

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

ROWING SKIFF, *GOOD LUCK*

HAER No. CA-2341

Location:	Dolphin Club, 502 Jefferson Street, San Francisco, San Francisco County, California
Date of Construction:	1976
Rig/Type of Craft:	Wooden Skiff
Trade:	Recreation
Principal Dimensions:	Length: 15'-6", Beam: 3'-11"
Designer/Builder:	D. E. Haynes
Original Owner:	The Dolphin Swimming & Boating Club
Present Owner:	The Dolphin Swimming & Boating Club
Disposition:	Active: Recreation, regattas, and piloting swimmers
Significance:	The rowing skiff was built as a fixed thwart double by Dean E. Haynes in Stillwater, Minnesota, in 1976. The vessel was modified into a sliding seat single by Jon Bielinski at the Dolphin Swimming and Boating Club in San Francisco, California, in 1985. Other modifications include removable risers, removable wooden boards locking into place with a toggle/latch, stern knee, and elongated quarter knees.

Description:

The *Good Luck* was built in 1976 by Dean E. Haynes of Stillwater, Minnesota, as a fixed thwart double pulling skiff. It is approximately 16 feet long between perpendiculars with a four-foot beam. It currently weighs 187 pounds. The wooden D section oars are 9'-8" long, and 27" handle to button. The Coast Guard hull number is XXS41003M76G.

In 1985, Jon Bielinski, the master boat builder of the Dolphin Club, converted *Good Luck* into a sliding seat single.

In 2017 the *Good Luck* was taken out of service to correct structural problems due to forty years of heavy use. Repairs were made in the Dolphin Club boat shop by Jon Bielinski, Julia Hechanova, and club volunteers. As an example, 32 of the original 35 oak ribs were replaced with black locust. Modifications included removable risers (for ease of refinishing), removable burden boards (for ease of cleaning) locked into place with toggle/latches, stern knee,

and elongated quarter knees. Other damaged parts were repaired, plus the boat was sanded and varnished to new condition. Julia Hechanova also documented the boat by making a detailed 24x36 construction drawing. *Good Luck* was relaunched on May 18, 2019.

Summary of Materials: Local Softwood planking plus various woods including Cedar, Black Locust, Oak, Apple, and Spruce. Silicon Bronze bolts and screws, Copper rivets, and Brass fittings. Le Tonkinois varnish.

History:

The sixteen-foot, fixed thwart, double pulling boat was delivered to the Dolphin Swimming & Boating Club on February 26, 1976. After club members applied five coats of varnish and made minor adjustments, it was launched on April 28, 1976. Gordon Cook, president of the Dolphin Club in 1976, christened the boat *Good Luck*. Although the boat was custom built for him and donated to the club, he preferred not to have it named for him.

Gordon Cook joined the club in May 1960 as a swimmer, an avid rower, and served many years on the Board of Governors. He was also a prominent Bay Area artist and art teacher. Gordon Cook died on August 5, 1985, at age fifty-seven. Soon afterwards the club honored him and engraved his name on the boat.

Dean E. Haynes built the *Good Luck* in Stillwater, Minnesota. Dolphin Club rowers casually refer to it as a Stillwater river boat. More accurately, the design is traced to the White Bear Skiff. Haynes, born in 1942, learned and refined his craft in the Adolph Amundson Boat Yard on White Bear Lake, Minnesota, between 1964 and 1968. Haynes then moved to Stillwater and established his own shop and business. He became recognized for selecting the finest woods, taking pride in handcraftsmanship, and supplying the highest quality, long-lasting boats that buyers desired. Dean Haynes retired in 1990 having built over sixty boats in his career.

As expected, for any wooden craft to last forty or so years, the *Good Luck* has required frequent maintenance and repairs. As written above, Jon Bielinski converted the skiff into a sliding seat single in 1985. More recently, Julia Hechanova, directing volunteer helpers, corrected all structural problems due to age and use. A few other modifications also were made to improve service on San Francisco Bay by many rowers with varying skills. *Good Luck* was relaunched on May 18, 2019, with Champagne, and fully prepared for many more decades of happy rowing.

Good Luck has been rowed almost daily for recreation, regattas, and to guide open-water swimmers. One other special row is memorable. In July 1998, *Good Luck* was pulled solo upriver the ninety plus miles from San Francisco to Sacramento. This illustrates the significance of *Good Luck*, that a wooden boat intended for lakes and rivers, if built to the highest standards, can even be enjoyed in the punishing conditions of San Francisco Bay.

Sources: Dolphin Club Board Minutes, boat shop records, publications, and membership records. These club materials are preserved in the Dolphin Club Archives, 502 Jefferson St, San Francisco, Ca 94109.

WoodenBoat Magazine article "Whitehall Pulling Boats" by J.R. Wheeler, May/June 1977 Issue, No. 16, Pages 15-16 and 62.

Conversations with Dean E. Haynes, November & December 2020.

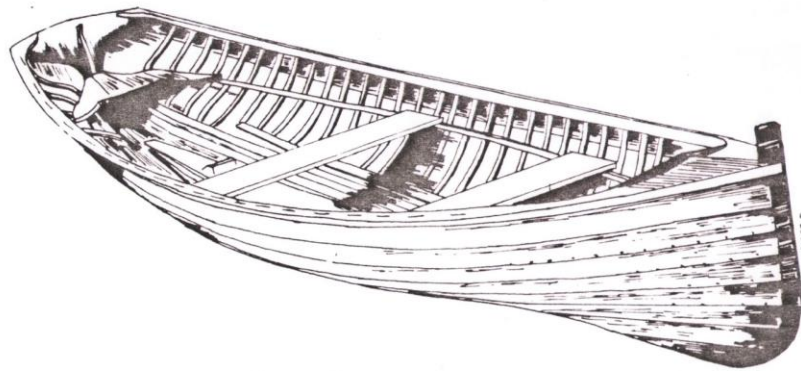
Additional research used historic copies of the *San Francisco Chronicle* and *Examiner* newspapers and genealogical data bases accessed on Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org.

Project Information:

The Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) is a long-range program that documents and interprets historically significant engineering sites and structures throughout the United States. HAER is part of Heritage Documentation Programs, a division of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. Todd Croteau, HAER Architect, manages the HAER Maritime Program.

Julia Hechanova prepared the technical specifications and measured drawings. Richard B. Cooper contributed historical data and photographs. Both are members of the Dolphin Swimming & Boating Club, December 2020.

Figure 1: The *Good Luck* as originally built in 1976



Custom Building and Restoring of Watercraft
Dean E. Haynes

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Figure 2: The *Good Luck* in the Dolphin Club shop, Photograph by Colin Gift, ca. 2013



Figure 3: The *Good Luck* name board, Photograph by Richard Cooper, May 18, 2019



Figure 4: The restored *Good Luck*, Photograph by Richard Cooper, May 18, 2019

