



Sailing a Herreshoff 12 ½

By Jeana Ganskop, Education Director



When you walk into the museum's Duncan Barn, immediately on your right is a beautiful Herreshoff 12 ½ (Saltonstall Collection, [1991.6.1.](#)). Named GREASED LIGHTNING, the Herreshoff Manufacturing Co. of Bristol, RI. built this sloop in 1938. ([Click here for more information.](#))

I don't come from a sailing background, and even after 8 years at PMM, I'm still actively learning every day! I've heard a lot about Herreshoff 12 ½s, and I've often observed visitors appreciating the GREASED LIGHTNING when they walk into the barn, but a barn is not a boat's natural environment. What is it like when it's on the water? Many visitors know, but also many of can only imagine.



I recently had the chance to sail on a Herreshoff 12 ½ owned by the [Sail Power and Steam Museum](#) in Rockland, Maine. It is 10 years older than PMM's, with some small differences, but overall it's very similar.

July 2026



We raised the mainsail, raised the jib, and glided out into the harbor. In the distance, we saw the ketch [A MORNING IN MAINE](#), and the [Rockland Breakwater Lighthouse](#). We saw the tiny black and white guillemots and an osprey carrying a fish. We also saw several ferries coming and going.



It was a great opportunity to experience a Herreshoff 12 ½ and explore Rockland Harbor. Now when I walk into the Duncan Barn, I have a new understanding and appreciation for the boats.