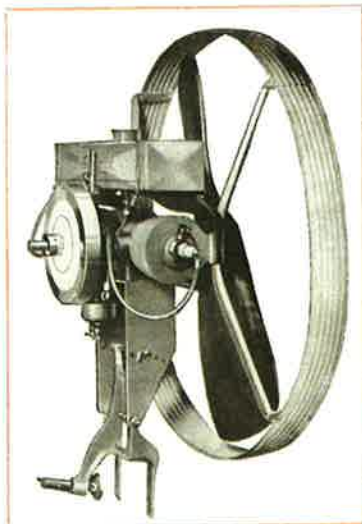


Oddball & Obscure Outboards

By Ken Kirk

The theme for our MLAOC display at the 2015 ACBS Gravenhurst Antique Boat Show will be "Oddball & Obscure" Outboards. To get the ball rolling and to stimulate all of you to dig out those unusual motors from your collection and get them ready to put on display at Gravenhurst....I have put together my "Top Ten" list of the "Oddball & Obscure". I am sure there are many more out there so bring them on.

Aerothrust
THE AVIATION MOTOR FOR ROWBOATS



WILL DRIVE A BOAT WHERE-
EVER IT WILL FLOAT

Aerothrust Engine Company
LAPORTE, INDIANA

1. Among the most unusual, and dangerous, outboards was the Aerothrust air propeller outboard. This was an air cooled, two cylinder, opposed firing engine that developed 3 hp and swung a 32" aircraft type propeller at 2000 RPM.

All this was attached to the transom of a boat by a single transom clamp. The rudimentary propeller guard was an optional extra.

Aerothrust outboards were made from 1915 to 1925. In the 1950's air propeller outboards reappeared. Two of the most successful brands were Air-Boy and Dragonfly. Both started production in 1954.

2. Jet drive, (turbine thrust), outboards started to be developed after World War II. However, none of the main stream outboard manufacturers embraced the idea. Among the very first was a Canadian company, Marine Machinists Ltd. In Leaside, Ontario. The brand name was Aqua Jet and in the late 1940's they claimed to be "the only jet propelled outboard in the world". Their first model was called the "Minor" followed

THE "AQUAJET"



MINOR



soon after by a more streamlined looking version. The Aqua Jet was just 3 hp but claimed to discharge up to 6 tons of water per minute.

Unfortunately the Aqua Jet was not a success and did not survive. During the 50's & 60's however many more Jet outboard brands appeared. Jetmaster, Carey Jet, Outboard Jet, Starling Jet, Cal-Jet and more. None of these brands had much success. Ultimately the main stream outboard manufacturers satisfied the limited demand for jet drive outboards by offering a turbine drive unit that would simply bolt on and replace the lower gear case on their existing models.



Oddball & Obscure Outboards- cont'd

3. The Fageol was not the first 4 cycle outboard but it was the first to use an automobile engine in a production outboard. Lou Fageol was a renowned race boat driver. He had driven such famous unlimited hydroplanes as , Such Crust II, My Sweetie & Slo-Mo-Shun V. He won the 1953 Presidents Cup and the 1954 Gold Cup. He retired from racing after a near fatal "blow over" in 1955.

The Fageol family business was building buses....they were the Twin Coach Company. In 1956 Lou created the Fageol Products Company division to build outboard motors.

The powerhead was a 44 ci, 4 cylinder, 4 cycle, Crosley car engine. It had dual carburetors and developed 35 hp. The engine was mounted vertically, on its end. The challenge was to adequately lubricate the crank, mains and connecting rods at the top end.

In addition to the outboard, Fageol offered a "thru the hull" inboard/outboard version, which also had a vertical powerhead, and a more conventional true inboard set up with horizontal powerhead.

The Fageol 44 was not a commercial success and after three short years the outboard division was sold to Crofton.

4. Another of the oddballs was the Flambeau manufactured by the Metal Products Corp. in Milwaukee, Wisconsin from 1946 to 1957.

The unique feature of the Flambeau was it's two-piece overall housing. The motor was formed primarily by two stampings that created the entire housing of the motor from the top of the crank to the tip of the skeg

on the bottom of the gear case. The combustion chambers were formed by fitting sleeves into the stampings as the two halves were brought together like a clam shell much like the early "Thor" outboards. Flambeau made a 2.5 hp single and a 5 hp twin. They also showed a 10 hp twin in their literature but these are very rare.

FLAMBEAU MODEL 2.5-46-1
4.62 cu. in. displacement

Light—compact—balanced. Exceptionally easy to handle and operate. Exclusive, patented dual carburetion system for smooth performance at all speeds. The many outstanding mechanical features put this Flambeau in a class by itself for providing a new high in outboard motoring enjoyment and satisfaction.

FLAMBEAU MODEL 5-46-1
9.24 cu. in. displacement

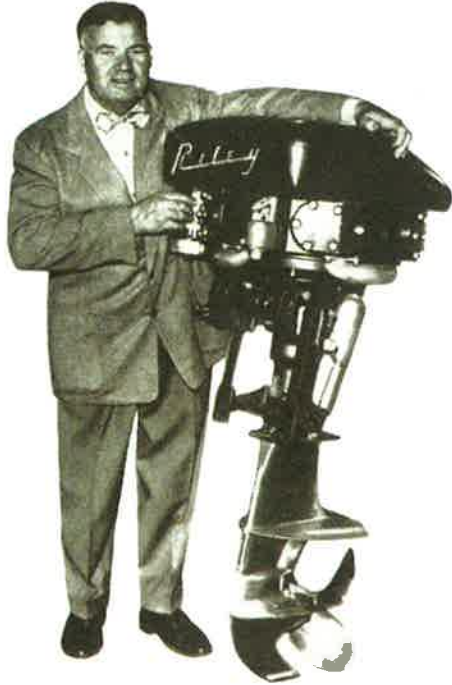
In addition to dual carburetion and all other exclusive Flambeau features, this model has the smoother, greater power of its dependable twin cylinder, alternate firing engine. Streamlined, compact, light weight. Smooth operation at all speeds, with high maneuverability and long, dependable service.

FLAMBEAU MODEL 10-46-1
18.9 cu. in. displacement

As with all Flambeau outboard motors, every part of this great twin is functional. Its alternate firing, twin cylinder engine, with patented dual carburetion system, packs plenty of smooth flowing power at all speeds. A rugged performer—light, compact, and a delight to handle and operate.

Oddball & Obscure Outboards- cont'd

5. Truly one of the most unusual outboards made was the Riley 75. Built by the George Riley Corp. in California. It was a monstrous 5 cylinder, 4 cycle radial engine, developing 75 hp with an advertised weight of 225 lbs. The "Riley" lasted three short years...1954 to 1956. Riley wasn't the first radial outboard. Back in 1928 the 5 cylinder, 50 hp, "Cross" radial was introduced. It survived into 1933 partially a victim of the great depression.



6. Yet another highly unusual outboard was the Coventry-Victor "Super-Speed". These outboards were built by Coventry Victor in Coventry, England during the 1950's. They were 4 cycle, 2 cylinder opposed firing and water cooled. You could have a 285 cc, 6 hp or 340 cc, 8 hp "Super-Speed". These outboards were an adaptation of the Coventry-Victor Inboard engines that were the primary power units in the Disappearing Propeller Boats built by Greavette Boat Works at Gravenhurst from about 1953 to the end of "Dippy" production in 1958.



7. Another unique approach to outboarding were motors designed specifically for use on canoes and kayaks in the 1930's. While North American manufacturers built special brackets to attach their small outboards to canoes, three well known German engine builders designed outboards exclusively for use on these types of small watercraft. These motors all had the same format....a mounting cross bar that went from gunwale to gunwale across the canoe. On one end of the crossbar was a mounting fixture to which the motor was attached so that it hung out over the side of the canoe.



The "liberty" style drive shaft was then attached to the motor and angled down to the water at 45 degrees. The motors did not turn. Steering was accomplished by using a canoe paddle or a rudder on the kayak. These motors were small single cylinder 2 stroke engines developing 2 or 3 hp and were water cooled.

The well known German engine builders who exported these canoe outboards to Canada were Zundapp, Konig and Sachs. Although popular in Europe these motors never had success in North America. World War II brought an end to their production and export.

Oddball & Obscure Outboards- cont'd



8. There were air cooled outboards and there were 4 stroke outboards but Lauson put the two ideas together and made an air cooled 4 stroke. The Lauson brand outboards were manufactured by the Hart-Carter Company in Wisconsin. Hart-Carter had been building farm and utility engines since 1900 and had a great reputation for quality and reliability. They also had a subsidiary company, Hart Emerson Ltd., in Winnipeg. The first Lauson outboard was a 2.5 hp single introduced in 1940. In 1948 they redesigned the single, popped it up to 3 hp and for 1949 introduced the new 6 hp "Sport King" twin. These motors were tough and dependable but were heavy for the horsepower they developed. Owners also found parts and service were not as available as with main stream brands. By 1956 the Lauson motor division was sold to Tecumseh and outboard production was terminated.



9. Many outboard motor manufacturers built a secondary line of outboards to be sold by a large retail chain and identified by a brand name exclusive to that retail chain. These were called "private label" or "store brands". Prominent examples would be the Viking outboards made for Eaton's initially by OMC. Wizards were built by Mercury for Western Auto Stores and Scott-Attwater made the Firestone outboard for Firestone Tire retail stores.

Way back in time Caille made the MotorGo outboards for the Sears-Roebuck retail chain. There are many examples of private label brands but perhaps one of the most obscure is the Voyager made by the Champion Motor Company from 1949 to 1958. The interesting difference is that Voyager's were not sold exclusively by any one retail chain. They were sold to a distribution company, Outboard Motor Brands Inc., who in turn distributed the motors to their own dealer network. Initially the Voyager had a 4 hp single and an 8 hp twin. By 1953 they had a full line....3.5 hp single, 5 hp twin, 8.5 hp twin and a 12 hp model. All of the two cylinder models had a full "QSC" gear shift. They looked like Champions.



Oddball & Obscure Outboards- cont'd

10. The Spartan 5 was a Canadian built outboard, made in Richmond, B.C. in 1959 and 60, by a company called Metalex Ltd. It was a 4-cycle, air cooled engine that was actually made by Tecumseh. Spartan implied it was the same powerhead used in the Lauson single cylinder outboard last produced in 1956. Lauson had been sold to Tecumseh so there was a connection, however I have one of these motors and it looks a lot more like a Tecumseh than a Lauson.

Spartan fabricated the rest of the motor components and assembled them in Richmond, claiming "Made In Canada". It looks like they were only made for two years however I know of several of these in the hands of Club members.

Another curious feature of Spartan advertising was their use of the Martin Outboard "Pipe Smoker" fisherman icon. Martin had ceased outboard production in 1955 so it looks like Spartan felt it was OK to use the Martin "Pipe Smoker" illustration.

