

NEW HAMPSHIRE BOAT MUSEUM

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For Immediate Release

Family Makes Gift to NHBM, Supports Capital Campaign

Wolfeboro, NH—January 21, 2021—A doctor by trade, Jim Forbes was a carpenter at heart whose passion for building and boats found a home at the New Hampshire Boat Museum (NHBM) in his retirement before passing away in 2019.

His contributions will not be forgotten, however, as the Bartel family—daughter Darcey and husband Chris—recently made a significant gift to NHBM.

Made in his name, the gift supports NHBM’s Capital Campaign to construct a 10,000 square foot year-round, state-of-the-art museum on 4-acres of waterfront property on Lake Winnepesaukee’s Back Bay in Wolfeboro.

“This new facility has the potential to be a special place for visitors and children alike,” said Darcey. “We are fortunate to be able to contribute to that.”

According to Alison Forbes, Darcey’s mother and Jim’s wife, the contribution underscores the enjoyment her husband experienced at NHBM as a volunteer and program participant over nearly 15 years.

This enjoyment found its truest form one summer in which Jim built a kayak with 6 of his nine grandchildren in NHBM’s Boat-Building program.

“He had always wanted to do it with his grandchildren, so it was very exciting when it became possible that one summer,” explained Alison. “It involved two things he loved, which were spending time with his grandchildren and carpentry—specifically, boat building.”

Building a kayak, however, proved more daunting than initially expected (by the kids).

“My three kids arrived on the first day and thought, ‘How do I turn this into a boat?’” said Darcey.

‘This’ consisted of four pieces of cut mahogany plywood and two gunnels laid out on saw-horses.

With help from Jim (referred to as Pops by the grandchildren) and a volunteer instructor, however, the kids—Kendall, Carter and Tess—made substantial progress before leaving for scheduled summer camp. The latter half of the project was completed by their cousins, Leighton,

Griffin and Rowan, who lived in London at the time with their parents, Kristin Forbes and Steve Calhoun.

“They, their dad, and Pops worked diligently the remaining days of the week,” said Alison.

The final step consisted in naming the boat, a decision to which they had previously (and unanimously) agreed. Named ‘HMS COUSINS,’ the kayak referenced their two home cities and relationship.

Cousin Leighton drew the long straw to be the first to launch the kayak on the lake.

“As he paddled the sleek kayak into open water, his smile was as wide as the pond separating the cousins that summer,” recounted Alison. “The biggest and proudest grin of all, however, was on Pops’ face.”

In making a major gift to NHBM, a room will be named in Jim’s honor, a legacy upon which Darcey said she hopes others may ‘build’ memories, much like the Bartel, Calhoun and Forbes families.

“In building the boat, the kids had to share a bit, take on certain tasks and take turns,” she said. “They learned to listen and act on what they had learned. They took responsibility...They also had a lot of fun.”

For Alison, the gift from the Bartel family and contributions from dozens of others who have given in his name not only preserve Jim’s memory, but benefit the community now and in the future.

“The museum educates people and preserves boating history—I think that is important,” she added. “This is a win-win situation.”

Founded in 1992 by antique and classic boating enthusiasts, NHBM is committed to inspire people of all ages with an understanding of, and appreciation for, the boating heritage of New Hampshire’s fresh waterways.

To learn more about NHBM, or its Capital Campaign, visit nhbm.org.

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