

Different wooden boat types

(prior to the introduction of the boat engine):

The traditional fishing boat was of utmost importance for a fisherman's family out in the archipelago. Measuring 22–26 feet, the fishing boat – sometimes also known as the town boat, the fyke net boat or the milk boat – had two masts: one for the spritsail, one for the mainsail. The fishing boat was used on fishing expeditions, using either gill nets or fyke nets to net herring, although it was mainly used as a means of transportation during an era when there were no cars and bridges connecting the archipelago with the mainland. The fishing boat had to be solid and seaworthy, and it had to be able to carry quite a heavy cargo of fish.



Traditional fishing boat in Larsmo. The boat was built by Herman Kaptens in 1938. Archive collection: Bosund Boat, Fishing and Hunting Museum.



Traditional fishing boat 1930. Photo Walter W. Forsblom. Archive collection: The Society of Swedish Literature in Finland (SLS) archive 405.

The dinghy or rowboat, measuring 14–17 feet, sometimes came rigged with a spritsail. Every household had at least one dinghy. The dinghy was quite often used by the children learning to sail. When teenage boys practised boat-building, their first project was often a dinghy. The young boat-builder would then perhaps sell the boat and use the money to buy a bicycle.



Dinghy 1930. Photo Walter W. Forsblom. Archive collection: The Society of Swedish Literature in Finland (SLS) archive 405.

Seal hunting boats have been used by seal hunters for hundreds of years. Compared to other utility boats, the 24–32 foot seal hunting boat, equipped with a mast, was quite large. The seal hunters would load all their provisions, equipment and clothes for the long seal hunting expedition onto the boat. The seal hunting boat served as a basecamp for the hunters during the expedition, which could last for several weeks. The hunters also slept in the boat.



Seal hunting boat 1930. Photo Walter W. Forsblom. Archive collection: The Society of Swedish Literature in Finland (SLS) archive 405.

The seal hunting dinghy was a smaller vessel used on sealing expeditions. When the hunters went out on daytrips from the basecamp, they would take the dinghy. Seal hunting dinghies were sometimes equipped with a mast in the bow. A typical dinghy had two runners under the hull, which made it easier to push the vessel on the ice floes.

Text: Joel Svenlin



Seal hunting dinghy 1930. Photo Walter W. Forsblom. Archive collection: The Society of Swedish Literature in Finland (SLS) archive 405.