



A History of the Chelsea Yacht Club

2006 Edition

Published on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of CYC

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Carthage Landing

Since the Chelsea Yacht Club was founded in January, 1881 as the Carthage Ice Yacht Club, it seems fitting to begin its history with the history of Carthage Landing, which is what the hamlet of Chelsea was named when the Club was started. According to Charles B. Glass,¹ a man named Abram Gerow came north from Westchester County in 1800 to settle near Low Point on the river. One section of the Hudson River chart shows the location of Low Point [95A13]². Perhaps it came by its name because New Hamburg, the next hamlet north on the east bank of the river, was once known as High Point.³ Mr. Gerow purchased land, built a log-house and a cooper's shop. He conducted a coopeage business for several years and also fathered ten children. The oldest daughter, Jane, married Charles P. Adriance, who was active in the affairs of the hamlet until his death in 1892.



95A13: Hudson River chart showing Low Point.

In 1812 Robert W. Jones filed map No. 51 in the Dutchess County Clerk's office which is labeled "A Map of Carthage in Dutchess County at a place called Low Point on the East side of the Hudson or North River---." Broad Way is shown as the central street heading toward the river. Either Mr. Jones or his map is probably the source of the name Carthage. Mr. Glass says that the hamlet was called Low Point until the completion of the Hudson River Railroad. At that point it was named Carthage. However

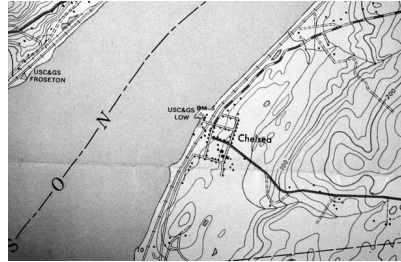
¹ pp. 25-29, Year Book, Dutchess County Historical Society, 1919

² This code shows the location in J.J. Mitchell's slide collection.

³ Matt Williams, p. 1B, Poughkeepsie Journal, 8/16/95

there was already a Carthage in Jefferson County,⁴ and mail was being misdirected so the hamlet was renamed Carthage Landing. Mail service was no better so the name reverted to Low Point until the railroad built a new station. At that point the name became Chelsea. The time was either June 17, 1901 or June 30, 1901.⁵

Frank Hasbrouck⁶ says that Low Point was equal in importance as a place of river commerce with the two docks at Fishkill Landing until John Peter De Windt built Long Dock at Fishkill Landing in 1815. After that time, Low Point fell behind even though it had deeper water.



95A14: Low Point on map

According to Charles Glass, commerce at Low Point prospered until the coming of the railroad. A Mr. Hoagland built a dock and a storehouse and carried on a general transportation business using sloops until 1836 or 1838. Then he sold his business to John Hopkins, who had as his partners his two sons, Solomon and Gilbert, and also Charles P. Adriance. The business grew to the point where the sloops were inadequate and the steamboat *William Young* was purchased to take care of the commerce.

“In those days the street leading to the dock was frequently blocked, for a mile or more, with farmer’s loaded wagons, coming from as far as the Connecticut state line, and they

⁴ Carthage, Jefferson County, Four River Valleys Historical Society, P.O. Box 504, Carthage, NY 13619 cited on p. 147 of Preservation Directory, Preservation League of New York State, 307 Hamilton Street, Albany, NY 12210(1988)

⁵ Private advice from Tom Holls is that the first date is from Post Offices in New York State and the second is from a history of the Chelsea Fire Company. The fire company history says that the change was from Carthage Landing to Chelsea. (February 5, 1993)

⁶ pp. 470-471, Frank Hasbrouck, editor, “The History of Dutchess County, New York,” Poughkeepsie, NY (1909)

were often delayed for hours, to unload their produce, and then to be re-laden with supplies for the farm and household.”⁷

There were other businesses at Low Point. At about 1820 Cornelius Carman established a shipyard at approximately the place where the CYC club house is now located. He built both sailing vessels and steamboats. In 1828 he built the *Plow Boy*, a steam ferry-boat, for Carpenter and De Windt of Fishkill Landing. It was the first steam ferry to ply between Fishkill Landing and Newburgh.

The first centerboard used on the Hudson River was introduced by Cornelius Carman, who installed it in the sloop *Freedom*. Henry Noble MacCracken, the former president of Vassar College, says in his book “Blithe Dutchess”⁸:

[Moses] Collyer tells that Cornelius Carman of Low Point (Chelsea) introduced the centerboard. This brought Dutch sideboards into the hull and was easier to handle in rough weather. Probably it was the Dutch practice, though an English authority attributes it to a Captain Schank of the Royal Navy in 1774. His name, however, is Dutch, and he may have been a Dutchess Schenk for all I know.

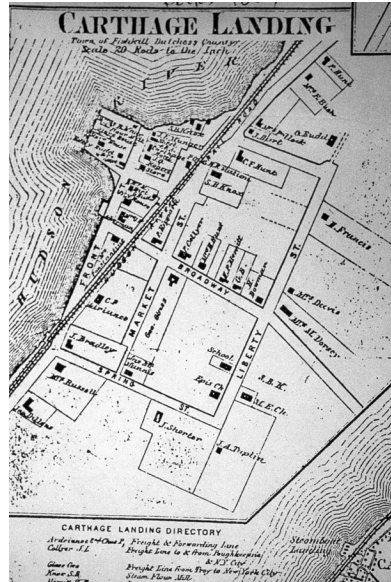
It was certainly the Hudson that brought the centerboard into use, and Hudson yachtsmen the practice. The English terms “sliding” and “strop” keels were never used by the Americans while the English dropped the terms, a sure sign of provenance.

When the Hudson River Railroad was built, the shipping of goods by water from Low Point fell off. In 1856 Starr B. Knox bought the dock property and converted the storehouse into a flour mill. He soon found that the milling machinery was shaking the building to pieces and had to interrupt a prosperous business to repair the damage. It opened again for a while and then closed until 1868 when it reopened and ground flour until the Union Pacific Railroad and the great steam mills of the west offered too much competition. In 1895 David Hunt purchased the property, and the mill was torn down.

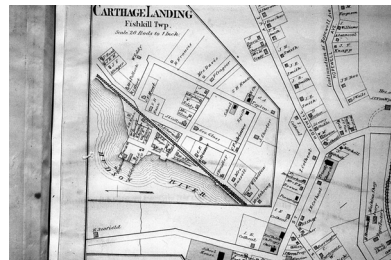
⁷ p. 26, Charles B. Glass

⁸ Hastings House, New York (1958)

T. Van Wyck Brinckerhoff in his “Historical Sketch and Directory of the Town of Fishkill”⁹ says that in 1866 Carthage Landing (or Low Point) was about three miles north of Fishkill Landing on the shore of the river. It had a post office, a school, several stores, a hotel, and two churches. The Methodist Church was organized in 1823, and a church building was built in 1833. The Episcopal Church was built in 1865. The village had about 300 inhabitants. The disposition of houses and streets is shown in a detail from Beers’ “Atlas of New York and Vicinity”¹⁰ [95A12]. Little had changed in 1876 as is shown in a detail from the “New Atlas of Dutchess County, New York”¹¹ [95B2].



95A12: Map of Carthage Landing from “Atlas of New York and Vicinity”



95B2: Map of Carthage Landing from “New Atlas of Dutchess County, New York”

⁹ Dean & Spaight, Fishkill Landing, NY (1866)

¹⁰ Published by Beers, Ellis & Soule, 95 Maiden Lane, New York, N.Y. (1867)

¹¹ C.W.Gray & Son and E.A.Davis, Reading Publishing House, Reading, PA (1876)

Moses W. Collyer

It can be taken that, five years later, when the Carthage Ice Yacht Club was formed in January, 1881, the community was much like that just described. Of the men who formed the Club we have details about only one, Moses W. Collyer. The details are available because he and William E. Verplanck wrote a book called *The Sloops of the Hudson*.¹² A photograph from the book shows Mr. Collyer [93A5]. In the book, he says, "Moses Collyer was born on the banks of the Hudson River in the town of Red Hook. His father, John L. Collyer, was the captain and owner of a North River packet sloop that sailed from upper Red Hook Landing, now known as Tivoli, to New York City in the 1830s. He carried farmers' produce and passengers to the city and general merchandise on the return trip."¹³



93A5: *Moses W. Collyer*

John Collyer prospered and was running two packet sloops, the *First Effort* and the *Perseverance*, when the Hudson Railroad took away his dock facilities at Red Hook. The two sloops drew ten to twelve feet of water and carried fifty to two hundred tons of cargo. Each had been sailing a regular two week schedule to the city and return when the railroad interrupted the business.

After doing various things to make a living, John Collyer again started in the sloop business in the spring of 1865 with the *Benjamin Franklin* out of Poughkeepsie. Moses joined the sloop that year as a cabin boy. The sloop *Benjamin Franklin* is shown at Low Point in a photograph from the book [93A4]. They carried crockery and earthenware from Foster's Dock at Poughkeepsie in the spring and fall to ports along the Hudson. In between they ran to Albany and to Long Island Sound in the lumber trade. The sloop would sail to Albany and wait in turn for a lumber cargo.

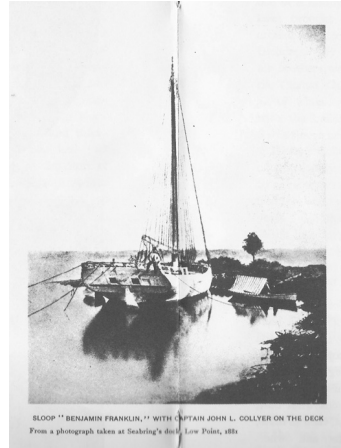
¹² G.P.Putnam's Sons, New York (1908)

¹³ Verplanck & Collyer, p.74

The rate was from \$2.50 to \$3.00 per thousand [board feet] for delivery to various ports on the Sound.

The sloop also carried coal from Rondout to various mansions, such as the Livingston's, the De Puyster's, and the Clarkson's, north of Tivoli. A cargo of coal delivered in the summer was enough to heat a mansion through the winter.

Moses, with his brothers Frank and Robert, sailed the *Ben Franklin* until 1877. Moses left her to join the schooner *Iron Age* and then became the captain of the schooner *Henry B. Finnerman* in the spring of 1878.



93A4: *Sloop Benjamin Franklin at Low Point*

In 1880 Captain Moses Collyer made one of the fastest round trips of the era in the schooner *Henrietta Collyer*¹⁴. She was built in Nyack for the iron trade. She left the Manhattan Iron Works, which was at 140th Street and North River, at six o'clock in the evening with a fresh south wind and flood tide. Fourteen hours later, at eight o'clock the next morning, she was at Catskill, 115 miles up the river. She had run up light. By noon that day, the schooner was loaded with limestone and got underway with a northwest wind. After fifteen hours, at three o'clock in the morning, she docked at the Iron Works.

At some point Captain Collyer bought the house that was formerly the rectory of St. Mark's Church in Carthage Landing.¹⁵ He also acquired the sloop *Mohican*, which had been built in 1837 at Peekskill.¹⁶ She was 68 feet long, and her beam was 25 feet. Under her quarter-deck, which extended almost to amidships, there were a dozen berths. Her timber and planking were of locust and white

¹⁴ Verplanck and Collyer, p. 54

¹⁵ Hasbrouck, p. 471

¹⁶ Verplanck and Collyer, pp. 63-64

oak. Captain Collyer had her sunk in front of his house to serve as a breakwater and dock. According to Norman Tardiff the “spine” of the *Mohican* can be seen south of the Chelsea Yacht Club at especially low water.

Ice Yachting

Since the major reason for forming an ice yacht club is to provide the pleasure of sailing an ice yacht, a few comments about ice yachting seem in order.

Michael Timm gave the Club a photocopy of a reprint of articles that appeared in *Scribner's Monthly* magazine in 1881. The reprint was in the January 1, January 15, and February 15, 1890 issues of *Messing Around in Boats*.

The first article, “Ice-Yachting on the Hudson,” expands at some length on the art of sailing on the Hudson River where the ice was seldom smooth, being marred by cracks, by mounds thrust up by pressure from below, and by large cakes of ice that had been shoved onto the regular ice. Another feature of ice sailing is that the yacht can go much faster than the speed of the wind. As the article explains in detail, the forward speed is mainly limited by wind friction on the forward side of the sails. The distance from Poughkeepsie to New Hamburg is a little more than seven miles. A good ice boat could make the distance in seven minutes; a slower one in nine.

The second article, “How to Build an Ice Yacht” gives detailed instructions for building a 50-foot long ice yacht. The design is somewhat different from the faster ice yachts that were soon to be built. The length over-all was 50 feet 5 inches and was said to be medium size. The article states, “Mr. Jacob E. Buckhout, of Poughkeepsie, N.Y., builds such a boat for four hundred and fifty dollars.”



93F13: Ice boat on Hudson River

However, just two years earlier, the design of ice boats was changed.¹⁷ Prior to 1879 the fastest ice boat on the river was John A. Roosevelt's *Icicle*. She was 69 feet 10 inches in overall length and carried over 1,000 square feet of sail. In that year H. Relyea of Catskill built the *Robert Scott*, surpassing the speed of every other iceboat built up to that time. He replaced the heavy framework of timbers and wooden side-rails with a single long center timber and steel guy wires to keep it square with the runner-plank. He also reduced the size of the jib and brought the sail's center of effort further forward, where it was resisted by the main runners, instead of partially by the rudder as before. The reduction in weight and improvement in control was a real breakthrough, and with very few exceptions, all iceboats built along the Hudson were "Scott" boats or "wire boats," as distinguished from the earlier "side-rail" or "wishbone" type.

"With only two-thirds the sail area, the *Robert Scott* soundly beat the great *Icicle*, so it was no surprise when Commodore Roosevelt ordered a new *Icicle* from the great Poughkeepsie builder, Jacob Buckhout, to be of Scott design."¹⁸

The second *Icicle* was 49 feet 6 inches long with 735 square feet of sail and was reputed to have sailed at 100 miles per hour. She had a long career, winning the Ice Yacht Challenge Pennant for the Carthage Ice Yacht Club in 1893,¹⁹ and, for a long time, was in the basement of the Roosevelt Memorial Library in Hyde Park. Now it is in the Maritime Museum in Kingston. In 1903 the second *Icicle* and her owner, John A. Roosevelt, were listed as belonging to the Carthage Ice Yacht Club.

In 1994, Reid Bielenberg, the secretary of the Hudson River Ice Yacht Club (HRIYC) recalled that his club was formed in 1881.²⁰ After World War I the club disbanded.²¹ However due to

¹⁷ Raymond A. Ruge, "Iceboating on the Hudson River," Fall 1974 issue of *NAHO*, the New York State Museum's quarterly bulletin

¹⁸ *Ibid*

¹⁹ Information from Nancy Calhelha

²⁰ Alec Applebaum, "Ice sailing takes to the river," *The Independent*, Feb. 10, 1994.

²¹ Matthew E. Mantell, "Captains of Winter Sail Hudson's Frozen Waters," *New York Times*, Feb. 26, 1995

the efforts of Raymond Ruge, a Cornwall, N.Y. architect and Chelsea Yacht Club member, there was a renaissance in the 1960s. When he died in 1985, Ray had transformed the sport from a millionaire's hobby to a recreation for local townspeople. And he also left the HRIYC a legacy of restored ice boats.

Most ice-boat racing is now done on lakes such as Orange Lake, Greenwood Lake, and Saratoga Lake. There is a regatta on the Hudson in Tivoli Bay when the ice is more than ten inches thick, but it is more of a social event than a racing event.

The Poughkeepsie Journal for February 22, 2001 shows a photograph of the ice boat *Sweet Marie* sailing on the Hudson near Athens (Greene County). It is one of the historic ice boats being maintained by the members of the Hudson River Ice Yacht Club.

Early Days of the Club

(Based mainly on "Early History of the Chelsea Yacht Club" by William Merritt)

The Club was originally organized in January, 1881 as the Carthage Ice Yacht Association by eighteen men from the neighborhood. They worked on the river or in the nearby brickyards. Their names are given in the following table.

Charter Members²²

| | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| W. Bradbury | George W. Hunt |
| Frank F. Collyer | Sebastian S. Meade |
| Moses W. Collyer | B.B. Merritt |
| A. Constantine | Charles Merritt |
| Isaac DeGroff | William Merritt |
| W. Euchand | Joseph I. Montague |
| Ivan H. Flood | John Mullahy |
| P.O. Flood | Peter V. Robinson |
| Stephen M. Glass | H.S. Vermilyea |

²² Taken from the 1984 *History of Chelsea Yacht Club*

Jack S. Meade, grandson of Sebastian S. Meade, recalls that his grandfather "... had only a slight interest in boats and maritime activities, but because his company probably provided some of the bricks used in the construction of the Yacht Club House and other



93A20: Carthage Ice Yacht Club

Chelsea facilities, he maintained a presence in community activities and was one of the original 18 charter members.”²³ Apparently his interest grew over time, because Sebastian S. Meade served as commodore of the Club in 1904.

At about this time ice yacht clubs were also formed in Newburgh, New Hamburg, Poughkeepsie, and Hyde Park. The members of the various clubs raced for awards such as the “Challenge Pennant of America” and the “Captain William Drake Flag,” which Frank Brockway won in the *Maud S.* in 1912. Captain Moses W. Collyer’s *Vision* covered the distance from Newburgh to Danskammer Point in seven minutes. A photograph shows him at the helm of his ice boat [93F14].

The Merritt brothers were great enthusiasts of ice sailing, which has been described as “poetry in action.” There are water colors by George Merritt that portray the intense feeling and excitement of ice sailing. The brothers built and experimented with ice boats. One design that boasted 1,000 square feet of sail started from Low Point, went out of control, and crashed into the New Hamburg dock, where it was completely demolished.

²³ Letter from Jack S. Meade to Commodore Tom Smith dated October 9, 2006.

At first the new Carthage Ice Yacht Club met in a room in the old mill on "The Dock," as the North Point was called then. A little later Capt. John Pinckney built a two-story building and fitted out the upper story as a club room, which he rented to the Club. After a couple of years the Club also rented the lower story as a place to store ice boats in the summer and to have entertainments in the winter.



93F14: *Captain Moses W. Collyer at the helm of his ice boat.*

Among the archives accumulated by Club historian Norman Tardiff are photocopies of the "Constitution, By-Laws, Sailing Regulations, Etc. of the Carthage Ice Yacht Club" for 1890 and for 1903. Included in the "Etc." is a copy of the certificate of incorporation of the Club. The certificate was attested to on January 11, 1890. Evidently it was at this point that "Association" was turned into "Club." The certificate says, "That the object and business of such society is the promotion of health and recreation among its members by ice-yachting and gymnastic exercises." The 1890 constitution states that "the officers shall be and rank as follows: Commodore, Treasurer, Vice-commodore, Measurer, and Secretary." The measurer's job was to determine the number of square feet of sail on each ice yacht because sail area was the criterion on which a yacht was placed in a given class. The constitution also established a regatta committee. The by-laws called for monthly meetings at 7:30 pm, a practice to which we still adhere. It also called for meetings on every Tuesday during the months of December, January, February, and March. The rules of order are given in detail so there was no need for a parliamentarian.

The astonishing thing from the point of view of today is the value of money in 1890. The proposer of a new member was required to pay the secretary \$1.50. Presumably a new member repaid his proposer when he was elected. In any case his monthly dues were twenty-five cents or a total of \$3.00 for the year.

Chapter III, Section 9 reads, “At no time shall the Club be in debt exceeding \$100 lawful currency of the U.S.”

Chapter VIII of the 1890 By-Laws says, “The distinguishing Signal of the Club shall be a blue swallow-tail Burgee, with a red border, containing the letters C.I.Y.C. in white.” Today’s burgee is no longer swallow-tail and the “I.” is gone, but it is still similar to the original.

The 1890 version lists 42 members, and the 1903 version 69 members. There were 14 ice yachts in 1890 and 19 in 1903. These yachts were divided into three classes: first class, sail area 400 square feet and over; second class, sail area under 400 square feet and over 300; third class, 300 square feet and under. The largest in 1903 was *Icele* with sail area of 735 square feet. It was owned by John A. Roosevelt. In 1903 he also owned the smaller *Vixen* with 340 square feet of sail.

The First Club House

The surroundings of Captain Pinckney’s building deteriorated. Coal sheds, horse stables, and manure piles led some of the members to say that they would not pay dues if the Club met there any more. On January 25, 1898²⁴ the Club met in Isaiah Miller’s shop and passed a motion that the Club would no longer meet in the building. This led to a discussion of where they would meet. The outcome of the discussion was the idea of buying land and building a club house. The treasurer pointed out that he had paid out \$15 more than he had received in the past year so the Club had no money. Capt. Frank F. Collyer said that he would give the Club fifty dollars if the Club could raise the balance needed, an early example of a challenge grant. John Constantine said he would give the Club ten dollars. Steven Glass said he would lend the Club ten dollars as did Isaiah Miller and D. Bradbury. B.B. Merritt said he would lend five dollars. With that settled, a committee was appointed to find if the Jackson lot could be bought and at what price. The lot was a small, three-cornered piece of property east of

²⁴ This date is based on Frank M. Whitehall’s history of the club. The dates in the William Merritt history are inconsistent.

the present club house. It was on the water, and the members thought that they could build a dock along the river edge.

The committee reported at a January 31 meeting that the price was \$100. The Club voted to buy the property, and the land was bought from Caroline A. Jackson for the sum of \$100. The building of the dock was discussed at a February 8 meeting. Again the problem of finding financing had to be overcome. There was a little money from dues in the treasury, and Isaiah Miller said he would lend \$40 to the Club to help pay for the timber. It was also agreed that members who worked on the dock would be paid 15 cents per hour worked when the Club's finances improved. Early in the spring the dock was built and was ready to receive a building.

William Merritt then drew up plans for a club house. The proposed building was two stories high, sixty feet long and twenty-two feet wide, with four rooms upstairs, consisting of a dressing room, a kitchen, a smoking room, and a reception room about the size of the meeting room in the current club house. The lower floor was for storing ice boats in the summer and holding entertainments in the winter. When the plans were submitted to the Club, it was unanimously agreed that the members would build the club house under the same conditions as the dock.

Financing the purchase of the materials was a problem. For one thing, the Club was in debt in the amount of \$200. A committee was appointed at the December 3, 1898 meeting to try to borrow \$1,000. It is obvious that the provision in the 1890 constitution and by-laws that the Club could not go into debt for more than \$100 was no longer in effect. Indeed, the provision is missing from the 1903 version.

The committee went to lawyer George Wood, a member of the Club, for advice. He arranged for a note payable to Annie Cornell, F.F. Collyer, I. Miller, C. Merritt, William Merritt, S.S. Glass, T. Smith, J. Mullahy, and John Constantine signed the note, and Mr. Wood handed over a check for \$1,000.

The members then set about building the club house. William Merritt kept the time books, received all moneys, and paid all bills. He, Stephen Glass, John Sturges, B. Merritt, I. Miller, C. Merritt, S.S. Meade, and J. Montague did all the work for fifteen

cents per hour. The Club house is shown in a February 1902 photograph.²⁵

At about April, 1899 Ms. Cornell asked for her money back. George Wood arranged for another note for \$800 signed again by various Club members. The proceeds with \$200 that the Club had in hand were used to pay Ms. Cornell. Finally, at a meeting of December 29, 1899,²⁶ the following resolution was passed: "Whereas F.F. Collyer, S.S. Glass, D. Bradbury, B.B. Merritt, T. Smith, I. Miller, C. Merritt, S.S. Meade, J. Mullahy, J. Constantine, J.S. Ackerman, and William Merritt have borrowed eight hundred dollars for the use of this club, be it resolved that the club authorize the trustees to issue a note to said parties for eight hundred dollars payable one year after date with interest at 5% payable semi-annually."

However, this was not enough to pay for the club house. At a meeting of February 26, 1901 a motion was passed to borrow \$450 to pay off all debts except the outstanding note. The Merchants National Bank of Poughkeepsie issued a demand note for the sum at 5% interest.

Fiscal Problems

At the end of 1901, William Merritt listed the assets and liabilities of the Club as: "One lot at cost, \$100. Cost of materials in building and dock, \$1,340.37 and \$1,385.15. Cost of labor on building and dock at \$1.20 per day with interest, \$501.18 and \$458.40. Cost of personal property bought, \$223.64. Balance on hand, \$46.91, making total assets \$2,212.10. The liabilities were one note for \$800 and one for \$450 and no unpaid bills, making the total liabilities \$1,250 [and] showing a difference of \$962.10." This amount plus money spent for other purposes was raised from dues, initiation fees, rent, and a series of entertainments. From July 4, 1899 to Labor Day, September 1901, the club held nine entertainments, one fair, and one excursion. All made money, even

²⁵ The corresponding slide is marked "O."

²⁶ This date is different from the 1890 given in William Merritt's history. The sequence of other dates makes it plausible that 1890 is a typographical error.

the "big blowout" which made \$48.39 in spite of spending \$43.71 (and all that they could eat) for a brass band plus \$32.90 for fireworks.

At the annual meeting on December 27, 1902, Isaac De Groff was elected commodore and H.S. Vermilyea, treasurer. This outwardly prosperous regime lasted until 1904. On December 31, 1904 S.S. Meade was elected commodore, W. Merritt, vice commodore, I.H. Flood, secretary, and J.S. Ackerman, treasurer, a position that he held for five years. The outgoing secretary presented a report showing no balance in the treasury. This report was laid on the table and the new treasurer was asked to procure a book. A committee was appointed with the new treasurer as a member to arrange the accounts of the past few years in the book. The committee's report indicated that, at the end of each of the past years, there were unpaid bills not taken into account. The net effect was that, at the end of 1904, \$700 was still owed on the \$800 note and there were unpaid bills amounting to \$273.92.

One of the largest bills was \$62.50 rental for a piano rented from Mr. Roosa. A committee appointed on January 7, 1905 met with Mr. Roosa to determine whether he would sell the piano to the Club. He agreed to sell the piano for \$100. William Merritt went to Captain F.F. Collyer who agreed to take the Club's note for \$100, and the piano was bought.

In order to consolidate the various debts, a resolution was passed at a May 30, 1905 special meeting:

Whereas the Carthage Ice Yacht Club is indebted to various individuals to the amount of \$1,400 and whereas said club has no funds on hand with which to pay said indebtedness, it is therefore resolved that application be made to the county court of Dutchess County, N.Y. for leave to mortgage the real estate of the Carthage Ice Yacht Club situated at Chelsea in the Town of Wappinger, said county and said state, to F.F. Collyer as trustee of the holders of bonds to the amount of \$1,400, that said bonds shall consist of a series of one hundred forty bonds of \$10 each, payable fifteen years from the first day of July, 1905, or prior thereto at the option of the Board of Trustees of the Club, with interest thereon at 5% per annum, payable

semi-annually on the first day of July and the first day of January of each year, [and] that said bond[s] and mortgage be executed by the commodore and treasurer of the Club.

At the July 30, 1905 Club meeting, F.F. Collyer announced that he had the bonds in hand for purchase by Club members.

Then, on March 17, 1906, the Club house burned to the ground. Only the piano was saved. Fortunately, the Club house had been insured for \$1,750, and William Merritt had insured the personal property for \$150. William Merritt used the plans that he had drawn up for the club house to convince the insurance adjuster that the building was worth the full amount of the insurance. The two sums of money were used to pay off the bond holders on July 1, 1906. Finally, after the December 29, 1906 meeting, the bonds were counted and burned. The Club ended the year with no debts and no club house.

For a while the Club met in the Collyer brothers' boathouse. Then a motion was made at the January 14, 1908 Club meeting that the Constantine house be rented for one year, so it can be assumed that is where they met until a new club house was built. (From here on the April 1934 *The History of Chelsea Yacht Club* by Frank M. Whitehall is a major source.)

Before this history goes on to the building of a new club house, the bizarre story of part of the Club land should be told. On October 27, 1902, Moses W. Collyer and wife and Frank F. Collyer and wife conveyed to George W. Hunt, Stephen M. Glass, John Mullahy, Moses W. Collyer, and Frank F. Collyer, a parcel of land lying to north of the Club property. One of the conditions of the deed was that at any time the Carthage Ice Yacht Club desired to purchase this land, it might do so upon the payment to each of the grantees the sum contributed by each grantee for the purchase of the property. Evidently this was considered a burden because the seven members of the Club who were at the December 29, 1906 meeting adopted a resolution purporting to remove the need for payment by the Club.

Many years later, in 1922, Frank F. Collyer laid claim to the land to the north of the Club house. He marked off a boundary line with a rope and post barrier and set up an iron post at what he claimed was the southerly limit of the property that he owned

jointly with M.W. Collyer and George Hunt. He also removed the Collyer boathouse to the north of the Club property, where it still stands. In addition, he removed the electric lines that ran on trees across the land he claimed. The Club had to spend \$48.43 to run the wires on posts along the roadway that then was at the back of the Club. Frank Collyer then resigned from the Club in 1923.

At that point the Club hired Mr. Schofield, a Beacon surveyor, to establish a correct boundary line. The survey showed that the removed boathouse was 10 feet 6 inches on Club land at the west and 8 feet on the east and that the iron post was 16 feet inside Club grounds. This survey cost the Club \$63.90 and was confirmed by an independent survey which Frank Collyer had made. As a result the rope and post barrier was removed, and bath houses were placed against the boathouse. Frank Collyer may have been wrong about the exact location of the property, but he was right that the Club did not own it. However, he was not the only owner. The dispute was resolved in December, 1927, when F.W. Pollock succeeded in obtaining the consent of the joint owners of the property to deeding it to the Club, but retaining a life interest to themselves. The Club would acquire Mr. Hunt's share²⁷ at his death and the shares of M.W. Collyer and F.F. Collyer at the death of the survivor of the two²⁸. In June, 1928 a complimentary dinner was given to the three donors. Later, on July 4, 1943, Frank Collyer presented the deed to the land to the Club. The story ends on the Fourth of July, 1993 when a Commodore Rick Scott held a ceremony to dedicate the land around the gazebo as Collyer Point. The ceremony was attended by Mrs. Marguerite Spratt, Frank Collyer's granddaughter, and by Constance Smith, the supervisor of the Town of Wappinger.²⁹

²⁷ December 22, 1927, Dutchess County Liber 483 of Deeds, page 458

²⁸ December 15, 1927, Dutchess County Liber 483, pages 456 & 457

²⁹ Chelsea Yacht Club *Newslines*, July 1993

The Second Club House

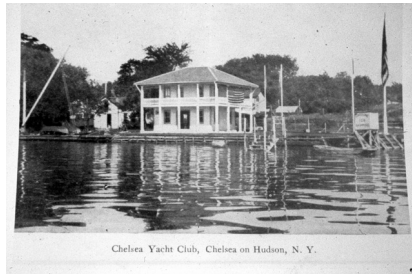
At a special Club meeting on January 8, 1910, Frank F. Collyer was elected commodore, C. Merritt, vice commodore, Ivan Flood, secretary, and William Merritt, treasurer. The balance from the previous year was \$527.93. Then, at the February 1, 1910 meeting it was moved to build a new club house at a cost not to exceed \$1200. Commodore Collyer reported at the April 30 meeting that a contract had been let for the construction of the Club house for \$1100. At that point, the Club had \$642.62 in hand so financing the

construction was no problem. The Club property was mortgaged to Charles Merritt for \$600.

At the same meeting, the Club changed the name of the Carthage Ice Yacht Club to the Chelsea Yacht Club of Chelsea on the Hudson. The court order

permitting this change, turned up by Joel Hanig in 1999, was signed by Judge Joseph Morschauser on May 28, 1910. A triangular flag with white CYC letters on a blue field edged on two sides by a wide red band was adopted as the official burgee.

On July 4, 1910, the flag was raised over the newly constructed Club house. Its appearance was quite different from today's building. There was only a two-story building with a porch on both the first and second floors. The building was also much closer to the water than it is today. A photograph shows the building and the boat house [93F16].



93F16: *Chelsea Yacht Club with boat house*

On June 29, 1912, F.W. Pollock was elected commodore. As he was a lawyer, he was very useful in negotiating with the New York Central Railroad. In September the railroad took some Club land to widen its tracks and, in return, agreed to obtain a water-grant from the state of waters to the west, to fill in the grant, and to build a rip-rap wall along the bank. This was done, resulting in the lawn which is now in front of the Club house. It is said that the large stones in the rip-rap wall come from a New York City subway. Again a photograph shows the building and the boat house [93F17]. Subsequently, the boat house was turned by ninety degrees to its present orientation.



93F17: Chelsea Yacht Club with boat house

Bricks in the Chimney

(Revision of Jan. 26, 1989 Version)

When the chimney of the CYC Club house was built, the mason who laid up the chimney laid several courses with the names of the bricks facing out. It has been suggested that this was done as a tribute to the brickyards that had furnished the bricks.

The accompanying photographs record the various trademarks as well as the granite block which indicates that the chimney was built in 1910 [86G20]. People at the Club knew nothing about the origin of the bricks. However, knowledge that this area was once a center of brick making led to inquiry at the Newburgh Public Library. There the rare book room has a pamphlet written by Charles Ellery Hall.³⁰ Its title is "The Story of Brick," and the body of the pamphlet was reprinted by Daniel De Noyelles from an article in the "Building Trades Employers' Association Bulletin".³¹ The pamphlet also contains a list of the

³⁰ Ref. 666.737 Hall

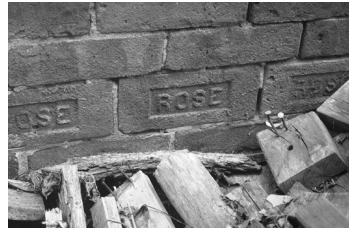
³¹ 150 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY, July 1905

brick manufacturers in the Hudson Valley in 1910. Moore Printing, Newburgh printed the pamphlet.

The second photograph [86G4] shows bricks from the Rose Brick Co. In 1905 John B. Rose was president and had 800 employees and the largest brickyard in the Hudson Valley. It was located in Roseton and turned out 75 million brick in 1905.



86G20: Granite block indicates that the chimney was built in 1910.



86G4: Bricks from Rose Brick Co.

The third picture [86G12] shows “JJJ” which is the trademark of the Jova Brick Works which adjoined the Rose Brick Co.’s plant. H.J. Jova was in charge in 1905, and the plant produced 33 million bricks in that year. Many Club members remember the Jovas sailing Lightnings across the river to take part in Chelsea Yacht Club races.

The fourth picture [86G13] shows bricks from the Arrow Yards. In 1905 this brickyard, located on Danskammer Point, was operated by Mr. E. Maitland Armstrong. It was the yard’s first year, and it produced 5 million bricks in that year.

The fifth picture [86G17] shows bricks from the Dennings Point Brick Works, which was founded by McLean & Co. in 1881, the same year that Carthage Ice Yacht Club was started. In 1904 the brickyard was owned by the Ramsdell Estate, employed 150 men, and sold 15 million bricks. It was located on the former Presqu’île which had been renamed Dennings Point in honor of Adjutant-General William Denning of George Washington’s staff.

The sixth picture [86G14] of “Brockway” bricks reminds one of the Brockway buoy, one of the Club’s racing marks, and of the Brockway family among whose members were H. Mortimer Brockway and Dr. Hobart M. Brockway, who was commodore in 1958. The 1910 list locates the Brockway Brick Co. as being in

Fishkill, New York. Fishkill Landing was a village in the Town of Fishkill until 1914 when it was incorporated into the City of Beacon.



86G12: Brick from Jova Brick Works.



86G13: Brick from Arrow Yards.



86G17: Brick from Dennings Point Brick Works.



86G14: Bricks from Brockway Brick Co.

The seventh picture [86G19] brings us closer to home. In 1910 a brickyard was operated by F. Watrous in Chelsea, NY.

The “PAYE” bricks in the eighth picture [86G15] are from the brickyard run by Captain John Paye who died in 1909. He was a Hudson River sloop captain who retired to make bricks.³²

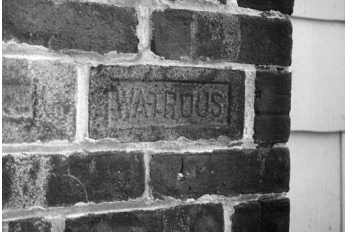
The “EHBCo.” bricks in the ninth picture [86G18] are from the East Hudson Brick Co.³³

Finally, the “R&S” bricks in the last picture [86G16] are probably from the Redner and Strang brickyard.³⁴

³² Fran Laffin, letter Oct. 30, 1989

³³ Private advice from Dr. John Ellison, Oct. 29, 1993

³⁴ Private advice from Joan VanVoorhis, City of Beacon historian, that a brickyard of that name was operating in 1876 (Dec. 9, 1991)



86G19: Brick from brickyard operated by F. Watrous in Chelsea, NY.



86G15: Bricks from brickyard operated by Captain John Paye.



86G18: Brick from East Hudson Brick Co.



86G16: Bricks probably from Redner and Strang brickyard.

Hard Times

After Moses W. Collyer was elected commodore on June 26, 1915, he presented a bill to the Club for \$100 for services, material, and extra labor not contracted for by the New York Central Railroad in the construction of a three foot cement sidewalk. The Club paid, and then adopted a resolution “that any work done for the Club in the future, without authorization, shall be considered a gift to the Club by the person or persons doing the work.”

Ivan H. Flood was elected commodore at the July 13, 1916 meeting and again on June 30, 1917. It was in 1917 that electricity was installed in the Club house.

On July 1, 1918, Frank F. Collyer became commodore. During the next three years no meetings were held, and the commodore considered the Club dead. However, at the request of F.W. Whitehall, the commodore called a meeting on July 18, 1921. At that meeting Moses W. Collyer was elected commodore and F.W. Whitehall, secretary. The secretary then began a campaign for

new members that resulted in the election of six members from Chelsea and six from Beacon. Moses W. Collyer and F.W. Whitehall were re-elected annually until 1929 when Commodore Collyer resigned.

During 1922 some members raised a cry that the Club was being taken away from the people of Chelsea. At the July 17, 1922 meeting an attempt was made to pass a resolution that non-residents of Chelsea be elected for one year only and that they pay dues but have no vote. These people did not realize that there were too few people in Chelsea to support the Club.

In 1925 there was a large influx of members from the Castle Point Veterans Hospital.

Meanwhile, progress had finally been made in paying off the \$600 mortgage held by Charles Merritt on Club property: a first payment of \$100 in 1921, a second \$100 in 1922, and then \$175 in 1924. The remaining \$225 was paid off in 1925 when there were 96 members as compared with 20 in 1921. A supper was held in the Collyer boat house to celebrate the burning of the mortgage.

The Ballroom

Since the Club had no building of its own in which to hold dances, dinners, or other celebrations, it was decided, over the strenuous objections of Commodore Moses W. Collyer, to erect a ballroom at the north end of the Club house. William Merritt was asked to draw up specifications. Commodore Collyer was inflexible in his opposition and refused to attend all meetings at which the building of the ballroom and the mortgage to pay for it were discussed. The ballroom was completed in 1925, and a mortgage of \$1500 was placed with Edw. F. Maloney to pay for it. A photograph taken from the railroad shows the back of the ballroom to the right of the Club house [93F18]. The mortgage was paid off in April, 1929.

Then, in 1928, the Club decided to have a well driven to supply water to the Club house. Again, Commodore Collyer objected and went so far as to order the well drillers (Cross and Sons) off the grounds. However, the well was driven, and a supply of excellent water at



93F18: *Chelsea Yacht Club with ballroom*

the rate of three gallons a minute was obtained at a depth of 54 feet. Although Commodore Collyer insisted that it was river water and unfit to drink, analyses at the Veterans Hospital and in New York showed that the water was pure. In 1931 the water was again analyzed at the Veterans Hospital and was reported by the then Commodore, Dr. James E. Dedman, to be unusually pure.

It is ironical that, in 1998, when Rear Commodore House William Jones had the water tested, the report came back that the water was unfit for human consumption. The coliform bacteria count was too high. After several attempts to purge the well failed, the Club purchased an ultraviolet purification system. This was installed in 1999. In order for the ultraviolet system to work properly, a filter also had to be installed to clarify the water. Perhaps, again, the water can be considered unusually pure.

Entertainment Committee

In 1925, women became eligible for membership, and seventeen were immediately accepted. Then, in 1926, when Mrs. Frank Whitehall and Mrs. Clarence Jackson became members, an entertainment committee was formed with them as members. Mrs. Jackson was chairperson up to 1934. Years later Frank Gain was chairman of the entertainment committee from 1982 to 1999, except for 1989, which he spent in the Persian Gulf. His sixteen years as chairman eclipsed Mrs. Jackson's former record of eight years.

The committee continued a tradition initiated by the wives of members who had conducted all the fairs, suppers, clambakes,

and weekly dances. The Chelsea Ladies Euchre Club was a very active group for many, many years. The committee held card parties once or twice a week and raised money that was used to furnish the Club house. By 1927 it had raised \$800 to be used to pay off part of the mortgage on the ballroom.

Today, both men and women served on the committee. Indeed, new members are required to serve on the entertainment committee so that they may become acquainted with the other members. There is a regular sequence of parties, beginning with the Commodore's Ball in November followed by the commodore's cocktail party in the spring, the celebrations of Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, and Labor Day, and the last-chance cocktail party in the fall.

On September 26, 2003 the Club voted to amend the constitution to create the position of Rear Commodore Entertainment. This was done in recognition of the ever increasing responsibilities of the chairperson of the entertainment committee. Entertainment was placed on the same footing as the other working divisions of the Club.

Not all of the recreation has been organized. In the early days the members gathered during the summer evenings on the south lawn to enjoy the refreshing cool breeze and watch the sunset. Ice cream, sandwiches, and other snacks were purchased at the "summer house," which was located behind the old steward's apartment.

In the summer of 2005, Wednesday evening races started. Rear Commodore Entertainment Joanna Doyle seized the opportunity to launch the sale of \$5 box suppers on Wednesday evenings. By the end of July she and her crew of volunteers were selling 50 box suppers each Wednesday evening and had cleared over a thousand dollars.

Swimming

Swimming was very much a part of the Club's activities in the early days. Swimming races were part of the annual September regattas held then. During the early 1920s, any member could erect his own bath house with approval from the Trustees. A sandy

beach and a crib for children were installed at the south end of the Club property in the 1930s. A springboard was added to the swimming float, and a “high water only” slide was also added to improve the facilities.

Club members were already concerned about water pollution in 1923 and authorized the secretary to write to the Veterans Bureau to protest the dumping of sewage from the Castle Point Veterans Hospital into the Hudson River. By 1927 Dr. Whitehall spoke out about the hazards of swimming in the river.

Sailing Lightnings

(From here on, a major source of information is the 1984 *History of Chelsea Yacht Club* written by Nancy Pfirman in 1971 and amended by Norman A. Tardiff in 1983. It was edited by Barry Meehan and typed by Donna Berger and Sue Yacavonis, and Kathy Howell arranged the cover.)

The enthusiasm for racing ice boats had been waning and was essentially gone by 1922 when the Chelsea Yacht Club made the last challenge to the New Hamburg Yacht Club. The bitter competition and ill feeling that had grown up contributed to the decline. In addition, ice breakers were now making a channel in the river right through the winter.

For many summers, the Club had held numerous sailing races and regattas. Competition was keen, and seamanship exacting. Typical of this era was the “Challenge for the Little America’s Cup.” Captain Moses Collyer, a legend on the river, held this trophy for twenty-six years with his gaff-rigged sloop *Rival*.

According to Norman Tardiff, in 1938 at the age of twelve, Carver Dumke was so skilled in sailing his small, lap-strake Maine Coaster that he routinely beat Dr. D.A. Astone in Club races. The accompanying photograph shows Carver in a sailor’s hat [93F11]. Dr. Astone could not put



93F11: Carver Dumke (left) and Tom Plimley (right)

up with that so he purchased one of the new, fast Lightnings. Now he was winning. Carver and his father, the Beacon dentist, Dr. Albert C. Dumke, went to Skaneateles to buy a Lightning too.

After extensive study, Dr. Dumke decided that the Lightning would be a good class boat for the Club. He arranged a dealership with Skaneateles and sold Lightnings to Club members at the dealer's cost, \$450. The initial fleet consisted of twelve Lightnings and led to the chartering of Fleet #39 in 1940. John Thorn, Carver C. Dumke, Edward H. Lasell, and Dr. D.A. Astone were charter members.

The following list of trophy winners shows that Carver had competition:

Trophy Winners

| Windjammer Class | | | Mariners Class | |
|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| <u>Year</u> | <u>Boat</u> | <u>Skipper</u> | <u>Boat</u> | <u>Skipper</u> |
| 1941 | <i>Hope III</i> | Carver Dumke | <i>Betty</i> | Dr. D.A. Astone |
| 1942 | <i>Hope III</i> | Carver Dumke | <i>Rambler</i> | William Thorn |
| 1943 | <i>Hope III</i> | Carver Dumke | <i>Jackie</i> | Bruce Hegeman |
| 1944 | <i>Candy Kid</i> | Idda Jova | <i>Garbo</i> | Bill Menzler |
| 1945 | <i>PDQ</i> | Dr. Tom Proctor | <i>Candy Kid</i> | Joe Jova |
| 1946 | <i>Candy Kid</i> | Joe Jova | <i>Garbo</i> | Bill Menzler |
| 1947 | <i>Candy Kid</i> | Joe Jova | <i>Dutchess</i> | Carver Dumke |
| 1948 | <i>Candy Kid</i> | Joe Jova | <i>Gypsy</i> | Bill Grimm |
| 1949 | <i>Fiesta II</i> | Henry Abreu | <i>Dutchess</i> | Carver Dumke |

The boat was popular, and, at one time, there were as many as twenty-five Lightnings moored south of the Club. At that time they were not dry-sailed. Fleet races were held on Thursday evenings at 1900. A typical Sunday race day would start with lunch served at 1200, and the races would start at 1330 for sailboat classes, followed by a race for speedboats.

The Mid-Hudson Lightning Championship was won by Carver Dumke in 1948 and by Idda Jova in 1949. Because Henry J. Abreu won the Atlantic Coast Lightning Championship in 1949, the Atlantic Coast Lightning Regatta was held at Chelsea in the following year. This was a very proud and busy year for the fleet members. They received special recognition from "Lightning National" for a "perfect regatta."

One of the Lightning sailors went on to become the designer of J Boats. He was Rod Johnstone, who was a teacher in the Millbrook School in 1961. During that year he sailed about six times in someone else's Lightning at Chelsea. He had competed earlier in Stonington, Connecticut as a junior sailor in Lightning #3310 which he, his brother Bob, and their father had built from a kit in 1947.³⁵

The Lightning fleet dropped off to only a few Lightnings in the early 50s, and there was no sailboat racing during this period. The Chelsea fleet consisted of mostly powerboats, and nearly fifty of them were moored off the Club. This number declined as marinas began to open in the area.

Land Acquisitions

In 1946, the Club obtained the property known as the Point Comfort Hotel, which was located across the road from the Club house property. This dilapidated building was torn down to make a much needed parking area.

Then, on September 9, 1953, the "Boatyard" (now known as the North Point) was purchased from Mabel K. Allen. It had been a commercial boatyard, and the intention was to rent it to someone who would continue to operate it and to retain the land at the water's edge south of the boatyard for car parking and boat launching. Farrell and Bachman (Farbach, Inc.) Chelsea Marina Service leased the boatyard from 1958 to 1961. After several tries at renovating the yard, CYC (Chelsea Yacht Club) slowly phased out the marina operation. By 1966 the Club decided to use the North Point as a dry sailing area and also to locate storage, bath, and locker facilities there as well. Therefore, old buildings were taken down or removed, and a new facility was added to house some of the planned amenities.

The DeRoosa property (two houses on the northeast corner of Front and Bank Streets) was purchased in 1966, and the houses were torn down to increase the parking area.

³⁵ March 3, 1984 letter from Robert A. Johnstone, President, J Boats, 24 Mill Street, Box 90, Newport, RI 02840.

In 1978, Commodore Sal Cerniglia added the Ackerman house, the house nearest our gate, to be steward's quarters. J.S. Ackerman had been our steward in 1930.

Club House Improvements

In 1928 the south-side, upstairs porch on the Club house was enclosed.

In 1940, Dr. Francis Shaw, a psychiatrist at the Matteawan State Hospital for the Criminally Insane, was the commodore and was the moving spirit in the reconstruction of the fireplace room. He designed the table between the two columns. The original wall of the room ran through these columns, and there was a porch on the river side of the wall. The wall was moved to the front of the porch. At the same time, the steward's room, which was in the south-east corner of the fireplace room and in which he kept the bath-house keys, was removed. Then the room was finished with wood paneling.

The fireplace was also rebuilt at this time. Axel Carlson, who worked for Dravo, the company that was finishing the Chelsea Aqueduct, welded the metal structure that is inside the fireplace. Dr. Shaw made the decorative inserts that are present in the vents. The stones used in rebuilding the fireplace are from the aqueduct.³⁶

In the same period, Dr. Shaw bought two ship's wheels and had the inmates at Matteawan electrify them for the ceiling lights at CYC. They are believed to come from the *Mary Powell*, the Queen of the River from 1861 until 1920. With three hundred feet of long, clean lines, she was the fastest side-wheeler on the Hudson.

Canoes, kayaks, and sailing canoes were part of the Chelsea scene in this era. A dirt-floor canoe shelter was located between the north end of the Club house and the boathouse. Around 1940, the roof was raised and a second floor apartment created for the steward's quarters. A kitchen and a storage room

³⁶ The fireplace-room information is from a conversation with Carver Dumke.

were created on the first floor. These were remodeled in 1969 to expand the apartment facilities. Also in the 40s, all of the porches were enclosed.

In the 90s, under the leadership of Rear Commodore Jerry Cavagnol, rotted window sills were replaced, the rotted building sill at the south end of the club house was replaced, and a substantial start was made at sheathing the club house with cedar shakes that had been stained “Cavagnol Gray.” In the spring of 1998, a completely new roof was put on the “ballroom.”

Renovation of Kitchen and Bathrooms

(Written by Serge Cryvoff, February 2004)

In August 2001, a CYC Planning Committee reported to the Trustees. Among the recommendations were: (1) to upgrade the kitchen toward commercial grade so that more meals could be prepared easily in support of the Club’s social activities, (2) to upgrade the upstairs bathrooms to make them presentable and easy to clean, (3) to improve water taste, and (4) to consider handicap bathroom access.

In early November, John Ellison, then Commodore-elect, formed a project planning committee to plan renovation of the kitchen and bathrooms. This committee, consisting of Robert Arnouts, Serge Cryvoff (chair), Karl and Rose Droge, Jim Herring, Gerry Hluchan, Jim and Sylvia McChesney, Ed Orchowski and Mickey Thompson, met during November and December. They worked on floor plans, a materials estimate, how to get the work done, and how to fund the project. They made their recommendations to the Trustees in January 2002, who agreed and asked that they present the plan to the general membership in February, and to seek membership approval at the March general meeting. The plans and budget met with a favorable reception, and at the March meeting the project was approved with a budget of \$55,000, including the addition of heat for the Club house. The project was to be funded through member notes and accomplished predominantly with Club labor, starting in the Fall of 2002 and continuing through the Winter to Spring 2003. Because of the large number of work hours estimated, the people selected would

work their 2002 and 2003 hours on the project. Members known to have the skills needed were reassigned to “Special Projects.”

A new stove, refrigerator and freezer, part of the project, were purchased immediately. Planning continued into June to refine the floor plans and the bill of materials and resumed in earnest in September. An early visit with the Town of Wappinger Building Inspector revealed that handicap access to the Club house and downstairs bathroom would become a necessity, and that some additional items would be needed for fire code compliance. Formal plans prepared by architect Robert Arnouts were completed in late October and submitted with the building permit application. It took only a day to get the permit! Serge Cryvoff was selected to be the “general contractor.”

Demolition work began Saturday, November 4, 2002. In two Saturdays, the crew had gutted the north end of the Club house and filled a 30-yard Dumpster. One of the first new items installed was a new beam to support the south wall of the two-story part of the bathroom wing. Then a number of windows and doors were replaced and/or relocated; a couple sections of exterior wall had to be replaced. Interior framing included extra floor joists under the bathroom floors, a new ceiling for the upstairs baths, and then the new wall framing. Concrete work inside the house included filling in the hole in the utility room, and replacing the wood-framed floor in the downstairs bath, consistent with a plan to eventually eliminate all on-grade wood.

The winter was unusually long and cold; it began in early December and persisted into March. Some of the work had to be done under pretty tough conditions, and exterior work had to be put off, but the spirit and willingness of the project crew, both assigned and volunteer, was tremendous. Saturdays were regular work days, as were Wednesdays, when the crew was largely the “Lunch Bunch” and other retirees. Working conditions got better once the heating system (a high-efficiency propane hot-air furnace) was installed. As the framing was done, new electrical wiring, including a new service entrance, was installed. Then came plumbing rough-in; this included an extensive upgrade of our water treatment capability, with larger sediment filters, demineralizer, softener, UV (anti-bacteria) treatment and, for drinking water, charcoal filtration. Building inspections of the concrete forming,

framing, electrical service, plumbing and insulation were required; we had no significant problems with these.

Because of some unanticipated expenses, and because the project was taking longer than anticipated, an additional \$12,000 (\$67,000 total) was approved to purchase items which had to be delayed to meet the previously-approved budget and to have the sheetrock work done professionally.

Finally, in April, the weather broke, and we installed skylights in the roof over the upstairs bathrooms, and we were able to pour concrete pads behind the house, between the club house and boat house, and in front of the front door (at interior floor level, for handicap access). Exterior shingling and trim gave a finished appearance from the outside. New double-glazed windows replaced the leaky old ones in the meeting room. Inside, the push was to get the downstairs functional for the Memorial Day formal opening of the Club. New quarry tile flooring was laid downstairs on the whole north end. Ceramic tile was installed in the downstairs bath. Washable fiberglass paneling was installed on the kitchen and downstairs bath walls. A fire-rated roll-up door covered the kitchen-to-meeting room pass-through. In the kitchen, all new stainless equipment was installed: a fire-suppression hood, triple sink, hand-wash sink, tables and hanging cabinets, and a coffee machine. Although not required for a private club, the kitchen essentially meets the health code for a restaurant.

On Memorial Day 2003, we had a “grand opening,” with a fully-functional downstairs – kitchen, pantry, utilities, and handicap-access club house and downstairs bath. After this celebration, work continued until mid-June, by which time the upstairs men’s room had been tiled, and the showers and toilets connected. From then until the beginning of October, we took a much-needed and deserved summer off to go sailing. (We’re a yacht club, remember?)

In October, work resumed, basically to finish the upstairs bathrooms. The men’s room was paneled and the ladies’ room was tiled and partially paneled. Metal partitions were installed around the toilets and to form dressing areas in front of each shower. New double-sink vanities with base cabinets were installed. The staircase was cleaned up, and new oak treads fitted. The meeting

room was painted and some new trim added a welcome “sprucing up”. With trim work and paint done, the project essentially was completed by the end of 2003, a little over a year since demolition began.

Over eighty people (members, family, and friends) worked on the project, and their names are on a plaque. The project took several months longer than initially estimated and probably more than double the manpower. Though they’d be embarrassed to have their names mentioned, extraordinary work was done by Jim Herring, Gerry Hluchan, Jim McChesney, Ed Orchowski, Eric Rieder, and Mickey Thompson. The “Lunch Bunch” contributed hundreds of volunteer hours. The membership has expressed appreciation for the beautiful and more functional facilities and for the work that made it happen.

Mishaps

The Hudson River has not been immune to oil spills. In 1955, an oil barge collision that occurred between New Hamburg and Poughkeepsie caused problems, and, in April 1960, heavy oil was released from a fuel oil company in Poughkeepsie. The tide and the current carried the oil to Chelsea and deposited it on the North Point and at the Club. The company sprayed the rocks with a chemical to remove the oil and replaced the oil-soaked sand on the south beach.

Hurricane Floyd³⁷ blew into the Hudson Valley the afternoon of September 16, 1999. High winds had been predicted, but what happened on the river and what people saw even a few miles inland were very different. Because of the hurricane’s counterclockwise rotation, winds in the 70 mph range blew from the north down the river. Quite a few members gathered at the club house, but because of the high wind and limited visibility from rain and spray, they only were able to watch helplessly as boats broke away from their moorings and sailed away (hulls make fine sails under those conditions) and eat pizza. Marcus Gray’s boat sailed across the river and landed with its keel atop a dock at the marina opposite the club. Gerry Hluchan’s boat picked up its

³⁷ As recollected by Serge Cryvoff May 31, 2006

mooring and moved about a mile down river. Rick Barbour's boat ended up in Newburgh Bay. Steve Schwark's newly-purchased Pearson 33 ended up near the gazebo. Most of the others came to rest against the river's banks. A section of Pirate Canoe Club's docks was in our mooring area. All the commodore could do was phone the respective owners and deliver news of their "problems."

The next morning was sunny and calm, and we determined that some 23 boats had broken loose, the great majority due to broken pendants. On land, there was no damage to the buildings or grounds; we just needed to clean up. We set out to refloat the boats. Donny White from



Morning Star (S. Schwark) after Hurricane Floyd, September 17, 1999

White's Hudson River Marina and his son and crew helped the most: at subsequent high tides, he came with two boats, one to heel the vessel over by pulling sideways on the main halyard to swing the keel up, and the other to pull the boat into deeper water. BoatU.S. also sent a rescue boat and crew into the area and recovered some of the boats insured by them. Boat damage ranged from none to "totaled," but most were still sailable. It was reported in the *Newslines* that, a week later, by looking around, you'd not know that anything had happened. The boat owners thanked Donny White and his family at a dinner at Greenbaum and Gilhooley's. An ad hoc committee recommended stronger specifications for mooring chain and pendants; these were adopted and are still in effect. Most heartening throughout the entire experience was the way all the club members talked to each other and helped each other and the club at large to deal with this crisis.

More Sailing

Sunfish Fleet #18 got its start in 1962 and grew to a fleet of seventeen in 1964. Being the most mobile fleet, its members have traveled the East Coast and have brought home many a proud trophy. In 1965, Dana Crumb represented the United States at a regatta in Puerto Rico. The same year, Ike Rubin took first in

singles and third in doubles at Miami. Dave Davies was the 1964 National Sunfish Champion.

Our Sunfish skippers brought home 50% of the trophies from Barnegat Bay, NJ in 1965 with Dana Crumb first, Rich Rudert third, and R. Miller fifth in the singles. In the doubles, Dave Davies was first and Sara Crumb fourth. Rich Rudert was a member of the winning team at the North American Team Racing Championship held in Bermuda in 1968, and Tom Taylor won the doubles in the 1971 Nationals.

According to A.R. VanderPloeg, the Sunfish sailors did more than sail. In 1964-65 Dana Crumb led his fleet in building a "Sunfish" dock on the south side of the North Point. He even was able to involve non-CYC members in the work.

Prior to 1961, Juan Jova, A.R. VanderPloeg, and Ray Ruge had Blue Jays that they sailed in open-class races. Then Phil Cartier motivated the purchase of six kits for building Blue Jays. They were built in the winter of 1961-62 by Phil Cartier, Bob Williams, Gene Riordan, George Evans, Tom Stafford, and co-owners Pat Flautt and Dana Spencer. According to Eric Fuegel,³⁸ the kits were assembled in Lew Larson's basement. With the increase to nine boats, the Blue Jays were able to race as a class. Lew was the dominant skipper in the races until Gordon Smith went to Connecticut, bought a Saybrook Blue Jay, brought it home, and took over the lead. The fleet soon grew to sixteen boats. Juan Jova became a vice president of the Blue Jay National, and the Blue Jay Nationals were held at Chelsea in 1963. The fleet then dwindled and became inactive by 1967.³⁹

In June 1965, Diego Kahr, Alfred Shepard, and Ted Mowry organized Fleet #21 of the Aqua-Cat Catamaran Sailing Association. This new design, a lively, twin-hulled boat, presented an exciting sight as it skimmed over the crests of the waves.

Linda Muller bought the first Catalina 25 at Chelsea. However, it was Sal Cerniglia who had the idea of organizing a fleet. The organizational meeting was held October 25, 1979 with eleven skippers in attendance. They were Ned Christensen, Karl

³⁸ March 31, 2001 conversation

³⁹ January 2, 1985 conversation with Phil Cartier.

Droge, Matt Bingham, Al Califano, Linda Muller, Sal Cerniglia, Jim Dowling, Carmine Cusano, Judie Rubin, Steve Smith, and Steve Gordon. The November 1994 “Mainsheet”, the Catalina and Capri boat owners magazine, listed the Chelsea Catalina 25 Fleet as Fleet 6 with Joe Klein as its fleet captain. The fleet raced as a class for many years. Catalina 25s now race in one of the open classes. One of its other activities was the sale of CYC apparel with the profits being used to buy equipment for the Club. One item was a large tent for lawn parties, and another was an ice chest for the sale of ice.⁴⁰

Gordon Robbins bought the first Catalina 30. Sal Cerniglia bought the second, and other former Catalina 25 owners followed suit. Again Sal was the one who had the idea of forming a Catalina 30 fleet. They raced as a class for several years, but are now racing in an open class.

In 1975 Ray Ruge with William E. Witkowski and six or seven others formed the Ensign Fleet 17. The Ensign is a 22-foot sloop designed by Carl Alberg. The Ensign Class has a web site at www.ensignclass.com, and Fleet 17 is listed on its own Web page. In an October 19, 2005 conversation Jorge Ibanez said that, when Ray Ruge retired from racing, Jorge bought his boat. In addition, he said that he and Brett Kolfrat had found an Ensign that had belonged to a Chelsea member for sale for boatyard fees. Brett bought the boat and came in second overall in the 2005 sailing season. As of the 2005 season the Ensigns were still racing as a growing class--that's thirty years!

CYC is a member of the Hudson River Yacht Racing Association (HRYRA). Richard Armstrong was HRYRA president in 1965, and Blake Moran in 1969 and 1970. Dr. Albert Dumke received the Association's "Sailor of the Year" award in 1964 for his many contributions to sailing on the Hudson. Among them were the introduction of Lightning Class races to the river, his work with Al Webb and Jack Orlup in designing a workable spinnaker for the Lightning, and his instrumental role in forming the Lightning Class Association.

⁴⁰ Information from Judie Rubin and John Mitchell

By the end of 1971 annual racing events included four major series of sailing races for both cruising and one-design classes; special events, such as the Cookie Jar, Powder Puff, and Junior Championship Regattas; the CYC Open Regatta, which draws competitors from Clubs up and down the Hudson Valley; The Skipper-Crew Race, the Long Distance Race; and even fun races for the Sundays when much of the fleet is away at a HRYRA race.

In 2003 the race committee underwent a sea change. Fleet Captain Will Gordon decided that the signals from the race committee boat should conform to the rules in the 2001-2004 rule book.

For decades the United States had used shapes for signals while most of the rest of the world used flags. The skippers of each class were supposed to know which shape's appearance meant "prepare" and which shape meant "start" for his fleet. The same shape that meant start for a fleet meant prepare for the next fleet.

The new rule book consolidated all of the starting systems into one and gave the race committee the option of not overlapping the starts of the different fleets.

The transition to this new system went reasonably smoothly because Will Gordon put much thought, time, and effort into making it do so. He rewrote the racing rules and the race committee instructions, making every effort to make them clear and complete. With the help of Sal Cerniglia he held a class after each Club meeting for the race committees for the next month. He provided labeled staffs for the flags, a holder to stow them on the committee boat, and another holder to display them at an angle after each flag had been raised. An example of his thoroughness was that he made the staff of the code P "preparatory" flag enough longer so that the flag did not overlap the fleet flag. His one regret was that the flags were not larger. In 2004 he replaced the 2'x2' flags with 4'x4' flags so that is no longer a concern. In 2005 Sharon Herring, CYC's first woman Fleet Captain, cheerfully changed the colors of the fleet flags to correspond with Hudson River Yacht Racing Association practice.

On July 27-29, 2005 Chelsea Yacht Club was host to the Empire State Games (ESG) Laser Class races. (Most of the

following was adapted from the article “Thrill of the Empire State Games at CYC” by Sharon Herring in the September, 2005 *Newslines*.) The man in charge of the event was John (Doc) Ellison, a past Commodore and a leader from heaven. He made you want to do it. Members were lining up. As a matter of fact, Chelsea had twice the number of people present than there were competitors and spectators combined.

At an ESG organizational meeting, Chelsea was told that it could sell food and have concession stands. The money would be theirs to keep. Doc Ellison had bigger plans. He wanted to treat the competitors to everything for the entire event. He wanted this event to be about us encouraging the love of competitive sailing. He wanted Chelsea to welcome the sailors and their spectators and show them our hospitality.

The Club house and grounds were spruced up. Food, snacks, fruit, water, and Gatorade were brought in by what seemed tons. Chelsea came together like a well-oiled machine. Some members even made unsolicited donations to help Chelsea fund the event.

On Wednesday evening the competitors arrived. They ranged from 15 to 71 years of age. Some exhibited skills other than sailing. Morley Flynn of Martville did headstands on the bow of his Laser. Andrew Zuber of Rochester did back flips off of his. They all shared mastery of their Lasers. They did a rolling tack that would amaze anyone. This manoeuver propelled the Laser forward by twenty feet.

Volunteers, led by Joanna Doyle, Rear Commodore Entertainment, cooked and served three breakfasts, three lunches, a fish-and-chip dinner, and a London broil/shrimp dinner. One of the lunches was served on the water to the sailors, the race committee, the work boat, the pin boat, the crash boat, the law enforcement boats, and the spectators.

Will Gordon wrote the racing rules, and a race committee was formed. The committee was on the water for seven races. One unexpected feature of the races was that there were no protests. Every infraction was exonerated by completing the corresponding penalty. One competitor even turned to help another to untangle his dagger board that had become entangled

with a mark's anchor line. Throughout the seven races there was fierce competition between Jake Muhlman, winner of the Gold, and Charles Williamson, winner of the Silver. However, they were heard congratulating each other on particularly clever tactics.

The most heart warming story was that of John Warner, a CYC past commodore from Newburgh. On Friday there were five races in a row without ever going ashore. John, who was the oldest sailor in the competition, finished all five of that day's races. When he finally came ashore, there were his three grandchildren cheering him and welcoming him back.

The final results of the races included the following sailors from the Hudson Valley:

| <u>Place</u> | <u>Name</u> | <u>Home</u> |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 5 | Eric Schwark | Hyde Park |
| 13 | Gregory Azzaretti | Brewster |
| 18 | John Warner | Newburgh |
| 19 | Jim Zambito | Newburgh |

As usual, the Chelsea Yacht Club went down in history for another great party.

In addition to the racing events, the cruising classes enjoy one or two long cruises each year. Many of the cruises are to Long Island Sound. One memorable one was led by Ed and Sam Livingston northward on the Hudson. They led a flotilla of eight sloops carrying twenty-five people, departing from Chelsea on Saturday, July 21, 1984. That evening six of the sloops were rafted together near the falls on Rondout Creek, and the two others were anchored nearby. Those taking part were the Carrolls, the Chobars, the Karpels, the Livingstons, the Mitchells, Linda Muller, Ed Orchowski with numerous children, and the Posters.

On the following days the flotilla stopped in mid-afternoon at the Hop-O-Nose Marina on Catskill Creek, at the Shady Harbor Marina at New Baltimore, at the Albany Yacht Club in Rensselaer, and at the Van Schaick Island Marina above the lock at Troy. The early stops provided time for a party before going out to supper at a nearby restaurant. The exception was Albany where a trip was made to the museum in the city.

The return trip included a pause at only the Albany Yacht Club so that the flotilla could arrive at Chelsea on Sunday, July 29.

With all these racing and cruising events and a full social calendar, Chelsea Yacht Club is a very active club.

Junior Sailing

The juniors at Chelsea, eager to emulate their fathers, sailed in what was available, or in any contrivance they could put together. Occasionally, informal sailing instruction was given, and, at one time, formal classes were conducted. In 1962, Dick Armstrong taught Saturday classes. The following year, a fiberglass Penguin was purchased through Club-member contributions for the junior program.

By 1970, the number and enthusiasm of the juniors had increased, and a group of Club members led by Dick Bailey combined their talents and energy to construct and outfit eight fiberglass "Chelsea Dinks." These have been most successfully used for training the novice juniors.

The Sunfish has been preferred by the more advanced juniors due to the nature and availability of the boat. In 1971, there were ten juniors competing for the Sailing Class Championship and twelve for the Junior Championship on Junior Race Day.

CYC Junior Champions

| | | | |
|------|----------------|------|---------------|
| 1963 | Corky Ross | 1976 | Lois Williams |
| 1964 | Carol Urey | 1977 | Lois Williams |
| 1965 | Carol Urey | 1978 | Lois Williams |
| 1966 | Pete Larson | 1979 | Mark Stewart |
| 1967 | Carver Dumke | 1980 | Mark Stewart |
| 1968 | Dave Pfirman | 1981 | Mark Stewart |
| 1969 | Billy Heaney | 1984 | Chris Best |
| 1970 | Bill Witkowski | 1986 | Brad Schwark |
| 1971 | Dave Pfirman | 1987 | Ada Garber |
| 1972 | Billy Heaney | 1988 | Brian Tesar |
| 1973 | Ben Williams | 1989 | Brian Tesar |
| 1974 | Lois Williams | 1993 | A. Thompson |
| 1975 | Ben Williams | | |

As time went by the Chelsea Dinks were retired from the junior sailing programs. Six of them became the basis for the Chelsea Dink National, a yearly race open to all who enjoy the fun of sailing a cranky small boat.

In the early 1970s Frank Newman started a Sea Explorer Ship at Chelsea that emphasized seamanship. It operated for several years and then combined with a Ship at the New Hamburg YC.

Meanwhile, the junior sailing program grew. Steve Schwark and Peter Bonk led a popular program that they turned over to Michael Doyle. Moss Calhella joined Michael Doyle. During their time the program grew from three weeks to four. The junior sailors also initiated a money-raising brunch that takes place on Memorial Day morning. Peggy Kraft then took on the program and turned it over to Andrea and Neil Pollack in 1999. The 1999 four-week program had 42 junior sailors, 24 of whom are present during each session. This number is set by the requirement that there will be no more than six juniors for each counselor. There are five JY Club Trainers for the beginners and four JY15s and three 420s for those learning to race. The program was also given a 470 that is used for the racers.

Club Development

Flags are a big part of the Club's customs. The American flag is flown from the gaff (a broken Lightning mast), the Chelsea Yacht Club burgee at the masthead or truck, and the flag of the senior Club officer present from the starboard yard-arm facing seaward. One of the Club's former American flags was presented by Mr. and Mrs. Schwab in memory of their son, Marvin, a Lightning skipper who gave so many hours and was so much a part of the Club. The flag was retired and now occupies a place of honor in the glass-fronted cabinet next to the outer door to the Fireplace Room.

Many people have worked hard to give Chelsea its rich history. Many wonderful, warm, colorful, funny, and even sad events have taken place in this history. Chelsea exists because of its members. A quote from a letter written in 1943 by Frank F.

Collyer to the Club very aptly describes the spirit of the Chelsea Yacht Club and what it means to its members:

“...In these two score years, there have been great changes. That is but natural in the course of human events. In all times, however, the Chelsea Yacht Club has grown and prospered. Through a succession of officers, many loyal members have given freely of their time and money to carry on the splendid traditions of boating on the Hudson River, but perhaps what is more important than all---the furtherance of good fellowship and sociability that rightly are such a part of club life in this community. These are the things that really make life worthwhile.....and may that always continue to be so.....!”

A chronological study of the administrations from 1971 to 1983 shows that each brought its own unique set of skills and priorities to bear on the Club's development. Some commodores enjoyed a routine tenure; others were involved in landmark decisions or major projects. Some commodores just happened by when a dramatic change was in order; others made changes happen. One important point: No tour of duty for a commodore is easy. Members exert personal demands. There are pressure groups -- yes, even politics. There are meetings and conferences where each officer gives much of him or herself in exchange for the title.

One common denominator of all the administrations since 1971 has been significant expansion and improvement of the Club's facilities. Commodore Bill Witkowski (1973) oversaw the installation of the Cyclone fence around much of our property and was instrumental in the purchase of the launch. Under the guidance of Sam York (1976), the Club improved the North Point ramp and, with considerable effort on the part of Zane Avery, put in the deep-water dock on the North Point. The Miller house, which stood to the north next to the Steward's house, was purchased at this time. This 100 year old house was constructed with hand-hewn timbers and wooden pegs. It was the home of two former commodores: John Sturges (1890) and Paul Miller (1930). Paul, a railroad engineer, lived there most of his life. In March, 2002 the Miller House was razed.

Efforts on the North Point continued in 1977 under the direction of Commodore Bob Bennett. Bob renewed the bulkheading and installed a holding tank for the heads on the North Point.

In 1978 Commodore Sal Cerniglia completed the fireplace room and added the Ackerman house, the house nearest our gate, to be our steward's quarters. That year was also the one in which the marina crew gave birth to the "Happy Hooker" to haul out the moorings.

With the Club's Centennial on the horizon for 1981, renovation activity soon reached a fever pitch. Under the direction of Commodore Matt Bingham (1980), work started on a new kitchen and upstairs bathroom facilities. This work was completed in 1981 by a volunteer team headed by Bill "Big Daddy" Witkowski.

Our memorable Centennial celebration in 1981 took much of Commodore Dick Stevens' time. Each event -- Memorial Day, Fourth of July, the CYC Open Regatta, Labor Day, and some in between were dominated by special activities -- music, fireworks, covered-dish suppers, and, to commemorate the Club's origins, a display of ice boats (*Jack Frost*, *Vixen*, *Whiff*, and *Glace*) on the lawn. To top things off, Dick inspired one of our artists to paint the CYC sign now at the entrance and another to carve the huge mahogany sign facing the river. The Club was at its best, with everyone working together. We were on display, and we were beautiful.

When 2006 rolled around, Vice Commodore Will Gordon and his committee vowed to make the 125th Anniversary celebration the best one ever, and they succeeded. Festivities started with the transformation of the Commodore's Cocktail Party into a sit-down banquet. On May 6, 2006 Rear Commodore Entertainment Joanna Doyle and her crew served over 100 pounds of turkey and 75 pounds of beef to 175 members, while a jazz pianist entertained them.

The 125th Anniversary Committee issued a challenge for the best dressed boat on Memorial Day, July Fourth weekend, and Labor Day weekend. Well dressed boats were in evidence on each of those holidays. Frank and Joan Newman won the prize on Memorial Day, Margaret Pepper and Barry Meehan won on Labor

Day weekend, and Moss and Nancy Calhelha won the grand prize on July Fourth weekend with their boat decorated entirely in CYC Open T-shirts from the past sixteen years.

The 2006 Chelsea Open Regatta on June 10 and 11 was a natural follow-on in the sequence of celebrations. Then came the official 125th Anniversary dinner on July 1, preceded by a Club Scrub. The weather was great, the food was splendid, and the new dance floor was crowded. Everyone had a great time. The final official event was a traditional covered-dish supper on Labor Day weekend followed by fireworks on the North Point. A ten-piece steel band led to the dance floor being popular again. We were honored by the presence of the great-granddaughter of Moses Collyer and the daughter of Frank F. Collyer, Jr.

As noted earlier, the Club admitted its first women members in 1925. Then, in 1982, 57 years later, we elected Linda Muller our first woman commodore. She was one of a small company of women commodores.

Linda conducted her office with adroitness and, as a special accomplishment, saved our summer house (gazebo) by directing the pouring of a new concrete base and bulkhead. The Club had discussed the need for this project for years, but Linda and a hard working crew under the leadership of Sal Cerniglia got the job done. As described in the following section on “Bulkheads,” this was the start of a multi-year project.

Linda has continued to help the Club in many ways. Among them was the writing of a list of recommended equipment and supplies for members who were planning to go on a Club cruise. She also conducted several successful courses for the training of women sailors.

In 1983 Commodore Al Califano saw to the completion of a new roof on the Club house.

Complementing the Club’s efforts to improve its physical plant were efforts to update its administrative structure and to expand its social activities. For example, Commodore Matt Bingham (1980) updated the Club’s constitution and created the office of Historian, with Norman Tardiff the first Historian. Commodore Frank Newman (1974) revived the Hallowe’en Party

and had the first Hawaiian Luau. Commodore Bob Wubbenhorst (1975) did much to stimulate the use of photography to record Club activities.

Another characteristic of the Club's growth in the 1970s and 80s was its continued prowess on the racing circuits. As a member of the Hudson River Yacht Racing Association (HRYRA), we won the coveted HRYRA Trophy for seven consecutive years. Boats have competed in HRYRA events from Staatsburg to Nyack. In 1979, one of our relatively new members participated in the New York Governor's Cup Race in New York harbor. The excitement of his experience generated keen interest in this event, and each year the race was held, some 20 of our top sailors converged on the starting line off Battery Park to pit their skills against the 150 plus boats from the metropolitan area. Even though the fleet included some of the biggest gold platers on the East Coast, Chelsea Yacht Club brought home more than its share of the silver. Developing in the wings were two newer classes: the Laser and the J24. During the mid-80s, as many as eight Lasers would turn out for Wednesday night races. Meanwhile, our famous Lightning fleet began diminishing, with only a handful still racing.

Our cruising fleet, too, increased both in numbers and in activities during this time so that the Club had to limit the mooring area to 120 boats with a maximum size of 35 feet or 15,000 pounds.

Nowhere, perhaps, is the quality of the Club's membership been more evident than in the hospitality it has shown over the years. Our facilities have been used by church groups, Boy Scouts, Sea Explorers, as a polling place for national elections, and even for baseball practice. During World War II, we entertained Servicemen through the USO. We have been thoughtful enough to have a guest mooring for visitors, and our launch has rescued many mariners in distress. During the installation of underwater power cables to the north of the Club, a work-barge overturned and released numerous fifty-five-gallon drums floating on the river. The CYC work boat rounded them up and returned them. The barge company responded with free ice cream for a Club party. Remuneration by visitors and non-club-members has always been politely refused. Often Club members have driven visiting sailors

to restaurants and markets. All of these reflect the sociability and the sportsmanship that are so characteristic of us as individuals and as an organization. Our deeds reflect our pride and our Corinthian spirit.

Bulkheads

In the late 1970s, whenever there was a big storm, sinkholes appeared beside the sidewalk in front of the Club house. The remedy for this problem was the reconstruction of the bulkheads along the waterfront, an ongoing task that was completed in late 1995. (The following remarks are based on interviews with Michael Bergmann, Gary Groo, Norman Tardiff, and Todd Voltz.)

The reconstruction started in 1982 when Linda Muller was commodore. The first place reconstructed, by a crew headed by Sal Cerniglia, was at the base of the gazebo. Much hard work by many people building forms led to a successful concrete pour. In 1983, under the direction of Commodore Al Califano, the crew then added bulkheading to the south including the Little Gunmount. John Chobar's experience with concrete construction was invaluable.

Gary Groo remembers literally working in the trenches in 1983. Under the direction of Ed Livingston, he helped to dig a trench in the water at the South Point, build forms, and install the forms in the trench. After the concrete was poured, the result was the wall on which the ramp to the dinghy docks rests.

Michael Bergmann was able to borrow pre-built forms which he and Ed Livingston used with the help of many Club members to complete the south end of the bulkhead. On one day they were able to pour the classic "whole nine yards" of concrete. The then teen-ager Gardner Murphy is remembered for his efforts on that day.

The elegant wooden fence that embellishes the bulkhead in front of the Club house is the work of Ken Green.

Meanwhile, under the direction of Rear Commodore Grounds Bruce Conklin, reconstruction was started in 1986 of the bulkhead at the northwest corner of the North Point. The wall on

which the davit for the dry sailors is mounted took thirty cubic yards of concrete. In 1989 the wall along the west side of the North Point was completed. One big event was the placing of the two 12 foot by 20 foot slabs that make up the boat ramp. Carl Schneider and his team cast the slabs in forms on land and lowered them into place with a crane.

One problem in 1991 was a STOP WORK order issued by the Town of Wappinger Fire Inspector.⁴¹ The order required work to cease on the bulkheads because Chelsea Yacht Club had not obtained a proper work permit. This problem was resolved when Commodore Chris Bunker assured the Town of Wappinger Zoning Administrator that the forms which were blocking the Chelsea Fire Company's standpipe had been removed.⁴² Access to this standpipe, located on Chelsea Yacht Club's property, was granted to the fire company by an August 3, 1948 agreement between the Chelsea Yacht Club and the Chelsea Fire Company.⁴³

In the December 1995 issue of *Newslines*, Commodore Charles Strong announced that the bulkhead was finished and gave special thanks to Todd McKenzie, Tom Snell, and the bulkhead crew for the completion of the long-term project.

Hauling & Storage

In 1980, when Matt Bingham was commodore, he appointed Sal Cerniglia, Rick Booth, and Lou Chumbres as a committee to study the possibility of the Club having its own hauling and storage. Their proposal was never approved by the members. (The rest of the story was written by Al Califano, Sept. 1, 1995.)

In the fall of 1990 the owner of the Chelsea Cottage Marina next to the Club property announced that all Club members who wished to store boats on CYC property and who wanted to use his services to haul boats with his Travelift and place them on CYC property would have to come out early because he

⁴¹ Town of Wappinger order October 18, 1991.

⁴² Chris Bunker letter, November 25, 1991.

⁴³ Recorded in a deed @ Liber 918, Page 249.

was going to Florida for the winter and wanted all boats in place before he left.

Commodore Don Hall and Past Commodore Al Califano discussed the problem that the marina's requirement caused with the storage program and decided that something had to be done. We were operating at the whim of someone who was controlling our Club activities by dictating what, where, and when we were going to end our sailing season. For this and other reasons arising from disharmony between Club members and the marina, Don and Al said, "Why can't we do our own hauling and storage (H&S)?" Al was willing to investigate the feasibility of doing it, and Don made him chairman of the H&S feasibility program. Thus began three long years of research, debate, legal issues, and frustration.

In 1991 Chris Bunker was elected Commodore and asked Al Califano to continue the H&S program. Robert Arnouts was selected as the architect to design the necessary hauling pit. Chris and Bob handled all the permits and legal issues. Al selected the Travelift and the contractor to build the hauling pit.

The owner of the Chelsea Cottage Marina tried to stop the program by getting the Town of Wappinger to investigate CYC as to deeds to property and permits from the Army Corps of Engineers and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and by getting the local residents upset with cries of encroachment on Town property and about anything else he thought might stop us.

Two years had now passed, and, after serving as Commodore for two years, Chris Bunker passed the gavel to the newly elected commodore, Rick Scott. As there were so many unresolved legal issues, Chris Bunker remained involved with Robert Arnouts in helping to bring those issues to a close. Al Califano entered his third year as the chairman of the H&S Committee and worked with Jack Ryan using the newly purchased Pettibone crane (originally bought to replace the ailing Yale crane) to haul and store members boats on CYC property.

The 15 BFM Travelift (brand name) was purchased from Foley Towlift Inc. (Foley Marine), located in Piscataway, New Jersey on June 8, 1993. Al first saw the 15 BFM Travelift at the New York Boat Show in 1992. After many conversations between

Al and William Moore (the representative for Foley Marine) regarding necessary modifications, such as making the Travelift two feet wider and three feet higher, a price was set and presented to the Officers and Membership for approval. The amount paid was \$72,115.00, which included delivery and assembly of the unit using the CYC Pettibone crane and someone to run it. Al Califano used the Pettibone to unload the truck and to maneuver the parts for assembly. Once the Travelift was assembled, Al was given about one hour of instruction on its operation and a set of keys.

The hauling pit was constructed by Murphy's Sand and Gravel Corp., a local contractor recommended by Donny White. The total cost of all material and labor was \$54,217.00. Construction was begun in December of 1992 and was completed in May of 1993. Al was there almost every day and videotaped it all.

Permission to Construct a Launch Pit

When the Club decided to provide hauling and storage of its members boats, it needed permission from the Town of Wappinger to construct the launch pit for the travel lift. Since Commodore Jim Kennedy had notified the Town of Wappinger Planning Board that Robert A. Arnouts, A.I.A., was authorized to represent the Club before the Board in regard to the bulkheads and the boat ramp,⁴⁴ it was natural to ask Robert Arnouts to obtain the permission for the launch pit as well.

Since he knew that, if he applied to the Town Planning Board directly, the Board would be required by the State Environmental Quality Review Act to refer him to the relevant agencies for permits before they could consider the application, he decided to get these permits first. He applied for permits from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), the New York State Department of State, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

DEC approved the plans almost immediately. An application went to the Department of State on April 15, 1991. They also approved the plans. In fact, when the plans were

⁴⁴ Letter dated April 28, 1988

changed at the request of the Corps of Engineers, they said that the relocation of the boat launch pit from the north side to the west side of the site would not cause coastal zone effects in the Hudson River different from those originally reviewed.⁴⁵

The Corps of Engineers was slower. A July 11, 1991 letter from Robert A. Arnouts to Mr. Chris Mallory (re: Project No. 8304) transmitted a requested list of adjacent property owners. Although the Corps approved of the project in principle, it took a request to the office of Congressman Hamilton Fish for expedition of the process to produce the issuing of Army Permit No. 16511.⁴⁶

On October 10, 1991 Robert Arnouts forwarded copies of all applications, approvals, and correspondence to Herbert J. Levenson, Town of Wappinger Zoning Administrator.⁴⁷ A December 27, 1991 letter from Mr. Levenson notified the Town of Wappinger Planning Board that his review of the site plans found them in order. On January 27, 1992 the Board gave legal notice of a February 13, 1992 public hearing at the Town Hall for discussion of site plan approval. It also distributed copies of the plans to various Town agencies. On February 7, the Superintendent of Highways responded with five proposed conditions, two of which were substantive. No. 1 was to remove the fence from Town property on the west side of Front Street. No. 3 was to reopen Bank Street to the river to allow public access to the beach which, according to Chelsea residents, was a public beach and launching ramp.

These conditions, and also allegations made at the public hearing, led to a complete resurvey of the Chelsea Yacht Club's property by licensed surveyor Peter Hustis. The resulting map was transmitted to the Planning Board with the comment that there is no substance to the Superintendent of Highway's condition No. 3. Finally the Club had title searches made by a title guarantee company to establish that the Club has clear title to all the

⁴⁵ Oct. 21, 1992 letter re: F-91-459 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers/New York District Permit Application, Chelsea Yacht Club, Town of Wappinger

⁴⁶ Feb. 2, 1993 letter from Thomas R. York to Robert A. Arnouts

⁴⁷ Robert A. Arnouts letter of 10/10/91 re: Chelsea Yacht Club Boat Launching Slip Project No. 9110

properties indicated on the map. This was partly in response to a July 20, 1992 statement by Ellen Hanig, Waterfront Specialist/Planner, representing Scenic Hudson. She attempted to throw doubt on the ownership of filled land.

Commodore Chris Bunker wrote many letters to the Planning Board attempting to resolve all of the issues involved. One of these was a September 24, 1992 letter announcing that the Club had relocated the fence on the west side of Front Street to within its own property boundaries. On September 29, 1992 the Board circulated a draft resolution approving the Club's site plan to the various Town agencies for comment. The Club finally asked Town Supervisor Constance Smith for help, and approval was finally issued with some conditions.

One of these arose from the property survey. The survey shows that Broadway Avenue extends across the railroad and joins Front Street right by the entrance to the club house grounds. The condition that was made was that the dumpster located by the railroad fence be removed from Town property. It was relocated to the adjacent parking area to the north.

An unexpected result of the property survey was the discovery that the Town of Wappinger boat-launching ramp is partly on Club property.

Coping with Downsizing

The year 1985 was the high point of IBM employment in the Mid-Hudson Valley with 31,300 employees in the area. In 1992, IBM shedded 25,000 employees worldwide, largely by promoting early retirements. In 1993 this was followed by the first-ever layoffs. The reduction that year was 8,300 to 13,100 locally. In 1995 employment leveled off at 10,100 in the region.⁴⁸

During this same period Chelsea Yacht Club also experienced downsizing. Instead of a waiting list, there were openings available. Budgets that were based on the membership in December had to be revised downward in July because the expected income from dues and assessments was never realized.

⁴⁸ Page one, *Poughkeepsie Journal*, Nov. 5, 1999

The membership committee, under the chairmanship of Frank Gain, made a study of what could be done to offset this loss of members. They found that yacht clubs in the Mid-Hudson area were all suffering from the same problem. In addition, the committee noted that demographics also added to the problem. The aging of the membership was increasing the proportion of life members who paid no capital or expense assessments. The committee report (May 31, 1996) recommended that the category of life member be replaced with two new categories, senior member and senior associate member. Senior members would be persons over 60 and would pay dues and one-half of the capital and expense assessments. Senior associate members would be those over 60 who had at least 25 years of membership and did not moor, store a boat, or maintain a boat on Club property. They would pay a yearly fee of fifty dollars.

This report caused quite a stir among the current life members. Sal Cerniglia, chairman of the planning committee, organized a questionnaire. On September 27, 1996 he presented a report summarizing the results of the questionnaire and of research done by the committee. Among the tables he presented was one that contained the following information:

Number of CYC Members in March

| Year | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Regular and Probationary | 153 | 160 | 152 | 146 | 142 |
| Life | 52 | 50 | 53 | 58 | 63 |

The deficit from the 175 regular and probationary regular member limit in the constitution and by-laws was already in existence in 1992 and had increased from 22 in 1992 to 33 in 1996, an increase of 11. (In May, 2000 the secretary reported the deficit as 33. Evidently it had stabilized.) Over the same period the number of life members increased by 11.

The report also contained the following estimate:

Maximum Number of New Life Members

(Assuming no resignations)

| Year | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| New Life Members | 3 | 9 | 7 | 11 | 5 | 4 | 9 |

In a sense, these numbers represent the number of recruits necessary to maintain constant the number of regular and probationary regular members. Resignations of regular members not yet qualified for becoming life members would add to the number of recruits needed. The report concluded:

1. We have no financial crisis,
2. We need to attract and retain more members in order to
 - (a) have more active programs, i.e. more fun and
 - (b) get help with the work and the funding,
3. We need to consider “sense of fairness” and tradition issues,
4. We need to critically analyze our expenses in order to get the best value for our dollar, and
5. We should review all fees and make appropriate changes and evaluate the suggested sources of income.

These two reports convinced the Club members that adding new members was a priority. After considerable discussion, it was decided to try a year with no initiation fee required of a new member. This did result in more recruits that year, but not enough more to offset the loss in revenue. The initiation fee was re-instated. The waiting list for moorings is an impediment to recruiting. There were not enough moorings for the boats of all the members. A new member had to find somewhere else to keep his boat. On the other hand, the hauling and storage program could be an enticement. The cost for winter storage is substantially less than charged by local marinas.

Conclusion 2’s statement about the need for new members to do the work of running the Club was validated in the year 2000 when Vice Commodore James Hyland requested Club members to donate work hours because some uncompleted projects had used up all their assigned work-hours.

Treasurer Barron Fitzgerald addressed the “fairness” issue in his proposed year 2000 budget. He calculated the cost of providing services, such as the mooring field, and assigned fees for the services that would cover the cost. This allowed him to reduce the assessments paid by all members.

Meanwhile, another issue arose. An audit of the Club’s accounts was carried out for the first time in many years. It was concluded that the accounts were accurate, but that several procedures should be improved.

Commodore Serge Cryvoff appointed a committee, chaired by James Hyland, to draw up a proposed new constitution and by-laws to present to the Club members. The committee put in many hours writing a document to better reflect how a non-profit corporation should operate and to streamline the much amended earlier version. The proposed new constitution was presented to the Club at the February 2000 meeting. One result was that the next several Club meetings were in effect sessions of a constitutional convention. Many hours were spent debating various proposed amendments. Many were adopted. Many were not. The outcome was a document that authorized the board of trustees to run the Club but required the board to present changes in procedures and policies to the Club membership for approval. It was adopted at the May 26, 2000 meeting.

The Miller House

When the Miller House was purchased in 1976, no one foresaw the trouble it would cause. The Ackerman House was purchased in 1978 as a place for the steward to live. After the steward took up residence in the Ackerman House, there was no use for the Miller House. This situation continued until the 1980s. A committee was appointed to review the situation. The committee made a detailed review. In its 1987 report, it recommended that the Miller House be maintained for possible future use. This resulted in a substantial amount of work. A new roof was put on the house. The front porch was removed. Plaster, laths, and ceilings were removed from the second floor. Much of the plumbing and electrical wiring was removed, and the windows were boarded over.

The net result was that the Miller House continued to be unused. Then, in the spring of 2001, the insurance company that wrote the Club's casualty insurance informed the Club that the Miller House was an attractive nuisance that would prevent continuing the insurance at the current premium. Commodore James Hyland appointed a committee to determine what should be done. Their report was presented by Will Gordon to the Club membership at a special meeting on October 10, 2001. The conclusion was that there were only two ways to satisfy the insurance company. Either the Miller House should be torn down or it should be made habitable. The committee recommended the second alternative and presented an estimate of how much the renovation would cost.

The property in Chelsea west of the railroad was zoned R-40 by the Town of Wappinger. This allows only single-family dwellings on 40,000 square-foot lots. The Miller House was nonconforming because it was on a 0.2 acre lot. However, it was built long before zoning was established so it could continue to be a dwelling. On the other hand, if it were to be torn down, no other structure could ever be built on that lot.

At the same meeting Serge Cryvoff presented a recommendation that the Miller House should be torn down, the space used for boat storage, thus generating income, and that the Ackerman House should continue to be the steward's residence. He granted that the Ackerman House needed immediate repairs, but they were minor compared to the renovation of the Miller House to a habitable condition.

From discussion at the meeting, it appeared that the only way that the insurance company would be satisfied would be if the Club secured promptly a building certificate and construction insurance for the renovation of the Miller House if the committee's recommendation were to be accepted. Commodore Hyland adjourned the meeting at 10:00 pm with the expectation that a vote would be taken at the regular October 26 Club meeting.

At a packed meeting on October 26, voting was done by paper ballot. When the votes were counted, it was discovered that the Club had decided by a majority of only one vote to have the Miller House torn down.

In March, 2002 a hired contractor demolished the Miller House, removed the debris, and filled and smoothed the site. According to Commodore Ellison, who was a spectator at the event, a bulldozer gave the house a preliminary shove, then backed off, and came hard against the house. The house simply collapsed into a heap of rubble. Lou Chumbres, who was also present at the razing, said that the nails in the building were found to be almost rusted through. The net result is that there is now more space for storing boats.

A Solo Voyage to Bermuda

When Chelsea Yacht Club member Mickey Thompson decided in 2004 to make a solo voyage to Bermuda, he and his thirty-foot Cape Dory ketch *Rag Doll* were no strangers to the open ocean. As Mickey recounted in the article that he wrote for the March 2003 issue of “Boating on the Hudson,” they had already undertaken two voyages to Bermuda. In May 2001, Mickey, two other Chelsea Yacht Club members, Art Irwin and Jim McChesney, and a Connecticut man, Al Milne, embarked on *Rag Doll* at the yacht club to sail to Bermuda. After five days of adverse weather they were only about 100 miles from land. They realized that they could not get to Bermuda in time to meet their wives, who planned to fly there to meet them at the original estimated time of arrival. They turned back in order to fly to Bermuda themselves, but they vowed to try again. On June 12, 2002, the same crew sailed from the ocean side of Brooklyn on *Rag Doll*. Again there was foul weather, blowing out two sails and damaging equipment. However, they were going in the right direction and arrived in Bermuda in eight days and six hours in time to meet the wives. The voyage back to New York City was twenty-eight hours shorter.

It was evident that Mickey and *Rag Doll* were well seasoned and equipped for ocean voyaging. However, single handing requires some form of automatic steering to allow the skipper to sleep while under way. Mickey equipped *Rag Doll* with the proper equipment and back up. He also arranged with Al Califano to be on the watch for an 0700 hours call each day to discuss progress and problems.

At 1020 hours on June 13, 2004, Mickey and *Rag Doll* departed from Chelsea Yacht Club and motored down the Hudson until 0145 the next day, when exhaustion from thirteen hours at the wheel caused him to anchor just north of the George Washington Bridge for a few hours of sleep. He called Al Califano at 0700 hours, stopped at Liberty Landing to top up the fuel tank and set up the rigging and the sails, passed under the Verrazano Bridge, and was at last out into the ocean.

On June 15 his 0700 call to Al revealed some problems. He was seasick and could not find the medicine; he realized that he had left his eye glasses at home; and the main sail would not go to the top of the mast. However, everything else was going well. Fortunately, next day, he found the medicine.

Of course, the difficulties were not over. The missing reading glasses meant that Mickey had trouble reading his instruments. For a while, a pen light helped, but then the bulb in the light burned out. Another difficulty was expected but still a problem. Sailing from New York to Bermuda requires crossing the Gulf Stream. The current set Mickey quite a distance to the east and made the trip longer.

During the following days Mickey found that there were parts of the steering system that wore out rapidly. He had brought replacement parts, but they also wore out. He went to his backup system and then lost the oar that made it work. This led to long hours at the wheel toward the end of the voyage.

Difficulties were not always bothering Mickey. On June 19, the last day he was able to reach Al Califano, he told Al that he had had great sailing the previous night. On the next day, he saw porpoises for the second time. He said that they looked like torpedoes as they surfed down the waves that were lifting *Rag Doll's* stern.

Meanwhile, there were long intervals of no wind so he fell behind his planned schedule. On 1740 of June 23 he was able to raise Bermuda Harbor Radio and, to his surprise, heard a call for mariners to be on the lookout for a thirty-foot white ketch named *Rag Doll* that had not been heard from since June 20. Mickey's wife, Joan, had flown to Bermuda to meet him and, when he had not shown up as planned, had gone to the authorities. By 2030

Mickey was able to transmit his position to Bermuda Harbor Radio. On June 24 at 0600 he arrived in Bermuda. From his earlier voyage he knew exactly where to wait for quarantine clearance.

Mickey and Joan stayed at a hotel. His son, Michael, and his daughter's fiancé, Louis Manipole, flew to Bermuda and stayed on the boat. The two young men were Mickey's crew on the return voyage. With three people, non-functioning automatic steering was no longer a problem. They did get stuck in the Gulf Stream. From July 3 at 1730 to July 4 at 0650 they made almost no headway. Then, at 0030 on July 6, *Rag Doll* was knocked down by a sudden squall. A sail went over board and wrapped around the propeller. Efforts to unwrap it were unavailing. Mickey called the Coast Guard, who were very helpful. They came out and towed *Rag Doll* to Shinnacock Inlet on Long Island. On July 7 Mickey had *Rag Doll* in good shape and sent the young men on their way. On July 8 he motor sailed for 23 hours to Liberty Landing. Then he picked up Art Irwin at 79th Street, and they left *Rag Doll* at Peekskill Yacht Club. On July 9 Mickey and Joan took the train to Peekskill and sailed *Rag Doll* to Chelsea, arriving at 1800 and ending a successful voyage.

Mickey Thompson's conclusions from this experience are, in his own words:

1. Never leave shore without your reading glasses.
2. Whatever goes wrong will be repaired with what you have with you.
3. If things are working well today, they will probably break tomorrow.
4. Always carry spare keys.
5. Batteries on board are not enough; you need spare bulbs for flashlights.
6. If your passage includes crossing the Gulf Stream, you should study or track its movements in advance.
7. After about ten days at sea, it's nice to know that you have not spent a dime. The term money has not crossed your mind; try that on land!
8. Fear is a term that you do not have time for. During a crisis, you simply handle it.

Chelsea Yacht Club Commodores

| | | | |
|-----------|------------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| 1881 | Stephen Glass | 1964 | A. Vanderploeg |
| 1890 | John Sturges | 1965 | Dana Crumb |
| 1901 | B. Merritt | 1966 | Robert Williams |
| 1902 | Stephen Glass | 1967 | Richard Armstrong |
| 1903-1904 | Isaac DeGroff | 1968 | Lewis Larson |
| 1905-1906 | S.S. Meade | 1969 | Wesley Pfirman |
| 1907-1909 | Charles Merritt | 1970 | Richard Bailey |
| 1910-1912 | F.F. Collyer | 1971 | C. Blake Moran |
| 1913-1914 | F.W. Pllock | 1972 | John Warner |
| 1915-1916 | M.W. Collyer | 1973 | William Witkowski |
| 1917 | I.H. Flood | 1974 | Frank Newman |
| 1918-1920 | F.F. Collyer | 1975 | Robert Wubbenhorst |
| 1921-1928 | M.W. Collyer | 1976 | Sam R. York |
| 1929 | Clarence Jackson | 1977 | Robert Bennett |
| 1930 | Paul Miller | 1978 | Sal Cerniglia |
| 1931-1932 | Col. J.E. Dedman | 1979 | Jack Ryan |
| 1933 | C. Barrett Bowne | 1980 | Matt Bingham |
| 1934 | Harry W. Hopper | 1981 | Richard Stevens |
| 1935 | Howard C. Secor | 1982 | Linda Muller |
| 1936 | Dr. E.K. Lee | 1983 | Al Califano |
| 1937 | Robert Weston Doherty | 1984 | Richard Berger |
| 1938-1939 | Willis H. Thorn | 1985 | James Jackson |
| 1940-1942 | Dr. F.C. Shaw | 1986 | Robert Yacovanis |
| 1943 | F.F. Collyer, Jr. | 1987 | Thomas Prizzia |
| 1944 | Dr. John F. McNeil | 1988 | James Kennedy |
| 1945 | Dr. A.C. Dumke | 1989 | Frank Murphy |
| 1946 | Bruce Hegeman | 1990 | Donald Hall |
| 1947 | Dr. Thomas Proctor | 1991-1992 | Christian Bunker |
| 1948-1950 | Vernon Bowles | 1993 | Frederick Scott |
| 1951 | Elmer Van Name | 1994 | John Beal |
| 1952 | William Menzler | 1995 | Todd Voltz |
| 1953 | Earl S. Smith | 1996 | Charles Strong |
| 1954 | Floyd C. Cooper | 1997 | Robert Dwyer |
| 1955 | Maurice Kenney | 1998 | Michael Doyle |
| 1957 | John M. Keating | 1999-2000 | Serge Cryvoff |
| 1958 | Dr. H.M. Brockway, Jr. | 2001 | James Hyland |
| 1959 | Dale Cooper | 2002 | John Ellison |
| 1960-1961 | Edward Waters | 2003 | Moacyr Calhelha |
| 1962 | John Finn | 2004 | Joel Hanig |
| 1963 | S. Szabronski | 2005-2006 | Thomas Smith |



2006 CYC T-shirt design produced by Starboard Graphics,
based on the original design by Karl Droge