

Pauline "Moppie" Bertram christens the very first boat built by Bertram Yacht. The iconic powerboat and sail racer, Dick Bertram, started the company 50 years ago after winning the 1960 Miami-to-Nassau powerboat race on his prototype *Moppie* (below).



THE BEGINNING OF BERTRAM

FIFTY YEARS AGO, A LEGEND WAS BORN
BY FOREST JOHNSON



In July of 1958, as Richard "Dick" Bertram readied himself for the America's Cup trials in Newport, Rhode Island, he couldn't have possibly known that he was about to revolutionize the course of an entire industry. At that time, Bertram owned a major yacht-brokerage firm in Miami and was steadily creating a name for himself as a successful racing competitor and sailor. That particular summer, Bertram was in charge of the foredeck crew on *Vim*, a 12-meter yacht designed to compete in the America's Cup series.



- 1961** - Introduces the Bertram 20 (five models), including a Center Console version (well ahead of its time), the Bertram 31; Richard Bertram sells the Bertram Yacht Company to Nautec, yet remains "on board"
- 1962** - 25 Utility
- 1963** - 38 Flybridge Cruiser, 25 Express Cruiser
- 1967** - 35 Convertible, 37 Tri-Cabin
- 1968** - Whittaker Corp. buys Bertram Yacht from Nautec
- 1971** - 28 Sport Fisherman, 39 Motor Yacht, Bertram Yacht produces its 1,000th boat; Bertram 31s (FBC Bahia Mar/Hardtop) remain most popular boats
- 1972** - 42 Motor Yacht, 46 Motor Yacht
- 1973** - 46 Convertible, Bertram Commercial Boat Division formed — using Bertram 38 fiberglass hull with an aluminum superstructure
- 1975** - 58 Motor Yacht, 42 Convertible, 26 Sport Fisherman
- 1976** - 33 Convertible, 33 Flybridge Cruiser
- 1977** - 58 Convertible with an aluminum superstructure

- 1978** - 38 Convertible III
- 1981** - 54 Convertible
- 1983** - 30 Sport Fisherman, 30 Express Cruiser
- 1984** - 38 Special
- 1985** - Whittaker Corp. sells Bertram Yacht to Investcorp/Bertram-Trojan, Inc.; 28 Bahia Mar, 37 Convertible, 25th anniversary Bertram 31s (limited supply manufactured)
- 1987** - 43 Convertible
- 1989** - 50 Convertible; Bertram-Trojan, Inc. becomes Bertrex
- 1990** - 60 Convertible, 72 Convertible
- 1992** - Italian industrial conglomerate magnate Gruppo Varasi purchases Bertram Yacht
- 1993** - 36 Moppie, 46 Moppie, 30 Sport Moppie, 43 Convertible (with a new look)
- 1995** - 50 Convertible (with a new look), 54 Convertible (with a new look)
- 1996** - 36 Convertible
- 1998** - Italian world-renowned boatbuilder Norberto Ferretti purchases Bertram Yacht

No stranger to yacht racing, Bertram had already helped sail *Finisterre* to victory in the 1956 Newport-to-Bermuda race. This grueling, 635-mile open-water race had grown over the years to become one of the toughest competitions in the world. After that first victory in 1956, Bertram won it again in 1958 and once more in 1960. With the

racecar promoter, Sherman F. "Red" Crise and Miami boatyard owner Sam Griffith, Bertam helped found an offshore powerboat race from Miami to Nassau, Bahamas. Billed as "the world's most rugged ocean race," the competition featured a 184-mile run across the treacherous Gulf Stream and the tumultuous stretch of water known as

the Tongue of the Ocean. when a flat-bottom boat slapped hard against the water's surface in heavy seas. Thoroughly intrigued by the craft's ease in rough water, Bertram sought out the designer of this remarkable little craft, C. Raymond Hunt. Hunt had a knack for unconventional thinking when it came to boat design, and his high-deadrise, deep-V hull bottom extended the entire length of the boat, rather than flattening out near midship like other boats of its day. The hull also featured longitudinal strakes along the bottom to help provide lift and throw spray from the boat, helping to keep it dry.

the hull captured Bertram's imagination; he thought it just might be the key to a faster, smoother, more efficient pleasure-boat experience. He contacted Hunt after the Cup races and commissioned a set of plans for a boat of his own. In early 1960, using Hunt's design, Bertram built his first wooden deep-V bottom boat — a 30-footer. Originally used strictly as a utility boat, Bertam docked that first effort, christened *Moppie*, behind his home in Miami. That hull, and the name as well, would soon become a legend in the boating world.

As a child, Bertram's wife Pauline had long, straight hair. Her mother kept it long, hoping it would eventually become curly like her two sisters' locks. At some point her father began referring to her as a mop — and the nickname "Moppie" stuck. That name lives on today as the flagship moniker for each new factory Bertram prototype. Powerboat racing was a popular sport in America for much of the late '40s and throughout the '50s. Small boat regattas, featuring smaller, flat-bottom boats, were all the rage. But the new sport of ocean racing began to emerge and gain popularity during this time as well. In a thoroughly coincidental conversation, Bertram's offshore-racing partner Sam Griffith mentioned that *Moppie's* new hull design might just be the ticket for the next Miami-to-Nassau race. They had last won the race in 1957, and in 1959 had lost to a 27-foot fiberglass prototype.

"ALTHOUGH THE DEEP-V DESIGN ACTUALLY DATES BACK TO 1903, HUNT'S NEW TAKE ON THE HULL CAPTURED BERTRAM'S IMAGINATION; HE THOUGHT IT JUST MIGHT BE THE KEY TO A FASTER, SMOOTHER, MORE EFFICIENT PLEASURE-BOAT EXPERIENCE."

third championship, Bertram became widely recognized as an ocean-racing veteran capable of winning any deepwater race he entered. But Bertram's racing enthusiasm wasn't limited to sailing. Back in 1956, along with ex-WWII Air Force pilot and

the Tongue of the Ocean. Teaming up with Griffith, the two raced against 10 other vessels in the punishing 1956 inaugural race, winning it in a wooden 34-foot Chris-Craft. They finished the race in just over nine hours at an average speed of less than 20 mph. The following year, 30-knot winds and blinding rain slowed the team to a crawl, but they still managed to repeat their victory, again in a Chris-Craft — this time taking almost 11 hours to finish.

At the start of the aforementioned America's Cup trials in Newport, Rhode Island, on July 16, 1958, Bertram noticed a small, 23-foot runabout whisking around in the rough water. Due to his

when a flat-bottom boat slapped hard against the water's surface in heavy seas. Thoroughly intrigued by the craft's ease in rough water, Bertram sought out the designer of this remarkable little craft, C. Raymond Hunt. Hunt had a knack for unconventional thinking when it came to boat design, and his high-deadrise, deep-V hull bottom extended the entire length of the boat, rather than flattening out near midship like other boats of its day. The hull also featured longitudinal strakes along the bottom to help provide lift and throw spray from the boat, helping to keep it dry. Although the deep-V design actually dates back to 1903, Hunt's new take on

After Griffith ran *Moppie* on a shakedown cruise, both Bertram and Griffith surmised that the deep-V hull design could tame the waters in the next "world's most rugged ocean powerboat race." The boating industry was about to change forever.

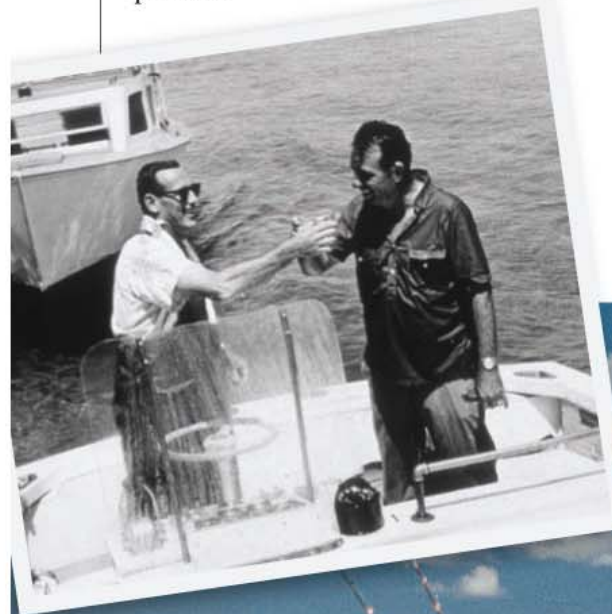
MOPPIE RULES

On race day in 1960, four days of heavy winds churned the seas into a terrible state. But *Moppie* performed just as Bertram and Griffith hoped, leading the race the entire way and crossing the finish line after exactly eight hours.

With enormous press coverage and fanfare, an outpouring of interest in this 30-footer rained down on Bertram. As president of one of the largest yacht brokerages and a successful businessman, Bertram couldn't ignore the tremendous opportunity.

Realizing the merits of building a boat of fiberglass rather than wood (fiberglass had been gaining popularity in the boatbuilding world since the '40s), Bertram used his original *Moppie* as a plug for a glass version. He rented a warehouse to build the boat in Hialeah, a Miami suburb, and in 1961 Bertram Yacht was born.

Winning several races in his deep-V design spawned a demand for the hull, and Bertram began producing his boat for the public in 1961 — introducing the indomitable Bertram 31 at the New York National Boat Show.



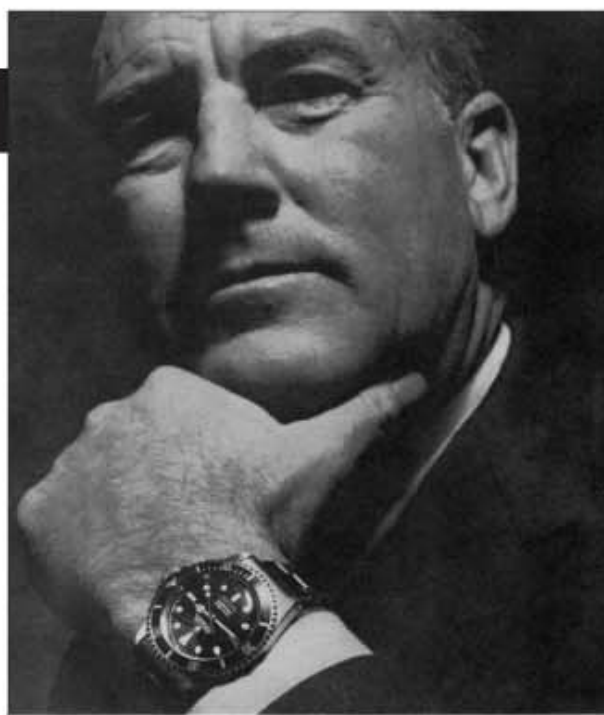
site where the Bertram manufacturing facility still operates today. Interestingly, the main building was also designed to operate as a food-processing warehouse — just in case the fiberglass boatbuilding process didn't work out.

LEGACY OF THE 31

The prototype Bertram 31 brought a truly unique hull design to the boating industry. The hull featured strakes on its bottom to help ward off water and create extra lift to get the boat up and out of the water. The wraparound cabin windows provided exceptional visibility from below but created weight problems for the hardtop. This forced Bertram to keep the flybridge area small, limiting the number of people who could sit up top at one time, yet creating a classic profile.

Most importantly, the cockpits on 31s are enormous, thanks in part to a more forward cabin placement than you would find on most boats its size, which was made possible by the lifting strakes that helped alleviate the forward weight.

The remarkable success of the little speedster ensured that the deep-V hull design and fiberglass construction were here to stay. A revolutionary Volvo sterndrive design, the Aquamatic, helped push the inboard pleasure-boat market even further. Within two years, a retired contractor named Don Aronow moved south from New Jersey and started to build his own powerboat empire, creating Formula, then Donzi, Magnum and eventually Cigarette. The old flat-bottom



"... And another important piece of racing equipment is the Rolex on my wrist."

"My Rolex is much more to me than a watch. I can trust it as a chronometer. And as a navigation aid, it's a superb speed and distance indicator. It's incredibly accurate, incredibly rugged, and I like its look."

Dick Bertram, a yachtman capable of hours in power or sail—wears the Rolex Submariner, a self-winding, 25-jewel chronometer, waterproof and pressure-proof to a depth of 660 feet. Featuring bezel, flaps and crown with magnetic shield. Stainless steel Oyster case with rotating bezel. \$1,950 (Federal tax included).

ROLEX

wooden boats were becoming a thing of the past, ensuring that the Bertram building, which still sits across from the original yacht-brokerage offices (currently Allied Marine), would never become a food-processing warehouse.

The success of the 31 combined with Bertram's racing prowess brought him instant celebrity. A billboard in New York City's Times Square featured Bertram advertising Camel cigarettes, and he also appeared in ads promoting Rolex watches.

On April 28, 2000, Richard "Dick" Bertram passed away, leaving behind a legacy that played a major role in boatbuilding history. His embrace of the deep-V hull design and fiberglass boat manufacturing raised the bar for offshore performance standards. Through the application of advanced engineering techniques and strong

A successful racing career and boat company made Bertram an instant celebrity, with his image appearing in magazine ads and on billboards in Times Square.

manufacturing principles, Bertram Yacht continues to maintain its high status in the boating industry. Just as ad campaigns in past years announced, Bertrams are still "very big in the boondocks," and that's why "the sun never sets on the Bertram empire."

Today, Bertram Yacht is led by president Alton Herndon, under the Ferretti Group umbrella, a world leader in the design, construction and sale of motor yachts. Bertram is part of a unique portfolio that boasts some of the most exclusive, prestigious brands in the nautical world: Ferretti Yachts, Pershing, Itama, Bertram, Riva, Mochi Craft, CRN and Custom Line. The Ferretti Group, led by chairman and founder Norberto Ferretti and CEO Salvatore Basile, has always been at the height of the pleasure-boating market. The extensive range of yachts is supported by the highly specialized technicians and engineers at Advanced Yacht Technology (AYT) — one of the most advanced naval research and design centers in the world.

The Ferretti Group, founded in 1968, is present in Asia as well as in the United States with Allied Marine, one of the top companies operating in the North American market that specializes in the sale and marketing of these luxury yachts as well as other nautical services. An exclusive network of approximately 85 carefully selected dealers guarantees the Ferretti Group's presence in more than 80 countries, ensuring that clients receive the very best assistance at marinas all over the world.

The Bertram product line currently features boats from 36 to 80 feet, including the Bertram 511, Bertram 540, Bertram 570, Bertram 630, Bertram 700 and Bertram 800.

Since assuming the reins of Bertram Yacht, Norberto Ferretti and the Ferretti Group have introduced products such as the Bertram 360, Bertram 390, Bertram 410, Bertram 450, Bertram 510, Bertram 511, Bertram 540, Bertram 570, Bertram 630 and Bertram 700. The latest models — introduced in 2010 — include the Bertram 800 Open Convertible, Bertram 800 Enclosed Bridge and Bertram 540 Sport Fisherman.



Norberto Ferretti (left) purchased Bertram Yacht in 1998 and still produces the beloved brand under the Ferretti Group umbrella of luxury yachts.