So, 2.5 Stock is a great class. But I do like F500 because I wasn’t that mechanically inclined. That boat was pretty much a one-person show, and I can jump in it. I can do some of the wrenching on it, so it’s really a great place to start. Less than some e-bikes, to be honest with you. They’re not that expensive.

Did you buy a used boat or did you get a new one?

I did buy a used one, but it was fairly new. It was only a couple years old. Had no damage on it—carbon fiber.

Who did you buy it from?

A gentleman in California. I can’t remember his name off the top of my head. The F500 was built by Composite Craft, and that’s R.J. West.

OK, yeah. Later you drove a Grand Prix with Jerry Hopp.

Yes, I did. I sold my 2.5 Stock. I raced it for a while and I knew that boat really was only going to be a third-place boat, because it wasn’t wide enough. So, I sold it and that next year I had the opportunity to test drive. I think I test drove for Vinnie Xaudaro in 2011, that same Seafair, at the end of the year. And then I had the opportunity to test drive the U-9. That was really an amazing experience, by bringing sponsors into the sport, like Les Schwab and Seattle Sun Tan.

For Mike and Lori Jones.

Yeah.

You test drove for them.

I test drove that in 2012. Jeff Campbell was the one who kind of gave me the opportunity, “If you get any sponsors then we’ll give you some laps.” Raised some sponsors and got some laps.

When you drove the Grand Prix, what was the arrangement with Jerry and Greg Hopp?

Well, at the time it was me and Jerry. Greg was still driving for Bob Schellhase. Jerry and I would swap seats and he’d kinda share. Sometimes I’d take the final, sometimes he’d take the final. Then toward the end he’d let me take all of Seafair and he might take all of a race. To have a teacher like that—I call him Mr. Miyagi. I learned a lot and not just in the boat, but in the shop. “Here, take that broom and clean this place up.” Just learning how boats work and how to run a team and a shop. There’s a lot to it. I understand marketing, but the shop and being involved here, keeping people motivated and helping them feel like they’re part of a great team, I learned a lot.

You’ve had your eye on an Unlimited ride.

Yeah, sure.

Probably ever since you drove Jones’s U-9 boat in testing.

Yeah.

It's finally working out for you.

It is, yeah.

Did Mike help you get this ride?

Mike Jones? Well, you know, he mentioned something about it. I think my name's been out there for a bit. Mike and Kelly [Stocklin] are very close, Kelly and Darrell [Strong] are very close, so I think there's just chatter, you know. So, glad that it kinda came to fruition and I'm getting an opportunity, as a dream come true. Now it's just about learning the boat, getting in it and seeing what it's

going to do, and we'll get there. Just kind of backing up, I was marketing and sponsorship for the Detroit Unlimited Group.

Dave Bartush.

Yeah, Bartush. I went back to see him but, you know, I knew he just had a lot of business things going on, so we may not see him that year. Then Darrell and I got a chance to chit-chat and I was already working with Boitano Homes, so Boitano came over to Strong and he let me come, too. So, I got to see the behind the scenes on how that team works. They have an amazing shop and a place

to entertain sponsors. Really, looking at the sport from a—and he'll tell you—like from that one perspective where people want to bring in corporations and have parties at their shop, he has the place for it.

Well, you'll be driving a boat that's not quite the same size as the others. Any concerns about that? Dustin has probably talked with you about that.

Dustin has been teaching me. There's definitely a little bit of method to the madness on that boat. It's not intended to go dive into lane one with all the big troughs that the other boats are going to do. So, for me, it's more about coming around, getting to the timing marks and getting a good start on the outside and then just showing that I can manage the course. I think that's really what I need to do and remember there are some great drivers who have done that before, like Chip and *Dionysis*, and there are many others. But get out there and show that you know what you're doing. You'll get other opportunities. You know, my goal would be to continue to help build sponsorship for this team, and then have us upgrade the boat and turn that one into a display boat.

Build another boat, or something.

Yeah, absolutely—buy, build, whatever.

If the money's there.

Yeah, I think that's the thing that I understand—that's what is happening in the sport. I do understand the marketing side, and I've been able to raise sponsors and been able to bring some sponsors back that we had before. But there's momentum that we need to build around sponsors. But then, more importantly, you know who the drivers are. I want our names to be known again like they were in the past.

That's one thing that sometimes is missing, that connection.

That's right. And I think cross-over, too. Like it can't just be "here's boat racing," you know. We should be at a Sea-hawk game, and I saw J. Michael Kelly



Vic Wright



Chris Denslow

Brent Hall's first competitive ride in an Unlimited is scheduled to come in the cockpit of U-440 *Boitano Homes*, seen here in 2021.

kick a field goal. People should see us in other venues and then, “Oh, yeah, there’s hydroplane racing.” Well, gotta be at a Seahawk game today, but maybe tomorrow I’ll go to the race. I saw J. Michael Kelly kick a field goal.

Well, on a somewhat different subject, Formula 1 has had success with Lewis Hamilton. As a Black man, can you help bring in more people?

I think so.

Diversify the interest? It’s something Unlimited racing really needs.

It does, it does. You know, just like Harold did for me. I don’t know if I ever thought about being in a boat until I saw his face in there. It just never crossed my mind that there would be an opportunity, and I hope the same thing happens when people see me in there—whether you’re Black or any minority, a woman, just hey, someone different in the cockpit. I think that’s important for us. Yeah, absolutely. And I’ll tell you, I’m starting to get a following of African American people who are like, “I’m so proud of you, you don’t know how proud this makes me.” I got a call from a gentleman

named Greg in New York and he’s thinking about how can he bring boat racing to the East Coast? He seemed so excited to see someone who looks like him in a boat, just like I was with Harold.

They tried a little bit with women and Brenda Jones, it didn’t work out as well as they were hoping. She was running a back-marker and never advanced.

Kayleigh Perkins, I remember when she took out the *Oberto*, she looked great.

It would have been good if she’d gotten a ride, but it didn’t happen.

Sometimes you just have to keep bangin’ on it until it opens, and that’s fine. I’m happy to do that. We had a little bit of a set-back with electricity, but we have a great team that cares about me and wants to see me do well, and you can’t ask for more than that. I think it’s more about I’m really open and willing to figure out new ways to market this sport.

As people read your columns, it gives them ideas. There’s no offense, if someone doesn’t like what we’re doing today, tell us what you want to see different. But talk about it, and when you talk about it, that means you’re watching us.

If you’re watching us, that means you’re supporting us, whatever way that looks like.

I just want to see us grow this sport and I know we can. I feel like we’re on that momentum swing right now. To see eight Unlimiteds here for testing, that’s good. That’s more than we had last July. So, I do feel like we’re on an upswing and now we just have to take advantage of it.

Great. All right, thank you.

You’re welcome, it was fun. ❖

A full day of (FAST) preseason testing in the Tri-Cities.

BY CHRIS TRACY

Unlimited hydro fans were pretty excited about preseason testing, held June 2, in Tri-Cities, Wash. Boat teams had done much work on their boats during the off season and everyone was anxious to see the results.

Seven Unlimited hydro teams arrived in the pits on Thursday and started setting up their boats to test at 9 a.m. on Friday. The U-11 *Legend Yacht Transport* arrived in the morning on Friday, bringing the total to eight boats. The Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum (HARM) brought over three boats to test, and three limited boats came to test, too.

In many past years, most testing was conducted in the morning and maybe a little after lunch, but with so many boats in the pits, this year it was a full day of testing. The course opened at 9 a.m. and boats tested until after 5 p.m. Water conditions were perfect and the high temperature in the afternoon was about 82 degrees.

Here's a recap:

The Strong Racing Team rebuilt the U-9 during the off season and had done much work on the U-8 to try to improve its handling. The U-9 sported a new name, *Beacon Plumbing*, and is now painted mostly white and piloted by Corey Peabody. There were changes made to the boat when it was rebuilt. The skid fin sponson is larger than the other sponson and the transom design has been modified.

The U-8, driven by J. Michael Kelly, is now primarily red and sponsored by *Beacon Electric*. It has a new rudder, plus much more work was done on the boat over the winter. Both boats have a unique front canard, that include small flaps within each, that almost look like



Scenes as the action got underway during the morning of the test session.

small deck hatches.

The Strong Racing boats went out several times and each boat tested two engines. Both boats were very fast, faster in testing this year vs last year. It's hard to judge complete performance, since this is a testing session and the goal is to try

different combinations, but both boats looked good and ran like contenders.

That said, at times the U-9 was not as smooth as some other boats in the corners. Occasionally, the U-8 appeared to pound or lift a bit on the smooth water, too, but driver Kelly was happy with

Photos by Chris Denslow



TOP: The U-91 *Miss Goodman Real Estate* with its beautiful new paint job. **MIDDLE:** The crew of *Lakeridge Paving* hard at work on their boat's engine. **ABOVE:** Dustin Echols in the cockpit of the U-40 *Bucket List Racing*.

the improvements. Fastest lap for *Beacon Plumbing* was 162.238 mph and fastest lap for *Beacon Electric* was 162.194 mph.

Both of the Miss Madison Racing-owned teams tested and, like the Strong team, each tested more than one engine. Extensive work was done on the U-91 *Miss Goodman Real Estate* in the off season, complete with a classy and attractive new paint job. And this was the first time their new driver, Andrew Tate, had driven the hull.

First time out was a bust as the boat would not start. (Unconfirmed rumor is that something was not put together correctly and caused some engine damage.) The U-91 crew spent a fair amount of the morning putting in a new engine. The second engine worked like a charm. Tate took the boat out multiple times and ran many strong laps, the fastest being 160.568 mph.

The boat ran well, but my picky observation from the shore, was that it was not quite as smooth as some of the other boats during its fastest lap, with the right sponson sometimes digging in a little, too. Tate left testing early, as he needed to catch a flight to Montreal to race a limited boat.

The U-1 *Miss HomeStreet* went out several times. This was the first time their new driver, Dylan Runne, had ever piloted the boat and he needed to qualify as an Unlimited driver. The boat ran well. Runne looked like a pro from the get-go and successfully qualified.

From my observation, the boat generally ran smoother and cornered better than all other boats that tested. Rookie Runne piloted the *HomeStreet* boat to the fastest lap of the day at 163.155 mph. Unlimited boats ran 16 laps over 160 mph during the day, and the *HomeStreet* boat clocked 12 of them!

The Bucket List Racing Team also brought two boats, the U-440 *Boitano Homes* and the U-40, with no sponsor name. It ran as *Bucket List Racing*. It was not a good day for the *Boitano Homes* boat and its driver, Brent Hall. An electrical is-

Photos by Chris Denslow



Photos by Chris Denslow

ed experience in the U-440 was evident, as he and the boat looked like contenders. Like some other teams, the boat was a little lumpy in the corners when running faster laps on a fairly flat course. Their fastest lap was 159.812 mph.

Scott and Shannon Raney brought their U-11 to testing, but it was only recently revealed that the U-11 they were bringing was not the boat they had raced the past couple of seasons. It was their other boat. Legend Yacht Transport is their sponsor for all races this season, except the Gold Cup/HomeStreet Cup in Seattle.

While the boat featured the same colors as in previous years, the paint job was redesigned with more red, and sparkles in the blue. The boat looks really attractive on the trailer and on the course. The boat did not arrive until Friday morning, so their crew spent much of the morning setting up the boat and it did not run until after lunch.

Jamie Nilsen took the boat out several times. The boat looked smooth and, from the beach, the ride looked better—especially in the corners—than their other boat that they raced last year. Fastest lap was 155.335 mph.

Go Fast Turn Left racing brought the U-21 to test. This team is really a family affair. Greg owns the boat with his son, Brian. And grandson Gunnar drove at testing. The family business, Lakeridge Paving, sponsors the boat.

Gunnar got his first ride in an Unlimited at testing in 2022, but the boat did not race last sea-

ABOVE: The U-1 *Miss HomeStreet* with rookie Dylan Runne getting his first experience in the cockpit. **LEFT:** Andrew Tate, the new pilot of the *Miss Goodman Real Estate*.

The U-1 *Miss HomeStreet* went out several times. ... The boat ran well. Runne looked like a pro from the get-go and successfully qualified.

sue, the starter, prevented the boat from getting off the trailer during the test session. It was a shame, as Hall is not a qualified driver and was hoping to get laps in for driver qualification and for seat time in his new ride.

Driver Dustin Echols took the *Bucket List* out several times and ran many strong laps. Although he is fairly new to driving the U-40, his Unlimit-



Photos by Chris Denslow

TOP: J. Michael Kelly aboard the U-8 *Beacon Electric*.
MIDDLE: The U-11 *Legend Yacht Transport* with Jamie Nilsen driving.
ABOVE: Rookie Gunnar O'Farrell in the U-21 *Lakeridge Paving*.

son. This year, he took the boat out many times and likely wanted more experience driving an Unlimited boat. Gunnar seemed to catch on fairly quickly and his runs looked better and better. Sometimes the boat was plagued with some compressor stalling.

The team was there to test, test, test. They even ran seven laps at 5 p.m. in the afternoon! Fastest speed was 155.628 mph. Gunnar will be the youngest driver this year and he is now qualified as an Unlimited driver. My critical eye noted that the ride was not quite as good as last year when driver Brian Perkins turned a fast lap of 159. Likely, the boat will only run in Seattle this year.

HARM brought three vintage boats: *Bardahl*, *Notre Dame*, and *Pay 'n Pak*. The *Pay 'n Pak* was first out on the racecourse at 9 a.m. and ran strong laps. Although both the *Bardahl* and *Notre Dame* did have some starting issues, they each ran laps, sometimes with a passenger. Three limited teams tested, as well, two GP boats and a 350.

The last Unlimited boat out on the course was the *Beacon Electric* at about 5:18 p.m. It was a full day of nonstop testing. Over 100 laps were run. It's going to be a competitive season. ❖

SEEING DOUBLE



Chris Denstlow

For the first time in several years, one sponsor will be lending its name to more than one boat this season. This got Jim Sharkey, the guru of tracking hydroplanes, to start thinking: How often has this happened? So, the author of *Hydro Who's Who* got to work, punched in some magic formulas to his Excel spreadsheets, and came up with the answer. What follows is the fruit of his efforts.

A couple of notes are in order.

1) The following list tells us when two boats with the same sponsor (or similar name) were entered into the same race. There are other cases where two boats with the same name competed during the same season, but they are not listed here unless they were entered in the same race.

2) Surprisingly, there are some cases where two boats with the same sponsor were entered in the same race by different owners. In one case, there were three of these! When you see more than one owner listed, they are in the order that the boats are mentioned.

3) In an effort to really confuse those who track such things, there are also a few cases where two boats entered a race with the exact same name. They are differentiated by their "U" numbers (if those were different) or by their hull numbers (when they weren't).

1949:

Such Crust and Such Crust II ... Jack Schafer

1950:

Such Crust and Such Crust II ... Jack Schafer (Below)



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

1951:

Gale and Gale II ... Joe Schoenith
Such Crust and Gold'n Crust ... Jack Schafer
Slo-mo-shun IV and Slo-mo-shun V ... Stan Sayres

1952:

Hornet-Crust and Such Crust III ... Jack Schafer
Slo-mo-shun IV and Slo-mo-shun V ... Stan Sayres (Below)



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

1953:

Such Crust III and Such Crust V ... Jack Schafer

1954:

Gale IV and Gale V ... Joe Schoenith
Slo-mo-shun IV and Slo-mo-shun V ... Stan Sayres
My Sweetie Dora and My Sweetie John Francis ... Horace Dodge
Pace-Along III and Trot-Along V ... Fred Van Lenner
My Sweetie and My Sweetie Dora ... Horace Dodge
My Sweetie, My Sweetie Dora, and My Sweetie John Francis ... Horace Dodge (Below)



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

1955:

Gale IV and Gale V ... Joe Schoenith (Below)
Slo-mo-shun IV and Slo-mo-shun V ... Stan Sayres
Gale IV, Gale V, and Gale VI ... Joe Schoenith
My Sweetie, My Sweetie Dora, and My Sweetie John Francis ... Horace Dodge



Byron Lang

1956:

Gale IV, Gale V, and Gale VI ... Joe Schoenith
Gale IV and Gale V ... Joe Schoenith
My Sweetie and My Sweetie Dora ... Horace Dodge
Miss U.S. I and Miss U.S. II ... George Simon

1957:

Miss Thriftway and Thriftway Too ... Willard Rhodes (Below)
Gale III, Gale V, and Gale VI ... Joe Schoenith
What-A-Pickle I and What-A-Pickle II ... Gordon Deneau
Gale V and Gale VI ... Joe Schoenith
Breathless and Breathless II ... Phil Murphy
Miss U.S. I and Miss U.S. IV ... George Simon
Miss U.S. I and Miss U.S. II ... George Simon



George Carkonen

1958:

Miss Thriftway and Thriftway Too ... Willard Rhodes
Miss U.S. I and Miss U.S. IV ... George Simon
Gale V and Gale VI ... Joe Schoenith
Breathless and Breathless II ... Phil Murphy

1959:

Miss Thriftway and Thriftway Too ... Willard Rhodes
Gale V and Gale VI ... Joe Schoenith
KOLroy and KOLroy Too ... Bob Gilliam

1960:

KOLroy and KOLroy Too ... Bob Gilliam
KOLroy and KOLroy I ... Bob Gilliam (Below)
Gale V and Gale VI ... Joe Schoenith
Nitrogen and Nitrogen Too ... Samuel DuPont
Miss Seattle and Miss Seattle Too ... Milo Stoen
Miss Thriftway and Thriftway Too ... Willard Rhodes
KOLroy, KOLroy I, and KOLroy Too ... Bob Gilliam



Las Vegas News Bureau

1961:

Gale V and Gale VII ... Joe Schoenith
Fascination and Fascination I ... Bob Gilliam

1962:

Gale V and Gale VII ... Joe Schoenith
Fascination, Fascination I, and Fascination 2 ... Bob Gilliam
Fascination and Fascination I ... Bob Gilliam

1963:

Miss U.S. I and Miss U.S. 5 ... George Simon
Gale V and Gale VII ... Joe Schoenith (Below)
Fascination and Fascination I ... Bob Gilliam



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

1964:

Miss Budweiser and Miss Michelob ... Bernie Little

1965:

Savair's Mist and Savair's Probe ... Mike Wolfbauer
Fascination and Fascination I ... Bob Gilliam

1966:

Miss Budweiser and Miss Busch Bavarian ... Bernie Little
Savair's Mist and Savair's Probe ... Mike Wolfbauer

1967:

Savair's Mist and Savair's Probe ... Mike Wolfbauer

1968:

Savair's Mist and Savair's Probe ... Mike Wolfbauer

1969:

Miss Budweiser and Miss Budweiser II ... Bernie Little
Savair's Mist and Savair's Probe ... Mike Wolfbauer

1970:

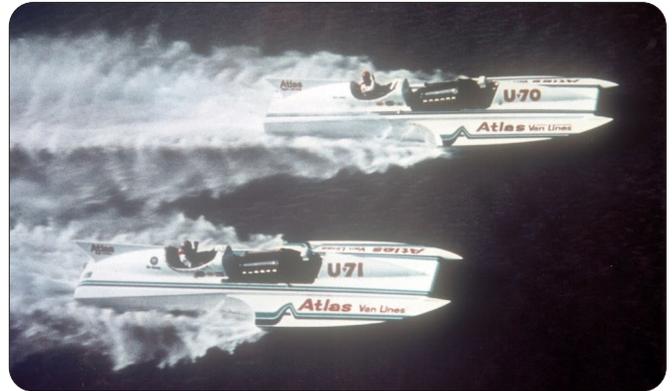
Miss Budweiser and Miss Budweiser II ... Bernie Little
Pay 'N Pak 'Lil Buzzard and Pride of Pay 'N Pak ... Dave Heerensperger
Atlas Van Lines and Atlas Van Lines II ... Bob Fendler

1971:

Atlas Van Lines and Atlas Van Lines II ... Bob Fendler
Miss Budweiser and Budweiser Malt Liquor ... Bernie Little

1972:

Miss Timex and Miss Timex II ... Jim McCormick
Atlas Van Lines and Atlas Van Lines II ... Joe Schoenith (Below)



Ricj Ombrek

1973:

Red Man and Red Man II ... Jim McCormick (Below)
Valu-Mart and Valu-Mart II ... Bob Gilliam



Randy Hall

1974:

Atlas Van Lines and Atlas Van Lines II ... Joe Schoenith
Lincoln Thrift and Lincoln Thrift II ... Bob Fendler

1977:

Miss Budweiser and Natural Light ... Bernie Little

1978:
The Squire Shop and The Squire Shop II ... Bob Steil

1982:
Miss Budweiser and Budweiser Light ... Bernie Little and John Still

1983:
American Speedy Printing and American Speedy Printing Too ... Fred Leland

1984:
Lite All-Star and Lite All-Star II ... Bob Taylor

1986:
Miss Budweiser and Miss Budweiser II ... Bernie Little

1990:
Oh Boy! Oberto and Oh Boy! Oberto/Wild Waves ... Jim Harvey and Ed Cooper

1991:
Oh Boy! Oberto/Beef Jerky and Oh Boy! Oberto/Pork Jerky ... Ed Cooper and Mike Eacrett

1993:
Miss D.O.C. Ray Ban and Miss D.O.C. Acuvue ... Ed Cooper and Bob Thomas

1994:
Miss Exide and Miss Exide II ... Robb Thompson

1996:
Miss Wellness Plan and Miss Wellness Plan II ... Fred Leland and Mike Jones
Miss Exide and Miss Exide II ... Mike Jones

1998:
PICO American Dream and PICO American Dream II ... Fred Leland
Cost Less Carpets (U-9) and Cost Less Carpets (U-11) ... Mike Jones

2000:
Znetix and Znetix II ... Fred Leland
Llumar Window Film (U-8) and Llumar Window Film (U-99) ... Bill Wurster and Fred Leland

2001:
Znetix and Znetix II ... Fred Leland
Miss EMCOR (#8700) and Miss EMCOR (#9010) ... Kim Gregory
Miss D.Y.C. (#8700) and Miss D.Y.C. (#9010) ... Kim Gregory
Miss EMCOR I and Miss EMCOR II ... Kim Gregory

2006:
Formulaboats.com and Formulaboats.com II ... Ted Porter

2007:
Formulaboats.com and Formulaboats.com II ... Ted Porter
Hoss Mortgage Investors and Hoss Mortgage Investors II ... Kim Gregory and Ed Cooper

2008:
Formulaboats.com and Formulaboats.com II ... Ted Porter
Hoss Mortgage Investors and Hoss Mortgage Investors II ... Kim Gregory and Ed Cooper
Hoss Mortgage Investors, Hoss Mortgage Investors II, and Amos W. Hoss ... Kim Gregory, Ed Cooper, and Erick Ellstrom

2009:
Ellstrom E-Lam Plus (#0116) and Ellstrom E-Lam Plus (#0717) ... Erick Ellstrom and Nate Brown

2010:
Formulaboats.com (U-5) and Formulaboats.com (U-57) ... Ted Porter

2011:
Oryx Cup and Oryx Cup II ... Steve Webster and Ken Muscatel

2012:
Jarvis Fire & Water Repair and Jarvis Properties Restoration ... Evans Brothers and Fred Leland
Leland Unlimited and Leland Unlimited II ... Leland Unlimited
Miss Fox Plumbing and Miss Fox Plumbing Too ... Leland Unlimited

2013:
Jarvis Fire & Water Repair and Jarvis Properties Restoration ... Jay Leckrone and Leland Unlimited

2014:
Graham Trucking and Graham Trucking II ... Ted Porter (Below)



Chris Denslow

2015:
Graham Trucking and Graham Trucking II ... Ted Porter

2016:
Graham Trucking and Graham Trucking II ... Ted Porter

2019:
Graham Trucking and Graham Trucking American Dream ... Rob Graham

2023:
Beacon Electric and Beacon Plumbing ... Vanessa and Darrell Strong

REMEMBERING JIM LUCERO, PART 2:

The arrival of the Blue Blaster.

Jim Lucero, among the most dominating crew chiefs and boat designers during the 1970s through '90s, passed away on April 29 in Federal Way, Washington. In last month's issue, we remembered the life of Lucero with an interview that we had published in the November and December 1974 issues of this publication—at a time when the new “Winged Wonder” *Pay 'N Pak* had won its second straight national championship. In the years that followed, Lucero guided the same boat to two more national titles, the last under the ownership of Bill Muncey. When Muncey purchased

Dave Heerensperger's race team early in 1976, his most prized acquisition was a craft being constructed near Tacoma, Washington, by Norm Berg. Launched in 1977, it would become known as the “Blue Blaster” and would also gain a reputation as one of the most successful in the sport's history. Shortly after the new *Atlas Van Line's* first appearance, Jim Lucero again agreed to be interviewed by the *NewsJournal*—this time by Craig Fjarlie. It was originally published in the May 1977 issue and this month serves as another remembrance of Lucero.

UNJ: When we talked with you last time, you told us how Dick Brantsner influenced your thinking with the “Bat Tail” *Smirnoff* and later with the U-29 *Lincoln Thrift*. Is the new *Atlas* a product of that influence, or is it more closely related to the Jones-style *Pay 'N Pak*? On other words, does the new boat have roots?

Lucero: It's primarily just what we learned off the other boats. I wouldn't say that any one person or persons has any-



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

The new *Atlas Van Lines* arrives at the Stan Sayres Pits in Seattle for its debut in March 1977.

thing to do with it.

So, you don't feel the boat is a direct descendant of the previous *Pay 'N Pak*/*Atlas* or anything like that?

No. Oh, it may be. Like I've said in the past, this boat is more evolutionary than revolutionary. I've observed certain things about our boat and other boats running. It's kind of a result of all that, and then some technical work we did at Boeing.

When this was the *Pay 'N Pak* team, what were the steps surrounding the plans for the new boat? Did Heerensperger come and say, “I think we need

a new boat,” or was it your suggestion?

David and I really worked together on that stuff. We took a look at the competition and he said, “Well, heck, they're catching up. We need something new.” The way we felt about it, we didn't want to go to Ron Jones again and have him design and build us a boat, and then if we were successful, end up having three or four more just like it the next year. So, we decided to do it ourselves.

About when did this happen?

Oh, gosh, before the '75 season. I started work on it probably in February, or so.



Bill Curry

Bill Muncey christens his new boat as his wife, Fran, and a big gathering of fans look on.

Did you know what you wanted when you started the design?

Some general ideas. The direction we wanted to go. Although I'll tell you, I was really confused about that time because of the way some of the boats were running. It was obvious to me that the *Lincoln Thrift*, the *U.S.*, and the *Weisfield's* boats should really be running well. At that point in time, they weren't. I felt they should be running better than our boat. But fortunately, in a way, the *Weisfield's* got their act together, so I could kind of confirm some of the things I'd been thinking up to that point.

Did you at that time plan to build a cabover, or did that come later?

No, we pretty well decided on a cabover right from the start.

How long did it actually take to do the design, before you got into the construction?

About six or seven months. Of course, you have to understand that a lot of it happened during the racing season. You aren't working on it full bore all the time. And that worked out well, too, because we were unable to get on the computer exactly when we wanted to all the time. But the whole thing really worked together well, I felt.

What things specifically did Boeing

help you with?

We just looked at aerodynamics. There is a whole group we worked with, but Jim Larsen, specifically, was the aerodynamics guy.

Why did you decide to build a cabover?

Oh, they look neater! No, they're better aerodynamically. You can clean up the boat a lot. We can get the wing lower on the boat. You can get a lower, overall physical profile. The visibility for the driver is better, and it's cooler up front. I felt that we could build the boat lighter than a conventional. There are some drawbacks, too, that we're well aware of.

Safety?

I'm not sure it's any safer to sit in the back than it is in the front. I don't know. But we do know that it's tougher for the driver to relate what's going on with the boat. But we felt that the other advantages would outweigh that. And at the time, when we really decided to go with a cabover, George Henley was driving for us, and he likes it up front.

Did he offer any suggestions when you were doing the design work?

No.



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

The new *Atlas Van Lines* is lowered onto the waters of Lake Washington.



Randy Hall

Bill Muncey drives his new boat onto the Lake Washington course.

Earlier, you mentioned that the boat is evolutionary, not revolutionary. In what sense is it evolutionary?

Well, it's evolutionary in the fact that it's not revolutionary. It just evolved from what we learned with the other boats. It's not a radical departure from the norm.

Why was Norm Berg chosen to do the construction?

He'd done some work for us in the past, and he did good work.

How do you feel about the job he did on the boat?

He did a nice job. There are some things I'm not real, real happy with, but you never are, no matter who does it. But, basically, his craftsmanship is excellent.

You used a lot of honeycombed aluminum in the construction, didn't you?

Yeah, about the same as the last boat.

You're pretty well sold on that material?

It works pretty well. It has its applications. There are some ways that we're using it that aren't necessarily really

good, but it works pretty well.

What are the basic dimensions of the boat?

About the same as the other one—about 28 1/2 by 13.

The boat has a concave section at the leading edge of the tunnel, which is somewhat new. The third *Miss Thriftway* had one, but in the new *Atlas* it's more pronounced. What's the idea there?

That was something Jim Larsen came up with. We decided to try it. It has some aerodynamic benefits, but I don't know if we'll be able to take advantage of them or not.

If it doesn't work, is this something you could eliminate?

Changing the shape of the bottom is a mammoth project. You can guarantee you'll add a couple hundred pounds to the boat. I just can't envision us doing that.

How much does the new *Atlas* weigh? Will you say?

No. It's around 6,000. It's about 200

pounds lighter than the other boat, and the other one was about 6,200. I didn't want to go significantly lighter with the boat because I was afraid of failures. We'd seen what had happened to the other Jones boats where he'd really tried to go lightweight on the honeycomb. They really had a lot of failures and we didn't want to be faced with the same thing. So, we went lighter where we thought we could, and actually went beefier in some areas.

For example, where is it beefier?

Around the engine area, because that takes a lot of load.

One thing that is of interest are the bubbles on the bottom for the gearbox and the oil pump. What effect do those bubbles have on the aerodynamics of the boat?

As far as we can tell, none.

The new boat has full-length air traps—just a thin strip—which the old boat didn't have. Why the change?

This actually has an additional inch

“But if it was an attractive-looking boat, something that caught people’s eye, then they would seek it out. Even if the thing runs like a turkey, at least people will like it.”

is all, and the only reason is for construction purposes. We wanted to run the air traps all the way to the transom. With the other boat we didn’t do that. That’s another area where we went a little beefier ‘cause it just adds some more rigidity to the back of the boat. That area takes a helluva pounding.

Looking at the boat, it looks as though the engine and shaft are slightly off center. Are they really, or is that an optical illusion?

Optical illusion. We started out to do that, and I got chicken at the end. If you look at it really close, you’ll see the engine is offset under the cowling, caused when we moved it back over.

The boat also has diagonal sponson braces. What is their purpose?

Just to stiffen it up. It’s just like a truss in a roof. On Ron Jones’s boats and on ours, there isn’t much meat holding that sponson on. You want to keep it from flexing a little bit, so that’s the whole reason behind that. Nothing trick about it.

The new Atlas was built for a Rolls Merlin. We keep hearing that the Merlins are all but gone. How many more years can they jeep building boats for Merlins?

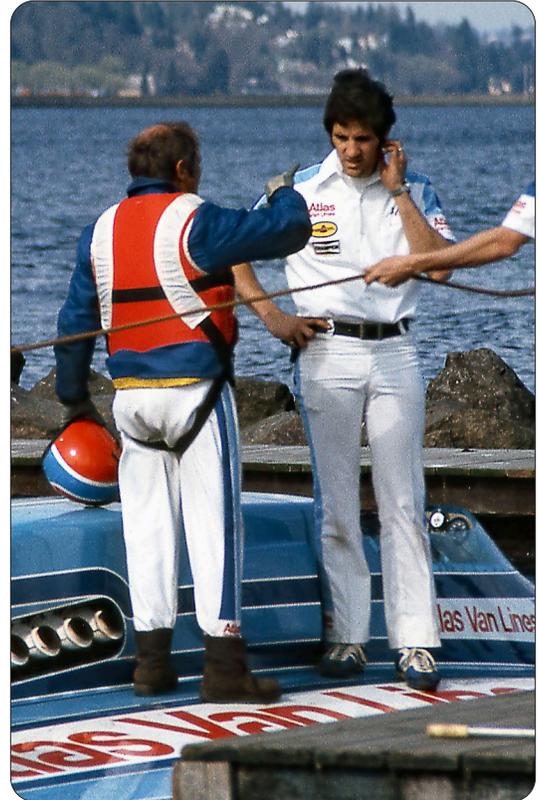
I’d say 10 or 15. Dash-nines are tough to come by. If somebody came to me right today, and wanted to get 10 Merlins, I could supply him.

With dash-nines?

No, it would be the equivalent. Something

that would be as good or better. You can run dash-sevens. I ran dash-sevens on the *Smirnoff*, which had to be the world’s hardest pushing boat, and I don’t think we lost a wheel case all year.

There were rumors before this boat was completed that Pay ‘N Pak was going to try a turbine.



Randy Hall

RIGHT: Bill Muncey and Jim Lucero discuss how the new boat performed.

BELOW: Muncey and *Atlas Van Lines* from above.



Bill Osborne

Any truth to that?

We kicked it around a little bit. One experimental thing at a time is enough. Trying to sort out a motor and a boat both—everybody who has done it has failed. They end up canning one or the other.

Is a turbine feasible for other boats in the future? Would you try one?

Sure. I'd go with anything I thought would win. I have nothing against turbines at all. I'd really like to see somebody try one again. I thought the *U-95* was a very promising project and had a lot of potential. I thought it was a real shame that the thing got ash-canned. It got us a lot of publicity. It was something new and different, and we need that. I wouldn't mind doing it myself if we had sufficient capital.

Would you try it with this boat?

I wouldn't rule it out. I don't know, I doubt Bill would go for it.

In all honesty, can any boat exceed the old one—go faster, win more races?

I don't think there's any doubt that we can go faster than the other boat went. I feel the *Budweiser* can go faster than the other boat went. But as far as winning



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

The new *Atlas Van Lines* soon became known to fans as the "Blue Blaster."

more races goes, a lot of that is circumstances. The other boat had a helluva jump on the competition. For basically the first two years it was a stroke deal. The first year [1973], that boat should've won—maybe seven races. It was just circumstances that kept it from winning a few of the races, like breaking a prop at the Gold Cup. But it was heads and shoulders above anything else running those first two years. Even the third year,

by the time we got it sorted back out, it was very good. Last year was a lot tougher on it. If the *Olympia* and the *Budweiser* hadn't had their problems, particularly the *Budweiser*, I think we would've had a lot tougher time.

How is Bill Muncey to work with?

Good. He's been very, very reasonable with us. If we have a question about something he's doing, or we as a team are doing, he's been very receptive to listen to any ideas we've had. I've been very, very pleased.

At this point, what are his feelings about the new boat?

I think he's pleasantly surprised. I think he anticipated the thing not performing as well as it has so far. Not that it's anyplace close to where we want it to be, but I think he expected to have to run a whole bunch more before we got it to the point where it is right now. Also, he's progressed faster in the boat than he thought he would. I think he feels a lot more comfortable now than he expected.

Who came up with that beautiful color scheme? Was it Atlas?

It was not Atlas. We wanted to do something different. We'd been thrashing around a color scheme since last year, because O.H. Frisbie wasn't happy with what we had on the other boat. I really wasn't happy with it either. So, we kept



Randy Hall

Bill Muncey and Jim Lucero on the deck of the new hydroplane.

thrashing it around and ended up with almost what they had on the Schoenith boat, which I hated. So, finally I said, “We’re going to change it.” So, I hired a guy and we kicked around some ideas, and we came up with this. We’re very happy with it.

I think it’s an attractive enough boat that it’ll generate a lot of interest in *Atlas* itself. My feelings on the other one are that it was just a plain-Jane boat. Only the fact that it performed well saved it. But if it was an attractive-looking boat, something that caught people’s eye, then they would seek it out. Even if the thing runs like a turkey, at least people will like it.

What are some of the steps you’ve taken in trimming the new *Atlas Van Lines*?

Oh, we’ve played with our wing—the normal stuff. You can’t lock into any one thing. We’ll end up playing with the gamut before we’re through. We’ll move



Randy Hall

Bill Muncey brings the *Atlas Van Lines* back to the Stan Sayres Pits.

weight around, play with the wing, play with the sponsons, just whatever it takes to make the thing run right.

In conclusion, are there any unsung heroes who deserve mention?

I’m real proud of the installation that

was done on this boat, and Loren Sawyer did most of that. He really did an ace job. Really first cabin. It’s without a doubt the nicest one I’ve ever worked on. ❖

THE 2023 HYDRO FLEET AN ADDENDUM:

The Unlimited Racing Group surprised us when it appeared for the test session in the Tri-Cities with a different boat than the one they used last year. Here’s the data on this year’s entry:

U-11 Legend Yacht Transport



Chris Denslow

OWNER: Shannon and Scott Raney
DRIVER: Jamie Nilsen
CREW CHIEF: Scott Raney
RACE TEAM: Unlimited Racing Group
BOAT SHOP: Cle Elum, Wash.
BUILT: 1993 (Hull #9302), Rebuilt in 2009 (Redesignated Hull #0925)
BUILDER: Dale Van Wiering

POWER: Lycoming T-55/L-7 turbine
PREVIOUS NAMES: Miss T-Plus (1993–95), Miss D.O.C./Acuvue (1996), Harvey Motorsports (1996), ARC Construction (1996–99), Trendwest Resorts (1996), KISS 106/Trendwest (1996), Molson’s Jack Hammer (1996), The Dole Cannery (1996), Miss Detroit Ford Dealers (1997), PrimeStar (1997), Gargoyles (1997), Pit Stop (1997), U-2 (1997–99), Déjà vu (1997–98), Miss Chrysler Jeep (1998–2001, 2004), Miss Molson (1998), Freddie’s Club (1998–2000), Gaylord’s (1998), Trendwest (2001–02), Miss APBA (2004), Graham Trucking (2004), Graham Trucking/Sinbad’s Roostertail (2004), Superior Racing (2007), Jarvis Construction (2007), Procraft Windows (2008), Buffalo Federal Savings Bank (2009), Mister Home Loan (2009), U-25 (2009–10), Boyland Nissan (2010), Miss Car Pros (2010), Peters & May (2010–12), Miss J&D’s (2017), Miss DiJulio presents J&D’s (2017), Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D’s (2017–18), and J&D’s presents Reliable Diamond Tools (2019).

PREVIOUS DRIVERS: Steve David (1993–99), Mark Tate (1999–2000, 2004), Scott Pierce (2001), Greg Hopp (2004, 2007), J. Michael Kelly (2004), Ken Muscatel (2007–10), Jon Zimmerman (2010), J.W. Myers (2011–12), Tom Thompson (2012–19), and Jamie Nilsen (2019).

RACE VICTORIES: 2
NATIONAL TITLES: None

MY \$0.02 WORTH

Editorial Comment by Andy Muntz



A part of me has been living in the past for the last several years. It started with an idea to write something about when hydroplane racing was the biggest sport in the Seattle area during the 1950s. But when I got into it deeper, I became fascinated by the stories of Stan Sayres, Ted Jones, Anchor Jensen and all that was going on behind the scenes of the public story about the famous *Slo-mo-shun* team. So, I decided to write a book about it.

I'm not going to go into the details here. Just know that one of the basics of a good story is conflict—and this one had plenty. Jones and Jensen didn't get along, Sayres became furious during the building of *Slo-mo V*, Seattle felt a rivalry with Detroit, Detroit felt likewise about Seattle, boat owners made threats, people were fired (or, were they?), the tax court got involved, Sayres felt trapped by his success and complained about the high cost, and so on.

But my purpose here today is just to

offer some thanks to those who helped along the way. I'll go into greater detail in the acknowledgments portion of the book, but I know several of them read this publication, so I thought I'd take the opportunity.

It was such a joy to get to know Don Ibsen, for example, who is the last surviving member of the *Slo-mo* crew. He is a wonderful human being and became a dear friend during this project. I'm also happy to now call the three surviving grandchildren of Stan Sayres my friends. Zoom meetings with them are always tricky, as they live in all corners of the planet, but it was so exciting to be with them in person when they gathered in Seattle last summer.

DeWitt Jensen, the son of builder Anchor Jensen, has been a tremendous help and is also now a friend. We spent hours together in the archives of the Museum of History and Industry going through his dad's coffee-stained memos and notes. It's been a pleasure to get to

know Ray Fageol, as well. The son of Lou Fageol had many great stories to tell about his dad, as did John and Tom Taggart about their father, Joe Taggart.

There are many others, as well: Doug Dossin gave me the Detroit perspective, Roger Lippman caught many typos in my drafts, and the staff at the University of Washington's Special Collections Division were so helpful in leading me through all the Stan Sayres material that they have.

Writing a story like this turns out to be a mammoth project, much more time consuming than you might imagine. But, it's also a very rewarding experience, especially when it involves people like those I've mentioned above and many others. They've shown that it literally takes a village to complete a project like this.

Now, the book is almost done. Fingers crossed, I'm hoping that it will finally appear on Amazon later this fall. ❖

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