

## Why I Have a Chris Craft

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I first got started admiring and enjoying boating with a Chris Craft from my cousin's father. He had three....a 1955 18' Sportsman, a '63 23' Skiff, and a 61' 17' ski boat which he gave to my father in 1967. It needed a bit of engine work which we got done and used that boat up until 1973. My father then sold it and bought a Thompson Chris Craft outboard which got plenty of use on our lake.

Later on through the years I had a few fiberglass boats on my own, but I once told my bride that I would own a Chris Craft by the time I was age 50.

In 2003 I built a 14' wooden boat with my son, and it had an 8 hp outboard on it. I had printed plans to build an 18' replica of a Chris Craft. But I started going to the Main Lake Market on weekend mornings to get coffee. I noticed a few Chris Crafts were there from time to time. It ended up being Bob Rice, Seth Katz, Mike Smith and some others that were also there getting coffee. I always listened and got in a few conversations with them about my outboard. I mentioned that I was going to build a replica of a Chris Craft, and Seth asked why would you want to have a replica when you could have an original one. Seth added, find one, restore it, and it will be worth more than a replica, and you will have an original.

I took Seth's advice, found a 1957 17' Chris Craft Sportsman in Akron, Ohio, and brought it home. I read a lot and started taking it apart to restore it. It took me three years to complete, just in time for our show in June 2010, and I turned 50 years old in August of that year. I named my first Chris Craft, "Nut Tonight".

We enjoyed that boat until I found a 1959 20' Sportsman in Wisconsin which I picked up and brought home. Since I had other projects underway...building a porch on our shore house, this boat took four years to complete. I completed the restoration three years ago and am enjoying this boat even more. With the name, "Cody Brooke", on the transom, look for me on the lake, give a wave, and enjoy the ride with us on our great lake.

Cody Brooke was featured in the Fall edition of The Brass Bell magazine in 2020.