

Joseph M. LaBarge

Owners: Roger and Barbara Giles

Home Port: Cooper's Landing River Port Marina, Missouri River Mile Marker 170.4 RAB

Hull Type/Material: Scow Bow, nearly flat bottom (there is a 6" keel), 3/16" steel hull except at the bow, where it is 1/4" thick, overlaying the boat's original wooden hull; the boat's overall length is approximately 79'; the hull itself is 55'6" long, 33" deep, with a 13'6" beam. Draft is 19". Displacement is 14 tons.

Length: 79'

Width: 13' 6"

Draft: 19"

Wheel Diameter: 10'

Wheel Width: 9'

of Buckets: 12 stainless steel buckets, 16" wide, herringbone/vee design with beveled edges.

Engine Type/Size: Detroit Diesel 453T, supercharged, turbocharged. The engine displaces 212 cubic inches, and produces approximately 220 horsepower. Engine cooling is via raw water supplied heat exchanger/engine closed loop antifreeze system. The transmission and differential are also cooled with the raw water system.

Drive Train Type: Allison 4-speed automatic transmission to a Ford 9" rear end/differential, with transverse drive shafts powering two 9" pinion gears, coupled by #120 roller chains to two 30" gears on each side of the paddlewheel shaft.

Built By: Not known

Build at: Zanesville, OH

Date: 1937

Past Names (oldest to newest from the late 70's): The Escape/Jim Ward, Ole Wood/Woody Roberts, Nancy Ann/Floyd and Nancy Drake, Joseph M LaBarge

Description and History:

Steering: Helm wheel via gear/chain to a horizontal shaft, connecting to another gear/chain in the engine room, to 2 rudders forward of the wheel and 2 monkey/aft rudders behind it. The forward rudders are geared directly, while the monkey rudders are operated by cables over pulleys.

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Joseph M. LaBarge (continued)

Superstructure: Wood construction, cedar exterior siding, painted. Lower level: knotty pine, carpeted throughout; main cabin with entertainment center, futon, chairs; full galley and dinette, propane stove/oven, propane wall furnace, 3-way refrigerator; head with macerator toilet, sink and shower; captain's quarters; and the engine/mechanical room. Upper level/Pilothouse: accessible via exterior or interior ladders; cedar, carpeted throughout; helm and controls, a second head with a macerator toilet and sink; a pilot's bunk; safety equipment, and a spacious Texas deck astern.

Miscellaneous: 12V DC and 120V AC electrical systems; Kubota 6500 120/240 volt, 30 amp diesel generator; 30 amp shore power; two 100-gallon bow fuel tanks; two 40-gallon potable water tanks, 20-gallon electric hot water heater; 3 window air conditioners, 11' winch-operated stage, weather station, barbecue grill. All electronics (marine transceiver, GPS/chart plotter, depth finder, stereo, entertainment system), air conditioners and the refrigerator have been replaced/upgraded since purchase. Substantial repairs/upgrades have also been made to the monkey rudder steel framework, buckets, stage winch frame, wiring, insulation, siding, interior furnishings, and windows.

Narrative: The boat was built in 1937 at Zanesville, OH as a wooden hull single deck gambling boat. It was later operated as a houseboat. In the 1980's a series of modifications were made, including the boat being set into a steel hull (which extended past the original wooden hull, adding space for the engine/mechanical room), propulsion converted from a screw to the diesel-powered sternwheel, and the addition of the pilothouse.

Roger and Barbara Giles purchased the (then) Nancy Ann in the summer of 2011. At the conclusion of the Ohio River Sternwheel Festival that September, they sailed the boat to their home port on the Missouri River, an 1175 mile/28 day trip. [This trip is described in detail in an article in the Winter 2011 ASA Sternwheeler magazine.] The boat was rechristened **the Joseph M. LaBarge** on May 20, 2012, in honor of the man universally recognized at the best steamboat captain ever on the Missouri River, and a distant relative of Barbara's!

When in central Missouri, be sure to stop by for a visit!

