

HISTORIC RIVER VESSELS

European Network of River Museums



VISTULA BOAT CALLED *BAT* FROM KAZIMIERZ DOLNY

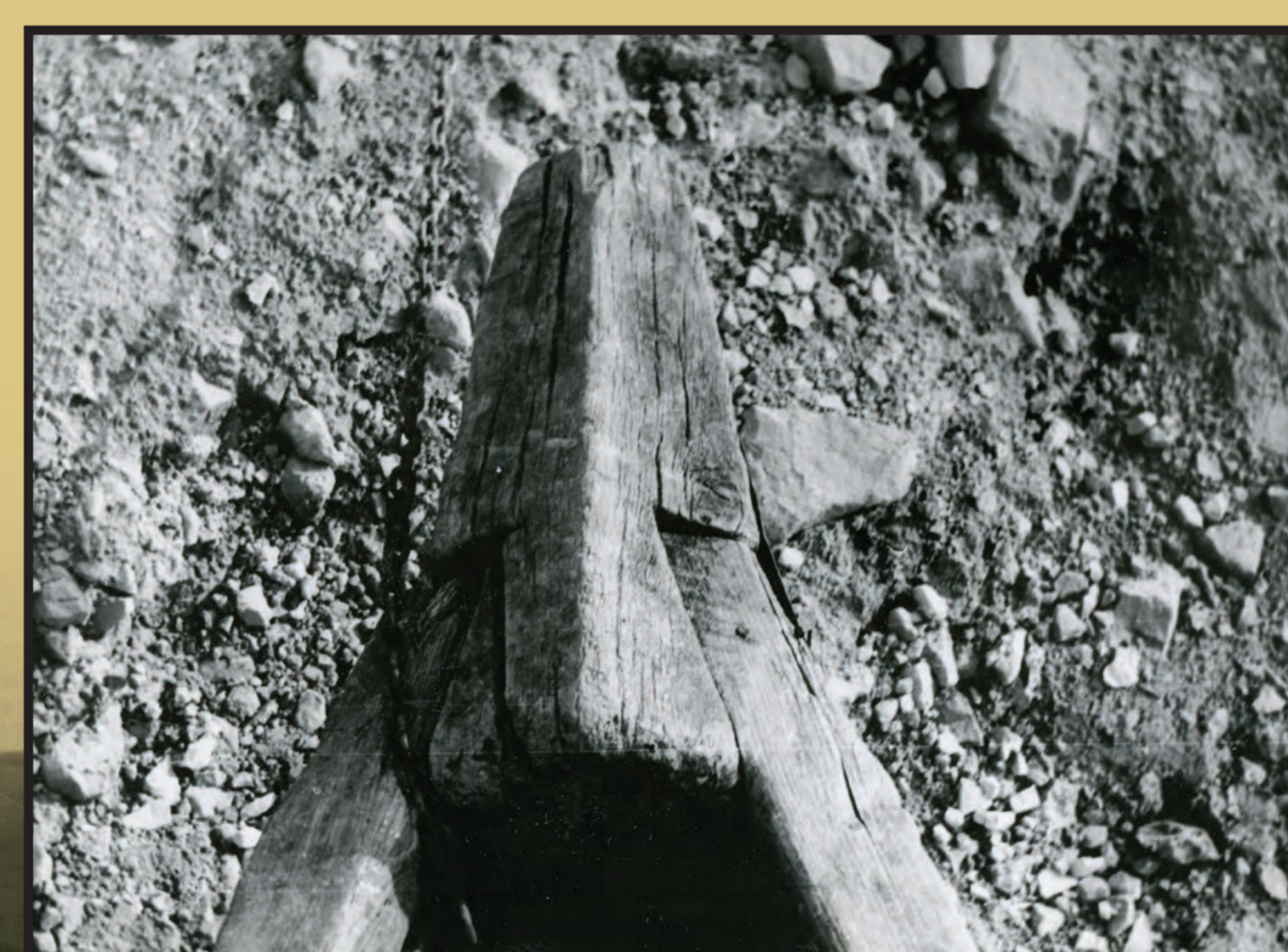
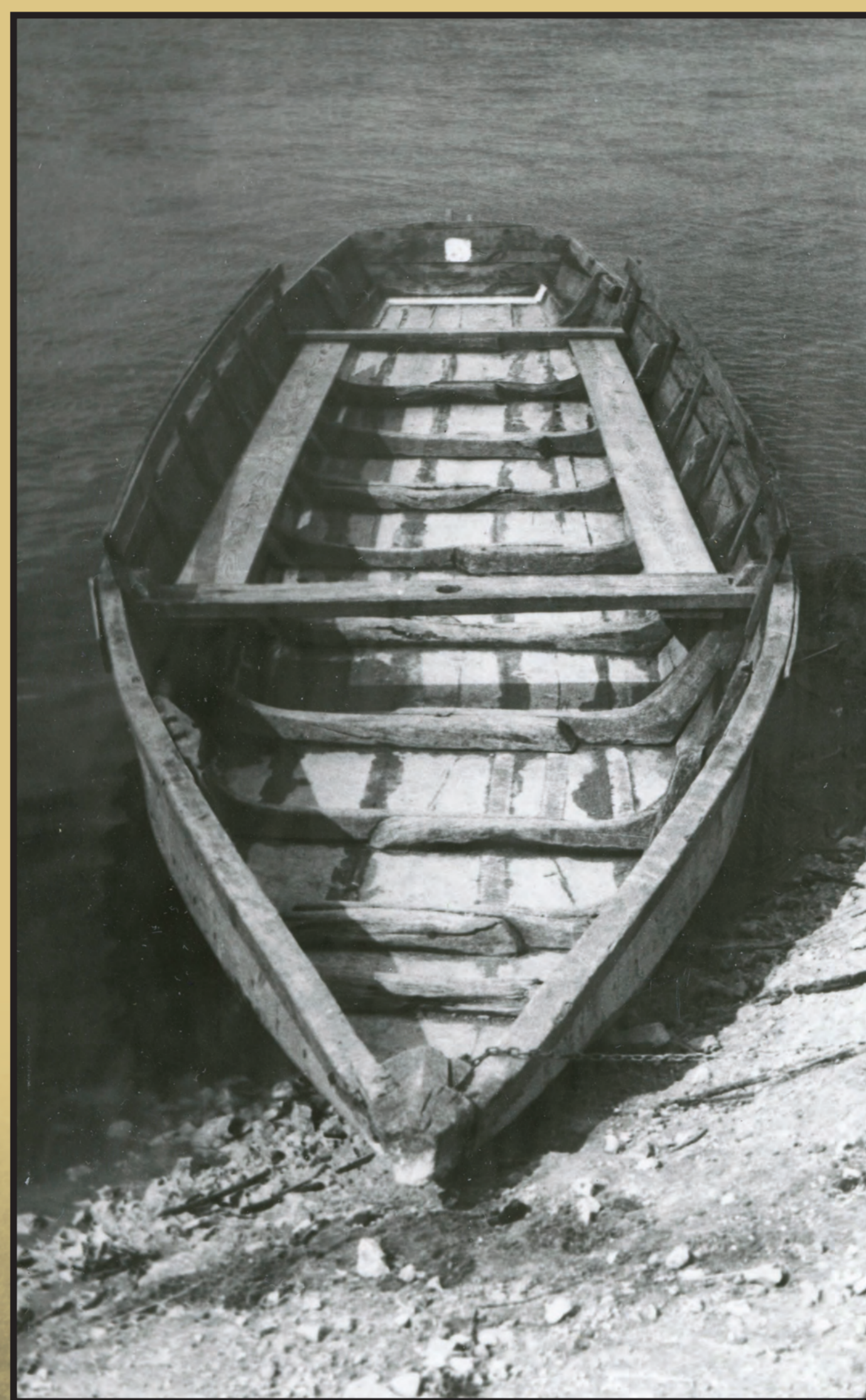
Big boats called *bats* have long been used on the central Vistula to transport people and goods in local traffic and in cross-border transport. They were also used by sandblasters extracting gravel and sand from the river bed and transporting it to Warsaw.

The boat from the collections of the National Maritime Museum in Gdańsk served as a ferry that transported people across the Vistula from Kazimierz Dolny to Janowiec. Outside the tourist season, it was used to transport fruit to Warsaw. Its registration number was: Wa-III-780. The boat was built in 1967 from the following materials: bottom from 5 pine planks 36 mm thick, sides from 2 pine planks 50 mm thick overlapped. The transverse stiffening consists of 9 ribs made of natural oak roots with a cross-section of 10 x 12 cm, joined in the bottom, with a spacing of about 1 m, attached to the bottom with wooden pins. The load capacity of the boat was 22 people. It is flat-bottomed, non-keel unit. The bow section is sharp with a block stem and raised high in a characteristic manner: sternpost sloping, almost vertical. Dimensions: length - 12.15 m, width - 2.1 m, height - 0.63 m.

The *bat* was powered by a spritsail and quant poles. Sometimes square sail was also fixed on a stay, thanks to which it was easier to return to Kazimierz. Additional equipment includes handrails to prevent passengers from falling into the water and benches along the sides. Light draught of the *bat* was 10 cm, while the maximum draught was 33 cm.

The last owner of the *bat* was Julianna Paźniak from Kazimierz Dolny. In 1976 it became a part of the collections of the Central (currently National) Maritime Museum in Gdańsk. Since 1979 it has been exhibited at permanent exhibitions of the NMM branch - the Vistula River Museum in Tczew.

The *bat* is a classic product of Vistula shipbuilding, constituting in its character and construction a reduced copy of the *scute* - the symbol of the golden age of the Vistula shipping, which has gone down in history and legend.



The last passenger *bat* from Kazimierz Dolny, which entered the collection of the National Maritime Museum in Gdańsk
photo by Przemysław Smolarek, 1973



Bat from Kazimierz Dolny at the permanent exhibition "Vistula in the history of Poland" at the Vistula River Museum in Tczew - Branch of the National Maritime Museum in Gdańsk
photo by Piotr Zagiell, 2017