

PREPARING FOR THE INEVITABLE

Those who have been bitten by the antique and classic boat bug probably have one or more boats and trailers; lots of parts and accessories; and many tools. 99% of the time the male in the relationship is the one who does the accumulating with the wife or significant other admiring the handiwork and enjoying the beauty of the boats, the boating events and the camaraderie of the ACBS community.

There comes a time in life when the ACBS member must reassess his lifestyle, including hobbies and possessions. Sometimes it is forced by circumstances and sometimes it is a conscious choice. As we grow older and less able to participate in hobbies, we begin to realize the need to divest ourselves of the things related to it.

Some signs that we may be approaching that juncture include:

- Loss of strength needed for launching and retrieving the boat;
- Inability to adequately maintain the boat to the prior standard of care;
- Unable to perform routine mechanical work on the boat;
- Pretty much stop using the boat;
- Easily tired;
- Loss of interest;
- Inability to concentrate on needed tasks;
- Unable to easily climb on, off and around the boat;
- Forgetfulness resulting in an incident; and
- Health issues affecting your safety and possibly that of others.

Giving up that which we love is hard, but recognizing that we are to that point is even harder, because we have to own up to the fact that we need to let go and then we have to take action to do so. In many cases the decision gets put off until someone else is left to deal with it—generally the wife, significant other or family. With some rare exceptions, these individuals are not equipped to

take the needed action which includes assessing the value of the boats, tools and other items. Once a value is determined, buyers must be found and the items sold or given away. Just imagine if you were the wife left with three boats in various stages of repair and a shed or garage filled with tools, parts and material because your husband had a major stroke or worse.

While we can't control for the unknown, if we are getting up in age, we can make a plan and begin to work the plan. Such a plan might include:

Go through your "stuff" and begin to get rid of items you no longer need (parts for a prior project or one you will never finish);

Decide what maintenance or repairs you are capable of and still interested in performing and then get rid of all tools and materials that are not needed;

Decide which boat or boats you will keep and make a plan to sell them in the future;

When you sell the boat(s), keep up with your hobby by continuing to be a member of ACBS and your local chapter. Attend boat shows. Enjoy your hobby passively or virtually.

Remember, as hard as it will be to step back, it is going to be a lot harder for those who may have to deal with the stuff you have accumulated if something happens to you. We urge you to give the points in this article some thought. If you are having difficulty making these decisions, ask fellow ACBS members for help. That's what we are here for.

