



The LEGEND of Grand Banks

How wooden GBs were built

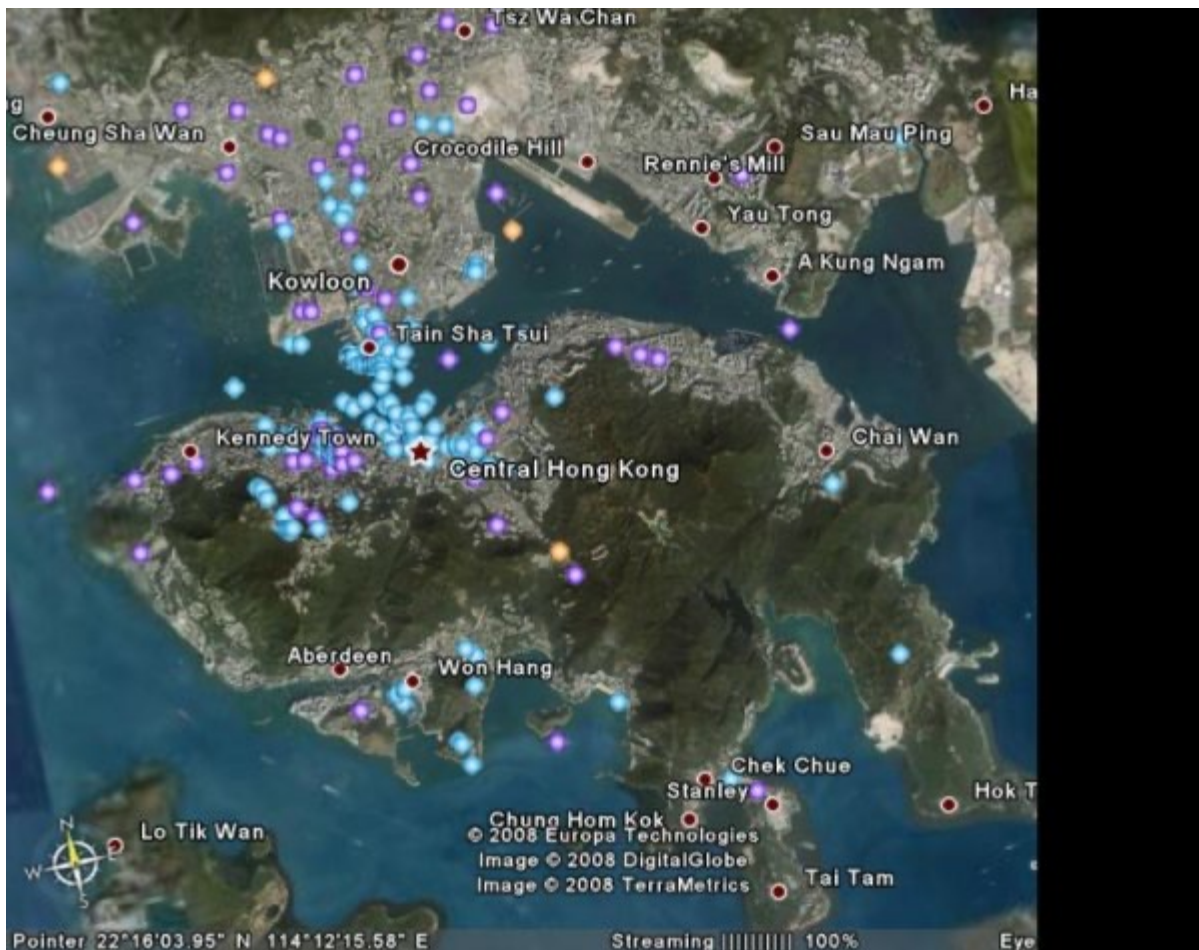


The story of Grand Banks began more than 50 years ago at a place that really does not exist anymore.

On the other side of the earth from where we are now is a country you may have heard of ... China.

50 years ago, Hong Kong was a British Colony in Southern China that many westerners may not even heard of.

As a matter of fact, Hong Kong is so small that it only appears as a dot here on the map.



If you zoom in on this dot, you will see that Hong Kong consists of the Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon Peninsula.

The long stretch of land sticking out from the Kowloon peninsula was the runway of Hong Kong airport.

To the left of the runway was a small town called To Kwa Wan where the Grand Banks tradition began.

More than 50 years ago, on a street named Mok Cheong Street, next to the Eastern Cotton Mills, was a soft drink bottling plant managed by the founder of American Marine, Robert Newton.



Amazingly, both Mok Cheong Street and the Eastern Cotton Mills still exist today on the Google Map.

I always find it ironic that American Marine got its start on Mok Cheong street because in Chinese, Mok Cheong means "a factory that works on wood." And as we know, all early Grand Banks were built of wood :-)

In the 1950s, Robert Newton already in his late 50s, an age when many people start thinking about retirement, Mr. Newton decided to start a boat building venture at his bottling plant's parking lot.

And fortunately for my family, Robert Newton took a chance by hiring an ambitious young engineer, who had no previous experience, and who did not even have a high school diploma to speak of.





In 1962, Robert J. Newton and his sons, John and Whit, were running a custom boatyard on Junk Bay in Hong Kong called American Marine, Ltd. Father and sons built heavy sailboats and big motor yachts, to designs by the world's top marine architects - Sparkman & Stevens, William Garden, Nat Herreshoff, Ray Hunt and others.



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That year they commissioned Kenneth Smith, another well-known marine architect, to design a 36 foot, diesel-powered cruising boat. *Spray* was launched in 1963 and a year later the Newtons abandoned their custom yacht building to focus on producing the first of a line of boats that would be known as Grand Banks. *Spray* was the prototype of the line that would succeed. With some changes, such as a larger saloon and the addition of a flying bridge, its successor became the craft that sold the world's boaters on a finely built, eight-knot trawler (although today's GBs may be fitted with engines that make them run much, much faster).



Even before *Spray*, however, there was the Chantyman that American Marine built of wood in its Hong Kong yard. Diesel-powered, the 34' 6" boat had a raised pilothouse, high bulwarks and softer hull lines (no hard chines). It was unlike *Spray* or the 36GBs that would follow, but Chantyman certainly was a design that introduced the concept of a production trawler-type yacht to the boating world. A few of the Chantyman line are still cruising, and every time one shows up at a Grand Banks rendezvous, everyone again asks, "What the heck is that?"



Grand Banks staff at work. Left Mr Kong, production manager, centre Mr Robert Newton.

Designer: Roger W. McAlister

Builder: American Marine Ltd.
1501 Westcliff Drive
Newport Beach, Cal. 92660

NEW DESIGNS

Admiralty 50

50' Motor Yacht

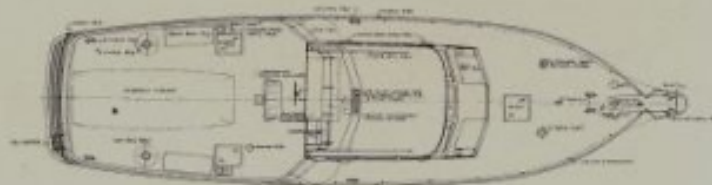
AFTER MANY YEARS of planning, American Marine Ltd. has gone into production of a motor yacht, auxiliary sail. The firm has announced that production in Hong Kong has already begun. The first model of the unique Roger McAlister design has been delivered to a buyer in Maryland.

Construction is claimed to be of the highest quality, and the yacht is designed for either single or twin diesel power. The vessel is offset with either hatch or sleep rig.

Among the outstanding features are a large 18' x 12' main cabin, finished with traditional appointments; large owner's quarters; a well-designed cockpit; and a large, full-width flying bridge and after deck area.

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA 50' 3"
Beam 14' 4"
CWL 41' 0"
Draft 4' 6"



JUNE 1969

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At that time, GB was building custom boats as this 50'



A GB Admiralty 50' still sailing nowadays



At that time, American Marine was already famous for building custom boats. This picture was taken at the launching of a 40 foot Sparkman and Stevens. The older gentleman in the middle was Robert Newton, the founder of American Marine. The man and woman in the picture were Mr. and Mrs. Von Sydow, the owners of the boat.

At Mr Newton's right, Mr Kong production manager.

According to Robert Newton's son Whit, this picture was probably taken in 1958 or 1959, a few years before American Marine introduced the Grand Banks line of yachts.



grand banks 36

dependable diesel cruiser

L.O.A.—36'4", L.W.L.—35'9", Beam—12'2", Draft—3'11", Water—10 gals., Fuel—400 gals., Cruising range—1000 miles, Heads—2, Sleeping accommodations—6 full berths over 6', Shower, Cockpit—4'10"x10'2", Deck saloon—11'8"x8'4", Aft cabin—9'8"x10'7", Side decks—20", Headroom—8'6", Forehead—Forward 6'3" aft 3'9", Mast and boom for Dinghy launching (5.5: rigging), Displacement—23,300 lbs., Finished Philippine mahogany planking—1 1/4", Fastenings—Stainless bronze screws and bolts, Frames and keel and engine bed—Yacal, Interior and exterior bright work—Teak, Teak decks, Fore & Aft cabin sole—inlaid teak parquet, Power—Single or twin diesel with fresh water heat exchanger.



The Grand Banks 36 is an able, sea kindly, long range cruiser with the safety, dependability and economy found only with diesel power. Her ample fuel tanks and low consumption diesel give her an 1100 mile range. The hard chine and full length keel deliver a smooth, level ride. In addition to her flying bridge, she has a lower "all-weather" steering station. Large windows afford the helmsman unlimited visibility. This rugged, oceangoing boat is hand crafted of select woods to give a lifetime of boating enjoyment. Burmese teak is used for exterior and interior trim. The large deck area provides room for on board storage of the ship's boat and the mast and boom facilitate easy launching. Her main cabin doors open outboard onto wide walk around teak decks. The well planned, luxurious interior is enough to make you feel comfortable, regardless of your port of call. There is a spacious galley with four burner range and oven, an "L" shaped settee in the main saloon, two heads and comfortable bunks for six. She is the only 36' cruiser that has the privacy and luxury of an aft cabin. The spaciousness and comfort of this owner's stateroom with its private head and shower is unrivaled.

THE GRAND BANKS 36, ENOUGH TO MAKE ANY FAMILY WANT TO GO TO SEA!

The general styling of the GB was seized by a score of other builders for fleets of look-alike yachts sold under dozens of names, but which could not match the quality of construction for which American Marine was famed.

Since 1965, the first model year, 1,124 of the 36GBs have been built by American Marine, first in wood at the Junk Bay yard and then, beginning in 1974, of fiberglass at a new factory in Singapore. (A footnote for history: American Marine made the switch from wood to fiberglass without telling its dealers or the public.

It came as one big surprise to a boating world still somewhat suspicious of fiberglass.) The GB36 is not being built this year, partly because of market demand for larger boats, which yield better profits. But American Marine says GB36 production will resume in 1999 and that the company is considering several improvements to the classic yacht, as well as "production steps" that will make it more profitable.



grand banks 42

dependable diesel cruiser

L.O.A.—42'10", L.W.L.—40'8", Beam—13'7", Draft—4'2", Water—290 gals., Fuel—640 gals., Cruising range—1200 miles, Heads—2, Sleeping accommodations—6 (all berths over 8'), Showers—2, Cockpit—8'12", Deck saloon—15'x9'7", Aft cabin—18'x12'2", Side decks—21", Headroom—5'8", Freeboard—Forward 7'2" aft 3'10", Mast and boom for single launching (5:3. rigging), Electric windshield wiper, Automatic water pressure system, Copper hot water piping, Door to after cabin—Stair with ladders, Automatic electric bilge pump, Displacement—34,000 lbs., Finished Philippine mahogany planking—1 1/4", Fastenings—Silicon bronze screws and bolts, Frames and keel and engine bed—Yacht, Interior and exterior bright work—Teak, Teak paneling & furniture, Teak decks, Main & aft cabin sole—inlaid teak parquet, Power—Single or twin diesel with fresh water heat exchanger.



The Grand Banks 42 offers luxurious living, dockside or a thousand miles at sea. She is designed to give a smooth and easy passage with deep forefoot, 34,000 lbs. displacement and 4 foot draft.

The soft glow of the hand rubbed satin finished interior teak paneling and cabinets, combined with the stylish teak furniture, give her a permanent uncompromised beauty.

The "L" shaped galley, the conversationally grouped settee and teak captain's chairs and the large windows give you a compatible and pleasing arrangement for entertaining or living aboard.

With special consideration for privacy, there are complete heads with showers in the guest and owners cabin.

The owners' cabin aft, with walk around twin or queen size beds, bureau, dressing table and chair, book shelves, swivel lamps and extensive shelf and hanging space, is beautifully appointed, giving that feeling of space and comfort until now only found on large luxury liners.

With three and one half tons of fuel and water aboard, your rugged, beautifully built 42 foot Grand Banks dependable diesel cruiser is ready to take you on that extended cruise in solid comfort.

In 1965, the GB36 had a big sister with the launch of GB42 #001, and by the retirement of that model in 2005, about 1,560 were produced. Along with the GB32, GB36 and GB49, the GB42 literally gave the name "trawler" to the industry. Around the world, this original design is recognized as the Grand Banks Heritage Series, first built of wood and then, beginning in 1973, of fibreglass (GB36 #366) at a new factory in Singapore. 40 years after production stopped, many of the wooden 42' are still to be found cruising oceans and seas around the globe. 17



grand banks 32

dependable diesel cruiser

L.O.A.—31'11 1/2", L.W.L.—30'9", Beam—12'6", Draft—3'8 1/2",
 Water—90 gals., Fuel—230 gals., Cruising range—1000 miles,
 Sleeping accommodations—5 (all berths over 6'), Head with
 shower, Cockpit—8'9"x20'8", Deck saloon—10'6"x8'2", Side
 Decks—18", Headroom—6'6", Freeboard—Forward 6' at 3'4",
 Displacement—17,000 lbs., Finished Philippine mahogany plank-
 ing—1", Fastenings—Silicon bronze screws and bolts, Frames
 and keel and engine bed—Teak, Interior and exterior bright
 work—Teak, Deck decks, Main cabin sole—stained teak parquet,
 Power—Diesel with fresh water heat exchanger.



Exclusively Grand Banks, a 32 foot, 1000 mile range, dependable diesel cruiser. Designed specifically for comfortable cruising with five aboard. Her generous beam, hard chine, three and a half foot draft, and 17,000 pound displacement create a degree of stability and performance unmatched in any other boat of her size.

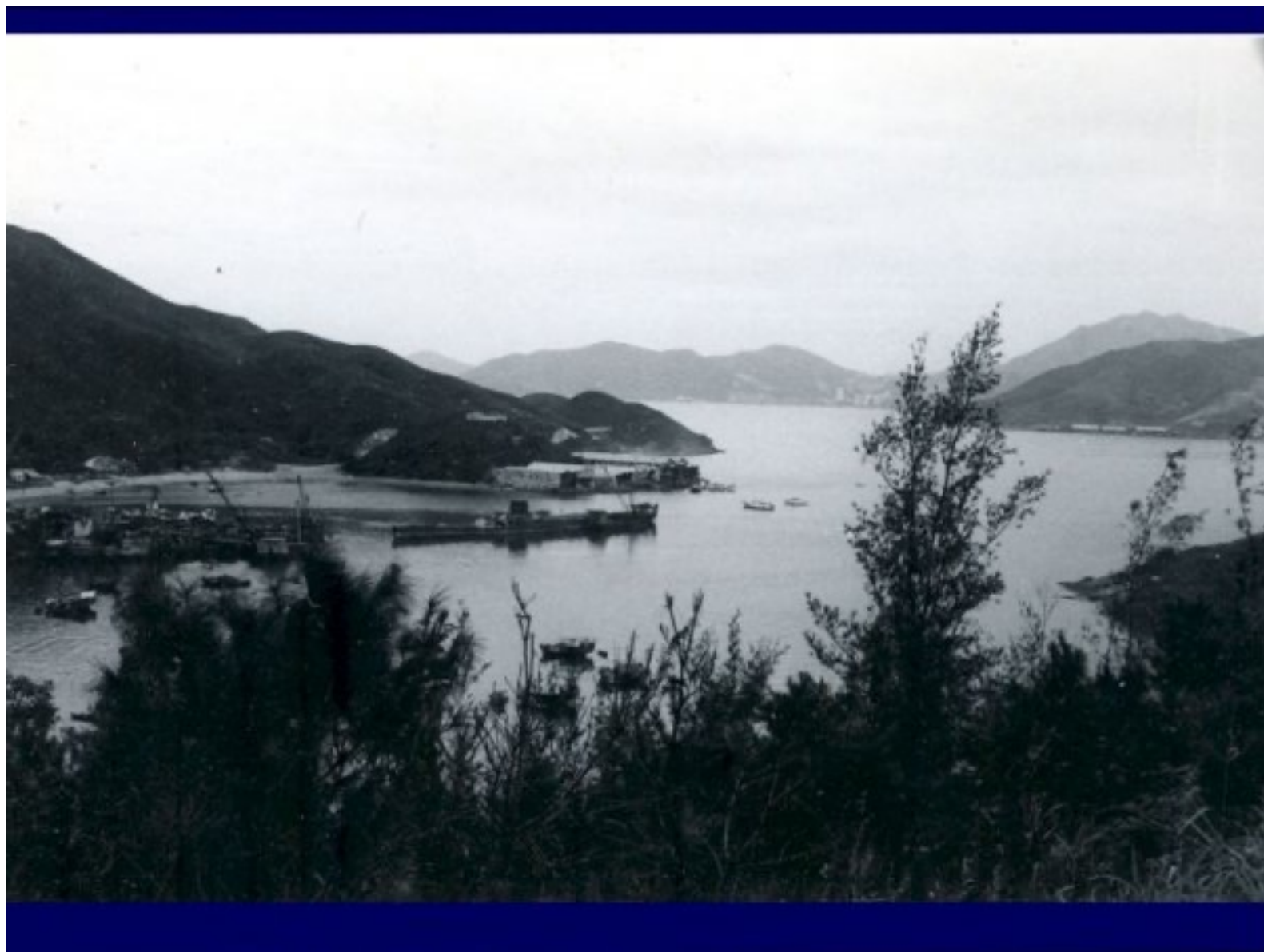
To appreciate her truly functional exterior deck plan, walk her wide side decks, fish or entertain in her 88 sq. foot cockpit, and relax in the sun on her 90 sq. foot flying bridge deck. The warmth and feel of her golden Burmese teak trimmed interior provides endless satisfaction. She is equipped with a complete head with shower, ample drawer space, large hanging locker, helmsman's seat, "L" shaped settee, and a beautifully functional galley with four burner ranger with oven. These features make cruising with your Grand Banks 32 an enjoyable experience.

Trinidad, Tabago, Grenada, or a summer cruise nearer home, it costs only \$38.00 to fill her tanks for that one thousand mile trip you've been dreaming of.

The 32GB, of which 861 were built, is out of production for similar reasons. Don't expect it to come back, however.

The Early Years of The Hong Kong GB Boat yards in pictures







The waterfront view of the Junk Bay boatyard. I love this picture because my father (Mr Kong) was caught in this picture by accident. One of the rare pictures with my father next to the boatyard he loved and he help built from the ground up. Someone had written the date Nov 18 1972 at the back of this picture. The boat on the left most production line was a Grand Banks 42 Europa.
(Shing Kong)



The yearly employees' day at Grand Banks boat yards in Junk Bay, HK



A visit of Hong Kong governor's wife in Junk Bay.



HK governor's wife on a GB 42'



HK governor's Grand Banks

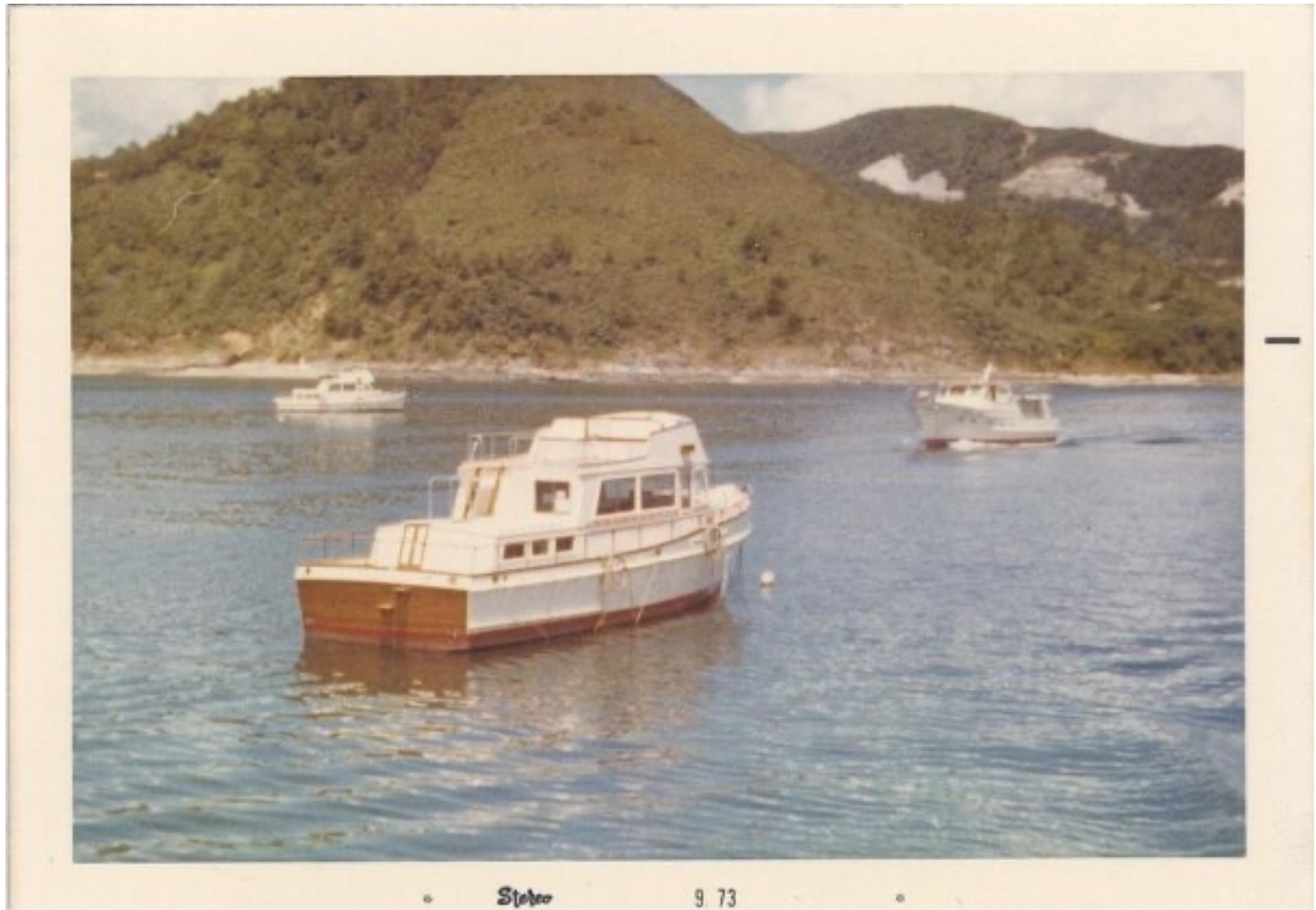




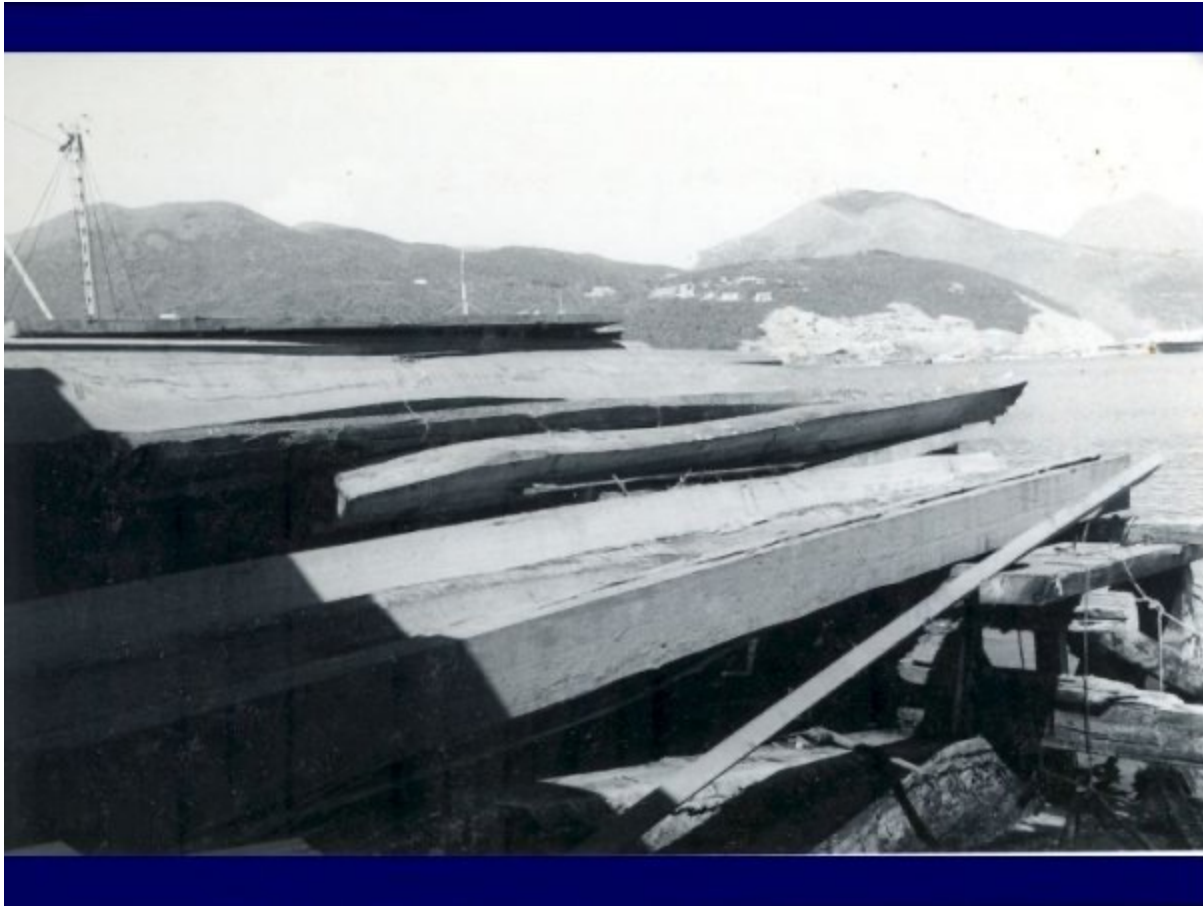




A line of newly produced GB 42s and Alaskans



GB 42' and Alaskan







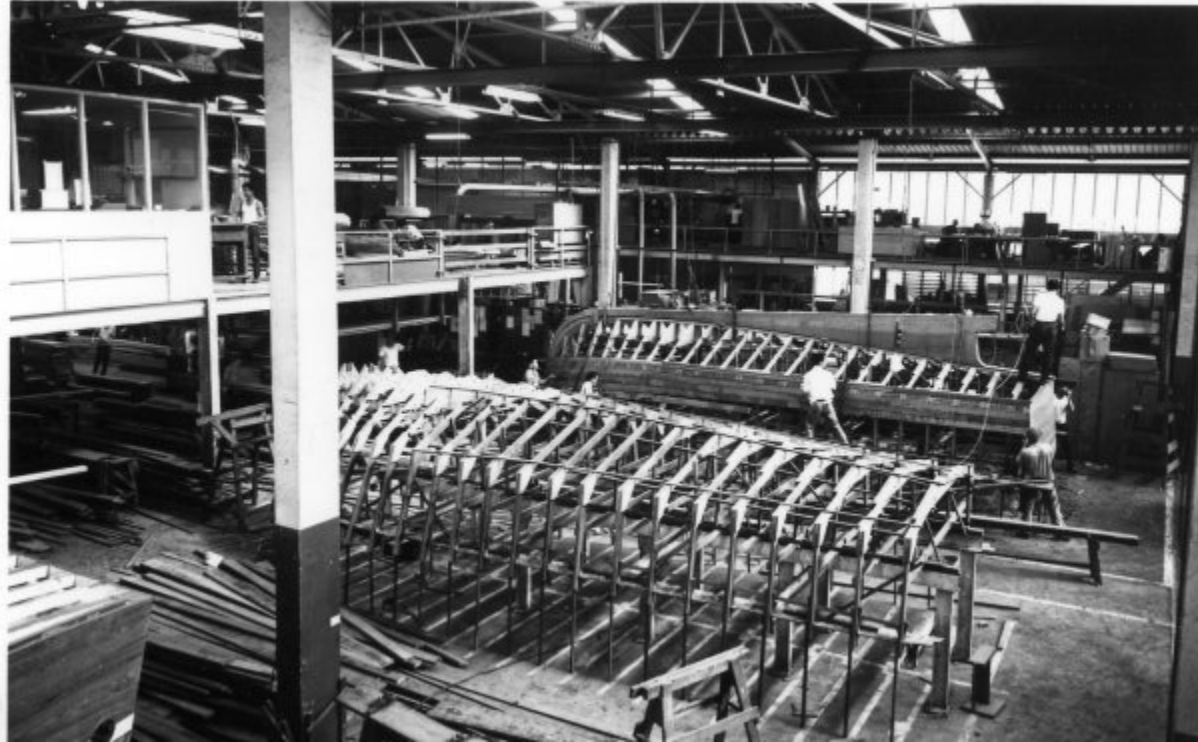






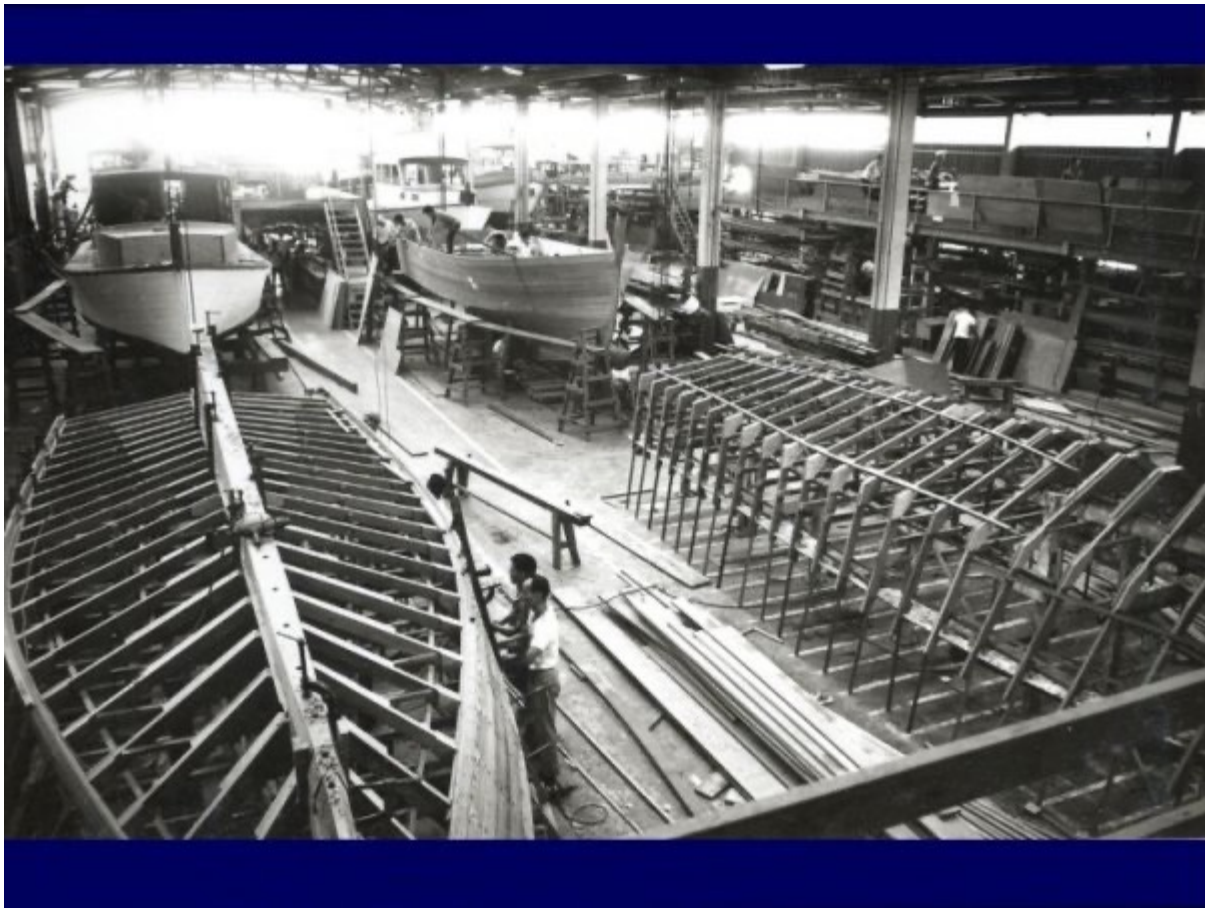








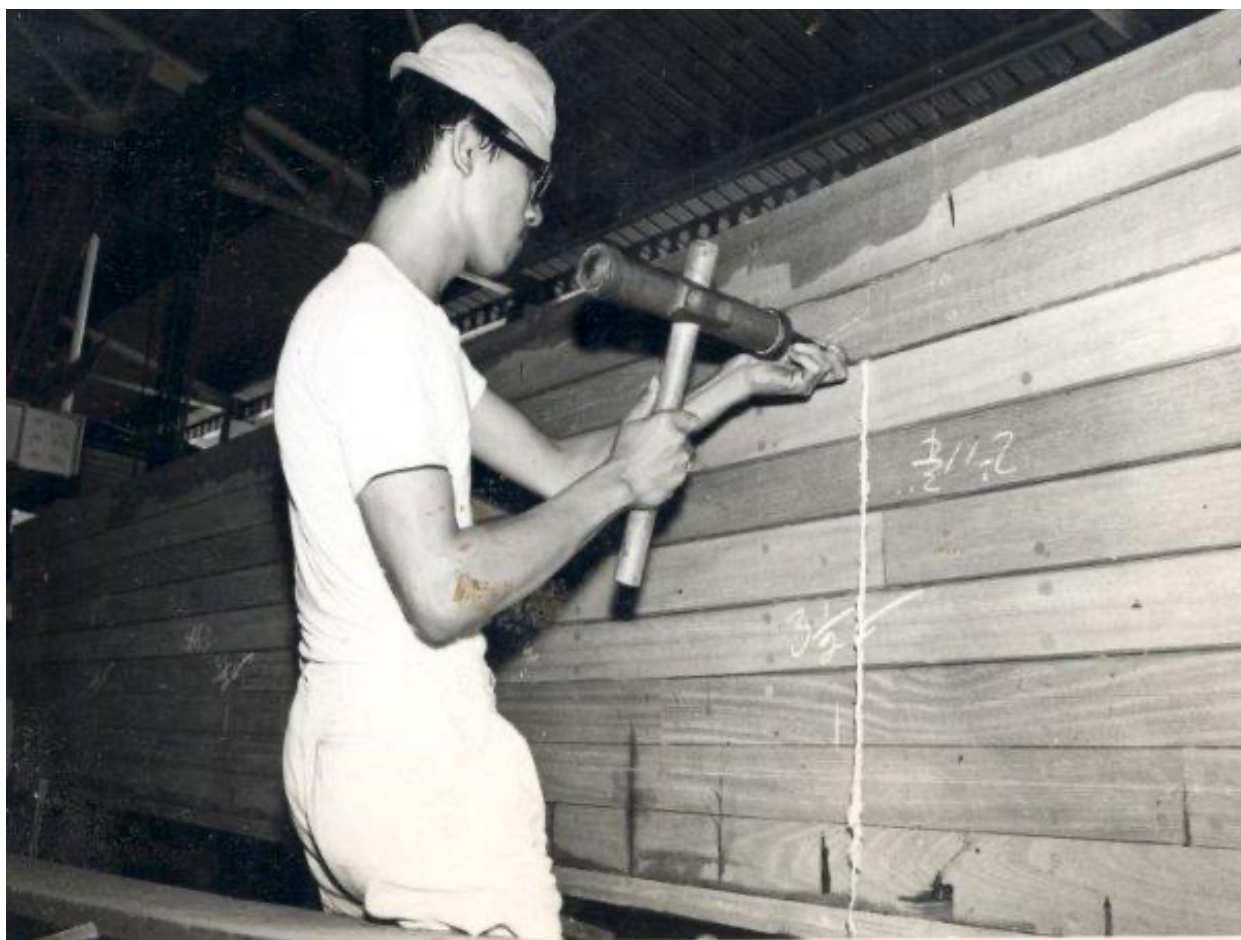


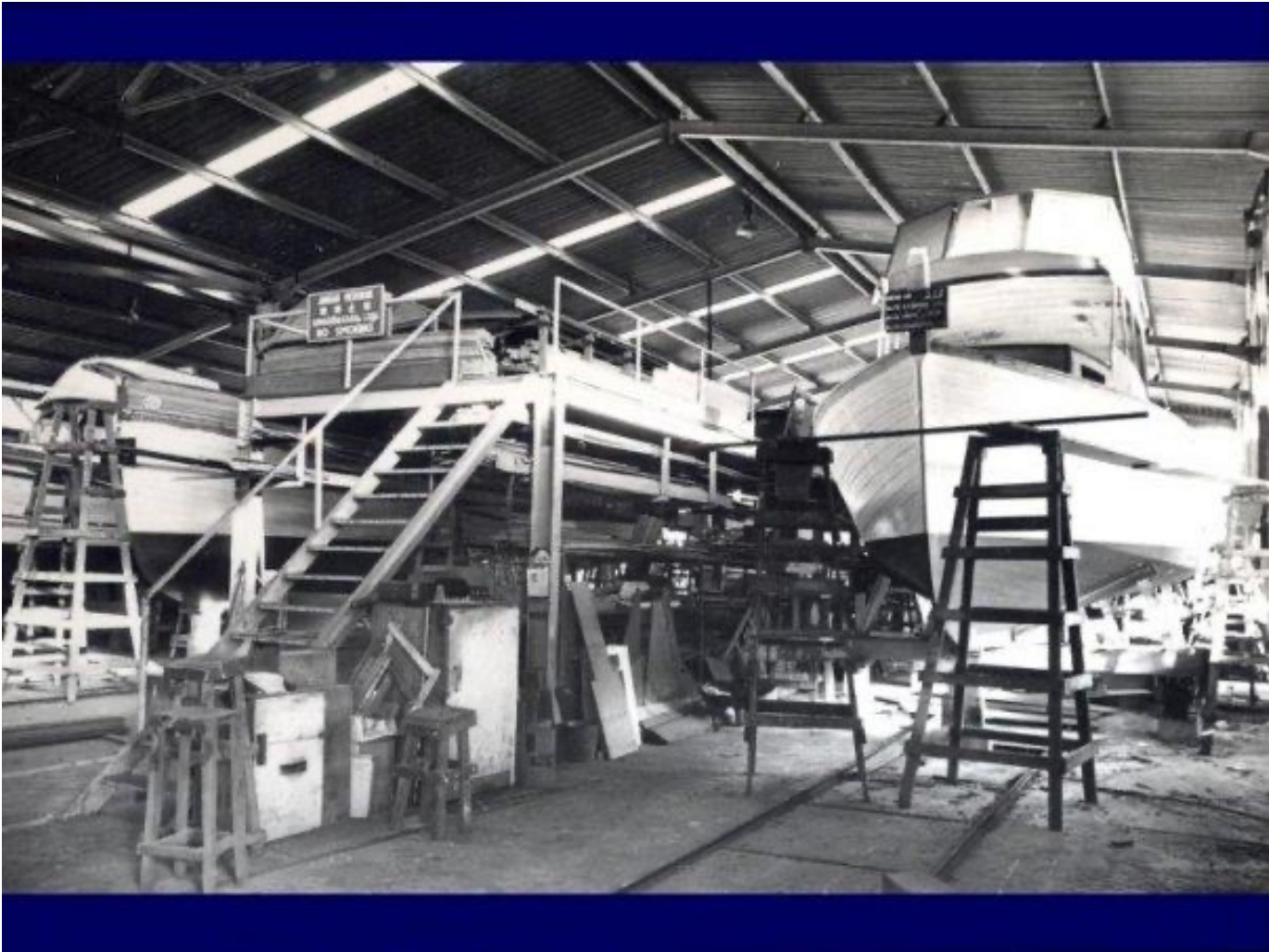








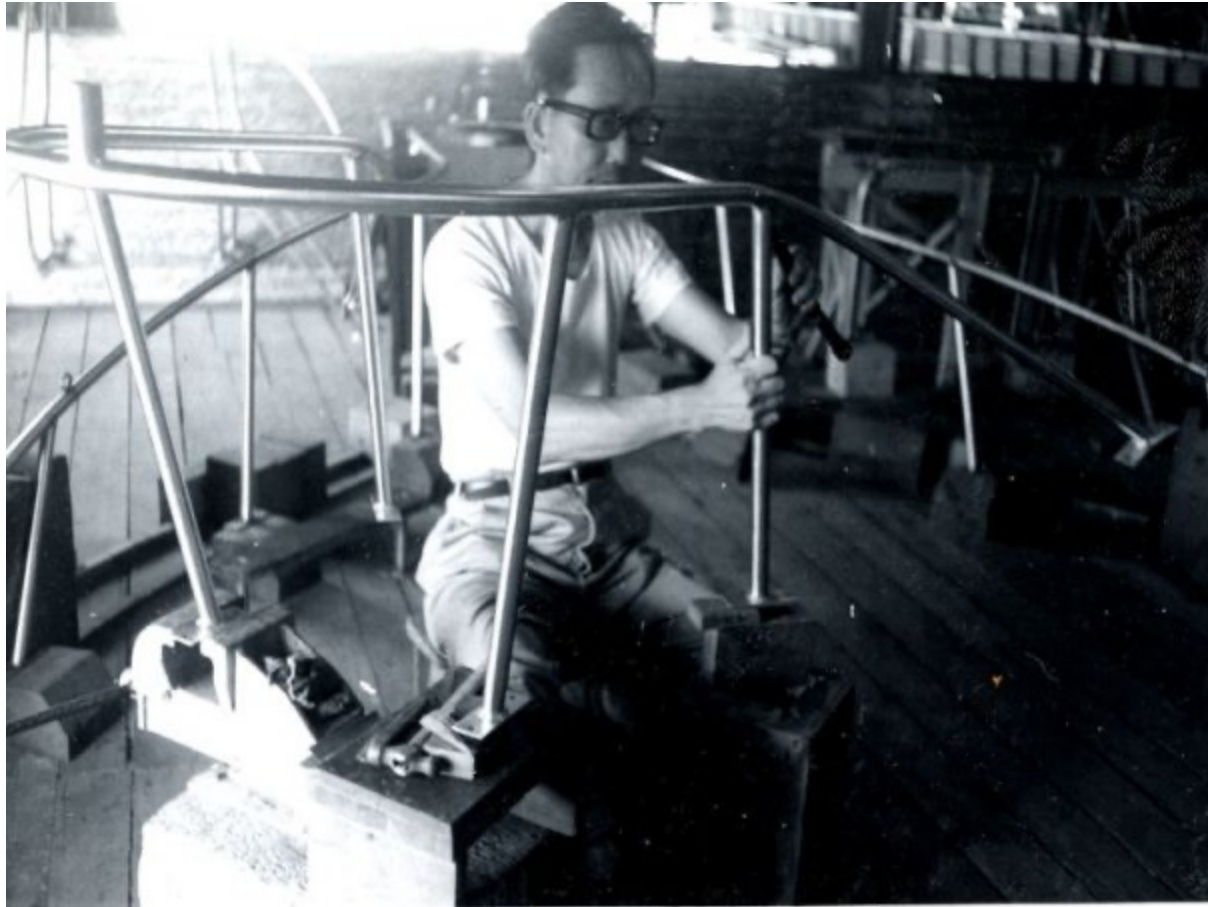






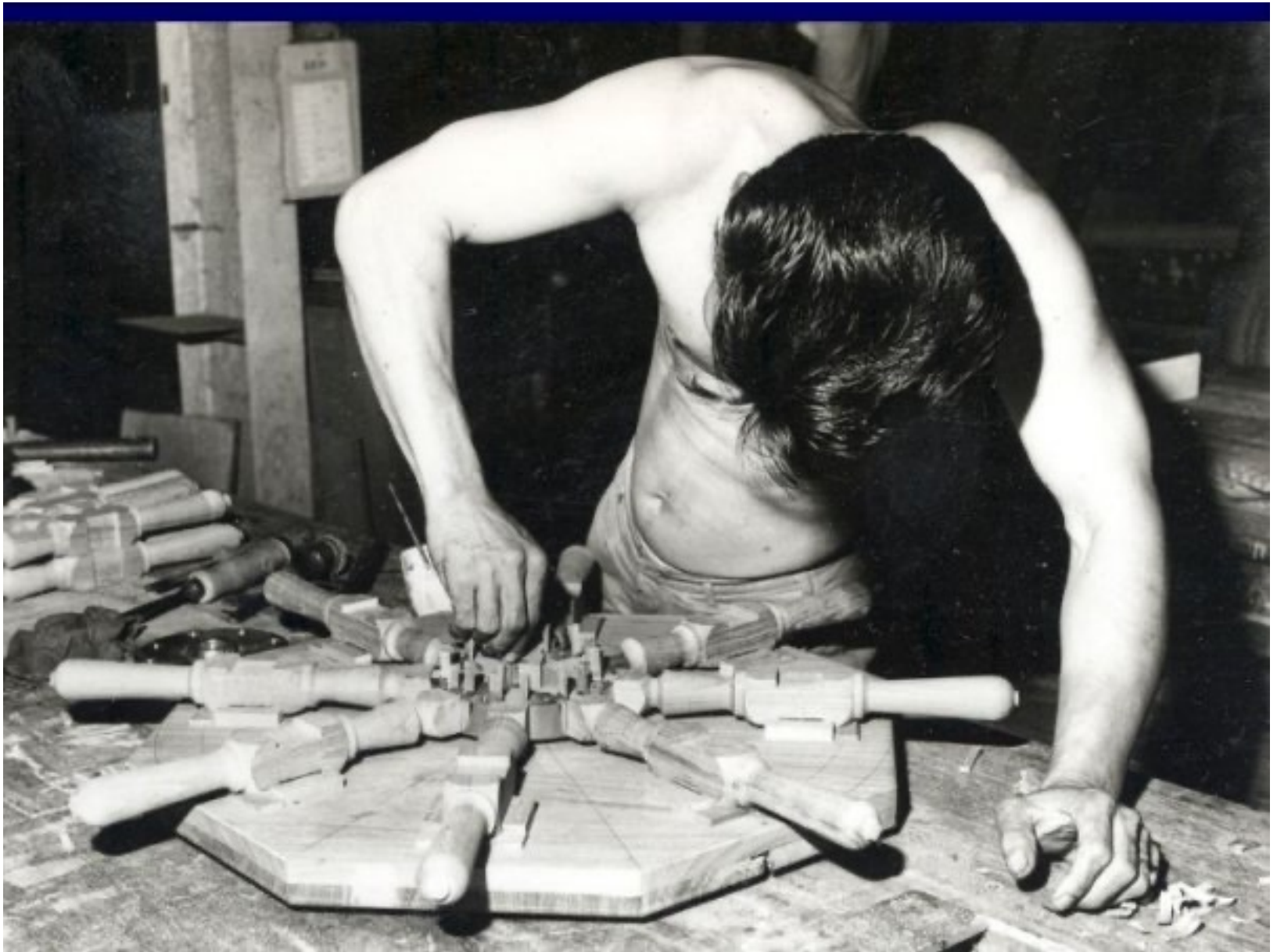
Wood work on a GB 48' MY

























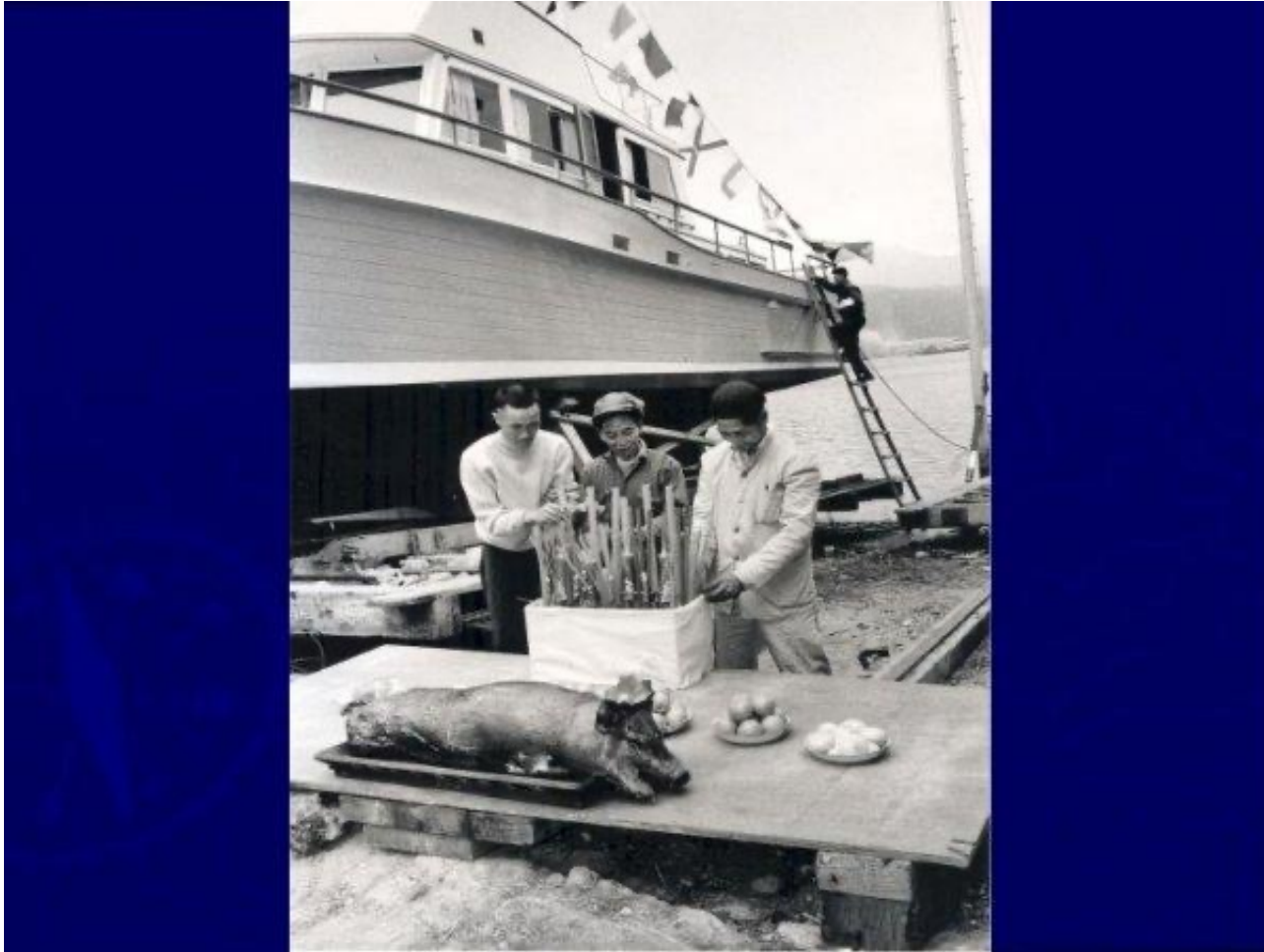








The Launch of a GB 42'



THE END