Fifty classics expected at antique boat fest

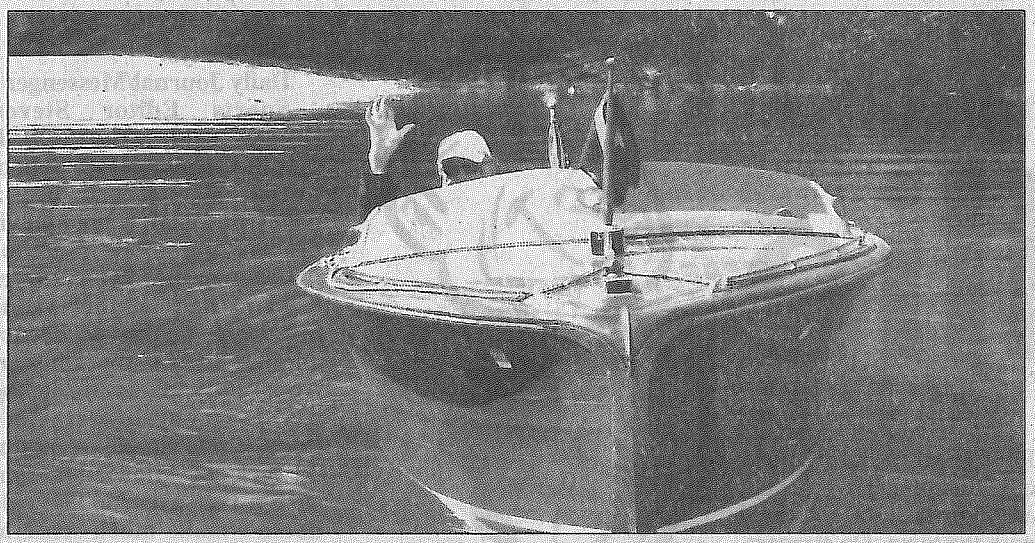
Staff Reports

SENECA — Beginning Thursday, antique and classic boat enthusiasts from across the Eastern United States will be gathering on Lake Keowee. Boats from as far away as Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Louisiana, Alabama, and as close to home as Georgia and North and South Carolina.

Local residents will be treated to opportunities to see these classic crafts cruising Lake Keowee and view them up close as well on Saturday. Joining the out-state fleet will be many local wooden boats that make their home on Lake Keowee year-round.

This event will be the second show of a very busy boat show circuit that began in Central Florida at the end of March. The Antique and Classic Boat Society (ACBS) hosts many events over the summer months throughout the United States and Canada, and most of the boats that will be taking part in this event will be entered into boat shows all across the country this season.

The mission of the Antique and Classic Boat Society is to protect the heritage of boating by promoting preservation and secondly, the restoration of historic, antique and classic boats. If anyone would be interested in additional information about ACBS they can access the Web site, www.acbs.org.



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Jim Lundy drives his 1947 Garwood. The boat is completely original except for upholstery, and no one has owed it but Lundy. The boat is laughingly referred to as "Mom's Mink," which is still the boat's name today. Lundy and his wife, Helen, have been boating for as long as they can remember, and he was instrumental in putting on a boat show in the early days of Lake Keowee.

The Oconee Chamber of Commerce has partnered with The Blue Ridge Chapter of ACBS to bring more than 50 quality restored wooden, early fiberglass and aluminum boats together for this event. The ages of the boats range from the early 1900s to the mid-60s.

The boats will be taking organized cruises on Lake Keowee Thursday and Friday. When not out running around the lake, visiting boaters will be treated to a morning of shopping and special luncheon menus in historic Downtown Seneca, including picturesque Ram Cat Alley.

The antique and classic boats will be on display to the public from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. Saturday at Crooked Creek RV/Marina. There is no cost to the public for the boat show. Food will be available for purchase on site.

The festival is honored to host Chris Smith, grandson of Christopher Columbus Smith who started the Chris Craft Company. As special guest, Smith will be taking part in the festivities during the three-day event and will be available at the public viewing between 10 a.m. and noon Saturday to talk and answer any questions about the history of Chris Craft and the early boating years.

Some of the boats will be offering a short boat ride to the public between 2 and 3 p.m.

To find Crooked Creek RV/Marina from Seneca take SC 28 north to SC 188 (Keowee School Road). Follow SC 188 east to the flashing four-way stop. Turn north on Ebenezer and follow the signs. From Keowee Key follow SC 1 83 north to SC 188, proceed west to four-way stop, turn north on Ebenezer and follow the signs.