



1998 Dan Sutherland 16-30 decked sailing canoe 'Cattawampus'



First replica of 'Tomahawk' 16' long, 30" wide, about 200 lbs.

Owner: Peter Mueller

Home Port: Lake Forest, IL.

During the summer of 1912, Ralph Britton of Gananoque, Canada's foremost canoe expert, had won every sailing race of the American Canoe Association at Sugar Island on the St. Lawrence River.

Encouraged by their club members success, the Gananoque Canoe Club, issued a challenge for the International Challenge Cup, offered by the New York City Canoe Club, never won by any foreign contestant. The International Challenge Cup is to canoeing what the America's Cup is to yachting, and is symbolic of the championship of the world.

In the winter of 1912/1913, Leo Friede of New Jersey, convinces W.F. Stevens to come out of retirement to build a boat. Stevens, recognized as the foremost canoe builder in his day, had retired in 1908 to a farm in Boothbay Harbor, Maine.

Stevens designs and builds a boat that Friede calls *Mermaid* and they are selected to defend the International Challenge Cup.

Friede and *Mermaid* defeat the challenger Britton and his boat *Jonah* in 1913.

Friede having returned to the St. Lawrence area, left *Mermaid* sit at the Custom's dock on the Gananoque waterfront awaiting shipment to Freide's winter home in New Jersey. Canoe spy William (Bill) Reese, a draftsman and designer of the Gananoque's town band shell goes down to the waterfront and measures *Mermaid* in order to build a boat to beat her.

Locals go around town raising funds to build the boat they hope will beat Freide and his *Mermaid*. A local master craftsman, W.J. (Jack) Malette, is chosen to build the deck sailor, called *Tomahawk*, named for the gentlemen who raised the money to build her.

Ralph Britton once again issues a challenge for the International Challenge Cup in 1914. Once again, he and his *Tomahawk* are defeated by *Mermaid*.

The original *Mermaid* was lost in a fire in 1923 at the Gilbert Boat Works along with her plans and newly constructed racing canoes. *Mermaid II* was built by Gilbert in 1935 for Ralph Britton and now resides at the Antique Boat Museum in Clayton, NY, along with the original *Tomahawk*.