



SANDY BEACH YACHT CLUB
1939 ◦ 1989

The History
of
Sandy Beach Yacht Club

Based Upon the writings of

T. Roswell Lippard
Robert C. Schmidt

Edited and Compiled by
Frank E. McClelland, Jr.

Published by
Ron Gates

Dedication



Arthur N. Little



George W. Brunton

We dedicate the 50th anniversary yearbook to the first two commodores of Sandy Beach Yacht Club, Arthur N. Little and George W. Brunton.

Good and true friends for a long period, they discussed the possibility of a yacht club on the Niagara River and in 1937 began the necessary steps to bring their vision to a reality. Without their untiring efforts, financial support and unquestioning faith in the success of their project, Sandy Beach Yacht Club would not be standing on the threshold of its second fifty years.

Subsequent commodores have carried on the fine tradition begun by these men. However, for providing a beginning, a foundation on which to build, we salute these two founding commodores and their memory.

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Commodore



Henry Buck
Vice Commodore



Dan Pruchnowski
Rear Commodore



Ron Gates
Fleet Captain



Bob Warnock
Recording Secretary



Edward Wargala
Treasurer



Left To Right (standing): R. Dubil, C. Varco, D. Vivier, L. Smith, M. Matusiak, R. Schmidt
(sitting): C.W. Bosworth, N. Stocker, W. Pilkington

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From the General Chairman:

Congratulations to the 50th Anniversary Celebration Committee for a job well done. Without your support, hard work and unqualified dedication, the 50th Anniversary Celebration would not have been possible. Special thanks to Dr. Frank McClelland, Editor of the Yearbook for his long hours of research in compiling 50 years of our club history. Also to Ron Gates, who took on the formidable job of editing and printing the book. To all of you who worked so hard and participated in making this Celebration a great success, my heartfelt thanks.

Patrons

Listed below are the patrons of the 50th Anniversary Yearbook. Their contributions, in large part, have underwritten the publication of this volume and the 50th Anniversary Committee is most grateful for their invaluable support.

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Sandy Beach Yacht Club

By
Dr. Frank McClelland

The year - 1938. Two years previously, Roosevelt had defeated Alf Landon. A man named Hitler was beginning to be heard from. Although memories of the great depression were still vivid, the world was looking somewhat brighter. Not too many years before, a bridge had finally been built connecting Grand Island to the mainland. Now, along the beautiful Niagara were sprouting both permanent and summer homes. One area, called Sandy Beach, was blessed with not only easy access to the water but also with a somewhat less forceful current so that a defined community of water lovers soon blossomed.

Someone amongst a handful of neighbors brought up the bright idea of a boating club and, apparently, the Sandy Beach community was ripe for just such a project. The idea: a club "to promote the friendship of its members, to maintain a clubhouse, dock and boathouses at Sandy Beach, Grand Island for the benefit of its members, to acquire a knowledge of aquatic sports and for entertainment and pleasure."

The organization meeting was held at the home of George Brunton on December 10, 1938. Arthur Little was elected temporary chairman. Dues were established at \$10.00 with an initiation fee of \$5.00. (By the following May, however, these fees were increased to \$15.00.) Charter members of the club were:

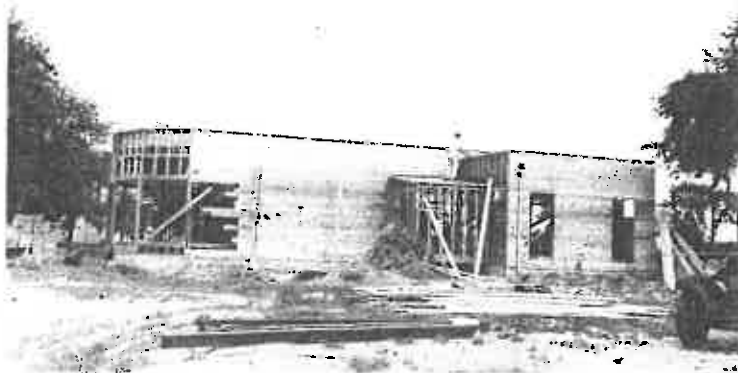
- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Ben A. Bovee | W. C. Moore |
| George W. Brunton | C. Pierce |
| E. H. Carnahan | E. R. Torre |
| Stanley Chmiell | E. L. Wallace |
| J. C. Janes | Glen Ward |
| Arthur L. Little | Otto Winters |
| M. L. Livingston | Frank Winters |
| Alvin Long | Kenneth Winters |
| George C. Miller | |

The efficacy of this group was remarkable. In less than a month a certificate of incorporation was received and by March 16, 1939 a constitution had been written and accepted. It is of interest to note that this original document stated that "any man or woman owning real estate in Sandy Beach plus any others are eligible for membership" (Ida B. Adams of Niagara Falls accepted - resigned one year later.) Certainly a bona fide nautical organization needed proper officers so that Arthur Little was commodore; George Brun-



*Arthur N. Little
1939-40*

Sandy Beach Yacht Club (continued)



Construction of the clubhouse - 1939



*George W. Brunton
1941-42-43*



*Ben Bovee
1944*

Sandy Beach Yacht Club (continued)

ton, vice-commodore; M. L. Livingston, treasurer; E. R. Torre, secretary; and Otto Winters, boat captain.

To allow for all their plans to be realized, property now became a priority. It is just possible that knowledge of available property was there all along as we note that a charter member of the club was one J. C. Janes. On May 4, 1939, just five months after the first meeting, a resolution was passed to purchase a



lot for the sum of \$2600.00 from guess who - J. C. Janes. From the minutes, data on the financing tells us that this was to be accomplished with \$250.00 in cash, an additional \$400.00 in a promised donation and the balance at 5% interest in \$25.00 monthly payments.

At a meeting on May 29, 1939, the following action took place.

1. Final motion passed to purchase Lot #1, Tract #2 from the Sandy Beach Land Company.
2. Various plans for a clubhouse were discussed.
3. Motion passed to hold a regatta on June 25th and a dance on the 24th.

Now, at a meeting at the home of E. L. Torre on June 8th - please note this date - it was decided to proceed as rapidly as possible on the construction of the clubhouse. On June 21, 1939 there was a meeting of the members held at the clubhouse. A clubhouse sufficiently constructed for a meeting in two weeks! We have it on good authority that during this period a relative of one of the founders, but who was not yet a member, was pressed into hard labor.

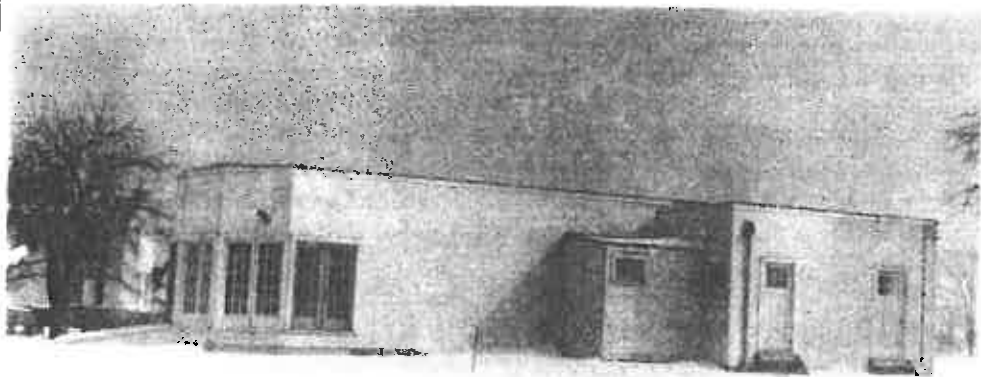


Charles Soch
1945-46



Raymond Mapes
1947

Sandy Beach Yacht Club (continued)



Bob Brunton should know.

Sure enough, on June 24th a party and dance took place in the clubhouse and a highly successful motorboat regatta was held on June 25th. In the words of the commodore, Arthur Little, it was "a crowning event as far as boat racing was concerned for it reawakened racing on the Niagara River - a sport which has been dormant for a number of years."

It is true that some professional skill (J. C. Janes, a member) was involved in the construction of the clubhouse. However, much of the labor and certainly all of the planning and overseeing of this ambitious project along with the simultaneous production of a regatta were accomplished by the members and their families. It is fitting that credit be given to these founders and early members for the establishment of the "do-it-yourself" work ethic accompanied by a driving ambition. There is no doubt that this principle of conduct, so created, is the solid foundation upon which Sandy Beach Yacht Club has been able to grow, survive and thrive so successfully.

Before the end of the year, Hitler was on the march and Sandy Beach Yacht Club had selected its burgee, sold \$5000.00 in bonds, started the monthly party idea and taken in 57 members, 39 of whom were property owners in the Sandy Beach area. A year to remember.

Work continued on the interior of the clubhouse during the winter months although a heating system was not installed until November of 1940. We note that a William Watson was hired to finish the chimney, lay tile, etc. with the proviso that he accept bonds in payment. Early in 1940, Arthur Little was elected commodore; George Brunton, vice-commodore; A. Dobbins, secretary; and Frank Winters, treasurer, a position he faithfully fulfilled for the next 16 years. Otto Winters was elected boat captain, a title the commodore offered to change to "Fleet Captain" when "the club can boast of at least two boats".

Acceptance of members continued at a brisk pace. As a matter of fact, as early as September 1939, the constitution had been amended limiting membership to 100. In spite of several attempts to secure an increase, the dues continued to be \$5.00 with initiation fee pegged at \$10.00. Finally, in November, 1940 these were increased to \$15.00 each. To augment income, at sometime during this period, a bank of "one armed bandits" was installed in the basement. The records make no definitive mention of this fact - probably for good reason. The treasurer's reports keep mentioning income from a "Wurlitzer". The amounts involved seem a little hefty for a jukebox but, then, from the number of parties that were held at the club, it is possible.

The big event in 1940 was the 2nd Annual Regatta with Denny Newman as the prime mover. Some idea of the amount of planning involved and the scope of this

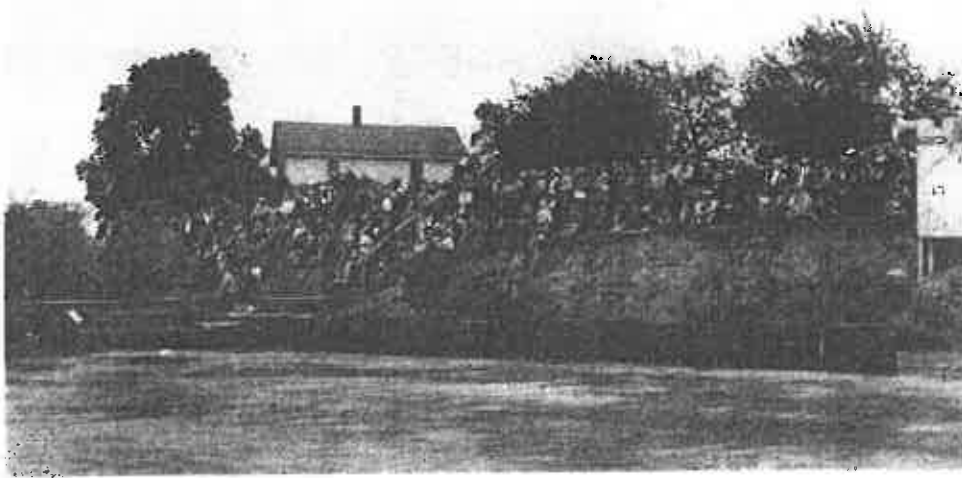


Robert T. Brunton
1948-49



Damon Averill
1950

Sandy Beach Yacht Club (continued)



motorboat regatta can be gained from the knowledge that a 40-page program was printed and provided with some 50 or 60 advertising contributors. Beverages and food for the event were contracted out. Incidentally, beer was 10 cents; hot dogs, 10 cents; cigarettes, 15 cents; and a box lunch, 20 cents. The prizes were a Deluxe Outboard Runabout, a Fishermans Outboard Motor and a portable three-way radio. The final profit for the club was \$500.00, a goodly sum in those days. The publicity for Sandy Beach Yacht Club was also goodly. We were on the map.

The clouds of war were beginning to gather with increasing momentum. England was already involved so that, late in 1940, the same previously mentioned Dennis Newman enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force. In January, 1941, he was voted an honorary membership, the first such honor bestowed in our club history.

Under the leadership of Arthur Little, the club was well established. Early in 1941, the members, to show their appreciation, bestowed on him the title of Commodore Emeritus. George Brunton was the elected commodore, a position he faithfully upheld for the next three years under difficult conditions. The membership that had been building up so encouragingly began, instead, to decline. Enlistments and the work of the draft boards were taking their toll. Membership participation slumped as dedication, understandably, changed its direction. However, somehow, the members managed to hold a power boat regatta in June and another in August.



Kenneth Kinsey
1951



Martin J. Kermer
1952

Sandy Beach Yacht Club (continued)

Sanctioned by the Niagara Frontier Boat Racing Association, the regatta on June 22, 1941, under the chairmanship of Damon Averill, was again a real production. There were several classes of racers including outboards, inboards and an unlimited class powered by 16 cylinder aircraft engines. Rumor has it that Guy Lombardo, a popular band leader for many years, was one of the contestants. There is no doubt about his boating prowess as, in years to follow, he won many national awards with several boats all named, "Tempo". Publicity for this regatta was widespread. The printed program, conduct of the race committee, the scorekeeping and the timing of the races was all done in a competent and professional manner. Also, the club made some much needed money. Then in August another regatta chaired by Art Baitz. For this one, however, they barely secured enough entrees.



December 7, 1941. Pearl Harbor bombed! With our country now at war, the club faced many problems. Material for non-essential building became difficult to secure. Gas rationing went into effect severely restricting the ability of active members to get to the club. Eventually, it was necessary to close the clubhouse and cease all activities from November 1942 to March 1943. At one point it was deemed wise to hire a local resident to act as caretaker. In 1943, there was an insufficient number of members to carry on proper business so that a change in the constitution became necessary allowing a majority of those present to constitute a quorum.

Undaunted, the dedicated club members of those years met the challenge. An extra supply of rationed gasoline was deemed essential, by the authorities, in order for citizens to plant and maintain "Victory Gardens" within a reasonable distance from their homes. Members discovered that the soil in areas near the clubhouse was not only available but, suddenly, very fertile. Thus, through this fortuitous situation and sundry other means, enough members could gather to fill in the front of the property, build a seawall and enjoy the water. As a matter of fact, in March 1942, an application was made for a charter to establish a Comet fleet. (Only a few were ever purchased.) In addition, several members, including George and Bob Brunton and Damon Averill, were able to keep their boating abilities sharpened by joining a Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla. In George's Richardson, the time thus spent by these three in the dead of night patrolling the river must have been an invaluable contribution to the war effort. Incidentally, the club made sure to purchase War Damage insurance.

The Board of Directors was able to continue to function. In March 1942, George Brunton agreed to assume the balance of the mortgage from the Sandy Beach Land Co. and, finally, to secure a deed. A controversy with this same company had, in the meantime, developed over an alleged encroachment by our



Howard Compson
1953



Jay T. Fish
1954

Sandy Beach Yacht Club (continued)

dock line on the adjoining property line. Early in 1942, the Corps of Engineers of the War Department ruled that there was indeed a five-foot overlap at the end of our existing dock. (Such as it was at that point.) However, nothing was done about it and nothing further was heard from our neighbors.

In August 1943, the members authorized the purchase of additional adjoining property to the east. This lot was amicably split with Ben Bovee, a member. Price \$2350. The mortgage was assumed by the company of George Brunton and Son. This move secured for Sandy Beach Yacht Club sufficient additional river frontage to allow a second dock to be eventually constructed and permit much improved access to the shore.

During the years 1943-1945, it was mostly a matter of holding things together but this process was admirably accomplished by Commodores Ben Bovee and Charlie Soch. Work did continue on the club basement and on the river frontage. By the end of 1945, there were 20 boats owned by members. Just how many types and classes of boats were included in this number is not really known but it is reported that even by this date many were Lightnings. The planned Comet fleet never really developed mainly because there was insufficient interest in this class throughout the Niagara Frontier boating community. The "in" boat for racing was the Lightning. (see *Lightning Sailing at Sandy Beach* on page 23)



The ladies had, early on, organized the Sandy Beach Womens Organization and in December 1941 established their mode of operation by donating some furniture to the club. The unflagging devotion of this group to Sandy Beach Yacht Club, their vital interest in its well being and their activities have been an essential part of the operation of our club. Much is owed them. (see *Sandy Beach Women's Organization* on page 27)

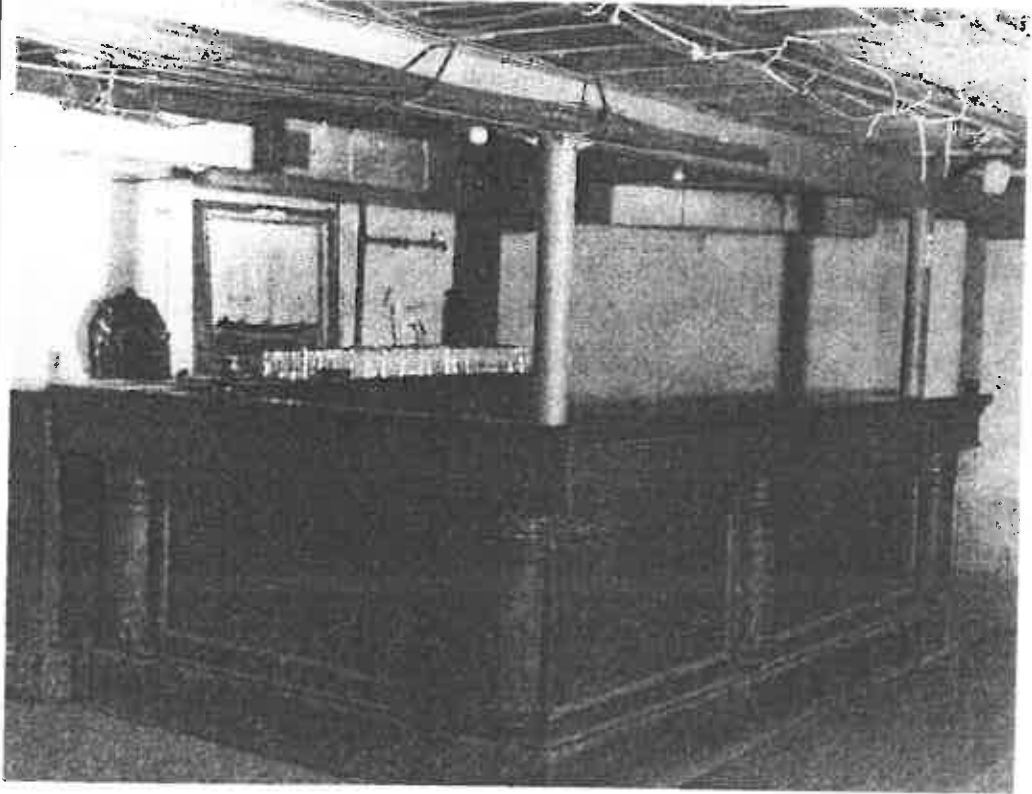


Russell Ward
1955



Wayne Baumler
1956

Sandy Beach Yacht Club (continued)



The year 1946 was mainly devoted to getting reorganized and dealing with some of the necessarily delayed maintenance problems. With the return of servicemen to civilian pursuits and with the "war effort" and its effects subsiding, the club membership began to swell appreciably but an attempt in 1947 to increase the membership from 100 to 125 was turned down. A waiting list for membership started to develop and by 1959 there were 21 awaiting. Membership chairman, Art Cramer, reported that he was "swamped by applications". In 1960 the membership limit was increased to 125.



Kenneth Wall
1957



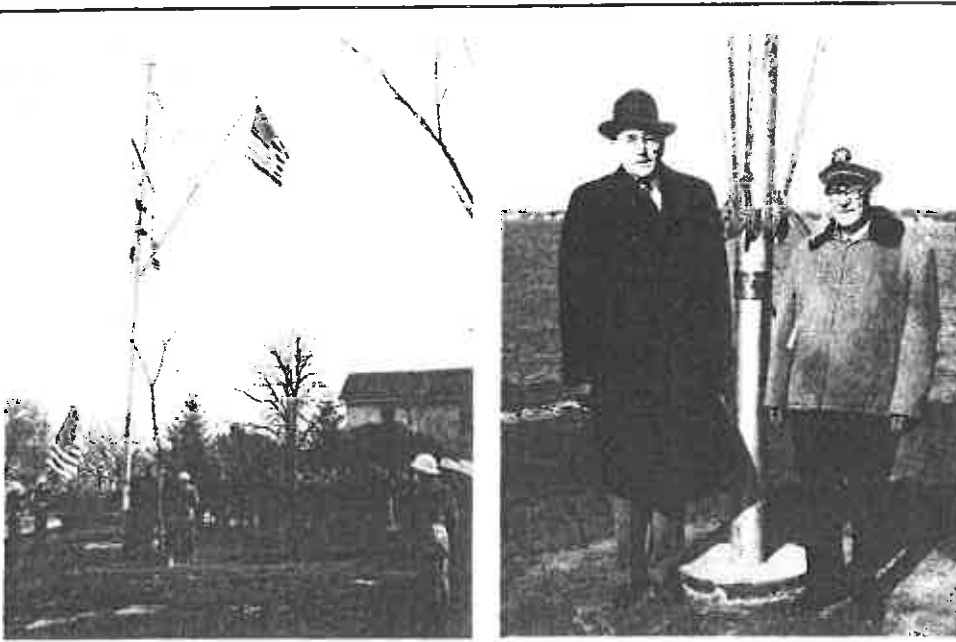
Somewhere in this same time frame, the procedure of informal initiation for new members originated. It was fun for all. Parts of the ceremony included a live chicken pecking corn from the navels of hapless inductees and painting of the club buirgee (in color) on their chests. It has been suggested that perhaps this initiation was originated and planned to discourage women from applying for membership. This is doubtful, but for whatever reason it was started, it died a natural death in about ten years.

The board minutes for 1949 report that Robert Brunton was elected to a second term as Commodore; the neighbors voiced objection to the noise after parties; and



James Sprole
1958

Sandy Beach Yacht Club (continued)



A speech delivered by Commodore Damon Averill at the dedication of the Sandy Beach Yacht Club flagpole on November 12, 1950

"We have gathered this morning to pay tribute to two great men. We sincerely and devotedly wish to thank them for Sandy Beach Yacht Club.

Some eleven years ago ART LITTLE and GEORGE BRUNTON had the idea the Sandy Beach would be a good spot for a yacht club. You see here the results —results both material and fraternal. We have a fine group of members and their families who have been afforded the opportunity of enjoying our facilities only because Art and George devoted many years of their lives these last eleven years in creating the backbone of our club. If it had not been for their undying enthusiasm, most of us would not have become acquainted with boating.

ARTHUR LITTLE - GEORGE BRUNTON, we the Officers, Directors, and Members of Sandy Beach Yacht Club have erected this flagpole in your honor. Long may it stand to remind others, in future years, of your wonderful deeds and love for this organization. God bless you and keep you for many years to come."

the roof leaked. It must be kept in mind that the "do-it-ourselves" philosophy of Sandy Beach Yacht Club created a situation in which the process of repairs, improvements and new construction in the clubhouse and on the grounds was in constant motion - as it continues to be for the organization. By 1949, ten years after the founding, the major additions in the clubhouse included the ladies' lounge and a caretakers room plus a complete remodeling of the barroom. This year, also, the club bought its first committee boat replacing the club dingy.

The following year Commodore Damon Averill led the club through more improvements and additions. The driveway and water pump were installed and a new covering for the main floor was completed. The original mortgage was retired and a bond drive to pay for improvements and refinance indebtedness was successful to the amount of \$5,000. A new flagpole was dedicated to Arthur Little and George Brunton in an impressive ceremony. This was the forerunner of the club's annual opening ceremony.

For the next two years, the big projects accomplished were a new screened -



Harold Little
1959



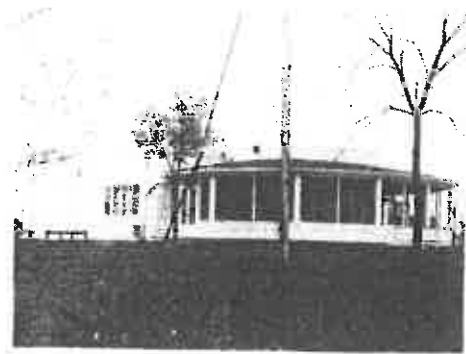
Floyd Law
1960

Sandy Beach Yacht Club (continued)

in porch and a new addition to the east side of the clubhouse. Now the club had a meeting room, an office and a cloakroom. The next project under consideration - a new dock.



Before



After

In addition, under Commodore Ken Kinsey in 1951, the first "Ditty Bag" was published; under Jack Kermer, in 1952, the first clambake was held; under Howard Compson, in 1953, the District Lightning Regatta. In cooperation with the Niagara Sailing Club, the District Lightning Championship was quite an undertaking. It proved our club's organizational ability to the bigger and more established clubs in the area and was hailed as one of the finest regattas that had ever been held.



*James Remmes
1961*

Under Commodore Russ Ward in 1955, a new committee boat was purchased. Discussions were started concerning the addition of a second floor to the clubhouse and this discussion moved into Commodore Wayne Baumler's regime in 1956. Finally, plans were put out to bid but all considered too high and the idea was dropped. Dues increased to \$40.00. The roof was leaking again. Ken Wall was elected commodore in 1957. An underwater easement was finally secured from the State of New York. The committee boat became inoperative. Jim Sprole became commodore in 1958 and Harold Little in 1959. As previously stated, there were now 21 on the membership waiting list.

During this era, following the war, the situation was this. The economy was gradually improving. Those young people whose normal pattern of life had been disrupted were now of the age for jobs, hard work, marriage and families. Optimism and energy was in high gear. Sandy Beach Yacht Club was absolutely made to order! Recreation for the entire family. A place to release energies in competitive sailing. A beautiful spot on the water for swimming, picnicing, and all the facilities. An ideal place to bring the young children and for young mothers to congregate. And all this for a bargain price. No wonder that the weekend trek to SBYC became an established ritual. Particularly Sunday! It was bedlam but what wonderful bedlam. Families established a rapport and a close bond of friendship



*Richard Newell
1962*

Sandy Beach Yacht Club (continued)

founded on similar interests and problems that was to last for years and years. On happy occasions they celebrated together. When sickness or tragedy struck, they closed ranks. It was truly remarkable.

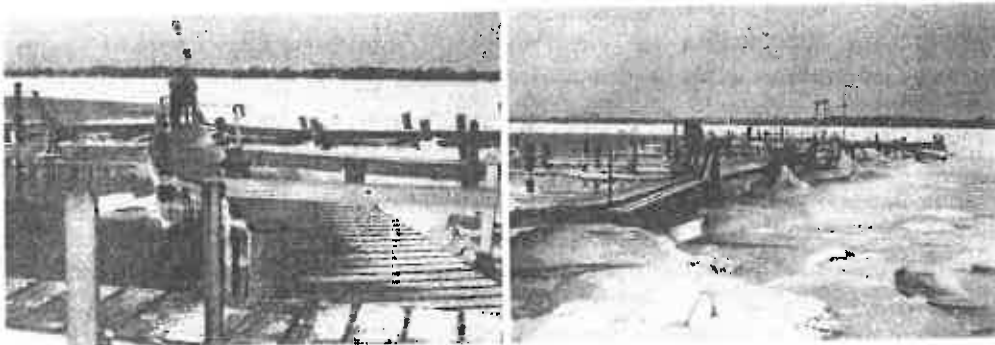
It therefore follows that the social life of Sandy Beach Yacht Club would be, likewise, very active. All members were on one of the monthly committees. One month it was the steak roast, another the Christmas party, and another the clambake. Then there was the show months. (see *Shows of Sandy Beach* on page 31)

Now Sandy Beach Yacht Club was under full sail. During 1960 the membership limit was raised to 125. There were 38 boats at the club. The clubhouse, grounds and docks were groaning with the strain. In April of 1961, the membership approved clubhouse expansion, construction of a parking lot and extension of the upstream dock. The bar was moved upstairs just in time for one of the big events of 1961...Sandy Beach played host to the Lake Erie District Lightning Championship. The Buffalo area was red hot in the development of the Lightning class. Local sailors went on to take National and International Championships.

Throughout 1961 and 1962 work on the clubhouse continued with much of it, as usual, accomplished by the members. Busy days at Sandy Beach. There were even dancing classes, taught by professionals, held during the Fall of 1962. We had to "keep up" by learning all those Latin dances, didn't we?

The increased membership brought new boats into the club. Low water was a problem and had rendered some slips unusable. New dock space was imperative. In January 1964—catastrophe!

The lake was partially frozen and the ice barrier had not built up at the head of the river. Gale force winds broke up the ice field. Since the storm came from the southwest, the winds blew the ice down the river and around the curve of the island. There the same winds prevented the ice from moving over the falls. The ice jam in the east river extended from shore to shore—from below Navy to Strawberry Islands. The jam was so solid that people were actually walking across it from Cayuga to Grand Island. The jam lasted for a couple of days when the tremendous pressures of the wind and current broke it loose. With it went about 75% of our docks. Damage was extensive on both sides of the river. Many docks, boat hoists (some with boats still in them) and shore lines were wiped out.



The damage to the docks came at a bad time. Bond issues for the 1961 and 1962 expansions were still outstanding. However, in April of that year the members considered three proposals. The one for floating docks was considered not practical. The vote to replace the docks with wood versus steel was close—25 to 27. Whew! There were 73 boats at Sandy Beach Yacht Club (including sailfish and dingys) and the 25th Anniversary was celebrated! (At the Quality Inn in Niagara Falls.)

The years 1965 through 1967 were historically unexciting. 1966 saw an addition built on to the front of the clubhouse. In 1967 the active membership was 125 with 12 junior memberships and 12 non-resident and the roof was still



John Sheehan
1963



James McFee
1964

Sandy Beach Yacht Club (continued)

leaking. Vandalism was on a definite increase. The Sandy Beach area seemed to be attractive to a large group of younger people both from Grand Island and the surrounding areas. There were several break-ins, thefts from boats and damage to the clubhouse. Meetings with town officials and neighbors were unproductive. The sheriff's department had insufficient manpower for effective patrolling. So be it. This problem has waxed and waned over the years.

During this period the Board of Directors was becoming concerned about the lack of interest in club activities. Bar income was down and attendance at club functions was lagging. Certain improvements to the clubhouse and parking area were definitely needed but, early in 1969, plans were postponed until the club's financial picture improved. Postponement of these expenditures proved most fortunate. On October 18, 1969 fire broke out in the clubhouse. (see *Fire!* on page 35)

Late in 1970, after years of negotiating with adjacent property owners, the two lots that we now use for parking were purchased. People who lived in the area were not too thrilled with this purchase. Also, apparently, they were unhappy with the noise level coming from the club - especially on weekends. Admittedly, there was a propensity of some of our more exuberant members to party on their boats until the early morning hours. At any rate, the pressures from the aggravations that had been building up amongst our neighbors erupted. The problem was discussed at town meetings and at meetings with people living in the area. The Board took corrective actions and tensions were somewhat relieved. Another problem that waxes and wanes. Also in 1971, it became obvious that the seawall was deteriorating. Also, the roof leaked.

The auxiliary sailing fleet had grown to about eight and in 1972 the first auxiliary regatta was held at the club. There were only six visiting boats but it was both a financial and social success. There was also considerable activity in the power boat fleet in those years. Predicted log races were being run. Summer cruises, both singly and in groups, were becoming popular. The Lightning fleet, which at one time was down to three boats, started to build up again. In 1973, there were ten boats actively racing. We added 19 new boats to the club's fleet that year and had to place six on the waiting list for slips. The roof was leaking.

During 1974 younger members of the club offered to design and construct a pitched roof over the clubhouse to once and for all overcome the leaking problem. Of course, a lot of the older members scoffed at the idea. They underestimated the ability of those young Turks because they not only designed and built a new roof but did it at a very reasonable cost. Hopefully, the nostalgic problem of a leaky roof was now solved. Also the expertise of our members came to the rescue, in 1974, with the replacement of the dock wiring with an adequate removable system.

The deteriorating seawall was becoming one of those problems that all members of Sandy Beach heartily wished would just disappear. The 1975 general membership meeting was particularly memorable for its fire and brimstone discussions. All motions concerning the seawall were defeated as were all motions concerning anything else - except adjournment. One bright spot that year was the renovations of the kitchen with the installation of the large refrigerator, gas stove, oven, fan and fan hood. All paid for by the Women's Organization. Well, in 1976, discussions were still underway concerning the seawall and in a special general membership meeting in October, a proposal to renovate the seawall was finally accepted. The amount authorized was to be paid for by bonds. (Which were oversubscribed.) However, the amount authorized for waterfront renovation had to be increased at another special membership meeting in June 1977 to include some dock work. Now, finally, during the summer of 1977, our problem with the seawall would be solved except there were some decided differences concerning the spoil and its disposal; there was difficulty over the permits; the contractor sold his business and new contracts had to be negotiated and the boom on the crane was overextended and buckled. Two



Philip Duchscherer
1965



Robert Roy
1966

Sandy Beach Yacht Club (continued)

boats, one belonging to te Fleet Captian and the other, the club's work boat, were totaled.

The auxiliary fleet continued to expand during these years. There were 30 boats sailing in the Auxiliary Regatta.

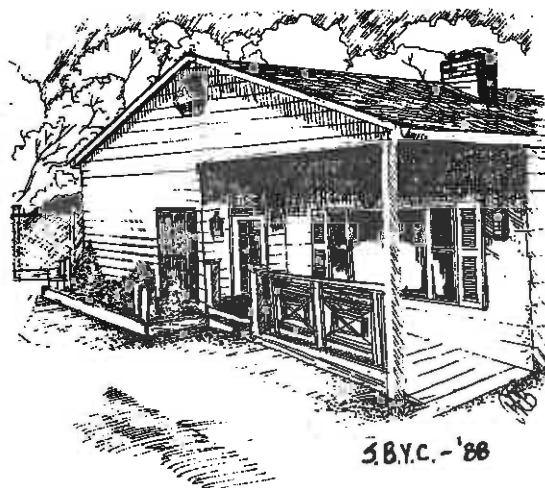
During the entire time of its existence, there has never been a year when the club members were not building or fixing or repairing. Although the years 1978 through 1986 were not historically exciting, the work on projects never ceased nor did the constant attention given by the officers and board to the maintenance of the best interests of the club. For example, in 1978, the gazebo was built - the entire cost paid by the Women's Organization. The Lightning fleet, at 16 boats, was the largest it had been in 25 years. Then over the next few years four new slips were added, the kitchen was updated with a new washer and - oops - in 1981 the roof was leaking again.

While it can be said that work on the clubhouse, docks and grounds has never ceased, neither have the social events. It surely can be stated without contradiction that the women and men of Sandy Beach Yacht Club, from the moments of its founding, are, always have been and probably always will be, party oriented. From New Year's Eve to Christmas parties, from corn roasts to gala shows, from Harvest dinners to regattas, the number and variety of social events and parties has been astounding. While boating may be the basic reason for the existence of a yacht club, it is mutual enjoyment of each others company when involved in social functions that is the real cohesive force between its members.

Under the leadership of Commodore Ron Banas in 1986 and Commodores Ed Wargala in 1987 and Bill Bosworth in 1988, a major renovation and expansion of the clubhouse was planned, executed and completed.

Well, here we are. After fifty years, a yacht club conveniently located on the beautiful Niagara. A handsome, functional clubhouse surrounded by attractive grounds. A haven for watercraft where sturdy docks make boating a joy. A place structured so the whole family can enjoy the water and its companion activities and meaningful relationships. A place where friendships are formed that can become part of our lives and whose bonds can even withstand the tests of time and change - as many, many have.

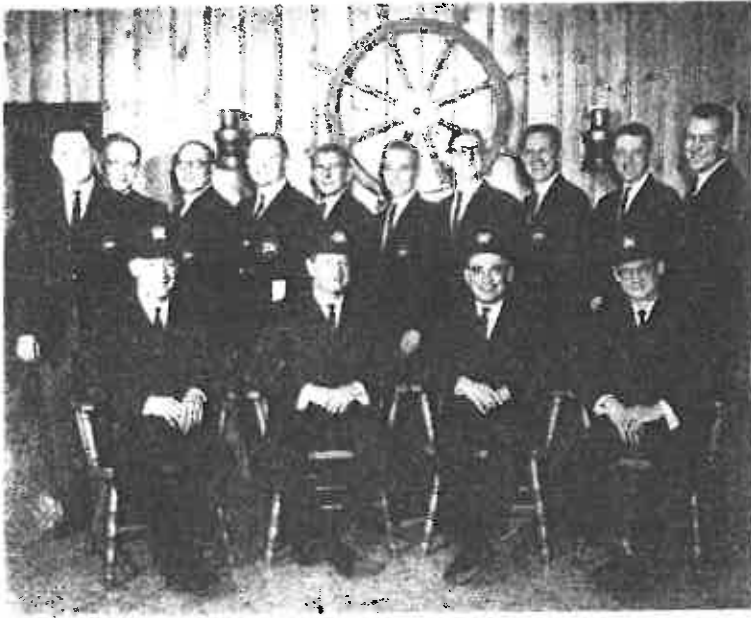
All of this has blossomed from the will, resolve and foresight of the founding few. All of this because so many men and women have given of themselves in dedicated service to Sandy Beach Yacht Club - for FIFTY years.

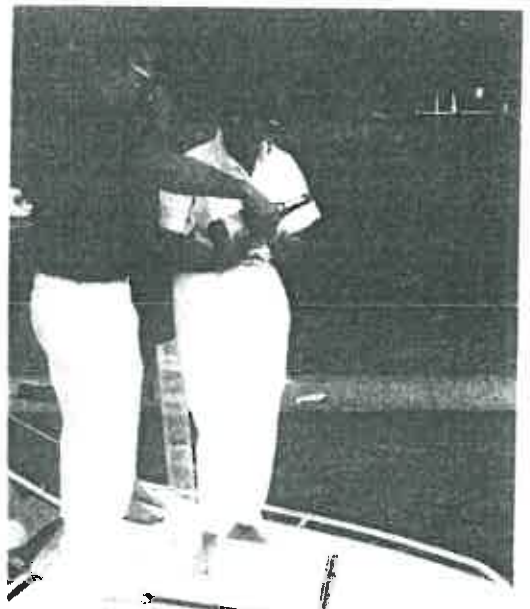


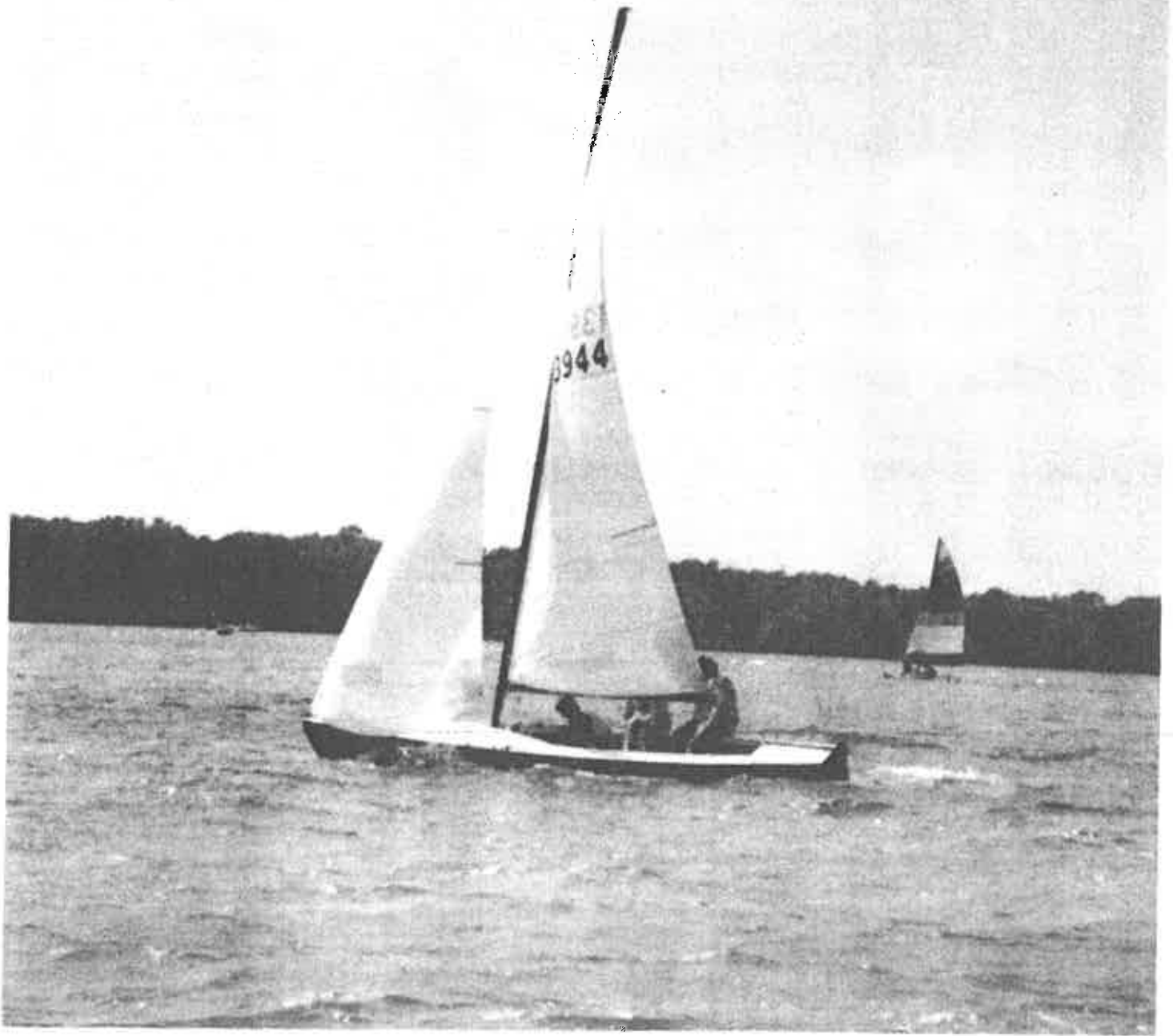
James Milliron
1967



M. Herbert Dusel
1968







Lightning Sailing at Sandy Beach Yacht Club

By
P/C Tom Lafferty

Gospel: Wherever two or more sailboats are gathered together there will be a sailboat race! So, early on after the clubhouse was erected, handicap racing began at S.B.Y.C. and a Comet Fleet Charter was granted to Edward J. Hawkes, Robert T. Brunton and Arthur Baitz in the 1942. (Not 1492!) Our own P/C Jim McFee had a Comet.

The first Lightning sailboat to tie up at Sandy Beach was brought in by Walter Sturnagle and was so impressive that a fleet was soon formed. Lightning Fleet Charter #78 and Fleet #81 from Buffalo Yacht Club were welcomed as new fleets at Buffalo Canoe Club's regatta in 1946.

According to an article in *Sail* (Oct 1988), "The Lightning was first conceived as a combination racer and family daysailer by John and George Barnes of the Skaneateles Boat Works, Skaneateles, N.Y. in the late 1930's. Olin Stevens designed the boat from the Barnes concept in 1938 and 5000 boats were produced by the company. By 1988 there were over 14,200 boats in 500 fleets worldwide. The boat was designed to be less tender than and more easily moved around than the venerable Star. It was conceived as a good daysailer that would have fine enough lines to be a good racing sloop. Finally, it had to be relatively simple in its compound curves so it could be built by a home builder."

The 1946 season had 12 Lightnings. They were:

# 433	Njoid	Oscar Carlson
752	Whizzabo	Franklin Winters
1290	Coquette	Bill and Mary Hope
1472	Iszatso	Georgia and Chester Bates
1489	Me Too	Martin and Evelyn Kermer
1525	Shaw Nuff	Gordon Shaw
1548	Little Joe	Bob and Alice Brunton
1684	Hi Ho	Charles andn Alice Soch
1796		Jay and Shirley Fish



Roswell Lippard
1969

Lightning Sailing (continued)

1903	Karsue	James Remmes
1904	Hi Ball II	Howard Compson
2054	Flasha	Ormond Lissak

In 1947 three more boats came in to make a fleet of fifteen:

1910	Jeane K.	Russ Ward
2988	Witch	Wayne Baumler
3650	Frisky II	Leslie Moyer

In 1948 there were no new Lightnings joining the fleet but 1949 saw six added to the list. They were:

42	Mandy	Richard Parshall
752	Pesky Pete	Floyd Law and Jack Marcille
1684	Hi Ho	Harold Wells
1693	Indian III	Herbert Astmann
2029	Touché	Joseph & James R. Clements
2935	Escape	Lloyd Lashway

In 1950, Remmes' boat #1903, renamed Glockenspiel, was being sailed by Stewart Anderson at Niagara Sailing Club. He became one of the finest sailors in our area. Howard Compson won the Law series that was sailed on Saturdays and one of his crew was Ed Kramer. The other crew person was anyone who wanted to see how it was done.

The following year, Al Sargeant begat #748 and Bob Brunton bought a new Morehouse #4976, Little Joe III. Charley Robinson and son, Bob, and Dr. J. Tannenhaus delivered #1548, Hypo, and Jim Milliron got #1224, Lu Jim.

The 1952 season shows a number of boats from the preceding years plus these additional entries:

#1603	High Jinks	Harold Wells
1684	Hi Ho	Charles Soch
2207	Half Cent	Ogden Mills
2930	Jeane K II	Dr. Charles Umland
4870	Debby J	Charles Robinson
4974	Hi Ball III	Howard Compson



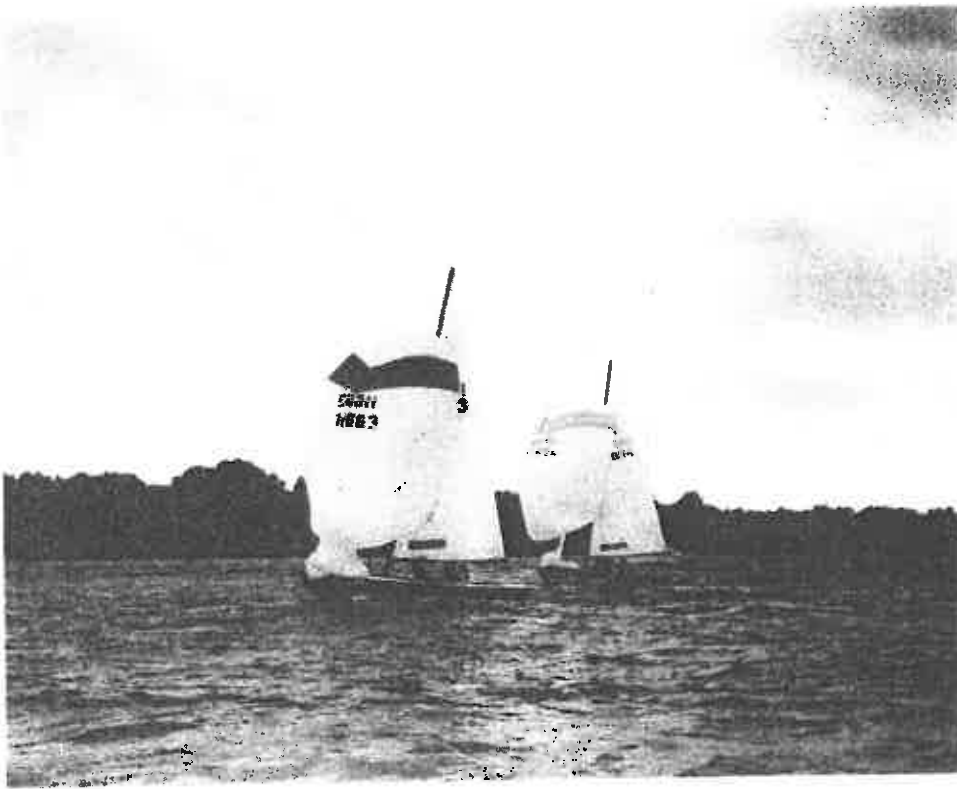
Robert Duane
1970



Robert C. Schmidt
1971



Lightning Sailing (continued)



S.B.Y.C. won the Old Oaken Bucket for the first time at the Tri-Club Regatta, the only trophy raced for at that event. The other two clubs being Niagara Sailing and LaSalle Y.C. This was team sailing to us in the 60's if not in the 50's.

Sandy Beach hosted the Lightning District Championship together with the Niagara Sailing Club. Some of the visiting boats were a bit apprehensive after seeing the mist rising from the Falls.

In January there was some Frost Biting in Sabot dingies by Damon Averill, Bill Hope, Phil Duchscherer, Charley Soch, Jim Spole, and Ed Kramer in a Haggerty Sea Shell. At another time some of our more rugged sailors went to the Canoe Club and Frost Bited (Bit?) in Tech dingies. Once they went to Rochester Yacht Club by bus and went Frost Biting there. It's been reported that it took an awful lot of antifreeze to get their color back.

The boats in these early days of the Lightning were quite heavy and Skaneateles boats had double planked bottoms, bronze cleats, turnbuckles, blocks, and mast hardware. They had removable floor boards and high bench seats, and high cockpit combings. All these things, together with the water soaked up by the hulls, made for a heavy boat more easily heeled over than the ones made today. They were more comfortable however. The boats were not dry-sailed and it was necessary to pull the boat into the shallows and tip it up on its side and scrub off scum and any growth to be competitive. They had no floatation and had to be pulled or pushed into the shallows to be bailed out when tipped over or swamped. Sails were of Egyptian cotton which stretched out of shape and spinnakers were of nylon that also stretched.

In 1957, Robert I. Kirsch, Roz Lippard and Dave Christie brought boats into the fleet and the next year John and his brother, Don Heine bought Wilawa. Jack Taggart, Jack Sheehan, and Ron McCall brought in #4032. Red Norwalk and Andy Dannels (who, incidentally, sailed in at least one Haul Out Regatta in a beaver fur coat) teamed up on Why Not. Allen Burnell also added a Lightning to the club that year.

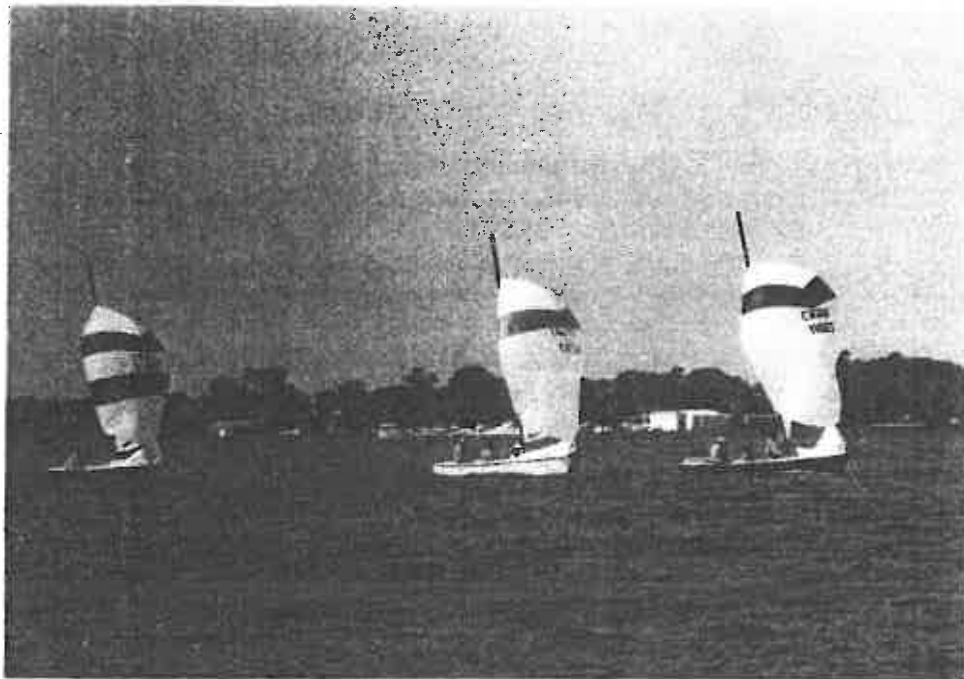


*Thomas F. Maguire
1972*



*Michael Markarian
1973*

Lightning Sailing (continued)



The year 1959 saw the first Old Timers race and the winning crew was Georgia Bates, Alice Brunton, and Jesse Law. Way to go, ladies!

The 1960's saw a number of new boats come into the fleet including my own in 1963. I'd be racing against Jack Sheehan, Bob Schmidt, and Jim Clements to name just a few. Gene Burr had a Lightning but he didn't race it.

The racing tradition continued through the 1970's with members buying new boats and trying the latest gadgets to make their Lightnings go faster. Our current commodore, John Boyce, picked 1974 to give up on his Laser and start racing a Lightning. By the mid-70's, the boats were very sophisticated with oval spars, five-inch floatation bottoms, big self-bailers, ratchet blocks on the main, jib down hauls, etc. to say nothing about the shiny fibreglass bottoms dry sailed on their trailers. It was possible to get the boat back up after a capsize and get back in the race. It did, however, take a very knowledgeable crew to sail the boat in competition.

The last year of Lightning races at Sandy Beach was 1979. The Haul-Out Regatta still brings Lightnings to our club but it's been 10 years since we've had a start for our own Lightning fleet. Many of those Lightning sailors are now on the water each Sunday afternoon racing their auxiliaries.

Speaking for the Lightning sailors of Sandy Beach, let me say that all the wonderful people who gave their boats, their time, and their energy as race committee were, and always shall be, very much appreciated. We thank all of you very much.



Thomas Lafferty
1974



Arden R. Theobald
1975

The Sandy Beach Women's Organization

by
Evelyn Powers

The Women's Organization has been an ongoing group since almost the beginning of the club. Its purpose, besides the obvious fellowship, has largely been the raising of money, in so many ways, for the betterment of the club's physical aspect.

Along the way, however, they have donated money to many needy families, as well as to various charitable organizations which they do to this day. The members have also enjoyed programs for fun and enlightenment such as talks from representatives of the Historical Society, police narcotics squad, Coast Guard, International Institute, antique and collector's societies and others. Our meetings have included such programs as Tupperware, jewelry and cosmetic demonstrations, as well. There have been book reviews, fashion shows, card parties, Lucky Name parties and demonstrations of flower arrangements. We remember steak roasts, Old Timers' days, children's parties and always - the preparations, serving and clean-ups at regattas and all the other parties over the years.

The Harvest dinners where, on one occasion, the "girls" had to leap frog over the electrical wires of the roasters, from preparing sandwiches for sale to hungry crews at Sunday races to the raffles and all the other ways to secure money for "our club", we raise our hats to the Women's Organization.



*Geraldine Pilkington
President, 1989*

Women's Organization

Past Presidents

Alice Soch*	1945	Alice Duane	1968
Jean Averill*	1946	Florine Duchscherer	1969
Evelyn Kermer	1947	Myrnie Heinrich	1970
Marion Frisbee*	1948-49	Ellen Markarian	1971
Evelyn Powers	1950	Norma Schmidt	1972
Alice Brunton	1951	Shirley Mohr	1973
Mae Wall	1952	Rose Hawkins	1975
Doris Rich	1953	Ivy Sundholm	1976
Joan Sprole	1954	Sue Robinson	1977
Leone Remmes	1955	Doris Chapin	1978
Gerry McClelland	1956	Sally Burr	1979
Marion Baumler*	1957	Pat Taggart	1979
Helen Wilkinson*	1958	Rita Earsing	1980
Ruth Nunemaker	1959	Shirley Mohr	1981
Jean Newell	1960	Linda Woods	1982
Amy Averill	1961	Sharon Murphy	1983
Shirley Fish	1962	Judy Nutz	1984
Arlene Welsh	1963	Sue Robinson	1985
Justine Fekete	1964	Margot Smith	1986
Alice Lippard	1965	Kathy Pruchnowski	1987
Joanie Lawrence*	1966	Margot Smith	1988
Marge Magner	1967	* Deceased	

1989 Officers



Left to Right: J. Buzby, M. Grybel, Pres. G. Pilkington, S. Robinson, N. Varco

A Conversation Between Two Past-Presidents

By
Ivy Sundholm and Sue Robinson

"Remember what an honor it was to be asked to run for corresponding secretary of the Women's Organization?"

"Even though it meant doing a monthly mailing—(remember using the address plates in the machines.)"

"Remember the old kitchen?"

"Oh yes, four cast off apartment stoves from the Park Lane and a refrigerator no longer needed by one of our members, but Rose Hawkins could shape a standing rib roast to fit into those ovens and put on a super dinner for 150 people in spite of it all."

"What about sandwiches for the sailors on Sundays?"

"In the days of the board boats, the sailors really appreciated the sandwiches made by the ladies which could be purchased for a quarter. If only they could have heard the endless discussions at the Women's meetings!"

"We've really had some good parties through the years."

"Some really spectacular fashion shows, too. Nobody can beat Mary Peterson as a model! Then there is everyone's favorite, the Lucky Name Party. Remember collecting all the Green Stamps and Brand Name coupons only to have Muriel Neville walk away with all the 'good stuff'. And those auctions, I'll bet we all still have things we bought which we planned to donate to the next one, but Mike had to build a second home to hold Ellen's acquisitions! Harvest Dinners, our reward to ourselves for all the hard work over the summer, and don't forget the steak roast. We had to move it from Thursday to Friday nights when many of our members' jobs were threatened for failure to show on Fridays! Yes, those were the days!"

"And those regattas!"

"Men and women alike worked for weeks preparing for the annual regattas. We threatened to buy a clothes dryer every September as several hundred drenched sailors sat around the club waiting for the inevitable rain to pass. How about getting the food out to the tent in the yard through the mud, rain and wind. And how about the years with no wind? Breakfast would go into lunch and lunch would back up into dinner and we even sent food out to some of those die-hards trying to make the upstream mark.

"And the parties!"

"The Stompers playing far into the night. The neighbors never complained and the only police were the ones we hired to watch the cars in the outer lots. Just think, we were thrilled to be an officer in the Women's Organization so we could work up through the chairs and be in charge of all the meals for those regattas!!! Corresponding secretary chaired breakfast, recording secretary had lunch and the president and vice-president did dinner. Boy, did we make money!"

"That's how we paid for the new kitchen and the gazebo.

"We can't remember the number of times through the years that we've been told 'YOU'RE NOT A MEMBER', but we know that deep down it was all in jest and everything that the Women's Organization has contributed since 1945 has been greatly appreciated by the members of Sandy Beach Yacht Club. We are grateful to have been a part of it."

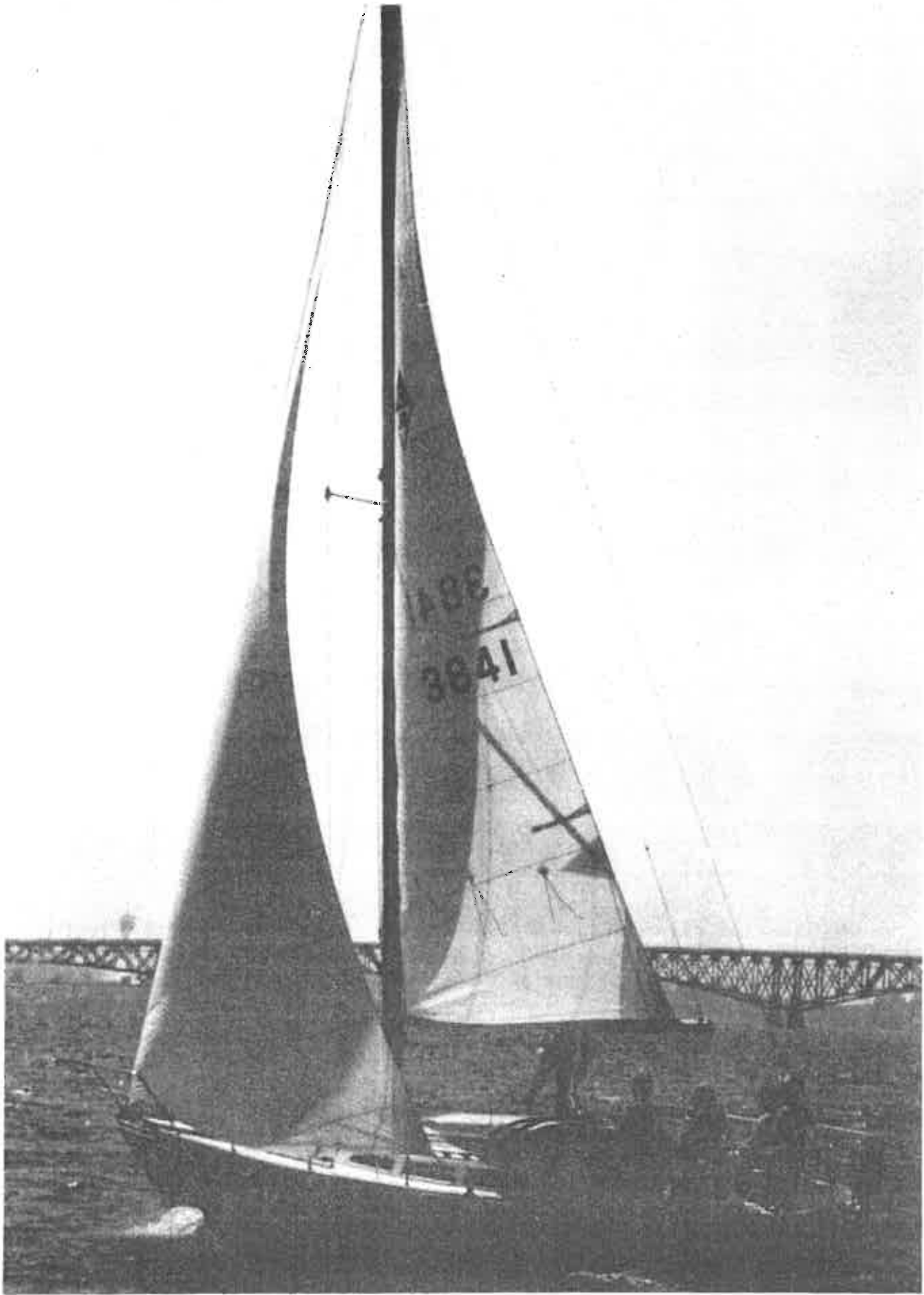
HAPPY FIFTIETH!"



Dennis Sundholm
1976



James Huggins
1977



Shows of Sandy Beach

by
Robert Schmidt

Starting around 1952, Sandy Beach Yacht Club got into the "show" business. Early on, every member of Sandy Beach was placed on a monthly party committee. These parties varied....one was the corn roast, another the clambake, and still another, the Christmas party. It was a great way for new members to get acquainted and become involved in club activities. Three of the twelve monthly committees produced a show- March, May and June (which eventually became a November party). All the hams migrated to show committees and, from their size, there must have been a lot of hams.

The shows were never serious-usually a combination of many acts with a central theme and including many musical numbers. The March committee, under the leadership of Phil Duchscherer with the scripts by Pat Taggart (some shows with twenty pages of script and up to eighteen songs), were probably the most involved. Inasmuch as the competition between the show committees was so intense, it will never be resolved as to which committee produced the best shows but all, on occasion, produced some really sophisticated productions. They certainly brought out some surprising talent.

Before the bar moved upstairs, the "stage" was usually at the river end of the club or in front of the fireplace. Eventually, a small removeable stage was constructed for use in the lounge area. The communal dressing area was the old office which made for some interesting offstage scenery.

Stage backdrops were quite involved. Many were painted by Bob Bemisderfer and Dick McCleary. Music was such an integral part of all the shows that many of the slick productions that Sandy Beach became famous for would have been impossible without Phil Duchscherer and the long-suffering Sandy Beach band.

The names of the productions give an indication of their cultural appeal. Some of the March committee productions were "The Shooting of Dan McGraw", "Hey Look Us Over", "Charlie Brown", "Hair", and "Hamalot". The May committee did "May Hem" and "The Bed" and among those that the June (November) committee did were "James Blond", "Playboy Follies", "Circus Time" and "Boobs and Saddles". Inasmuch as the show years extended from about 1952 through 1977, the number of individual acts involved was prodigious. A few that stuck in the writer's memory were Betty Lafferty's dance (no wonder the nickname "Boom Boom" stuck), Mike Markarian as an Arab prince, Tom Lafferty singing "If I Were a Rich Man", Ruth Nunemaker doing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" as a stripper, Gerry and Frank McClelland singing "Put a Penny on the Drum" in authentic Salvation Army costumes, Harold Little's hernia dance, the routines of the irrepressible Ellen Markarian and Marge



William Mohr
1978

Shows of Sandy Beach (continued)

Murphy and the harem costumes of Joan Hein, Shirley Mohr and Ivy Sundholm.

Late in the 1970's, the gradual loss of willingness by the members to contribute the amount of time and effort necessary to produce a show was probably the main reason for the demise of interest. This is surely understandable. Other social activities with many fine affairs put on by enthusiastic members continue as integral parts of being a Sandy Beacher. The shows of Sandy Beach, however, will always have a special place in the hearts and memories of those involved.



*John Taggart, Jr.
1979*



*Eugene Murphy
1980*



The Penguins

by
Robert Schmidt

During the late fifties, the Lightning fleet had dwindled considerably. In order to generate more interest in sailing and to provide boats for adult and junior sailing classes, 10 or so members were inveigled into purchasing Penguins. The commodore in 1960, Floyd Law, pushed the project. It sounded like a good idea at the time. This was a 12-foot sailboat but was purchased as a kit. Construction of the boats was to take place in the club basement or in the member's homes and, ostensibly, as a family project. Involved were Law, McClelland, Duchscherer, Remmes, Little, Paxhia, Clements, Cobler, Newell, Magner and maybe others. A concrete ramp was constructed at the basin for launching and storage.

Instructional classes were held. Races were scheduled for juniors on Saturday and adults on Sunday. Boats were made available by the owners to anyone who qualified. In the Fall and Winter, a "frostbite" series was held. There was lots of interest the first year. Sailors came from Niagara Sailing Club, Olcott Yacht Club, Buffalo Canoe Club, and Buffalo Yacht Club. Races were run until close to Christmas. It was lots of run scraping the snow and ice off the crafts before leaving the dock!

The Penquin, to say the least, was a tricky boat to handle. The air was often heavy with certain special words. It took some doing to haul big Schmidt out of that cold river encumbered by all those heavy clothes. By 1965, interest had declined and most of the boats were sold or given away.



C. Eugene Burr
1981



October 18, 1969

Fire!

By
Robert Schmidt

The fire was discovered at about 2300 hours by one of our Grand Island members who happened to be passing the club. He noticed the lights were out and smoke was pouring out of the fireplace chimney. Fortunately, as we were told later by the fire department, the damper had been left open and provided a vent for the smoke and heat. Otherwise, we might have lost the whole clubhouse. When the club officers, one of whom, was called from his bed on his wedding anniversary, arrived at about 0100 hours, the fire department was in the process of putting out small pockets of embers and mopping up. Fire had started in the lower hallway near the entrance to the ladies room. At that time, the hall was divided in half with one side used as storeroom and what is now the electrical room. The cause of the fire was never determined. Arson was suspected. The club had not been used for the previous two days so careless smoking was ruled out. Since it appeared that the fire had started near the junction of a mess of electrical wire in close proximity to a copper water line, faulty electrical wiring could not be ruled out.

In any event, the early discovery of the fire prevented serious structural damage. Only a small area near the stairway needed to be rebuilt. Another lucky circumstance, the fire happened on a Friday night. The next day was our regularly scheduled winterizing and clean up. We were able to clean out quite a bit of debris from the interior of the clubhouse.

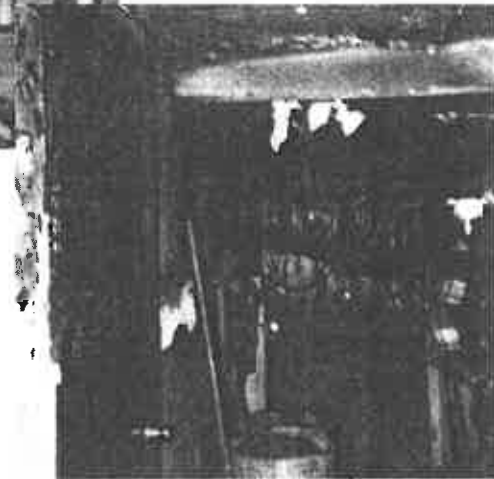
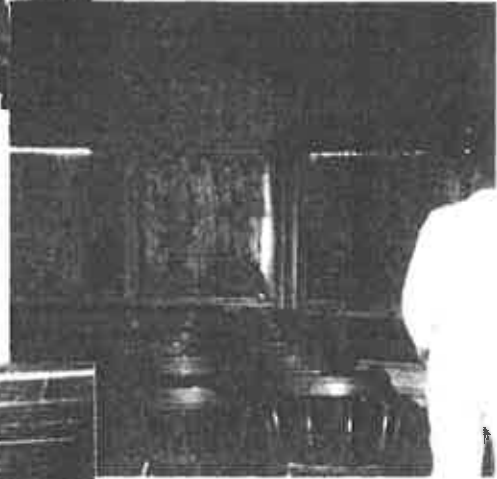
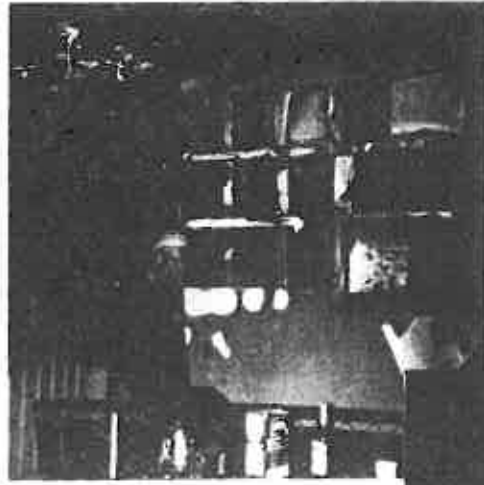
The foyer area was the most seriously involved. Some floor joists had burned through. Ceiling timbers, walls and ceilings were heavily scorched, downstairs hallway and old storeroom were heavily damaged, all electrical service was out, the water line burned through, a heavy film of oily soot covered the whole clubhouse, the front doors were damaged by firemen breaking in to fight the fire and most of the front windows were broken out to vent the fire. Again we were fortunate that the main structure was sound and using temporary lights, we were able to use the clubhouse for all the meetings necessary to resolve the insurance settlement, to discuss any rearrangements and changes desirable during reconstruction and to continue Tuesday night sessions.

During our November annual meeting held at the Niagara Sailing Club, the membership authorized the Board to proceed with the reconstruction, within the limits of the insurance settlement which came to \$23,318 after all the fees were paid.

There is no way of accounting for the thousands of hours our club members put into the rebuilding project. We were able to get a lot of material at low prices through our members and their contacts. We received the services of



Edward Kramer
1982



Rudy Nutz
1983-84



Michael K. Murphy
1985

necessary craftsmen on a "moonlight" basis.

Through the hard work of our membership we were able to completely rewire the clubhouse, install all new light fixtures, insulate the ceiling, build the new stone fireplace, panel practically the whole club, replace the ceiling, install the new mural on the back of the bar, install carpeting and buy a new piano.

Of course, the whole process took until November of 1970 to complete. All improvements, believe it or not, cost just over \$500 more than the insurance settlement.

The Longest Night

by
Robert Schmidt

An annual event known as the Commodore's Ball has, for many years been a part of the club's activities. One that will be long remembered occurred on February 19, 1972. It was held at the Buffalo Launch Club.

Al Starck asked for and was given the chairman's job for the 1972 party so what followed is all his fault. Snow had started falling in late afternoon and by party time there was a foot or so on the ground. Some folks expressed concern about the snowfall but their fears were assuaged by the copious libations available. The storm continued all during the speeches, presentations and dinner. By the time dancing started the driveway to the Buffalo Launch Club was almost impassable.

A few timid souls departed early and made it home after several hours following circuitous routes trying to find a passage off the Island. Some Island residents walked or were given rides home on various snow fighting vehicles. The commodore, Bob Duane and Alice, left the party fairly early with their hosts Roz and Alice Lippard.

Meanwhile, back at the party, the frivolities continued. Several people who had left early were rescued from their stalled cars and returned to the Launch Club. It's hard to maintain decorum when riding a snowmobile or snowplow equipped truck, much less surplus Army jeeps wearing long evening gowns and officers uniforms. In spite of the assaults on their dignity, these folks rejoined the fun and frolic. There was plenty of entertainment available. When the hired band got tired, Phil Duchscherer took over the piano. Some of the performers from the club shows put on their specialty acts...songs and dances on improvised stages, tables, even on the bar (singers only). Some of the tireless actors were still at it at daybreak.

The bar had to close at 3 am (just in case some liquor authority guy was prowling around in the storm). BLC Commodore Mel Rupp Jr. did not sound too sparkling when he answered the 3:30 am phone call but he asked the club bartender to continue serving those who were still standing. Guests were sleeping on tables, lounges, in chairs or wherever a fairly comfortable place was available. Hard to rest with all the noise-some called it singing -that prevailed the club. Around 8 am even the most exuberant were slowing down. They were revived somewhat by the arrival of coffee and rolls supplied by the help who had spent the night with us, assisted by a couple who got to the club by dog sled or something.

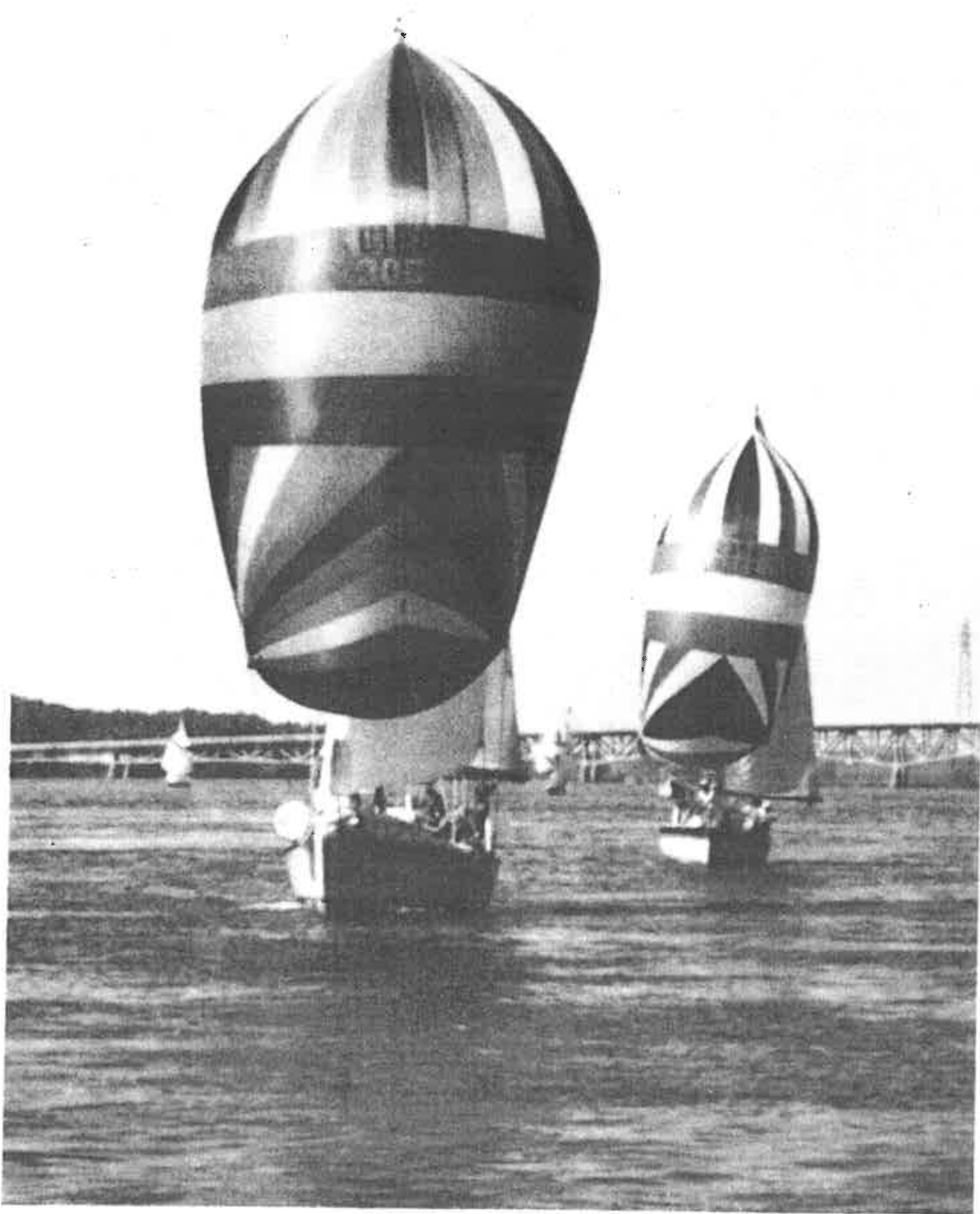
Even the most hardy was glad to see the snowplow that arrived around 10 am Sunday morning. The driveway was cleared and the weary celebrants wended their way towards home.

There were lots of horror stories. Cars stalling in drifts, gowns being ruined from riding in various trucks, hairdo's a disaster, ballroom slippers soaked from walking in the deep snow, some cars were not repaired and returned for a week or so, drivers covering every road on the Island before finding a route home, but we all survived. Fortunately, there were no injuries other than to our dignity.

As is usually the case when faced with adversity, a feeling of camaraderie prevailed and people maintained their sense of humor; especially true of Sandy Beachers.



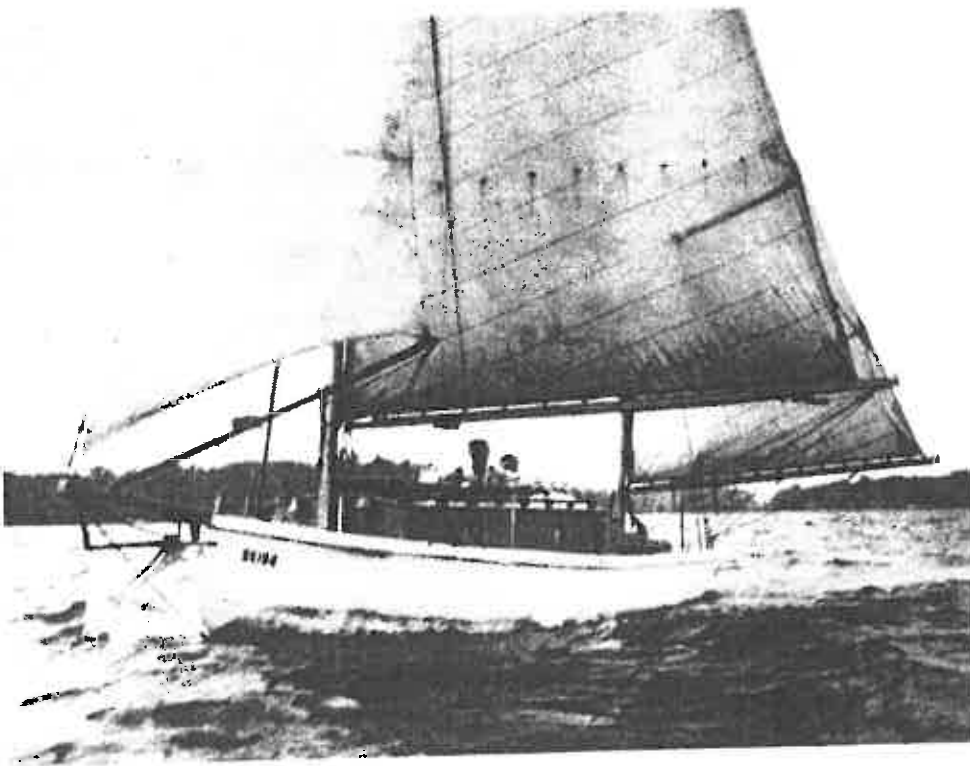
Ronald Banas
1986



Cruising Sailboats

By
Gene Burr

Early in the 1950's, the wives of some of the small boat sailors gave vent to their displeasure at being relegated to the front lawn with the kids while their husbands were out on the water having fun. As a result a cruising sailboat fleet was born. It may not have had an auspicious beginning but in 1989 the sail fleet is almost exclusively cruiser/racer craft.



The fleet started with wooden boats, now called "classics". Ken Kinsey and Jay Fish paved the way. Ken, with his "Duet", a sloop about 30 feet overall, built locally and Jay followed suit with his "Sea Lark", a 28-foot yawl. These adventurers left SBYC frequently to cruise the waters of Lake Erie. Jay recalls that his boat was a sort of playpen for many of the SBYC youngsters. George Rasmussen joined the cruising group in that decade with his 32-foot, Italian built sloop and Jim Sprole and family enjoyed their "Mermaid" until 1964 when they sold her. Jim concluded that he could have just as much fun sailing with



Edward H. Wargala
1987

Cruising Sallboats (continued)

friends without the problems of ownership.

These boats weren't particularly suited to racing around the buoys in the river but nevertheless the competitiveness of our skippers would prevail. In the early years there was one race each year. There was no consistent winner until Phil Duchscherer brought "tupperware" technology to the fleet with his beautiful Cheoy Lee "Sea Jay" and usually won.

The plastic boats had made their debut and would soon be popular but many of the SBYC day sailors would enter the "big boat" world when wood was still a viable choice. Al Kramer brought a Kings Cruiser to the fleet and promptly named it "No Buoys" in honor of his three daughters. Gene Burr had a Dutch built boat which he sailed until 1972, long after others had moved on to fiberglass. Jack Topliffe sailed a handsome 30-foot sloop which he had built himself.

As might well be expected in any fleet and among sailors of varied, sometimes questionable, skills, sailing was a most beguiling pastime, with misfortunes interspersed with the good times. The fleet has experienced lightning strikes, dismastings, serious groundings and other assorted ills of a less serious nature, too many to be recounted in detail. An anecdote about one time member Charlie Geyer bears retelling, however.

Charlie bought a 24-footer but before he could get it in the water, Charlie, a captain in the Buffalo Fire Department, was blown out of a building by a gas explosion. During his recuperation, he was sailing up the river when he spotted a small dog floating down the river. As was determined later, the dog, unbeknownst to its owner, had fallen overboard. Using its identifying tags, Charlie returned the dog to the boat operator's wife before the latter returned home from his outing. Must have been quite a shock to the guy when he saw the dog because he didn't know how he was going to tell his wife that their dog was gone. What makes this story particularly interesting are the names. As a result of Charlie's good fortune in escaping the fire and explosion without serious injury, it seemed only fitting that his boat be named "Lucky" and you can guess the rest. The dog's name was also "Lucky"

The fleet of the 1960's was quite varied. Examples include a Chris Craft Capri, a Columbia 28, several Islanders, an Alberg 30, a Coronado 27, a Cal 25 and others. And, as is common in the boating world, the fleet was, and is, constantly changing. Howard Harris gave up his plush power boat for an impressive Islander 37 in 1968. Howard took his boat to Florida in 1972 assisted by Jim Sprole, Al Mature and others. Phil upgraded to a beautiful Newporter ketch. These boats were too big for SBYC so were moved to Youngstown and the Buffalo Yacht Club. Phil did bring his boat back to SBYC on occasion and presented a beautiful sight on the river with all sails set. During the 1970's, the makeup of the fleet changed rapidly, so much so that such changes cannot be mentioned here in detail. Bob Bemisderfer, for example, has changed boats more often than anybody anywhere, including Bob Jankowiak.

Unfortunately, some of this change was forced by a disastrous marina fire which destroyed several SBYC boats including the aforementioned Capri and Columbia 28. Tom McGuire's Islander, however, was salvaged by the late Frank Reddy and rejoined the fleet in greatly altered condition caused by the addition of copious amounts of body putty.

Although most of our sailors continued to race around the course at SBYC, they also enjoyed the challenges of broader horizons. Doc Harris undertook to race for the Freeman Cup on Lake Ontario with Jim Sprole, Steve Sprole, Dave Duchscherer and Dick Braisted as crew. Others raced the Erie-Dover, now the Lake Erie Interclub. Al Kramer was a frequent contender with his Cal 25 and subsequent "Odd Couple", a Redwing 30 co-owned with Barney Starck and later a C&C 30 also in partnership with Barney. His crew consisted of such stalwarts as Jim Sprole, Tom Brown, Jim Milliron, Jim Huggins and others. That group also raced the prestigious Lake Erie Race, nonstop from Buffalo to Toledo. Phil Duchscherer was a frequent competitor in the Erie-Dover and took quite a few



C. William Bosworth
1988

Cruising Sailboats (continued)

members at different times along as crew. Exposure to this activity and the subsequent yarns spun at the club piqued the interest of many who later went on the race in their own boats. At one time Phil had as crew six past commodores; Fish, Brunton, Schmidt, Sheehan, McFee and Averill. Seven past commodores on one boat! No wonder everyone was giving orders. Hank Henry and Gene Burr took young folks as crew. Denny Sundholm has the dubious honor of being the only SBYC boat owner to try going inside the old lighthouse marking Mohawk Reef. He failed to notice that the buoy three miles out in the lake was a mark of the course. Lots of rocks in there, but Denny got off without much damage except to his dignity.

Jim Remmes and Bob Schmidt took "Amity", their Columbia 34 on the Erie-Dover five times and Schmidt went in "Bandit", his later Cal 27 on five other occasions, doing very well, placing second overall out of 24 boats on one race from Buffalo to Barcelona and finishing third in the whole series in the 12 boat Class B Fleet. That signalled his retirement as an active participant. John Robertson, Bob Bemisderfer, Dick Braisted as well as those previously mentioned also competed in these series races. Races are 45-50 miles long with one race on each of five days.

Incidentally, Dick Braisted has the most varied sailing experience of any of our members. He has sailed in nine Newport-Bermuda races as well as Newport-Ireland and two other transatlantic races. He had a charter boat in the Virgin Islands in the 1950's and continues bluewater sailing with his old Harvard buddies out of Massachusetts whenever Martha lets him go.

In in the mid-1960's, Herb Astman brought the first Shark class boat to the club. While not exactly considered cruising boats, these 24-footers became a welcome addition to the fleet. Some very exciting races were held on these boats. Jim Clements, Jim Walsh, Dave Damm, Larry Van Dusen and John Maloney all competed at one time or another.

Our intrepid racers encountered one problem they didn't face when they were racing Lightnings against each other; how does one race such a varied fleet on an equal basis? Handicapping was the answer but they didn't have a system, so—they developed one. It served the purpose at the club but the big league was more demanding. The serious racers got their International Off-shore Rating but this took money and was a major inconvenience. Fortunately, after many discussions and attempts at various handicapping systems, the Performance Handicapping Rating Fleet appeared on the scene and was adopted by the local clubs. Now all the cruising sailboats can use the PHRF system and race competitively throughout the area.

At this point it is obvious that although the original day sailors and their races are history, the cruising sailboats are doing more racing than cruising. Bob Jankowiak was bitten very early by the racing bug and moved rapidly from his Venture 24, through a series of progressively faster boats to a New York 36 which he now races quite successfully against the best of Eastern Lake Erie. Although cruisers by intent, most of our sailors have been very competitive. Denny Sundholm and Ivy are there every Sunday. Frank Reddy and Helen will always be remembered as the "never give up" contenders. Frank's slogan, "a clean boat is a fast boat" persists to this day. Along the way even our power boat people got caught up in the excitement with most of them providing Committee Boat services at one time or another. And some of the most active sailors of earlier years have served as Race Committee Chairmen for SBYC regattas and Sunday afternoon races. In fact, many of the past few years have been real challenges with very imaginative courses designed by Chairman Schmidt.

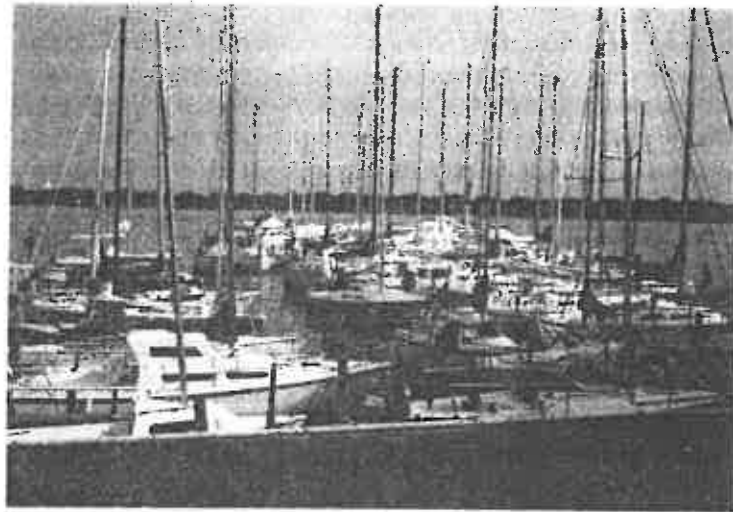
Instead of one race a year there are now about 15 races for various trophies. Each trophy has a particular significance. For example, the Polish Race deed states the the course shall be a figure eight, the Starck-Starck trophy has an established course. And then there was the infamous Singlehanded Race!



*John C. Boyce
1989*

Cruising Sailboats (continued)

Over a couple of glasses at the bar, Frank Reddy and Jack Robinson had a quiet discussion about the merits of their boats and their sailing expertise. This evolved into a challenge wherein they would sail against each other with only one other person aboard. This second person was aboard only for safety, to pass up lunch or perhaps a bit of libation but could not help sail. A three page list of rules was agreed to by both parties and the race was scheduled. The two boats involved were the slowest in the fleet and would have trouble making any speed in any kind of wind. The race was started in a light wind. Jack was in a great position at the start and was opening up a big lead before Frank could get across the line. Shortly after the down river start, Frank went aground on Grass Island.



There was much joy on Jack's boat as he was drifting steadily toward the first mark. Then the wind dropped to zero. Near the north bridge, Jack finally got his anchor to hold. The wind came up and Frank got off the sand. Meanwhile, back at the bridge, the recalcitrant anchor resisted removal. Frank sailed merrily on his way to victory. That was the only time this race was held. As Frank said when refusing all future challenges, "I have retired undefeated".

In 1974, Fleet Captain Jim Huggins, recognizing the increased interest in big boat action, initiated an Invitational Regatta for Cruising Boats. The first year, sixteen visiting boats joined nine from SBYC. Winds were fierce! The visiting boats, however, accustomed to Lake Erie sailing, were amazed at the fine sailing in the river, enhanced by smooth water, instead of the big seas that would have been encountered on the lake. However, one visitor, Jack Hunt from Buffalo Yacht Club with a new 36-foot boat, hit the big rock near the dock. The following year Jack brought an eight-inch diameter, ten-foot long fiberglass pole, equipped with ground tackle, to mark the scene. The pole, named "Jack's spar" was in place for a few years until it sank and could not be recovered. Lack of interest ultimately caused the regatta to be discontinued.

For many years, SBYC had been host to the annual Haulout Regatta, marking the end of the sailing season for various class boats including a large Lightning fleet. With enthusiasm for racing running high among the cruising boat sailors, it was decided that they too could participate in the Haulout Regatta. Although it seemed like a good idea at the time, experience proved otherwise. The large boats blanketed the smaller craft, caused confusion at the turning marks and, in at least one instance, resulted in a major collision at the finish line. Consequently, the Haulout Regatta was returned to the original format and SBYC continues to host an enthusiastic fleet of one-design small craft every Fall.

At this, our Fiftieth Anniversary, the auxiliary sail fleet is alive and well. Many sailing families are enjoying the sport as Sunday afternoon racers and each summer more of these same families are discovering the rewards of cruising to pleasant anchorages and hospitable yacht clubs.



Music, Music, Music

*excerpted from articles by
Arden Theobald and Robert Schmidt*

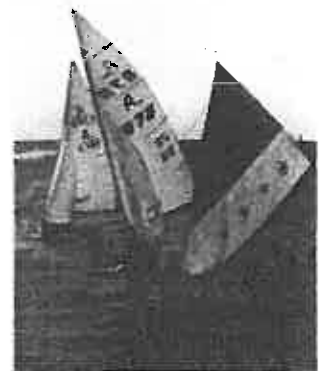
In accounting for the consistent quality and enviable support of social activities at Sandy Beach Yacht Club over the years, there is no question that music has been an especially important factor.

It seems certain that Phil Duchscherer was the core around which our musical ensembles developed and it probably all started when the first piano arrived. The original group, calling themselves "The Crewmen", was composed of Phil, Earl Nunemaker on the tenor sax, Rob Roy on the trumpet and Bob Durrell handling the drums. In time, with substitutions and additions, the group became known as "The Stompers". If you were in the lower level of the club during a musical session, you would know where the name originated. The decided beat was one of their attributes.

It was probably sheer luck that Sandy Beach was blessed, over the years, with so many talented musicians. If it was possible to hold a reunion of all those who have contributed it would include Phil Duchscherer, Bob Howland, Wendy Hershiser and Bernie Vance on the piano. A reed section would include Bob Howland on the clarinet with Earl Nunemaker, Jay Fish, Joe Labert and Al Starck on the saxophone. A great brass section would include Rob Roy and Bob Wilkins with their trumpets and on the trombone, Tom Lafferty and Skip Board. Talent on the drums abounded with Bob Durrell, Art Theobald, Bob Warnock, Jack Robinson, Fran Chemaly and, occasionally, Jim Milliron and Marge Murphy as sit-ins. In addition to all these, one would hear Herb Dusel on the banjo. No musical ensemble is complete without vocalists. The old pro, Tony Schwartz, added much to our enjoyment as did Alice Bemisderfer, Marilyn Robertson, Fran Chemaly and Joe Labert. With all that talent, it was inevitable that, eventually, a second group would form to play as the occasion arose. Their style was more modern and somewhat quieter and, centering around Bob Howland at the piano, it would include the talents of Bob Warnock, Herb Dusel, John Jacoy, Gerry Ferraro and whomever.

Throughout the "show years", our band supplied the background music for the numerous musical numbers. Phil Duchscherer was indispensable as he worked untiringly with the show committees. For years and years, the musicians were willingly available for any and all club parties that called for music—and most did. Whether for shows, dancing, or sing alongs, the music made our parties famous and, believe it, Sandy Beach was the envy of all our fellow yacht clubs.

As time passed by with its natural attrition of members, later years have seen a reduction of available musicians in our ranks. However, to all those musically talented members who, over all these years, have given so unstintingly of their time and efforts to provide Sandy Beach Yacht Club with such extraordinary pleasure and entertainment, we say "Thank you!"



The Commodores of Sandy Beach Yacht Club

Arthur N. Little*	1939-40
George W. Brunton*	1941-42-43
Ben A. Bovee*	1944
Charles J. Soch*	1945-46
Raymond F. Mapes*	1947
Robert T. Brunton	1948-49
Damon R. Averill	1950
Kenneth M. Kinsey	1951
Martin J. Kermer, Jr.	1952
Howard W. Compson	1953
Jay T. Fish	1954
Russell I. Ward*	1955
Wayne E. Baumler	1956
J. Kenneth Wall*	1957
James M. Sprole	1958
Harold A. Little	1959
Floyd E. Law*	1960
James J. Remmes*	1961
Richard C. Newell	1962
John E. Sheehan	1963
James P. McFee	1964
Philip E. Duchscherer	1965
Robert L. Roy	1966
James I. Milliron*	1967
Martin H. Dusel*	1968
Thomas R. Lippard, Jr.	1969
R. Robert Duane	1970
Robert C. Schmidt	1971
Thomas F. Maguire	1972
Michael Markarian	1973
Thomas R. Lafferty	1974
Arden R. Theobald	1975
Dennis Sundholm	1976
James Huggins	1977
William B. Mohr	1978
John F. Taggart, Jr.	1979
Eugene J. Murphy	1980
C. Eugene Burr	1981
Edward M. Kramer	1982
Rudy F. Nutz	1983-84
Michael K. Murphy	1985
Ronald Banas	1986
Edward Wargala	1987
C. William Bosworth	1988
John C. Boyce	1989

* deceased

These are the men who,
over the last 50 years, have led Sandy Beach Yacht Club
to a place of prominence and respect among Niagara Frontier Yacht Clubs.