

N E W H A M P S H I R E BOAT MUSEUM

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For Immediate Release

NHBM Honors Longtime Volunteer

Wolfeboro, NH—12/9/21—Age is just a number, which aptly describes the involvement of Herbert Mitchell at the New Hampshire Boat Museum (NHBM) who, at 90 years young, continues to volunteer his time. One of his main areas of focus is NHBM's boatbuilding classes.

"When the shop opens to prepare the materials for classes, I always attend those shop efforts," he said. "We rough out the sides and frames—there is a lot of pre-work that goes on."

Noting he is an instructor for the class, he said he spends a lot of his time cleaning the tools used to build boats.

"The tools we use get pretty beat up, and I am a master at cleaning those tools," he added with a laugh.

A resident of Alton during the summer months, Mitchell said he expects to fulfill many of the same roles for which he has developed a fondness upon his return from Florida in the winter.

"I will do that as long as I am able to," he said.

Martha Cummings, executive director at NHBM, said she cannot imagine the museum without Mitchell, who has been a volunteer for 10+ years.

"He has been here more than twice as long as I have," she said. "He is an integral part of our museum family."

As a way to celebrate his involvement this past summer, Cummings said the boatbuilding volunteers and staff surprised Mitchell with a 90th birthday party. Mitchell described the party as "the highlight of [his] summer.

"They put a buffet out there for me and it was a really nice thing they did for me," he said. "I didn't expect this at all. I really love working there with those people."

He also loves helping people build boats. He recalled a class from years past which made a lasting impression on him with regard to one of the students.

“For the first week, the student never said one word to me or anyone else—I thought he was just shy, I did not realize he had a disability” he said. “The next week, he started to talk to me.”

According to Williams, he left the class talking to everyone.

“He even got a job at a market afterwards talking to people,” said Williams. “It was the best thing I have ever experienced...I will do this as long as I am physically able. I am eager to get started again and see no end in sight really.”

Founded in 1992 by vintage boating enthusiasts, NHBM is sponsored this year in part by Goodhue Boat Company, Eastern Propane & Oil, Meredith Village Savings Bank, FL Putnam, Stark Creative, Bank of New Hampshire, and NH Humanities.

To learn more about NHBM, or its Capital Campaign, visit nhbm.org. To learn more about volunteering, email programs@nhbm.org.

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