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Dick Bell's Mighty Legacy
MIGHTY-MAC out o' Gloucester

Submitted by Dick Bell's Family

Dick Bell at Smith Cove, circa early 1970s.

Dick Bell's Mighty Legacy

MIGHTY-MAC out o'Gloucester

Richard S. Bell was born in a bathtub at his family's home on Washington Street in Gloucester on the 4th of July in 1912, reportedly, as the holiday parade was passing by. He was the oldest son and second born of Morris and Molly (Broder) Bell.

Dick attended grade school locally, graduating from Gloucester High School in 1929 and Tilton Academy the following year. After two years at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Dick returned home after hearing about his father's terminal illness. He became the understudy to his father as the co-owner of Cape Ann Manufacturing Co., a Gloucester fishing industry outfitter and oilskin maker.

Upon his father's death in 1933, it did not take long for Dick to see the potential to leverage the principles upon which his dad's business was built. Dick knew he could address the needs of a much larger national and international market for sturdy, weatherproof outerwear and sportswear.

Borrowing the money from the bank to buy out his father's partner and recruiting his younger brothers Harold and Brad to join him, Dick set out to build on the tradition of craftsmanship of Gloucester's talented immigrant labor force to create the world's greatest outerwear. Taking its name from its first product, a Mackinaw, a heavy blanket-wool jacket of a style made popular by Canadian Mounties, MIGHTY-MAC, "Out o'Gloucester" was born.

For more than fifty years, Dick stayed at the helm of his beloved MIGHTY-MAC, building the product line and its reputation for quality and style into one of the nation's largest men's and boys' outerwear companies. Viewing its association with Gloucester and other Massachusetts working-class towns as integral to the identity of MIGHTY-MAC, he steadfastly refused throughout the '60s, '70s, and '80s, despite daunting competitive pressure, to move the manufacturing process offshore to access cheaper sources of labor and materials. Dick chose in-

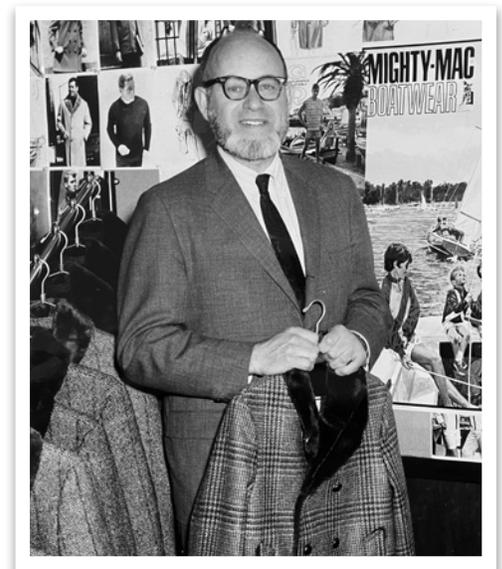


Photo of Dick Bell from the cover of New England Business, February 1968.

stead to invest in a broad array of Gloucester real estate and thereby deepen his commitment to his beloved homeport. For decades, Dick traveled routinely, spending most weeks of the year at his offices in New York City, returning home on Fridays to spend the weekend in his offices in Gloucester, Lawrence, or Taunton.

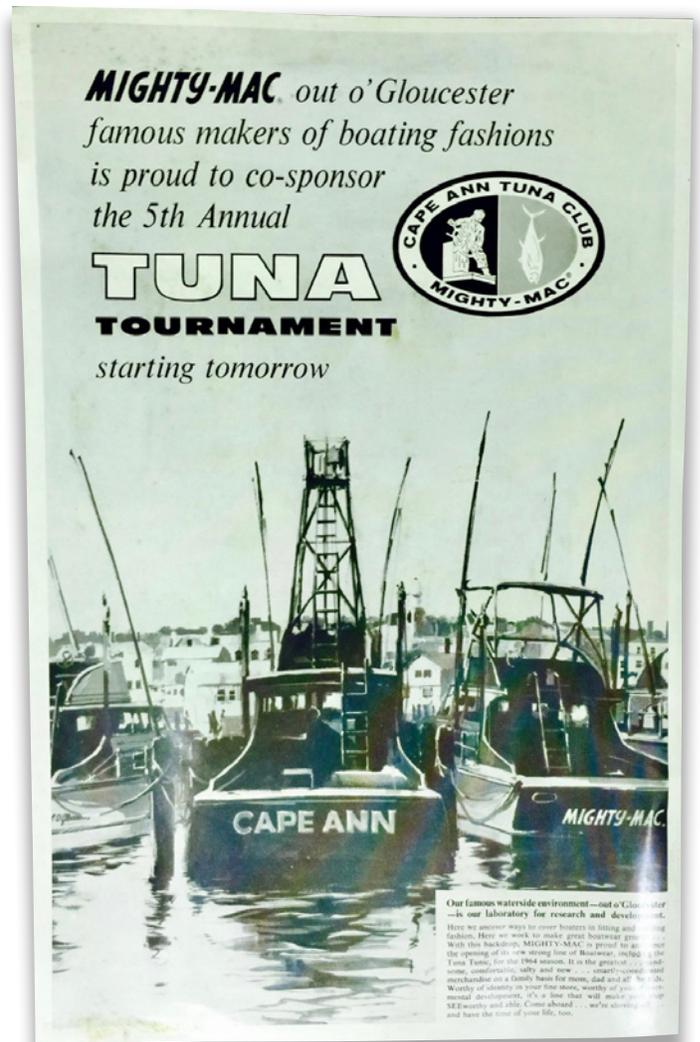


MIGHTY-MAC feature editorial in Life Magazine, 1961. Photo by award-winning photographer, Gordon Parks.

Dick was known for his merchandising and marketing pizzazz. For example, presaging the Red Sox by more than 50 years, in 1960, he developed a campaign wherein his marketing and sales team all grew Gloucester fisherman-style beards and were featured in MIGHTY-MAC ads. Dick never shaved his beard off again and was known for his mustache-less beard for the rest of his life. Among the many professional accomplishments of which he was most proud were: MIGHTY-MAC earning the Army E for the work it did to make uniforms for the military during WWII; winning recognition repeatedly as Merchandiser of the Year by menswear manufacturing trade organizations; having his line of code flag jackets photographed by world-famous photographer Gordon Parks, Jr. and featured in a centerfold ad in Life Magazine in 1961;

undertaking a Trade Mission to Europe on behalf of President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965; creating and sponsoring the Cape Ann Tuna Tournament as a novel way to unveil his new line of MIGHTY-MAC each year, attracting hundreds of journalists and buyers from across the US and abroad to Gloucester for successive annual tournaments/fashion presentations during the mid-late 60's; securing the dashing French Olympic champion Jean-Claude Killy as brand spokesman for MIGHTY-MAC ski-wear in 1969; and serving as an early member of the Young Presidents Organization (YPO) and President of its "49rs" New England chapter during the 70s.

As busy as he was at MIGHTY-MAC and as the father of six children, Dick also found the time and energy to give back to the city he so loved. Serving as the founding Chairman of the Festival of the Arts throughout the '50s and '60s, he used his executive skill and promotional savvy to organize and run recurring special outdoor events celebrated in an exhibition at the Cape Ann Museum. In 1973, he returned to chair Gloucester's 350th Anniversary, celebrating his deep affection for the city he coined "Port of Charm." In 1990 he was touched and honored to serve as a marshal of the Horribles Parade.



Dick Bell and MIGHTY-MAC created and sponsored the Cape Ann Tuna Tournament.

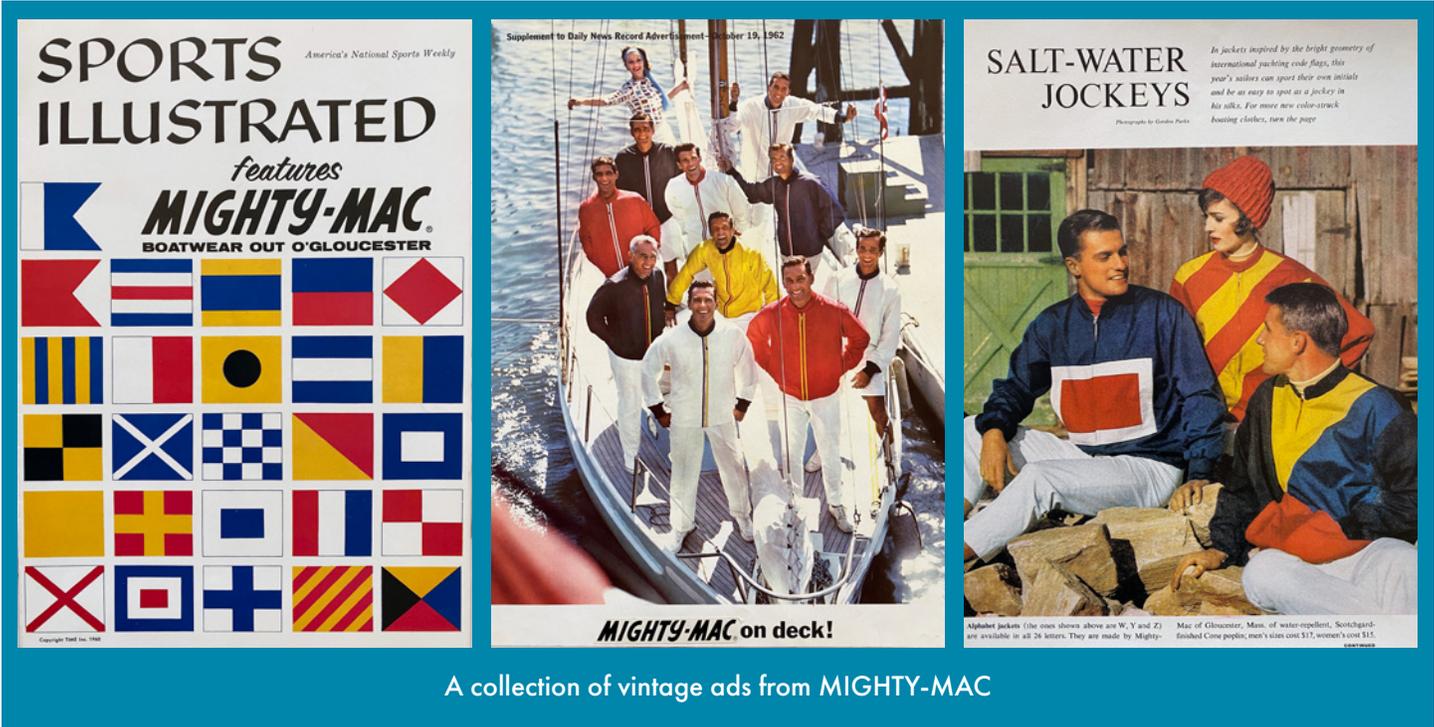


Dick Bell served as Marshal of the Horribles Parade in 1990. Pictured with his wife Winnie.

Dick's love of woodworking and "working in the yard" served him well over the years, as he endeavored continuously through hands-on effort to enhance his family's comfort and living spaces. Initially, he made a home for them in a cottage on the Annisquam River, which he rebuilt and named "The Winnie Way," after his beautiful Southern bride. As the family grew, he moved them to what at the time was a historic but down-at-the-heels antique, the Stage Coach House on Essex Avenue, now home to Wellspring. It was said to be one of the ten oldest houses in America still standing on its original site. Dick and Winnie did much of the renovating and renewing of this special property themselves and found their beautiful home and gardens featured in numerous articles and magazines, including National Geographic in 1955. Their last homestead, a stately yellow ochre Greek revival home overlooking the harbor on Eastern Point Boulevard, was perhaps Dick's favorite and most lovingly maintained. As devoted as they were to Gloucester, for several decades Dick and Winnie also maintained a retreat on Florida's Sanibel Island, where they enjoyed many happy times, just the two of them together, interrupted by frequent visits from family.

Known over his 100+ years by a variety of names—"Itchy" and sometimes even "Scratchy" while at Gloucester High School; "Hippie Dippie Dick" by his children during the '70s; and "Popeye" to his grandchildren and great-grandchildren; he liked best being called "Dick Bell of Gloucester".

Dick died peacefully on June 9, 2015, at his home surrounded by loving family and caregivers in the city that was his favorite place on earth. His death came exactly one year to the day after the death of his beloved wife of 72 years, Winnie Fay. Dick Bell of Gloucester was just shy of 103 years young, and we remember him.



A collection of vintage ads from MIGHTY-MAC

August 26, 1964

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

This rugged crew of the Constellation in furious America's Cup battling were initial wearers of the new "Challenger" jacket. The seamen's ideas were combined with those of MIGHTY-MAC to skin-gineer the ideal garment for comfort-in-action on a wave-splashed deck -- or a divot-splashed fairway. Water-repellent, of course, the "Challenger" is warm yet lightweight. Four zipper pockets plus handwarmer pockets keep handy everything -- including polish to shine the coveted America's Cup.

Created by MIGHTY-MAC...Cape Ann Manufacturing Co., Gloucester, Mass.
/f1

1964 PRESS RELEASE

The winners of the 1964 America's Cup were the first to wear MIGHTY-MAC's new "Challenger" jacket.

