

2. Don Feltmate's *Building a Better Boat*, How the Cape Island Longliner Saved Nova Scotia's Inshore Fishery Maritime history is vital to this province's identity, so it is fortunate we have writers like Don Feltmate with the passion and commitment to set down the past. Out in April, *Building a Better Boat* is the definitive history of the Cape Island-type longliner, a vessel unique to Nova Scotia that helped save its coastal fishery from collapse.

During the first half of the twentieth century, economic recession, a lack of government support, Feltmate wrote, and the incursion of large draggers on coastal fishing grounds meant many inshore fishing communities were facing poverty and starvation. The Sunk-en Lake resident outlined the formation of fishers' cooperatives which started a movement toward recovery, and the introduction of the internal combustion engine. He depicts the development of a new medium-sized fishing vessel equipped with mechanical haulers meant ground fishers who had previously employed handlines from small boats with a single hook could now haul multiple trawl lines from a single vessel.

The development of the "government approved" Cape Island-type longliner was perhaps one the most significant achievements in the survival of the province's struggling inshore fishery. Sadly, this important history has gone largely unrecorded until now. With the help of in-depth archival research and more than 30 little-known historical photographs, *Building a Better Boat* chronicles the history of the recovery of the shore fishery and the development of a new fishing craft known as wooden Cape Island-type longliners. It is a story that needs to be told, he says, if for no other reason than to honour the brave fishing families who persevered through poverty and hunger and who, despite all odds, developed a vessel that would help them secure their own futures and that of future generations.

Feltmate was born in the Cape Breton fishing village of Port Morien and grew up in a family of shore fishermen. Since his retirement from the Canadian Armed Forces, he has been actively involved in improving public accessibility to some of the most forgotten elements of Nova Scotia's maritime heritage.

In 2012 he completed a pictorial history of the Cape Island-type longliner for the Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic. This new paperback, which was published by Nimbus, sells for \$24.95.

GRAPEVINE

BOOKS BY LOCALS

Wendy Elliott

Aug. 2023

August 2023 | Issue No. 20.08

ARTS | CULTURE | COMMUNITY

THE GRAPEVINE

032018

THEATRE.COM
SHOW