

well represented by Chris-Craft enthusiasts. In Buenos Aires — at Port Said — on the Riviera and on the Nile, Chris-Craft is as much at home as in New York — or exclusive inland lake. Hardly a port exists the whole world round where social and business leaders have failed to make Chris-Craft a part of their equipage. Purchasers in thirty different countries have recently received new Chris-Craft.<sup>63</sup>

Actually, a full fifteen percent of Chris-Craft sales would be made outside of the United States in 1929, and Chris-Craft were enthusiastically received at the major boating shows of Europe, particularly at the newly established Salon Nautique in Paris. Overseas representation by Arthur Bray of London included the majority of continental Europe. Viscounts, Dukes and royalty clamored for their own Chris-Craft.

Of the elegant 30-foot Custom Commuter the Smiths would proudly say, "In the first year of its introduction many men of great prominence sought to buy this remarkable new craft; a few who placed late orders were disappointed in not being able to secure one. The demand exceeded our expectations because so many had been waiting for just such a craft. A busy year has now put us in position to supply a larger number of these weather-closed, twelve-passenger, drawing room commuters. ... Here is, in truth, a traveling home, where one may comfortably pass the time between office and home. Seclusion, reading, writing or games, luncheon or business meeting are available to every owner of a Chris-Craft Custom Commuter."<sup>64</sup> The Custom Commuter was now provided with the quicker 225-horsepower Chris-Craft engine, whisking business travelers to work at 40 miles per hour.

The Queen of the fleet, though, was the new 38-foot 30-Mile Commuting Cruiser, and arguably the Smith's crowning achievement for the decade. It truly was a marvelous machine, far exceeding the modest competition for a speedy well-appointed mahogany cruiser. Within "Mac" MacKerel's notebooks was a detailed analysis of every commuting type cruiser on the market, some seventy-three models ranging from custom to production, from 33-feet to 100-feet, and representing the very best cruisers the world had to offer. Within their engine rooms thundered power from sixty-five to twelve hundred horsepower, and *not one boat listed* in the Commuting Cruiser size could come close to the performance of the new Smith flagship.

It was the first Chris-Craft to have berths, galley, wash basin, table, boarding ladder and bilge pumps, but also mattresses, bedding, table linen, china, glassware, silverware, and galley with stove. When you took delivery of your Chris-Craft Commuting Cruiser, all you needed to do was fill up the 138-gallon gas tank, stock your favorite food and you were on your way; everything else was provided for immediate cruising enjoyment. At 12,000

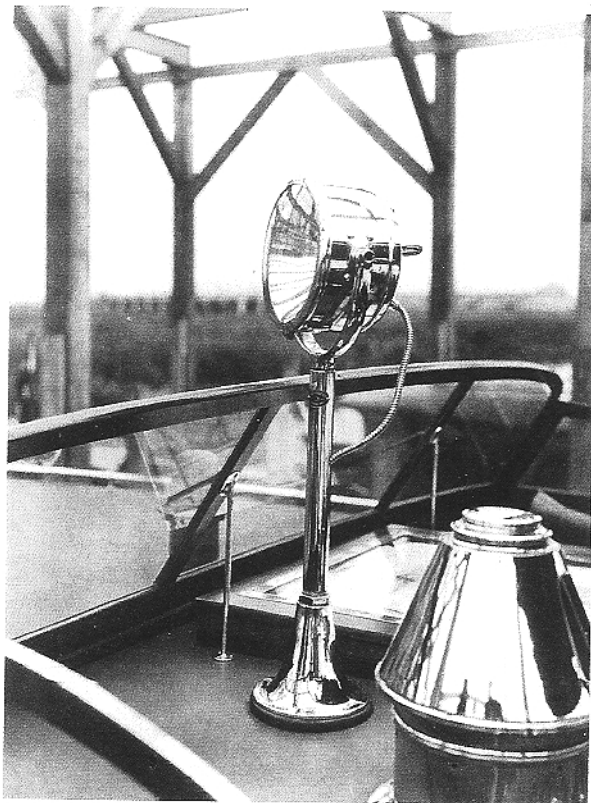
pounds, you could own her for \$1.25 a pound, less than the cost of ground beef sixty years later.

It was the vision of Jay Smith that gave birth to the first Chris-Craft engines, and the superior design and performance of the 200 and 225-horsepower V-8's was testimony to his keen mechanical judgment and perseverance. In a portion of the 1929 brochure dedicated to the marine engines, praise is heaped upon the creator of the division.

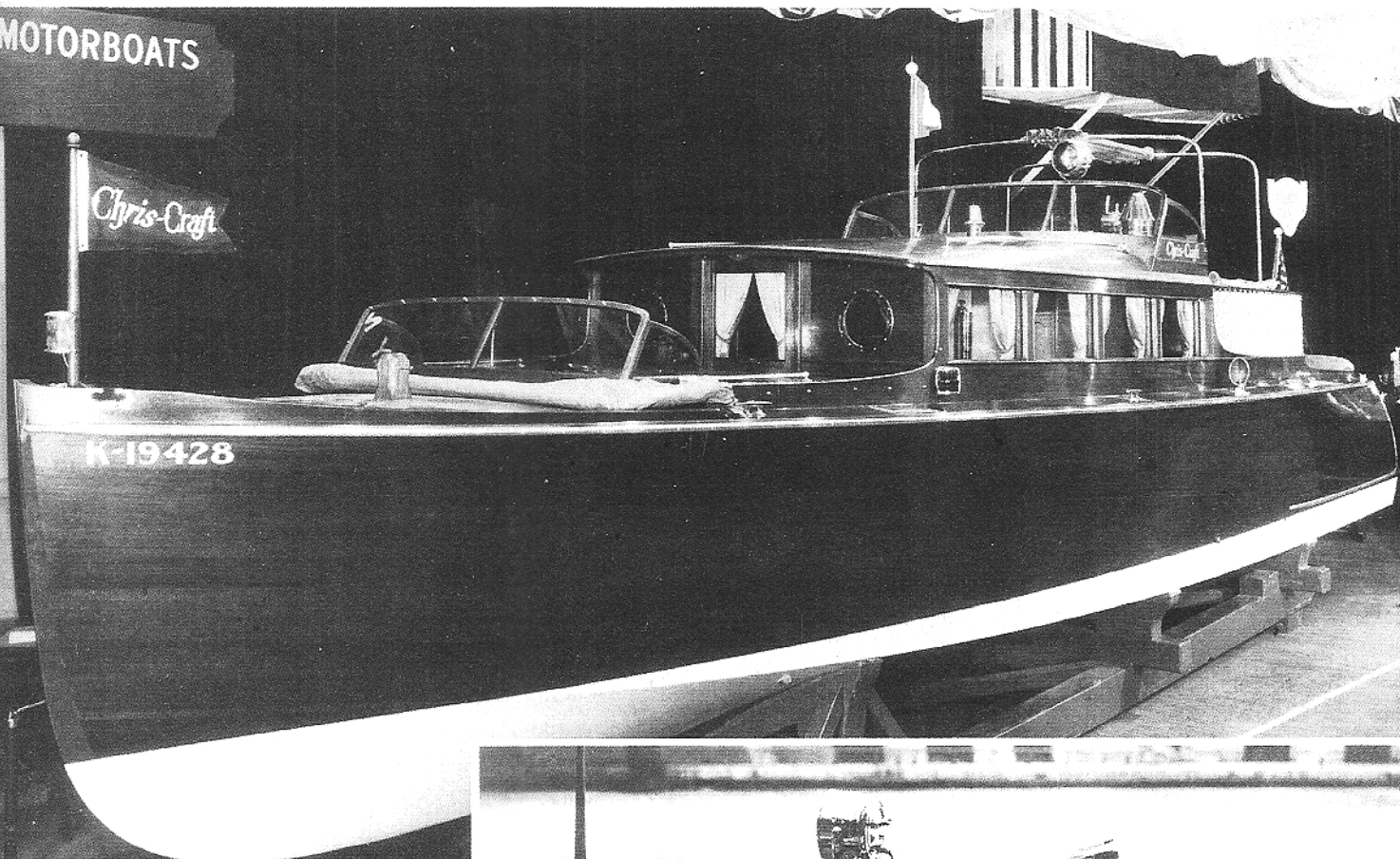
*The final development came in 1927. The new motor finally answered the designer's vision - a vision far beyond any layman's expectation. That it speeds a 38-foot cruiser along at 30 miles an hour, day after day, is only a hint at its power and performance.*

*Those who have had a full year's use of the new motor feel that, in spite of the outstanding success in building the Chris-Craft organization, the largest of its kind in the world, the real Jay W. Smith is best expressed in this superb mechanism.<sup>65</sup>*

The decade of innovation, standardization, expansion and diversification had firmly established Chris-Craft as the dominant producer of boats in the world, and had popularized the Smith legacy through millions of words in articles and advertisements. "The eyes of the boating world are on Chris-Craft," the last brochure of the 20s honestly maintained. Indeed, in coming years, the mettle of the



Y MOTORBOATS



Courtesy Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Virginia

Above and opposite: The revolutionary Model 276, 38-foot *Commuting Cruiser* was Chris Smith & Sons' first cruiser, and boasted 30 miles per hour. The open forward cockpit, luxuriously furnished cabin, bridge and rear cockpit accommodated 20, with sleeping quarters for four, including galley and private lavatory. It was introduced in November 1928, and here displayed for the first time at the January 1929 National Motor Boat Show in New York. Completely found, and featuring the new Chris Smith & Sons 250-horsepower V-8 engine, this first cruiser retailed for \$15,000. A beautiful example of this boat can be seen on display at the Mariners' Museum in Newport News, VA.