



# Making Waves: Michigan's Boat-Building Industry, 1865-2000

*Scott M Peters*

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Michigan will always be known as the automobile capital of the world, but the Great Lakes State boasts a similarly rich heritage in the development of boat building in America. By the late nineteenth century, Michigan had emerged as the industry's hub, drawing together the most talented designers, builders, and engine makers to produce some of the fastest and most innovative boats ever created. Within decades, gifted Michigan entrepreneurs like Christopher Columbus Smith, John L. Hacker, and Gar Wood had established some of the nation's top boat brands and brought the prospect of boat ownership within reach for American consumers from all ranges of income. More than just revolutionizing recreational boating, Michigan boat builders also left their mark on history—from developing the speedy runabouts favored by illicit rum-runners during the Prohibition era to creating the landing craft that carried Allied forces to shores in Europe and the Pacific in WWII. In *Making Waves*, Scott M. Peters explores this intriguing story of people, processes, and products—of an industry that evolved in Michigan but would change boating across the world.

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