

# ‘‘flyer fever’’

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**Dedicated to the FUN of owning a Larson Falls Flyer**

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Volume 1 - Number 1  
November 1989

## Welcome!

Welcome to ‘‘Flyer Fever’’. You have received a copy because we have you listed as a Larson Falls Flyer owner, or enthusiast. We hope you enjoy this initial effort, and urge you to fill out the survey enclosed in this issue. In fact, if we don’t hear from you, we’ll assume you are not interested, and remove you from our mailing list.

Why ‘‘Flyer Fever’’? ‘‘Just for fun,’’ explains editor Ross Pfund (see editor’s notes). ‘‘I admit to having Falls Flyer fever, and I’m not certain there’s a cure. . .so I’ve decided to continue to enjoy it. . .but watch out, it’s contagious!’’

He explained that the idea for the newsletter grew after he, and his wife, Pat, attended Dr. Bob Johnson’s Falls Flyer Invitational this fall in St. Paul. ‘‘I wrote to Big Bob after his show and said I’d edit and produce the newsletter if he would help with postage, the check came the next week, along with his list of owners, and we were underway.’’

He then added that letters were sent to a number of owners asking for pictures and stories, and the response was very positive. Noted marine historian and author, Bob Speltz, also lent a hand to the publication, and here we are!

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## 8th Annual Real Runabouts Invitational

# ‘‘World Series’’ of boat shows will feature Larson Falls Flyer

The ‘‘World Series’’ of boat shows, ‘‘The 8th Annual Real Runabout Invitational Antique and Classic Boat Show’’ will feature the Larson Falls Flyer at its annual gathering in Albert Lea this summer, Saturday, July 14, 1990.

World renown author and historian, Bob Speltz, who organizes the show, relates that his show will feature the ‘‘largest display of Larson Falls Flyer boats, both inboard and outboard, wood and fiberglass.’’

At this early date, owners have already committed to show over 20 boats. Speltz, famous for his ‘‘Real Runabouts’’ series of books, plans several special Flyer Flavors to his annual show at Fountain Lake.

The show cap for 1990 will be in Flyer colors-red, cream and black, with a Falls Flyer boat on the

front. The Falls Flyer will also be featured on the cover of the show booklet, along with a story of the boat’s history inside.

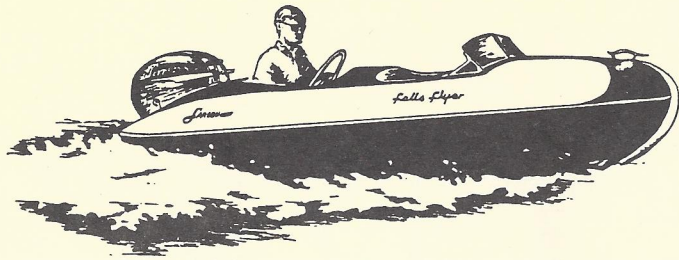
Also, all Falls Flyers will be docked near each other in the water, and those on land grouped together as well.

Overall, Bob reports that he expects well over 60 boats.

Other special features include a parade, race boat fly-by by Bob Walters of Okoboji, Iowa, and band concert. . .to highlight a few. Show celebrity will be Marjori Wood, daughter of Win Wood, niece of Gar Wood. Also, show goers will have a chance to meet Ransie Lane, former driver of the huge wooden runabout, ZEPHYR.

‘‘Look for some other surprises as well,’’ concluded Bob.

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## From the editor

Hello! For those of us who have not crossed paths, a brief introduction is necessary. I'm the fourth generation editor of a weekly newspaper that has been in my family over 100 years. In fact, the Norman County Index is halfway through its 110th year. I volunteered to edit and produce "Flyer Fever" because I love the boats, and it seems like a lot of folks share that feeling.

There are a number of people that deserve credit for generating renewed interest in the Falls Flyer, of which this newsletter is a direct result. Bob Johnson ("Big Bob"), of St. Paul, hosted a show at his home this fall (see article), and compiled most of the mailing list of owners and enthusiasts. Bob supplied postage, a couple articles and encouragement. He's been afflicted with Flyer Fever even longer than I have.

Bob Speltz, of Albert Lea, famous marine historian and author of the "Real Runabouts" series of books, shared his information and support, even though recovering from a fall. Get well soon, Bob! We're all looking forward to your show next summer (see article).

Also, thanks go out Tom Juul, of Alexandria Classic Boats. Tom is a premier boat restorer, and his encouragement and advice have been key elements as well. Tom's working on several projects (see article) that should be good news to a number of owners.

To those of you who took the time to send in photos and an article for this issue, thanks are due as well. Let's hear from the rest of you, and maybe we can roll another issue of "Flyer Fever" off the press!

### "Flyer Fever"

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with

**OUTBOARD  
MOTORBOATS**

by

**LARSON**

FROM THE COVER OF A LARSON BROCHURE, 1951.



Pat Pfund and Keith Dobbs discuss the finer points of owning a Falls Flyer at Big Bob's show. The Pfund's unrestored 1955

fiberglass outboard, with rear steering and a restored 1957 Johnson 35 h.p. is pictured in the foreground.

## “Big Bob’s Falls Flyer Invitational” proves to be great fun!

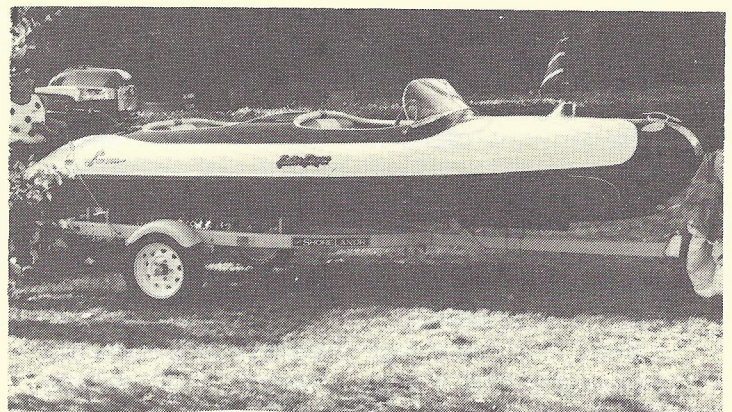
The first annual Falls Flyer Invitational held at Bob Johnson's home in St. Paul proved to be a great time for all involved. "I knew the time was ripe for a gathering, because interest in Falls Flyers was popping up all over the place," explained Bob of his idea for the show. "I had been collecting owners' names for over two years and combined my list with one Bob Speltz of Albert Lea had compiled."

Bob planned his show for the 14th of October, at his beautiful home on Crocus Hill, overlooking the city. "I planned the simplest and smallest show possible, because these seem to be the most fun. I mailed out invitations, and followed those up with phone calls. . .and it was amazing that the attendance rate!" Bob added that he believes about 85 percent of the people invited actually attended the show.

Record high temps and a bright sunny day made for a perfect atmosphere, with 50 people enjoying the opportunity to view eight Flyers. Five

outboards and three inboards were displayed on the spacious lawn, with a table for displays of old brochures, photos, and other memorabilia—including a commemorative t-shirt.

Continued next page



One of the restored Flyers at Bob Johnson's show. This fiberglass outboard is powered by a 1956 Johnson Javelin 30 h.p.



Gil Arvig's 1952 cedar strip Flyer was a show favorite. A 1956 Johnson 30 provides the zip.

## Big Bob's . . .

Bob gave free "Big Bob's Falls Flyer Invitational" t-shirts to a number of people, including all those that brought boats. On the back of the shirts was Bob's now famous quote: "Falls Flyers are like potato chips, you can't stop with just one!"

Bob noted that there was a good mix of people, ranging from Megan Brown (age two) to Angie Speltz (age unknown), and a good range of boats, from 1937 to 1958, in conditions that varied from rough unrestored, to semi-restored, to completely restored.

"If there was a 'Best of Show', it was probably the Steele's 'Boondoggle', a 14' single cockpit

inboard, special for both for its uniqueness, and its fine restoration," Big Bob noted, and added, "There was little doubt that the worst boat was trailered by Tom Akenson from Alexandria (a 14' fiberglass outboard)."

"Another highlight of the show was the presence of two special guests," Bob explained. "First of all was Bob Speltz of Albert Lea, author of the 'Real Runabouts' series of books, and ring master of the 'World Series' of antique and classic boat shows-'The Real Runabout Invitational', held each July in Albert Lea."

"Our second special guest was Tony Brown, from Lake Minnetonka, and most recently Lake Tahoe, California. Tony is widely held as the world's foremost antique boat restorer. . . as well as the most expensive," Bob laughed. He added that Tony attended with three generations of the Brown family.

Bob said that the day went very fast, with the help of some liquid refreshments (including Schmidt Beer for Harry Zemke), and light snacks. At 5:00 p.m., Donna Edmonson had the light supper ready to serve, with sloppy joes, Big Bob's Baked Beans, and lots of other goodies. The supper was followed by a "Falls Flyer Hot Fudge Sundae", and entertainment for the day included an Eastern Onion Nurse, sent by Paul and Candi Walker (Lake Tahoe) to sing to Bob. The lovely young lady put on a very enjoyable and funny performance for Bob and the group.

"As darkness fell, everyone loaded and departed with full tummies, and a heavy dose of Falls Flyer Fever," Bob concluded.

"Special thanks to Ross Pfund for designing and producing the Falls Flyer sweatshirts and t-shirts, and to all the other people who helped me put on the enjoyable show. Please bring your boat to Bob Speltz's show in July of 1990—Bob Johnson."

## Falls Flyer named for Charles Lindbergh and Little Falls

Jim Moore, of St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin, shares that he visited with Paul Larson a number of years back, a week before Paul died at the age of 86.

"I spoke with Paul Larson many years ago, and he told me he named the boat after Charles Lindbergh, who he went to school with, and Little Falls," Moore relates.

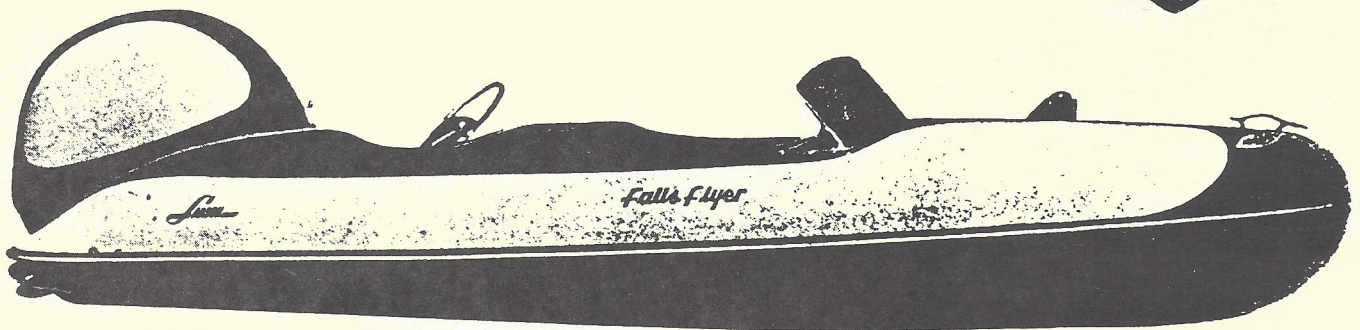
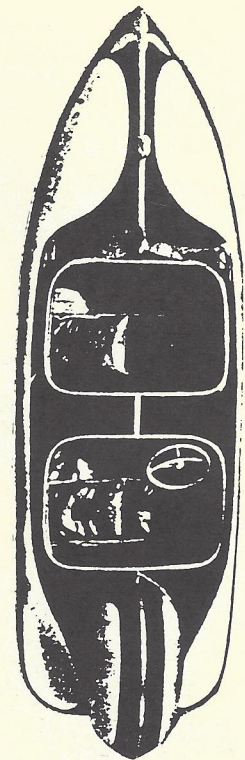
"He (Larson) designed the originals to look like Lindbergh's first airplane (Jenny), with the twin cockpit and round hull. The original seven in-

boards had a metal Eagle on the front (Lindbergh was nicknamed the Lone Eagle), which later became the duck, swan or loon."

"Paul told me he couldn't remember much more because he was 86, and 'about to croak'. He died the next week."

Jim added that he has pictures of Larson from 1937, as well as a Certificate of Merit for safety from the DNR which came from his home after he died.

# Falls flyer



"The Falls Flyer is Truly America's Most Distinctive Outboard Motor Boat." That's how an early 50's Larson Boat Works' brochure describes the wooden outboard Falls Flyer.

Here are some other excerpts. . . "The Falls Flyer is sturdy in construction, having selected cedar planking over closely spaced steam bent frames with intermediate sawed frames of mahogany. The stern and sawed frames are mahogany, screw fastened with waterproof glue joints, assembled to stand the strain of large motors. It is not one of those rough riding racing boats. It is designed to give maximum comfort to passengers when used in choppy waters. It takes the turns with utmost safety. Ride in one and be convinced.

The new streamlined stern of the Falls Flyer incorporates the stern support (extension of bottom back of stern) first introduced by Larson several years ago. This feature gives more 'lift' at the stern, allowing quick pick-up and get away. Full length splash guards are an integral part of the boat. The entire top of the boat is covered with a finely woven fabric stretched tightly over the sturdy decks. The fabric is filled. . . The bottom up to the splash guards is finished in bright red marine enamel, the bow and part of

the deck is black, with the balance of the boat ivory. . . To add beauty to the finish, a neat stripe sets off the different colors in artistic harmony. The trim on the Falls Flyer consists of chrome plated cutwater, V-type windshield, running light, mouldings and a beautiful streamlined 'winged waterfowl' combination handle and mooring cleat. The steering wheel is mounted on the right side of the back cockpit. Change in mounting may be had at a slight extra cost. The aeroplane type cockpits are upholstered in high grade dark red leatherette over one-half round sponge rubber padding, polished moulding protects the edges of leatherette completely around both cockpits.

The upholstered seat backs and life preserver cushions are also of the same color and quality leatherette. . . Only seeing the real finished product will convince you that they are in a class by themselves. You will agree with us when we say they are the most beautifully modern streamlined boat in America."

Specs for the boat saw the length 14 feet, the width 56 inches, the depth amid 25 inches, the weight 225 pounds, and power from 16 to 50 horse.



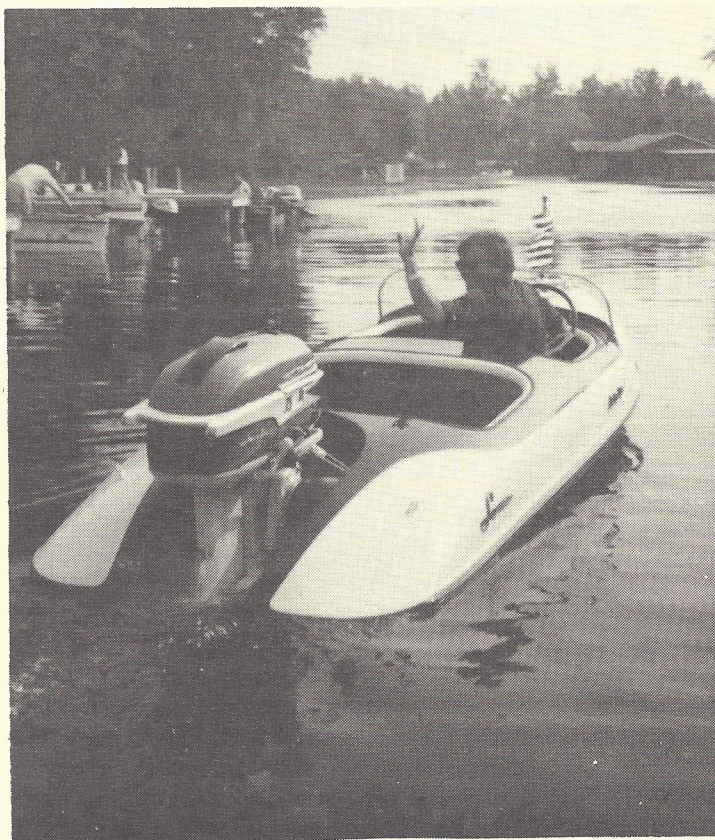
*Jim Moore fires up his beautiful 1937 19-foot inboard prototype, with plenty of dock hands to assist.*

## Wisconsin's Jim Moore enjoys vintage inboard and classic outboard

Jim Moore, of St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin, shared some interesting history with our readers for this issue, and also has a couple outstanding restored examples of Falls Flyers.

Jim has a 1937, 19' inboard that was built as one of seven prototypes for the later outboards.

His outboard came from a small lake north of Outing, and was restored carefully over a period of three years, at a cost of \$2,000. His 1957 boat is powered by a 1957 Johnson Javelin, which he found new in Iowa with less than 10 hours on it.



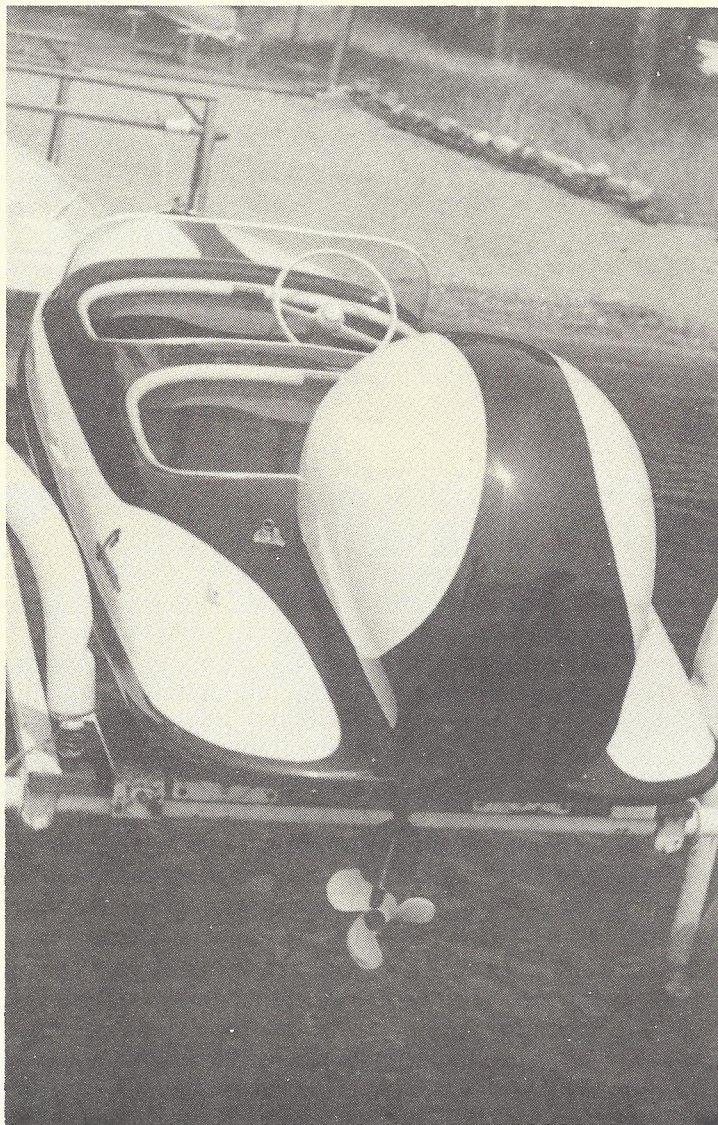
*A new 1957 Johnson Javelin found in Iowa powers Jim Moore's restored 1957 Falls Flyer.*

# This Flyer has somewhat of a “hood-ish” reputation...

Folks in the Brainerd area have had the rare treat to see a beautifully restored Falls Flyer outboard cruising Gull Lake. What makes the boat of Brook Davis even more unique, however, is that it has an engine hood.

As of this issue, we know of no other Falls Flyer that still has a hood. Many of the original owners purchased the optional hood, and most all were discarded at one point or another.

Brook, of Vermillion, South Dakota, found his boat on Leech Lake about six years ago. He explains that it was a good, solid hull, but in need of a complete restoration.



Owned by Brook Davis, this rear view shows the unique design of the hood on his fiberglass Flyer. Power is by a 1957 Johnson 35.

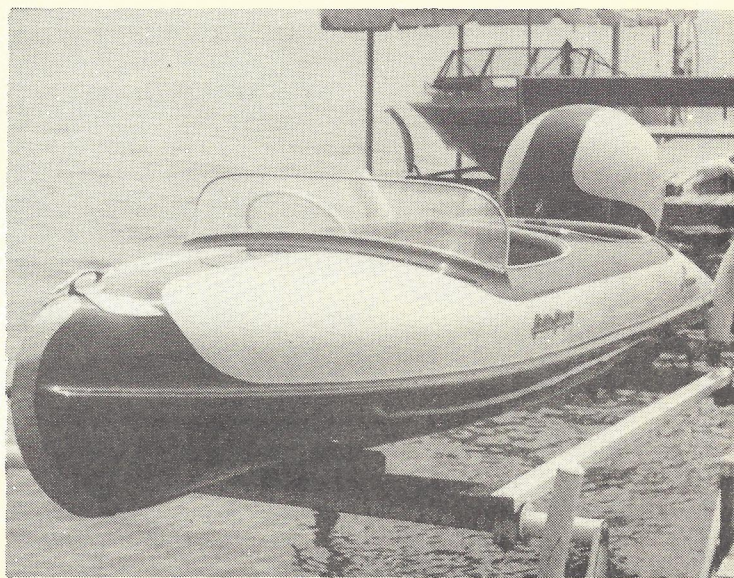
The end result of the restoration is evident from the photos, and Brook feels it was a job well done by John Grell, of Nisswa Marine, who did the fiberglass and paint work.

The boat didn't come with a hood, "but I'd heard of a Flyer with a hood in the Grand Rapids area. After a lot of phone calls, I located the boat with the hood, and bought the whole boat to acquire the hood. Again, John Grell did the glass and paint work," Brook explained.

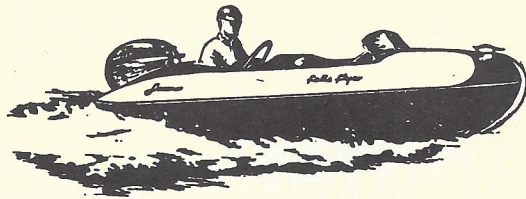
He added that Harold Monahan of Larson Motor Service in Little Falls loaned him a 1955 Larson catalog, and then Grell worked out the paint scheme to scale using the catalog. "He (Grell) took great pains to get it as close as possible to the original, and I obtained original Larson decals from Monahan, and my Falls Flyer decals came from Jim Moore, who had purchased the last original set in Little Falls and had a few sets made up."

Hidden under the hood is a 1957 Johnson 35, which powers the Flyer. "I'm planning on adding electric start to the motor," Brook notes, "as it's rather a pain to crawl back, lift the hood and start the motor."

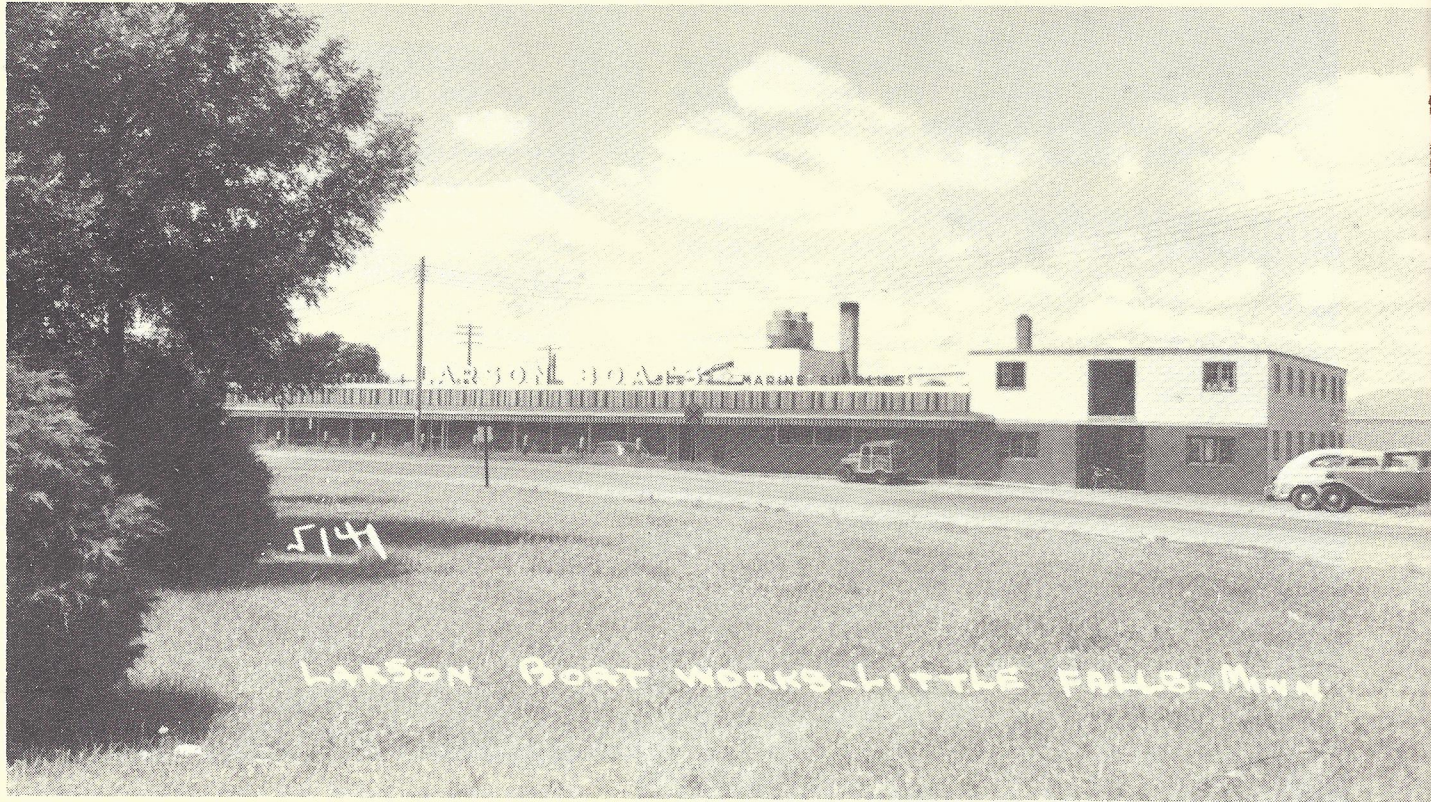
Brook Davis, of Vermillion, South Dakota, owns this prize



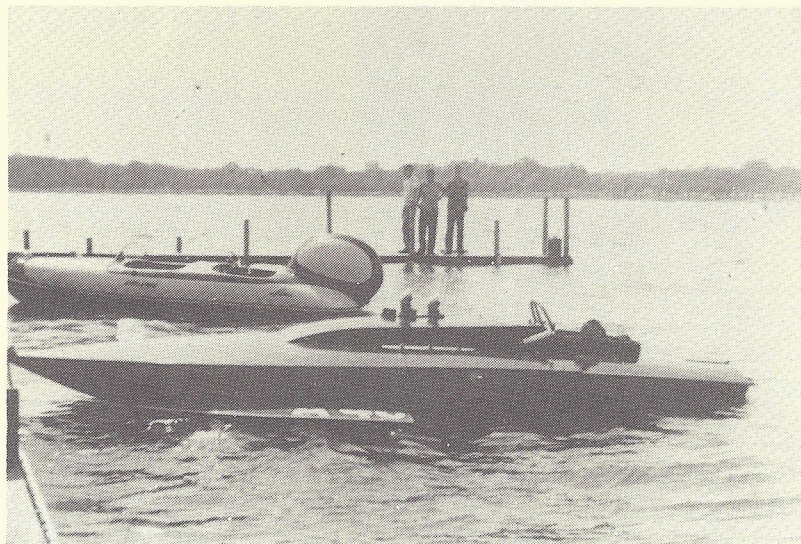
A rare sight. A Larson Falls Flyer with an engine hood.



# flyer favor



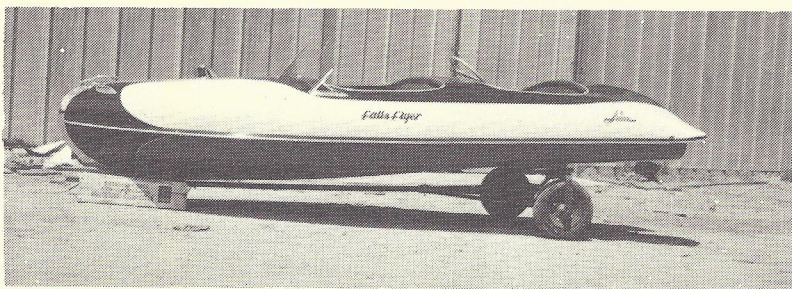
*A picture post card of the Larson Boat Works, Little Falls.*



*A wood Falls Flyer with a hood looked just as striking as its next door neighbor, a neat hydroplane, though we suspect the race would not be close.*



# rites from the past



*A new wood Falls Flyer leaves the factory, ready to make some new owner very happy.*



*Could this have been "Boondoggle" when it left the factory? Perhaps not, but certainly a close relative. Note the fancy wire wheels on the trailer, and what looks like a duck boat behind it.*

*Photographs courtesy Bob Speltz.*



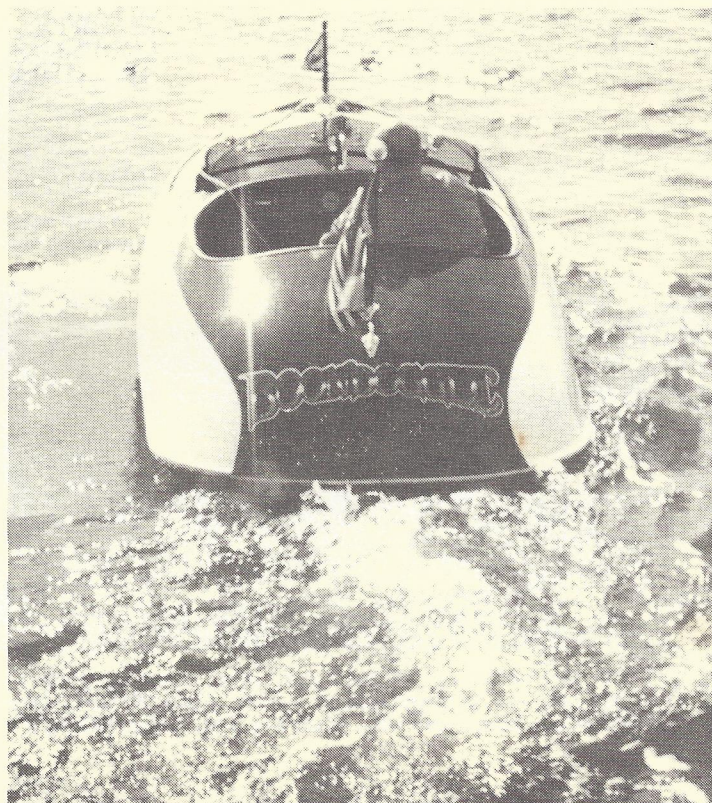
*I love a parade, and this Larson Boat Works entry in a Little Falls extravaganza drew its share of applause, we're sure. Can anybody*

*identify the year of the truck that's pulling the inboard?*

# Chuck Steele's "Boondoggle" certainly no wasted effort



Chuck and Margie Steele are pictured dockside in "Boondoggle", a beautifully restored single cockpit inboard, powered by a Gray Fireball Four. The photo was taken at their club outing on Three Lakes, Wisconsin, in August of 1988.



Heading out to sea.

Perhaps the most interesting of the Falls Flyers belongs to Chuck Steele, of Madison, Wisconsin. Chuck is the proud owner of the single cockpit inboard, "Boondoggle", which is a show stopper wherever it appears.

"I had always been interested in boats, and decided I wanted to restore an inboard," Chuck recalls. "In the summer of 1973, I started looking, and in August I found the Falls Flyer under some painting tarps in a storage shed at Russell Marina in Madison. I thought maybe I could restore it, so I brought it home on a borrowed trailer." (Editor's note: Chuck's daughter, Laurie, is pictured with the boat when he brought it home. She was 11 in the picture, and is now 27.)

Chuck continues. . . "At the time, I had no idea what I had found, or how it was originally finished (varnish, paint, color, etc.). The boat was in sad condition, full of leaves, maps, newspapers, and furthermore, the 60 h.p. Gray Phantom engine was frozen tight."

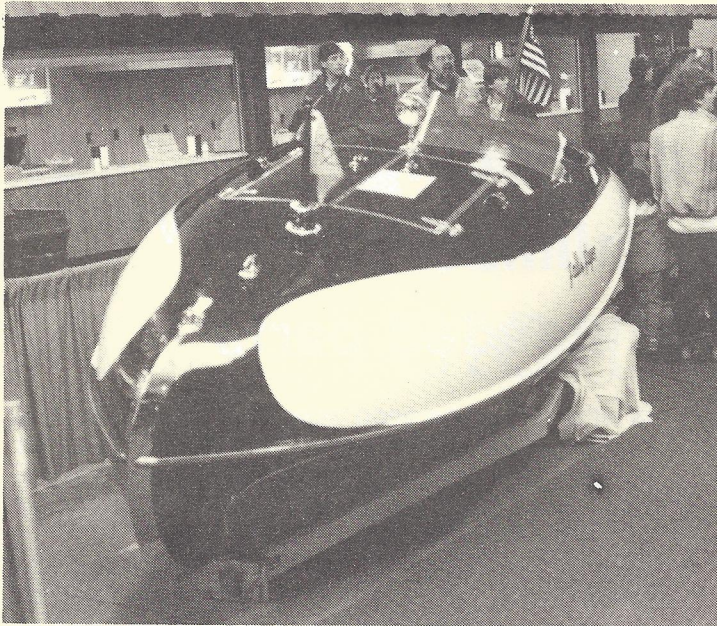
Steele's first step was to remove the engine,

which he then gave to a friend for parts. He then stripped the old paint off the boat, replaced a few rotted wood strips, and painted it a bright yellow with industrial enamel. "I was then unable to find an engine for it, so I covered it with canvas and stored it in my yard. There it sat for 11 years, as I wanted to restore it, but knew I didn't have the skill or patience."

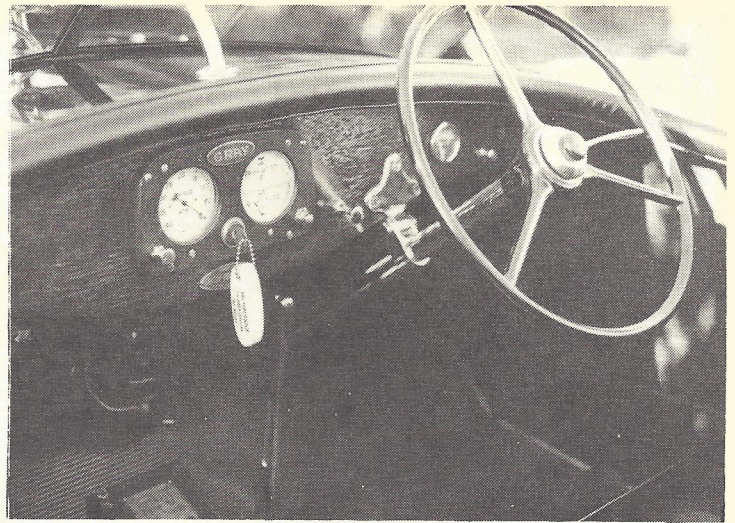
In the meantime, Chuck owned several Chris Crafts and Century's which needed only varnish, that he refinished and enjoyed.

In 1979, he joined the Midwest Antique Boat Association, and told one of the members about the Falls Flyer. "In 1984, I sold the boat to Bob Chatterton of the club, with the understanding that I would have first chance to buy it back, if and when he wanted to sell it."

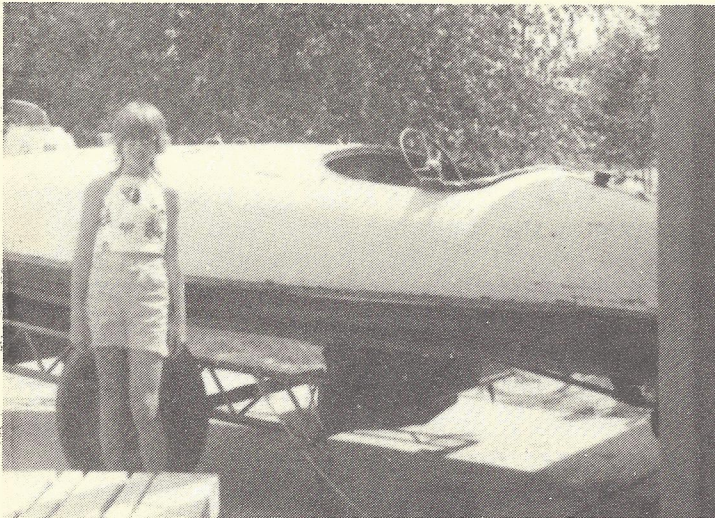
"Bob is a true craftsman, and did a beautiful job restoring the boat. In September of 1987, I bought the Falls Flyer back, and have enjoyed it thoroughly ever since."



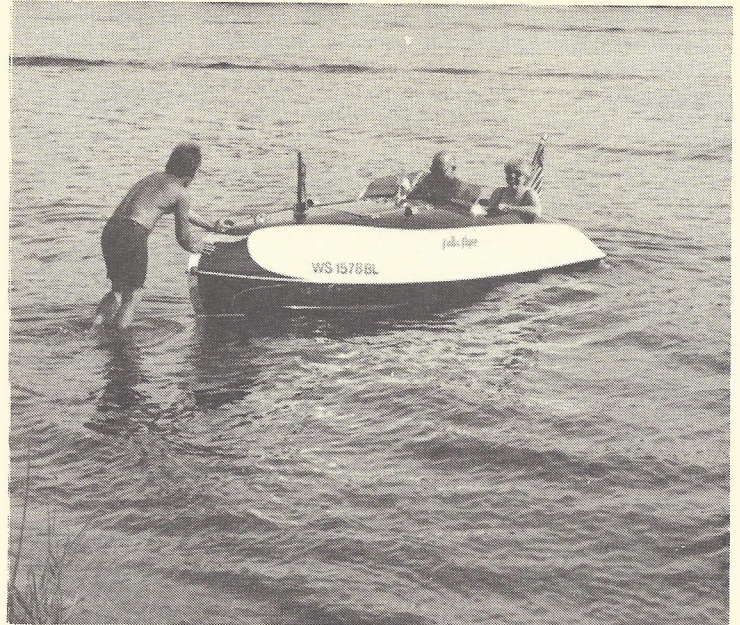
*"Boondoggle" on display at the Milwaukee Boat Show during the winter of 1987.*



*An interior shot of the Steele's boat. Note the firewall cut around the engine.*



*Chuck Steele's daughter, who is now 27, is pictured next to his unrestored Falls Flyer at age 11, the day it arrived home on a borrowed trailer.*

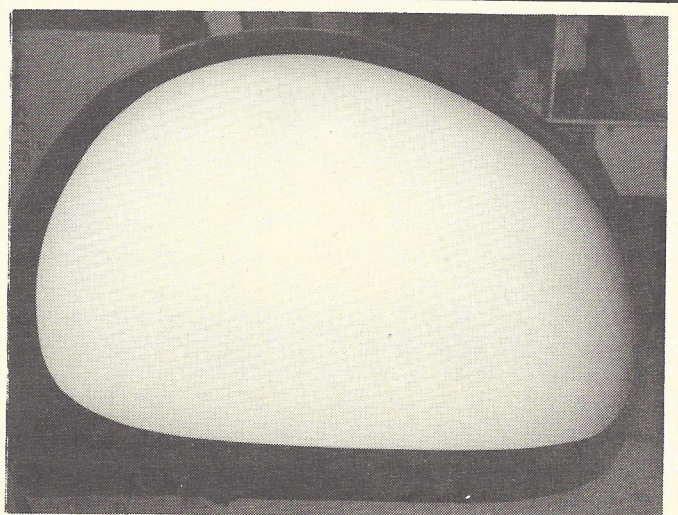


*Time for another fast ride around the lake.*

## A unique option

Did your outboard have an engine hood? A Larson Boat Works Catalog that was effective October 1, 1951, showed that the hood was an option that would cost you \$75.00 more. Oh yes, the Falls Flyer 14 foot wood runabout from the same year was \$595.00 new. Place my order for several!

An old Larson brochure explains: "Optional on the new Falls Flyer is a beautiful streamlined Motor Hood, which is hinged for easy access to the motor, and gives you all the comforts and appearance of an inboard. The motor hood is designed for use with the modern streamlined motors and will not fit some of the older type motors."



*Looking like a giant egg, the engine hood is a rare and valuable find for any Falls Flyer outboard owner.*



## Treasure in the weeds. . .

*Just waiting for the right owner. This twin cockpit forward inboard was photographed in northern Minnesota, and had seen better days.*

## Still going strong. . .

Oldest active owner? We're not certain, but we think that goes to Fargo, North Dakota's Ole Rommesmo. Ole purchased his 1941 inboard new, and remembers he paid about \$1,500. for it. The boat is in original condition, and used every summer.

Ole said that he's always kept his boat inside, and credits its longevity to that fact. As far as Ole's longevity? He still goes to work just about every day.

## Share your stories!

Where did you purchase your Falls Flyer? Some owners bought them new, and have taken loving care of them for years. Others came across them by accident, or searched high and low, only to find one on a rummage sale. A rummage sale?

Do you find yourself hitting every garage and rummage sale in the neighborhood? Probably not, but at least two owners on our mailing list found their boats at a rummage sale. Tom and Carol Juul of Evansville bought their outboard, painted bright yellow, in just that manner. So did the Don Moen's of Fargo, North Dakota.

Newsletter editor Ross Pfund spent a Super Bowl Sunday on the road to pick up his first fiberglass outboard, and he had to help dig it out from under a big pile of snow. He also recently purchased another fiberglass Flyer that was painted green with house paint, inside and out, and the fellow had strapped a huge Johnson V-4 75 horse to the back!

Have an interesting story? We sure wish you'd share it!

## Restorer Tom Juul developing a number of needed parts

In what should be good news to outboard owners. Tom Juul, of Alexandria Classic Boats, is working on a number of items to complete your restoration. Tom's restoring a mid-fifties fiberglass Flyer owned by his wife, Carol.

Tom is working to develop a reproduction stainless steel cutwater, having waterfowl handles and wings cast, and finding a source for cockpit moulding and windshield trim.

Less obvious details he's working on include the nails the cockpit moulding is fastened with. "We may have to use brass nails, and have them chromed," he said.

Tom Juul restored boats are well-known for their attention to detail. His 1951 Chris-Craft 16' Riviera won the Best Chris Craft award at last summer's seventh annual Antique and Classic Invitational hosted by Bob Speltz in Albert Lea. It captured major awards at the Whitefish Show, and was the best judged boat at the Minnetonka boat show. A Gar-Wood he restored for, and with, Dr. Bob Johnson of St. Paul was also a major winner on the show circuit last summer.

"Flyer Fever" will keep you informed of how Tom progresses, so stay tuned.

## Replica decals available!

Ross Pfund, with the assistance of Tom Juul, of Alexandria Classic Boats, has reproduced a limited number of replica decals. "Tom had an original Larson decal, plus a color photo of an original boat with a good view of the Falls Flyer decal. I was able to get a tracing off one of my fiberglass outboard boats, and had our artist at the newspaper take it from there," he explained.

The decals are red and black on chrome, with a self-adhesive back. Cost is \$12.50 per decal, or \$45. a set (two Larson, two Falls Flyer). Add \$3.00 shipping and handling.

"Tom and I needed them for the restoration of our boats, and I knew of none available," he explained. Inquiries, or orders, can be sent in care of "Flyer Fever."

Pfund is also working on developing a white pennant flag with your choice of Larson or Falls Flyer screened in red.

## A bedtime restoration story

# It was a dark and stormy night. . .

*Editor's note: Here's an enjoyable first person restoration story by Bob Johnson, Commander and Chef of the Falls Flyer Armada. Bob is famous for a number of things, including his Speedboat Spaghetti and his Falls Flyer Firehouse Beans.*

*First of all, my thanks and congratulations to Ross Pfund for volunteering to put out a Falls Flyer newsletter. I know it will be good, because he's a professional journalist, and comes from a long line of journalists in his family. . .*

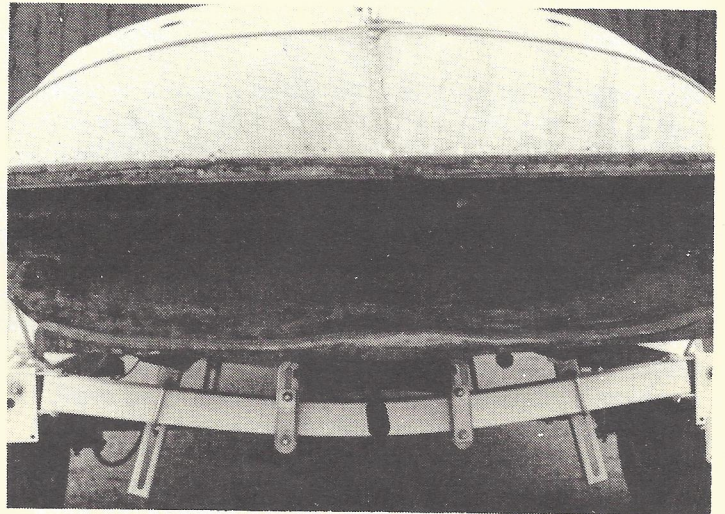
*I want to tell you about the first Falls Flyer I ever saw, and the first Falls Flyer I ever bought. It is a 19-foot split-cockpit inboard, built by Larson Boat Company, circa 1940.*

*I fell in love with this boat when Jon "Slow Boat" Menth brought it to the ACBS boat club meeting a few years ago. He bought it for \$200. an hour and a half before the meeting, and I bought it for the bargain price of \$600 at the break time. . .two and one half hours after the original sale. This is Jon's usual 300 percent mark-up, although he really wanted \$750.*

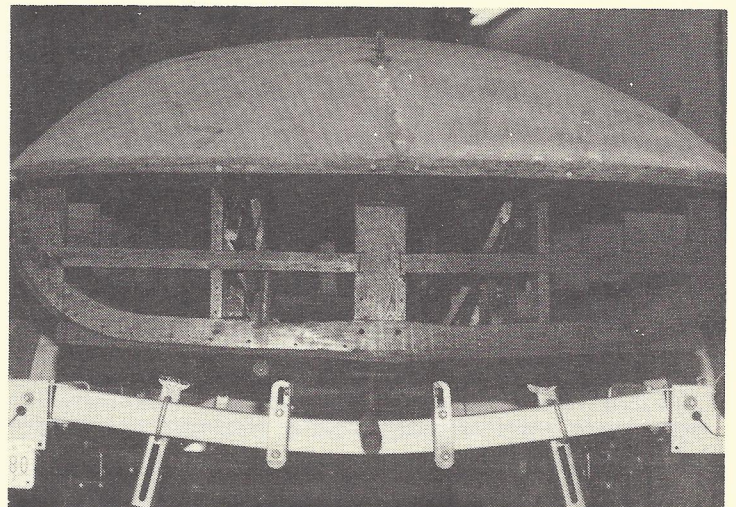
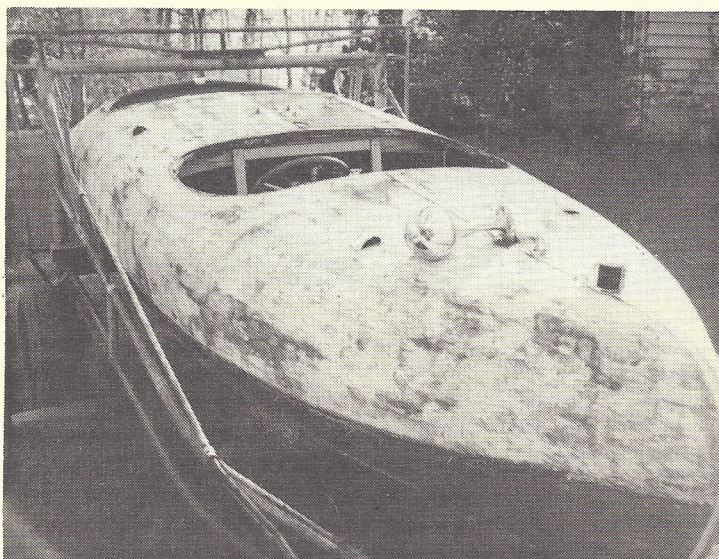
*I pulled it home on its original trailer and photo-documented everything. Then I cleaned everything*

*out of it, including the Gray Marine Model 6-90 engine. With some help, and a rented engine hoist, we proceeded to remove the motor. It looked bad on the outside, but was even worse on the inside. I soon found out that Jon's "She's a runner" assessment*

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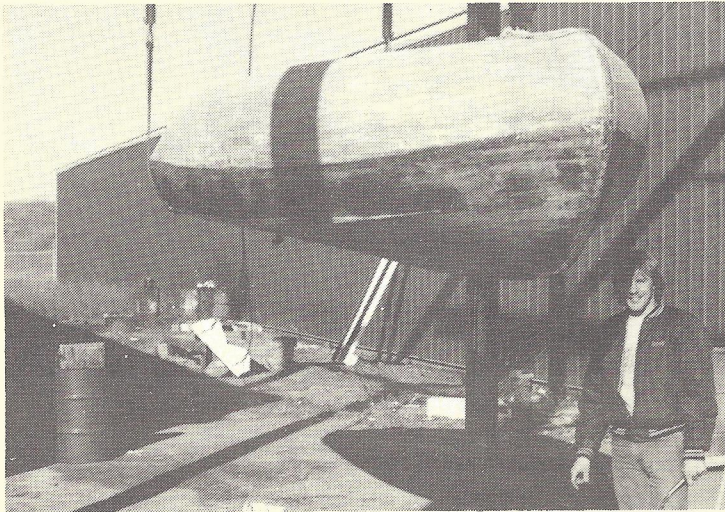


*The transom was rotted on the ends (above), and was a "nightmare" to disassemble, according to Johnson. Below shows the frame ready to have new wood installed.*



*Bob Johnson's "find" arrived at its new home. Note the original trailer, some of the trailer configurations can be as interesting as the boats.*

# Big Bob's project. . .



With the boat suspended from chain hoists, long hours and lots of elbow grease separated the epoxy from the bottom.

was slightly optimistic. The spark plugs had been left out of the head for what must have been years, because when I pulled it off, I found four to five inches of archaeological buildup in each cylinder. It started with leaves and twigs at the top, and slowly evolved into dirt at the bottom. Just think, my own composting engine!

I scooped this mixture out and put it in pots. . .you should have tasted those 100 octane tomatoes! The motor was obviously a badly rusted mess, and even soaking it in diesel fuel for days proved to no avail. I did manage to pop out a couple pistons, but it was in need of major machine shop attention.

\$2,300 later, I had virtually a brand new motor back, but it would have been much cheaper to have just bought a good block and installed the marine stuff on it from the old engine. But, some people learn the hard way—having the engine rebuilt before the hull was well on the way to completion was a big mistake.

My \$2,300. engine has been holding down my garage floor for over three years now, and it ain't throwing off no interest! And to think that that cash could have been in Jon's bank, helping to pay his salary all this time. . .

I also spent many hours scraping a thick layer of epoxy resin off the bottom half of the boat. Some of it was separated already, but most of it was still stuck tight. It took about 14 applications of paint and

varnish remover, combined with many vigorous hours with a sharp scraper to finally get down to bare wood. The whole process took place while the boat was suspended by a chain hoist, and I would not do it in that manner again.

The best way would be to turn the boat over (it's very light) and set it on saw horses, secured by screws to the stringers, locating one in the front seat area and one in the rear cockpit.

After finally reaching bare wood, I then countersunk all the nails, and sanded the entire hull. The nail holes were then filled, and everything sanded smooth. I had to replace the transom planks because they were rotting on the ends. This was very difficult. The planks were oak, and they used steel screws and a complicated framing method that made disassembly a nightmare. Harold Thompson, of Nisswa Marine, then constructed a stern cap, did keel repair, and some other wood work.

The boat is now stored at Tom Juul's shop (Alexandria Classic Boats). I hope to complete the rest of the preparation for painting with him, and then it will be off to Dennis Peterson for painting and Terry Young for upholstery.

This whole saga has lasted about four years to date. . .but who knows? Maybe I'll have it done for Speltz's show in July!



Still not quite ready for the show circuit, Bob Johnson's unique split-cockpit Falls Flyer is ready for the finishing touches to begin.

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**“A Larson Boat Is Always Afloat”**

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*What could be more fun than a fast ride on a beautiful fall day in Minnesota? It's hard to imagine that anything could. John C.*

*Pfund takes his niece, Ellee, for a spin in his brother's 1955 Flyer. This is what it's all about—Flyer Fever in its finest form.*

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## Flyer survey results will help to date boats

What year is your boat? We're hoping that the results of the owner survey will help us compile a more accurate determination. If you remember for certain when your boat was purchased new, and can find a serial number, we should be able to pinpoint the year of manufacture for other owners. Also the interior color and pattern will be key in helping restorations.

Here's what we think now. The fiberglass Falls Flyers with fins and striped bottoms were built in 1958 and 1959. The fiberglass outboard style that duplicates the original wood boat was built from 1955 through 1957. 1954 and before were wood outboards, and of course the inboards were all wood.

We need to hear from some inboard owners. Jim Moore (see article) has a prototype inboard built in 1937, and hopefully the survey will yield more information.

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## Fashionable Falls Flyer creations

T-shirts, sweatshirts. . .where will it all end? "Having a screen printer for a friend certainly doesn't hurt," was how Ross Pfund described his fashionable Falls Flyer creations.

"I had a few t-shirts with a drawing of a Falls Flyer wood outboard on the front, and a logo taken from a 1940 Johnson brochure printed on the back, made for friends and family. Everyone thought they were fun, so I even had some sweatshirts along for Dr. Bob's show," he explained.

Pfund designed the striking "Big Bob's Falls Flyer Invitational" shirt commemorating his show last fall, which is destined to be a collector item, along with the recipe for Big Bob's Falls Flyer Baked Beans served at the show.

"I have only a couple of shirts and sweats left, but if there is enough interest I could sure whip up some more," he said.

# Below the Waterline

## REFLECTIONS OF A BOAT NUT

I'm addicted to boats. . .there, I've said it, but it certainly is not the first step to my recovery. I grew up spending the summers with my grandparents on a small lake in the Itasca Park area of Minnesota. I have a cherished color picture in my office of my grandfather driving his Larson 14' Grand Lake cedar strip fishing boat, my grandmother in the middle seat holding me when I was two, and my older sister in front.

Put me in a boat on a lake and I'm instantly happy. Old home movies see me racing past the dock in our Larson Playmate powered by a 1957 Johnson 35. It went like the wind with a skinny nine-year old at the wheel. (Usually I could only drive it half-throttle when I was alone, with my father keeping a close eye, but this was the movies!)

A number of hydroplanes got me through my teenage years, and college saw me depend on neighbors for my waterskiing and fast boat rides.

Later I inflicted my wife-to-be with boat fever, and we opted for a very small wedding (her dad, my folks), the minister took a couple of pictures, and when we returned from a week's camping trip we made a downpayment on a brand new boat with the check her dad had given us in lieu of a big wedding.

And we've never been sorry. We still own it, along with a few (using the term loosely) others. We scan the classified ads together, and have even found some bargains.

The rest of the family has mixed emotions when it comes to my hobby. My daughter had a hydroplane, "Miss Elizabeth", christened after her when she was six, and wanted to drive it right then. My young son, the Nintendo freak, turned up his nose when I told him the faded green Falls Flyer I just brought home was his eventual graduation present. My folks could only shake their heads when I excitedly towed a neglected, aging Chris Craft into their driveway. . .my father's only comment being that he hoped to live long enough to be able to get a ride.

I've seen the smiles I have put on people faces when I bought that outboard that didn't run anymore and had been collecting dust in their garage, or hauled away the green Falls Flyer. "I'll send you a picture when it's done," I say. "Right," they answer, clutching the check.

Boat fever, you bet I have it. Falls Flyers? I love them.

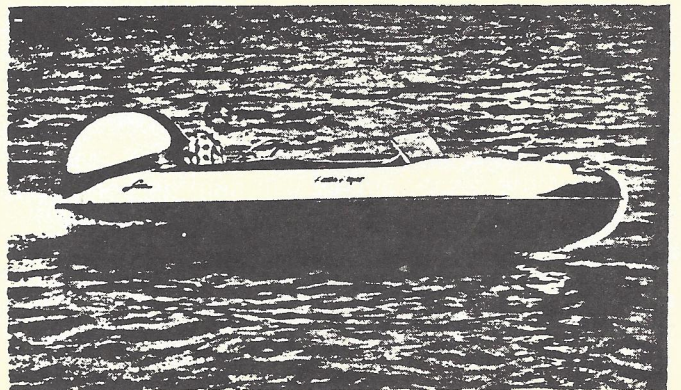
Ugly? No way!

Outdated? Wrong again.

Fun? You bet.

Give me a sunny day, a smooth lake, and a full throttle ride in my Falls Flyer. Speeding down the lake, that old 35 Johnson roaring in my ears, brings a feeling that can't be compared.

*Ross Pfund*



"Tomorrow's  
Boats Today"

1951 LARSON BROCHURE



# "Flyer Fever" Survey

**NOTE: You must return this survey to receive the next edition(s) of "Flyer Fever."**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE(S) \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Tell us about your Falls Flyer(s). (If more than one, use back or separate sheet.)

Year \_\_\_\_\_ (if known) \_\_\_\_\_ (guess)

Inboard \_\_\_\_\_ Style \_\_\_\_\_ Length \_\_\_\_\_

Outboard \_\_\_\_\_ Length \_\_\_\_\_ Hood \_\_\_\_\_

Hull No. \_\_\_\_\_

(The inboard serial number locations vary, but most, we believe, are located on the main deck frame. Fiberglass outboards: on engine well stringer, or on main front seat brace. Wood outboards?)

Interior Color \_\_\_\_\_ Pattern \_\_\_\_\_

Engine (inboard) \_\_\_\_\_ HP \_\_\_\_\_ Model \_\_\_\_\_

Engine (OB) \_\_\_\_\_ HP \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ Model \_\_\_\_\_

Steering (outboards): Front \_\_\_\_\_ Rear \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have literature, catalogs, old photos, etc., you would be willing to allow us to reproduce and share through this newsletter or otherwise?

\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Should we organize a structured club? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Dues? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Or, leave as a loose-knit organization? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Would you be interested in a Falls Flyer only Boat Show? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Would you be willing to help in planning such a show? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Do you think Little Falls is the natural site for such a show? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Do you think this newsletter should continue? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ How often? \_\_\_\_\_ Subscriptions? \_\_\_\_\_ Donations? \_\_\_\_\_ Other? \_\_\_\_\_

Send us names of other Falls Flyer owners:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Contributions needed: Send us a few photographs of your boat and a story - include everything!**

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Suggestions \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_