



## The Hacker Boat Company / Hacker-Craft Story

Founded in Detroit, Michigan in 1908, the Hacker Boat Company is one of the longest-lived boatbuilding companies in the world. Its founder, John Ludwig Hacker, born in 1877, was an extraordinary talent who has long been acknowledged as one of the world's leading naval architects and the greatest American motorboat designer of the 20th century. Hacker is widely considered *The Father of the Modern American Runabout*. An accredited marine designer, Hacker would soon become the most influential runabout designer among the leading American builders. Hacker incorporated several innovations during the World War I years, most notably a revolutionary V-shaped hull that allowed his creations to reach speeds unheard of in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



John Hacker's 55 foot 1939 *Thunderbird*, issued by the United States Postal Service as a 2007 Commemorative Stamp

In 1904 Hacker designed *Au Revoir*, which instantly set a world speed record. By the time he established the Hacker Boat Company, he had already built a wealthy clientele. In 1911 he designed the first airplane floats for the Wright Brothers of aeronautical fame. Hacker designed and built the *Kitty Hawk*, the first successful stepped-hull hydroplane and the first watercraft to reach the "impossible" 50 mph speed mark on water. A series of *Kitty Hawks* followed, each building on earlier design successes and in the end establishing the basic design parameters that today still define the American speedboat.

In 1920, Hacker relocated his burgeoning enterprise to Mt. Clemens, Michigan, where the company met further success with a series of designs for the Belle Isle Boat & Engine Company. Named the Belle Isle Bearcats, these boats became immensely popular with such auto industry giants as J.W. Packard, Horace Dodge, Henry and Edsel Ford.

At the time of his death in 1961, John Hacker's designs would easily have made a who's who list of the greatest wooden boats ever built. *Pardon Me. Thunderbird. Tempo. El Lagarto. Peerless. Dolphin. Miss Pepsi. My Sweetie.* To name a few.

The company relocated to Northern New York in the 1970's and today is the only company in America that hand builds mahogany boats in a production line manner. The company's corporate offices, new state of the art production facility, marina, restoration facility and storage facilities are all located on, or near, the shores of beautiful Lake George. The company also restores classic wooden boats in a dedicated restoration facility.

Today's Hacker-Crafts are hand-crafted with the finest select mahoganies available using the design plans John Hacker. Many of our models look like classic original 1920s and 1930s Hacker-Crafts above the waterline, but significant improvements have been made throughout thanks to improved modern boat building techniques and materials. Utilizing these new technologies and materials, today's Hacker contemporary classic boats are built with "dry" bottoms: modern epoxies are layered between each of three planking layers of mahogany. Not only are the dry bottoms incredibly strong and resilient, their maintenance has been drastically reduced. No more replacing rope caulk, wetting and swelling or yearly refinishing. Our dry bottom boats are so advanced and dependable that the Hacker Boat Company provides all owners of new Hacker-Craft with a limited ten (10) year boat hull warranty.

The fiberglass boat manufacturers of today's modern market mass produce nice boats. We build classics, one at a time. The life of a Hacker-Craft is measured not in years, but in generations. A Hacker-Craft is never out of style. Not now. Not a hundred years from now.