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Barbara Maddocks
Director of Leadership Gifts
315.686.4104 x230
Barbara@abm.org

“Paying Back the Good” Results in \$1.1 Million Planned Gift

CLAYTON, NY (August 20, 2012) – It is with deep gratitude that Co-Chairs of the *Conserving Our Heritage Endowment Campaign* Bob Easton and Teddy McNally have accepted Trustee Don Babcock’s planned gift for the Museum’s endowment.

This is a Life Tenancy gift of the family’s summer home on Skaneateles Lake of which 52% goes to the Museum, and the remainder goes to the Boy Scouts and SUNY Morrisville. The present day valuation of the Museum’s portion of this wonderful gift is **\$1,115,400**.

Don was born in Syracuse and his grandparents had a cottage on Skaneateles Lake – where his present house is today. As a boy, the cottage had no electricity, no plumbing and no powerboats, but it did have a rowboat and that boat nurtured Don’s life-long passion for being on the water.

When Don turned 13 he discovered the Boy Scouts and attended Camp Askenonta on Lake Placid. He subsequently worked at the camp for three summers between 1954 and 1956 and became the boat driver. The camp had two Fay & Bowens and a 14-foot Thompson with a 10 hp Johnson that Don drove twice a week to town to get cartons of milk for the scouts. When Don graduated from high school his mother encouraged him to enroll in SUNY of Morrisville. “The Boy Scouts taught me to work hard and Morrisville taught me how to study.”

After Morrisville, Don married Eleanor and they subsequently moved to Nashville, Tennessee, where they had two children, Brook and Tina, and ultimately became owners of a manufacturing representative business. After a successful business career, Don retired at 55. In the 1990’s, Don and Eleanor took a ride in a Chris Craft on Skaneateles Lake. He later met Trustee Tony Mollica who helped Don find his first antique boat that came off of Murray Isle, a 1939 seventeen foot Chris Craft named *Purr*. Thus began Don’s quest to collect boats and his journey to the Antique Boat Museum.

When Don was invited to sit on the Museum’s Board he immediately realized what a wonderful service the Museum was performing for the antique boating community in collecting and preserving so

many boats. “And this was all before we had the new buildings. Eleanor and I were very proud to be part of the Museum’s growth.”

When asked about his wonderful gift Don answered, “This has been a family decision.” Don and his current wife Caroline, whom he married after Eleanor, passed away, and Brook and Tina have all been a part of this decision. “Brook and Tina own homes on the water and together we made the decision that we do not want this property in our estate. Caroline and I are able to live in the house until we no longer want to and we avoid both New York and Federal Estate taxes. In addition, we receive a charitable deduction. But most importantly, life has been good to us and we feel we should pay part of that good back.”

Executive Director Frederick H. Hager summed up the importance of the Babcock gift by saying, “This transformational gift will enable the Antique Boat Museum to continue its vital role of conserving our heritage and introducing families to our wonderful region, the River and experiential learning both on our campus and on the water. It is with deep thankfulness that we accept your generous and thoughtful gift.”

The Antique Boat Museum is the premier freshwater nautical museum in North America. Located on the St. Lawrence River in the 1000 Islands, the ABM features over 300 antique and classic boats among thousands of recreational boating artifacts. From May to October, the campus comes alive with speed boat rides, boat shows, and educational programs for all ages, special events and more. For more information please visit the Museum’s website at www.abm.org.

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