



WESTERN CANADA
HERITAGE VESSEL
REGISTRY

Statement of Significance

Torhavn

1939



MARITIME MUSEUM
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

Torhavn

Year built:	1938/1939
Builder:	Hugh L. Rodd
Build Location:	Canoe Cove, B.C.
Vessel Type:	Fishing Vessel / Live-Well Cod Boat
WCHVR Category:	B.C Historic Vessel
Owner(s):	Cowichan Bay Maritime Centre

PRÉCIS:

Torhavn is an excellent example of a small subsistence fishing vessel, substantially intact and operating, she offers a clear view of BC maritime history. There are no other known double-ended, live-well boats with an operating Easthope gas engine afloat in BC. Owned by Frank Miller from 1947 until his death in 2001, he and the boat became interchangeable characters, and Frank became known along the waterfront as “Tor”. After a number of subsequent owners, ownership passed to the Cowichan Bay Maritime Centre in 2024 where she is being cared for, maintained, and kept in commission year-round.



Torhavn; classic live-well Cod Boat

Statement of Significance

In the 1990's when ***Torhavn*** appeared at the Victoria Classic Boat Festival, her then owner Frank "Tor" Miller would print a description in felt pen on a cardboard box; "This vessel is one of a kind. There are very few left on the coast...welcome aboard."

This description is even more true today; there are no other known double-ended live-well boats with an operating Easthope gas engine afloat in BC. Built in 1938 (launched '39) by Hugh L. Rodd at Canoe Cove, BC, the commission came from first owner George Springit at a reported cost of \$750.00. The first engine, a 15 HP single-cylinder Vivian would have been an additional cost, as would any fishing gear.

Prior to WWII double-ended live-well boats were common in the waters inside Vancouver Island. These boats were built to specialize in a "live caught" day fishery, mainly of Ling or Rock Cod delivered at day's end to a local buyer. The boats were built around the midship live hold; in the case of ***Torhavn*** a 10' long hull section divided off by 3" thick cedar watertight bulkheads. Throughout the live hold ***Torhavn's*** hull planking is riddled with 110 small openings allowing the sea to flood the hold. The catch was stored in this hold and kept alive by constantly circulating fresh seawater.

Springit sold ***Torhavn*** to Frank Miller in 1947 and the Vivian was found to be badly corroded from its saltwater cooling system. Frank immediately installed the first 15-18 Easthope engine, also salt water-cooled. When this engine also corroded away, a second fresh water cooled 15-18 Easthope was installed by Miller. That engine is still in the boat and operating very nicely. Miller fished cod with ***Torhavn*** for 44 years, retiring from fishing in 1991, and he retained ownership of the boat until his death in 2001. He and the boat became interchangeable characters, and Frank became known along the waterfront as "Tor". Home port for most of this time was Oak Bay but Frank fished as far north as Campbell River and south to Constance Bank in Juan De Fuca Strait.

When Frank passed in 2001 ownership of ***Torhavn*** went to his son Mark Miller, who sold the boat to Buchart Gardens in 2003. While Buchart owned the boat an extensive restoration was undertaken, though the hull was found to be in good shape. Abernethy & Gaudin rebuilt cabin tops and stripped and painted the entire hull. New covering boards and sheer planks were installed, and a new mast was built, as well as new hatch covers.

In 2006-2007 Mark Miller again owned the boat, then it was sold to Scott Russel, who in turn sold it to Al Collishaw. As ***Torhavn*** is not a registered vessel, exact dates are obscure, but Al subsequently sold the boat to Einer Jensen of Powell River. Jensen owned the boat for a number of years before handing ownership to the Cowichan Bay Maritime Centre in 2024 where the boat is being cared for, maintained, and kept in commission year-round.

Torhavn measures 34'6" (10.51m) length overall, beam is 8'6" (2.59m) and draft approximately 5' (1.52m). The hull is planked with 1.25" thick Douglas Fir, many of the planks are full length with very few butts. Ribs are closely spaced bent oak, decks and house are red cedar.

Torhavn's arrangement follows small fishboat tradition, divided into three main sections by stacked 3" red cedar transverse bulkheads. The forward section is combined living quarters with bunk and tiny galley area, engine room, and pilothouse. Midships is the live hold, divided into four equal sections by bulkheads to limit free surface of the contained sea water. Aft is a large lazarette (storage area) which provides much needed buoyancy when the hold is flooded.

Torhavn is an excellent example of a small subsistence fishing vessel, substantially intact and operational, she offers a clear view of BC maritime history.

Statement of Significance for:

Live Well Cod Boat *Torhavn*

**Prepared and acknowledged by the
Western Canada Heritage Vessel Registry**

Lead Assessor: Tad Roberts

Signature: _____

Date: August 30, 2026

SOURCES:

- Frank Miller quote - Resolution MMBC Autumn 2001
- Background - Resolution MMBC Autumn 2001; "Torhavn" by Shirley Hewett.
- Victoria Daily Times, April 24, 1962.
- Pacific Yachting; Galley, Dyan Dunsmuir-Farley, June 1998.



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