

T-536

MARTHA LEWIS (skipjack)  
Tilghman, Maryland

MARTHA LEWIS is a 46.2' long two-sail bateau, or V-bottomed deadrise type of centerboard sloop, commonly referred to as a skipjack. She has a beam of 16.7', a depth of 1.3', and a gross registered tonnage of 8. She carries a typical skipjack rig of jib-headed mainsail and a single large jib with a club at its foot. Built in 1955 by Bronza Parks at Wingate, Maryland following traditional Bay design and construction methods, MARTHA LEWIS is significant as being one of the 35 surviving traditional Chesapeake Bay skipjacks and a member of the last commercial sailing fleet in the United States. MARTHA LEWIS is of special interest as having been built by noted boatbuilder Bronza Parks during the post World War II revival of skipjack building for the working oyster fleet.

Survey No. T-536

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

CHESAPEAKE BAY SKIPJACK FLEET THEMATIC GROUP

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic MARTHA LEWIS

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number Gibsontown Road n/a not for publication

city, town Tilghman n/a vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland 024 county Talbot 041

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Captain Gene Tyler

street & number telephone no.: 886-2147

city, town Tilghman, Maryland state and zip code 21671

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. n/a liber

street & number folio

city, town state

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Survey of Surviving Traditional Chesapeake Bay Craft

date 1983-1984  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state MD 21401

## 7. Description

Survey No. T-536

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			<input type="checkbox"/> n/a

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

MARTHA LEWIS is a 46.2-foot long, two-sail bateau, or V-bottomed deadrise type of centerboard sloop, commonly referred to as a "skipjack." She has a beam of 16.7 feet, a depth of 1.3 feet, and a gross tonnage of 8 register tons. She carries a typical skipjack rig of jib-headed mainsail, laced to the boom and carried on wood hoops at the mast, and a single large jib with a small club on its foot. The vessel is cross-planked in typical Bay construction methods. The wooden hull is painted white, and sheathed with metal at the waterline to protect against ice. The MARTHA LEWIS was built in 1955 at Wingate, Maryland and serves in the working oyster fleet.

The vessel has a longhead bow and a square (transom) stern with a beaded surround. The rudder is carried inboard. A jig for the pushboat is centered on the transom. Her stern quarter is graceful, with a long run aft and a good deal of rise.

The decks are flush, with several structures. From the stern forward, these include a bright-finished box over the steering gear; a trunk cabin with an added doghouse with three large windows and a full-length door; a small deck hatch; a box over the winders; and a main hatch. Fittings include a taffrail aft, with a pipe safety rail atop, and a log sheer rail forward. There is a pushboat carried on davits suspended over the stern. Other equipment includes dredging gear, in season; an anchor; and rollers mounted on the sides of the hull for pulling in the dredges.

The single mast is set with little rake, about  $10^{\circ}$  aft; wooden mast partners rise about three feet above the deck and are bolted around the base of the mast with metal bands. The mast is set up with double shrouds and turnbuckles, jibstay, forestay, and topping lift. The boom, which is jawed to the mast, is carried high; it was taken from the old skipjack ROBERT L. WEBSTER. The bowsprit is squared off on top with wooden grips or runners along its length; it is rigged with double bobstays and double chain bowsprit shrouds. The vessel carried a two-sail rig, with lazyjacks to aid in furling the sails.

Painted white, the vessel is marked with her name in black letters on the transom. Notable features are the added doghouse, and the reuse of spars from another vessel, the old ROBERT L. WEBSTER.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. T-536

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates            1955                            Builder/Architect            Bronza Parks

check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
and/or

Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Level of Significance:  national  state  local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

As well as being a surviving member of the working oyster fleet, the MARTHA LEWIS is notable for having been built in 1955 by the well-known boatbuilder Bronza Parks of Wingate, Maryland.

This vessel is significant as being one of the 35 surviving traditional Chesapeake Bay skipjacks and a member of the last commercial sailing fleet in the United States. Out of a fleet of hundreds of skipjacks that worked Bay waters in the early years of this century, today only this small number remain to carry on the tradition of working sail.

The skipjack evolved as a distinct type of Bay vessel in the 1890's as a cheaper-to-construct alternative to the earlier bugeyes and other traditional framed craft, in a period when shipbuilding costs were rising and the oyster catch was diminishing. The type was devised by enlarging (to 25 to 60 feet) the hull of the ordinary, unframed, square-sterned Bay crabbing skiff, and giving it a deadrise bottom, a-deck, a cabin, and a sloop rig. The result—with its unframed, hard chine, cross-planked, V-bottom—proved inexpensive to build, easy to repair, and could be constructed by a competent house carpenter. Skipjacks were specifically designed as oyster dredge boats, with wide beams and low freeboard lending stability and providing a large working space on deck. The single masted rig, with sharp-headed mainsail and large jib, was easy to handle, powerful in light winds, and handy in coming about quickly for another pass over the oyster beds.

The Maryland oyster season begins November 1 and ends March 15. Skipjacks must dredge under sail on all days except Mondays and Tuesdays, when they are allowed to use their motorized pushboat for dredging. The pushboat, normally carried on davits at the stern, is lowered into the water and literally "pushes" the skipjack along from behind, the nose of the pushboat resting against the "jig" on the stern of the skipjack. The pushboat can also legally be used to get the skipjack to the from the oyster beds each day. Each skipjack's crew is made up of the captain, who is often also the owner, and five crew members.

MARTHA LEWIS is of interest as having been built during the post-World War II revival of skipjack building for the working oyster fleet. She was built as one of a trio of skipjacks by the well-known boatbuilder Bronza Parks, at Wingate, Md (the other two

(continued overleaf)

being the ROSIE PARKS and the LADY KATIE). Until the renewal of building for the sailing oyster fleet in the 1980s, these three vessels were the last of the skipjacks built in Maryland for twenty-five years. The vessel follows traditional Bay design and construction methods and has worked in the oyster-dredging fleet since her building, presently based at Tilghman Island. The vessel was one of ten skipjacks built after World War II during a boom in the oyster business, all of which are still active except the ROSIE PARKS (now at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum). It is of great interest that even though these vessels were built over 50 years after the peak skipjack-building years, their design and construction methods closely followed turn-of-the-century prototypes.

MARTHA LEWIS is especially significant for having been built by the noted boatbuilder Bronza Parks of Wingate, Maryland. The son and grandson of watermen, Bronza Parks began his career as an oyster dredger, but switched to boatbuilding after constructing a crabbing skiff for his own use. Specializing in skiffs and power boats for both pleasure and commercial use in the 1930s and 1940s, Parks prided himself on building no two boats alike--he tried something new and different on each. Hoping to improve on old designs, in 1955 he undertook the construction of the three skipjacks mentioned above. Parks' claim to have created a superior design proved accurate, as the ROSIE PARKS became a champion in the annual workboat races. Bronza Parks was fatally shot at his boatyard in 1958 during an argument with a client.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No.

See Thematic Group nomination cover form, Continuation Sheets <sup>T-536</sup>  
No. 8-13.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Tilghman, MD

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<u>18</u>	<u>384240</u>	<u>428550</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

E			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

F			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

G			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

H			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

## Verbal boundary description and justification

This working vessel is usually docked at the location indicated in Item 2. Historic boundaries are coterminous with the hull.

## List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	n/a	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Witty/ M. E. Hayward

organization Radcliffe Maritime Museum  
Maryland Historical Society

date May, 1984

street & number 201 West Monument Street

telephone (301) 685-3750

city or town Baltimore

state Maryland 21201

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. T-536

Magi No. 2105365833

DOE  yes  no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic MARTHA LEWIS

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number Gibsontown Road  not for publication

city, town Tilghman  vicinity of  congressional district

state Maryland county Talbot

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Captain Gene Tyler

street & number  telephone no.: 886-2147

city, town Tilghman, Maryland state and zip code 21671

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.  liber

street & number  folio

city, town  state

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date  federal  state  county  local

pository for survey records

city, town  state

# 7. Description

Survey No. T-536

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

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Painted white, the vessel is marked with her name in black letters on the transom. Notable features are the added doghouse, and the reuse of spars from another vessel, the old ROBERT L. WEBSTER.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. T-536

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
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<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	1955	Builder/Architect	Bronza Parks
check:	Applicable Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D		
	and/or		
	Applicable Exception: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G		
	Level of Significance: <input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> state <input type="checkbox"/> local		

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

As well as being a surviving member of the working oyster fleet, the MARTHA LEWIS is notable for having been built in 1955 by the well-known boatbuilder Bronza Parks of Wingate, Maryland.

This vessel is significant as being one of the 36 surviving traditional Chesapeake Bay skipjacks and a member of the last commercial sailing fleet in the United States. Out of a fleet of hundreds of skipjacks that worked Bay waters in the early years of this century, today only this small number remain to carry on the tradition of working sail.

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# 8. Significance

Survey No. T-536

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

### Specific dates

### Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
and/or

Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Level of Significance:  national  state  local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

being the ROSIE PARKS and the LADY KATIE). Until the renewal of building for the sailing oyster fleet in the 1980s, these three vessels were the last of the skipjacks built in Maryland for twenty-five years. The vessel follows traditional Bay design and construction methods and has worked in the oyster-dredging fleet since her building, presently based at Tilghman Island. The vessel was one of ten skipjacks built after World War II during a boom in the oyster business, all of which are still active except the ROSIE PARKS (now at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum). It is of great interest that even though these vessels were built over 50 years after the peak skipjack-building years, their design and construction methods closely followed turn-of-the-century prototypes.

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# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. T-536

Marion V. Brewington, Chesapeake Bay: A Pictorial Maritime History (Cambridge, Md: Cornell Press, 1953)

Howard I. Chappelle, Chesapeake Bay Skipjacks (St. Michaels, Md: CBMM, n.d.)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Witty/ M.E. Hayward

organization Maryland Historical Society

date 5/84

street & number 201 W. Monument St.

telephone 685-3750

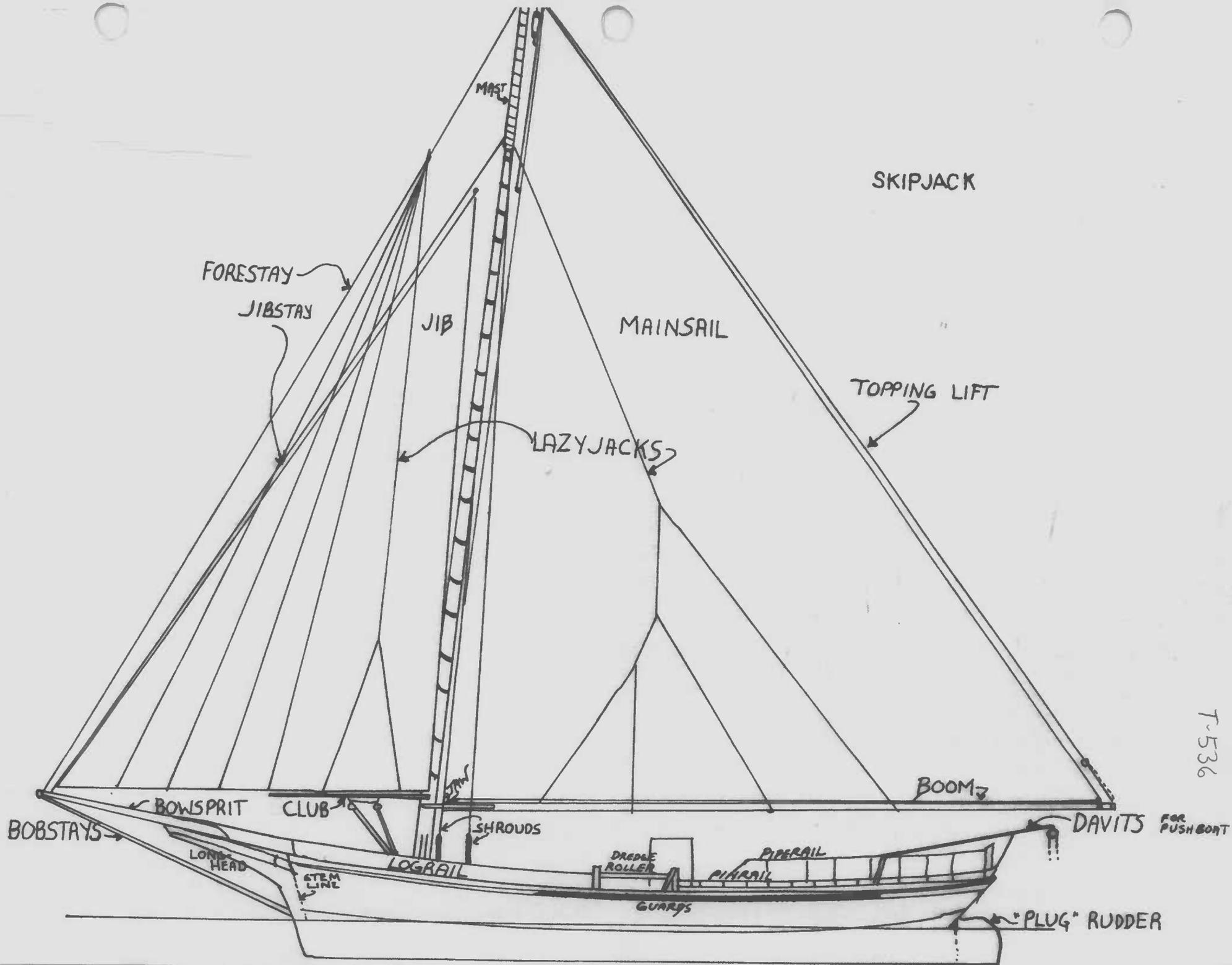
city or town Baltimore

state Maryland 21201

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return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438



T-536



T-536

MARTHA LEWIS  
Tilghman, Md.

port side  
M.C. Wootton 10/83

83%



T-536

MARTHA LEWIS  
Tilghman, Md

starboard bow  
M.C. Wootton

10/83



T-536

MARTHA LEWIS  
Tilghman, Md

starboard stern  
M.C. Wootton

10/83