

THE AUTHOR

IF YOU OWN A BOAT, the odds are good that you also own a copy of *Chapman Piloting and Seamanship*.

Elbert “Mack” Maloney has one as well, although it seems unlikely that he would need to look anything up. After all, he started writing the venerable tome in the 1960s, and at 93, he’s still serving as the consulting editor on the forthcoming 67th edition.

“I keep a copy of *Chapman’s* right on the coffee table of the boat,” he says with a chuckle. “So everybody who boards sees who I am.”

His association with boats goes back to childhood (“I always had a rowboat or a floating log or something,” he says), and his association with Charles Chapman started in 1959, when the two spoke after a Power Squadron meeting in New York. Maloney later wrote that “as is all too often the situation with me, I disagreed with the speaker on some topics and stood up to say so.” He later became the director of education for the Power Squadron, as well as the first member of the National Advisory Council for a nascent BoatU.S. in 1966, a position he still holds.

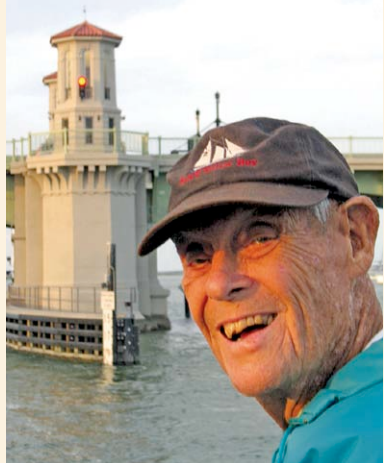
BoatU.S. founder Richard Schwartz remembers early discussions with Maloney, whom he describes as a stickler for formality. “We could not have a ‘burgee’ because we were not a yacht club,” Schwartz says. “Our signal would be a ‘flag.’ And we could not use the word ‘boater’ because it was a hat, and the correct term was ‘boatman.’” Maloney’s attention to detail served him well in his technical writing. After retiring from the Marine Corps in 1964, he spent about a year-and-a-half cruising on his 48-foot Wheeler before (somewhat reluctantly) accepting a land-based job

with Chapman, and eventually taking over the writing of the book, which is updated every three years, mostly to cover new regulations and technology. He also found time to produce the 13th and 14th editions of *Dutton’s Navigation and Piloting* (now in its 15th edition), *Chapman Boater’s Handbook* and nautical guides, and a host of magazine columns and articles. His longest association, though, is with Chapman. “I’ve worked on Chapman for so many years that it’s really a part of me,” he says, “and I’m delighted that they’re allowing me to stay connected with it.” (An email to Chapman publisher Jacqueline Deval about Maloney brought this response: “We love Mack!”)

“The basic theme of the book stays the same,” he says, but “you’d be amazed how many pages change, maybe just small details, but they change.” (At least one change to the book brings out his contentious streak — the greater inclusion of engines. “That’s neither seamanship nor piloting,” he says.)

Maloney lives in Pompano Beach, Florida, and in September, he was busy getting ready for a trip on his 38-foot powerboat.

“I’ll leave with my boat for five or six days down in the Florida Keys,” he said. “I try to get away maybe every six weeks or so, to just spend a little time by myself on the boat.” — C.L.



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