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# THE STORY OF JOLTIN' JOE

**Joltin Joe** - A 1949, 22' Chris Craft Runabout, Originally owned by the Legendary Joe DiMaggio. Entered by the City of Martinez.



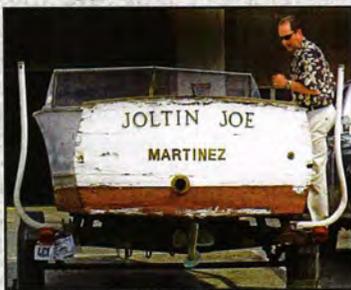
Born as Giuseppe Paolo DiMaggio in Martinez, California on November 25, 1914, Joe DiMaggio was the fourth son and eighth child born to Sicilian immigrants Guiseppe and Rosalie DiMaggio. DiMaggio's father, Guiseppe, brought his family from Italy to the Martinez fishing community and then later, when Joe was one-year-old, to the Italian neighborhood North Beach in San Francisco in hopes of better fishing and an improved way of life for the family. Guiseppe hoped his sons would go with tradition and join him as a fishermen. Joe had a disdain for the smell of dead fish and his desire to do anything to get out of cleaning the fishing boat took him to the neighborhood sandlots. Joe had his first baseball experience at the age of ten, playing third base at the North Beach playground near their home by Fisherman's Wharf. Little did he know that this would be the forefront to a long and celebrated career as a New York Yankee.

The Joltin' Joe was bestowed upon DiMaggio in 1949 in a ceremony at Yankee Stadium by fans grateful for his monster season (one of many) the year before, when he hit 39 homers and posted a .320 batting average. Gracefully crafted of first-class materials, the vessel was one of the premier boats of its day, capable of hitting 33 mph and looking classy doing it. *Joltin Joe*, was shipped to Martinez, CA, the town of his birth where he would occasionally tour the waters of Suisun Bay and San Francisco Bay.

In 1952, a year after he had retired from the Yankees, a friend arranged a dinner date for Joe with up and coming actress Marilyn Monroe. They were at different places in their lives—Joe, retired, ready to settle down, and Marilyn, on her way to stardom, yet they commenced perhaps the greatest American love story with an 18-month courtship and then marriage on January 14, 1954 at San Francisco's City Hall. Martinez has long treasured its claim as DiMaggio's birthplace and home before he moved to San Francisco as a toddler, so it was to their great delight that Joe DiMaggio entertained his film-star bride right after their wedding, with a reception in Martinez and a cruise on - you guessed it - the *Joltin' Joe*. Unfortunately the marriage didn't even last a year.



DiMaggio loaned the craft in the 1960s to his brother, Vince, who then turned it over to their cousin, Mike DiMaggio. The cousin used it for fishing until his death in 1991. The boat floated unused in the harbor for a few months until marina managers discovered that Martinez's most famous son still owned it. The managers asked DiMaggio if he would donate the boat to the city. Much to their surprise - the slugger was famous for only rarely making official visits to Martinez - he showed up and signed over the pink slip. So when the Yankee Clipper donated the craft to his hometown in 1991, he gave Martinez a, well, *jolt* of civic pride. It was then perched proudly on a pedestal at the marina in Martinez.



Unfortunately, continued exposure to the elements took its toll on the *Joltin Joe*.



In June of 2008, the Sons of Italy, Diablo Valley Lodge 2167, became aware that the *Joltin Joe* was in need of restoration. Recognizing that the Joltin Joe is an irreplaceable piece of sports memorabilia, lodge members approved the project and a Restoration Committee was formed. Efforts to raise funds began. The Martinez Carpenters Union, Local 152, under the direction of Master Boat Builder, Don Curtis, came forward, and have been working on the restoration. Upon completion, the *Joltin Joe* will be permanently displayed indoors for public enjoyment at a location yet to be determined.





THE  
JOLTIN'  
JOE  
MARTINEZ, CA 5

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