

What a Birthday Present!

by Bill McIsaac

It was 1994, and I had just met my future father-in-law, Carl Hikade. Through our many conversations, my interest in old Michigan stuff came up. He recalled his grandfather Herman having an old Caille outboard he had purchased new in 1928. At the time, I had just started collecting old boat motors. Carl remembered still having the motor up into the 1980's when it was sitting in his mom's garage in St Clair Shores, Michigan. We both thought how cool it would be to go for a ride together in the boat with the old Caille.

In 1997 Carl's mom passed away. While he was going through the mountain of boxes in her basement, he stumbled across an old tag for a Caille Model 30. This was the factory tag that hung on the motor in the Caille showroom. It didn't seem like anything special to him at the time, so he gave it to me and I filed it away in my paperwork.

Now in 1999, Carl was again pillaging through some old family papers and once again found something special. It was the original operating instructions for the Model 30 along with a brochure for all the 1928 Cailles. Once again, Carl gave me the information and I took it home. Always interested in old stuff, I couldn't wait to read more about the old Cailles.

With a further investigation of the material, I realized that included on the hang tag was a serial number – A4913. I mentioned what I found to Carl a short time later, and we both agreed ... wouldn't it be something to find Herman's original motor? Knowing the hunt would be virtually finding a needle in the haystack, I decided acquiring any nice Caille Model 30 would be the next best thing. So in 2001, I bought a very nice original Model 30.

One winter day in 2004, I was sitting around and decided to place an ad on the AOMCI webvertise, "WANTED: Caille Model 30 serial number A4913. This motor was bought new by my wife's great-grandfather." As expected, there were no responses to the ad, so I forgot about it.

On a summer day in 2005, I was over visiting Carl and we were looking through some old family photos. What do I pull out but a picture of Herman sitting in a Century Cyclone with his Model 30 on the back. It's dated June 28, 1932. What an awesome shot. It was a wonderful addition to my archive of Hermann history.

It's the fall of 2007 and out of the blue, I get an email from a friend, Jack Craib. He says he has an inquiry about a Model 30 someone is selling and thinks the serial number is A49XX or something ... he's not really sure. I said I would be interested in finding out more about this motor. This is almost unbelievable news. One week goes by and nothing. Another goes by and my hopes begin to fade. I think to myself, what are the chances? Is this motor in Florida, California, Texas or who knows where? Finally I get an email from Jack and he says, "Bill, why don't you contact him?", yet reminding me that his contact is merely a liaison for the true owner of the motor. I immediately contact the person.

It is now mid-December 2007 and back comes the response. "I see you are local, please contact my brother-in-law, Tom. He has the motor in St. Clair Shores, Michigan."

I just about fell over! Herman's Model 30 was last seen in ... you guessed it, St. Clair Shores, Michigan. Again my hopes soar ... is it too good to be true? I desperately attempt to set up a time to meet and see the motor. I ask, "Is the serial number a match on the top and the transom clamp?"

Tom says, "I don't have the motor here; it is at my mom's." Ugh ... now we are gonna have to wait until after the holidays to get together.

Now it's January 3, 2008, and I email Tom and we decide to meet the next Saturday. I tell my wife Karla that we are going to look at a motor on Saturday and she reminds me that we are celebrating my father-in-law's birthday.

Saturday, January 5, 2008 is Carl's 66th birthday. I drop my family off and proceed to Tom's. I walk down into the basement and see one of the nicest Model 30's ever. I look at both serial numbers ... A4913. Almost unbelievable. We strike a deal, load the motor, and I head back to Carl's.

I sit down in the family room and give my wife a nod. She knows I have the motor. Out of my binder comes all of Herman's original paperwork. I ask Carl, "Do you remember giving me this stuff?"

He says, "Sure."

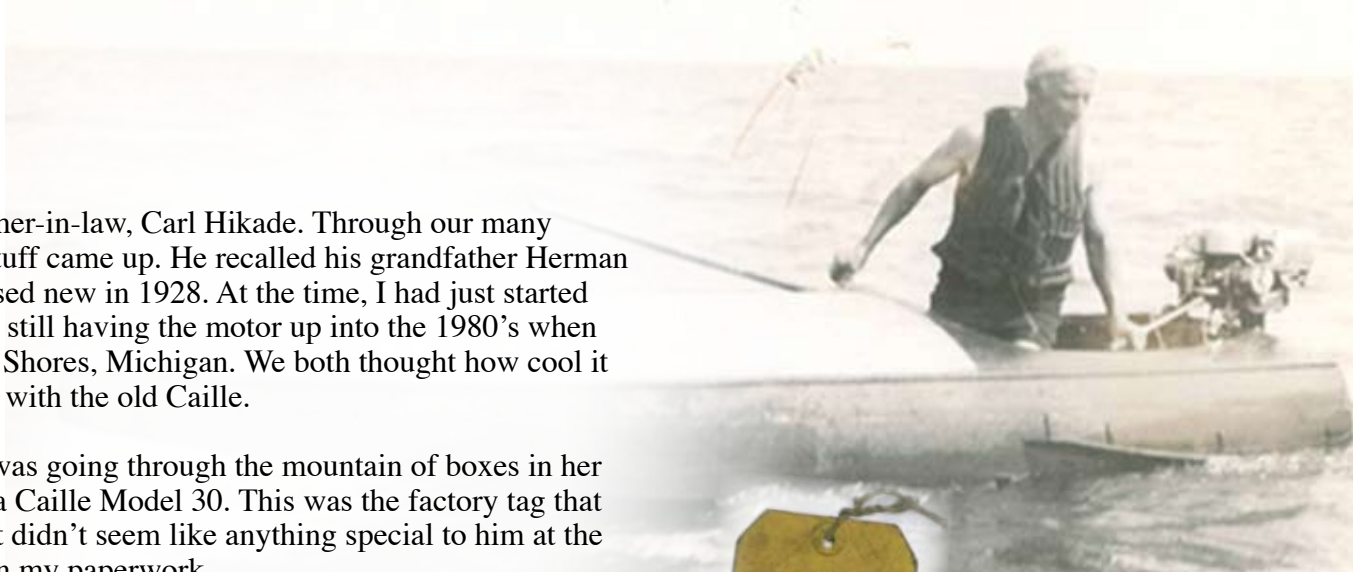
I say, "Do you remember my mentioning A4913?"

He is dumbfounded.

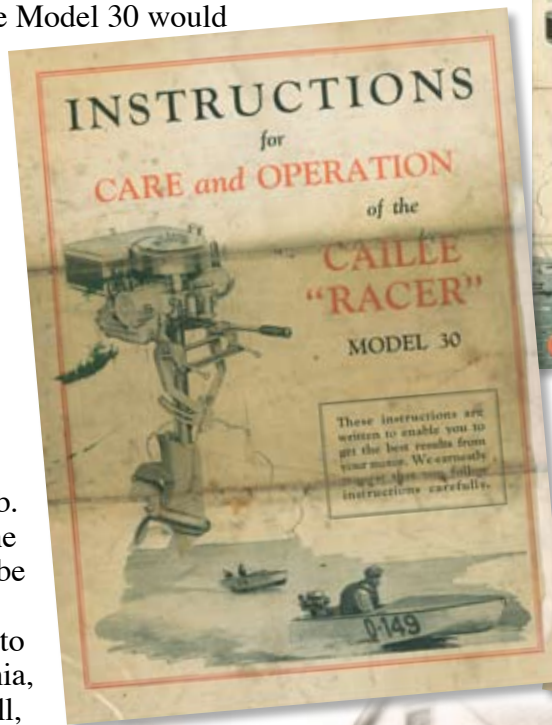
Then I say, "I have something to show you." With total amazement, he sees the motor his grandfather Herman bought brand new in 1928. The exact motor Carl has not set eyes on in over 24 years. It was a long time coming, but it's now finally home.

What a birthday present!

Thank you, thank you, thank you... Jack and Emma Craib. Without your efforts, none of this would have been possible.



Herman Schulze
Century Cyclone Boat
Caille Model 30 Racer
June 28, 1932 at the
Cottage on Lake Erie,
Baycrest Beach.



Erna Hikade-Schulze **Herman Schulze**
(Herman's daughter: age 23)
Delivery day: 1932 Deewite with 1929 Johnson S45
May 8, 1932 at the Cottage on Lake Erie,
Baycrest Beach near Monroe.



Bill McIsaac
Karla Hikade-McIsaac
Grace McIsaac (age 6)
Anna McIsaac (age 2)

Carl & Maryann Hikade
(Karla's parents)