

João Silveira Tavares – Biography (1946 - ...)



John Silveira Tavares son of John Silveira Tavares and Zelia Silva, was born the October 27, 1946, in the village of Ribeiras in Lajes do Pico county.

John Silveira Tavares was born the October 27, 1946, in the village of Ribeiras, county of Lajes do Pico. It was in the 1970s, in Angola, which has developed the techniques and knowledge of shipbuilding, in particular at the level of the design and the project. He built in Luanda, at his own risk, is first boat: a fishing boat for a friend countryman living in the city. Returning to Pico Island in 1973, and it is asked to coordinate the work of conservation and maintenance of trawlers of COFACO that varavam in Lajes do Pico, in the city of Horta, on the island of Faial.

After five years in the service, he began working on his own account, mainly in boats repairs, conservation and restoration of different types of craft on various islands. On the island of Flores he work of boats for the company of the Master Jose Augusto; in Faial he worked on speedboats of the Captain of the Port of Horta. On Pico, on boats for local traffic, on Azorean Tuna fishing boats, on the trawler Salazar for Manuel Silveira Alves and on the island of São Miguel he worked on the trawlers Conchinha and in Lajes do Pico and the boat of Santo Anthony.

In addition to these work he was always also doing work for private individuals, repairing but also building from scratch the construction of small boats, speedboats of artisanal fishing boats. He was always using traditional artwork standards for the boat construction. On the island of Corvo he made a large barge for the service vessels for the transport of goods.

It was in 1998, he began the construction of Traditional Azorean Whaleboat enterprisers and that year, he was invited to join a project to restore and safeguard the process of construction of traditional boat Azorean whaling ships. The project was proposed by the American Daniel Thorne and with the support of a school of shipbuilding guided by Lance Lee (famous builder of boats in wood) in the State of Maine, USA. The objective focused on the construction from scratch of a Azorean Whaleboats. They add to do a study of the process and a research concerning the types of materials used in traditional techniques of construction. Two young Americans, apprentice carpenter (J. Adam Stone and Bruce Halabisky) went to the Azores and followed the Master John S. Tavares throughout the process of construction of boat Bela Vista, in the city of Horta. The project able them to recovered traditional knowledge, concepts and traditional methods that could of being lost for ever. The whole process was recorded and documented in the book *Twice' round the Loggerhead* (texts of Lance Lee and water colours of Yvon Le Color). It was the first new Azorean Whaleboat built after the Azorean whaling period.

This project encouraged and was the starter for a larger project in the area of reactivation of whaling heritage and would be decisive in the career of Master John S. Tavares. Between 1999 and 2000 he was invited by Azorean Maritime Heritage Society to go to New Bedford (MA, USA) build two whaling boats, Faial and Pico. From this date instituted the international rallies, competing crews that take turns moving to the city of New Bedford and the islands of Faial and Pico.

Since then, Master John S. Tavares has dedicated his career to the construction of the root and the maintenance of Azorean Whaleboats world. His work, both by the importance and notoriety, for the

recognized quality, on his work makes him one of the most renowned master concerning Traditional Azorean Whaleboats in the Archipelago.

In 2015, he was invited by Marc Larose to participate in a project to promote the Azorean culture and the Traditional Azorean Whaleboats heritage via the construction of original models in wood of half hull of s Azoreans Whaleboat hand made by Master John S. Tavares. A high-quality product, certificate and that include interpretative documentation. A single register of Master John S. Tavares art of working with wood and experienced in the field of traditional shipbuilding.
