

## A CENTURY IN RETROSPECT

It was about 12 years ago when Gerald O'Connell, a member of the club went to the back beach to investigate where all the smoke came from. There he found the steward having a dandy bonfire, burning some old papers that turned out to be yacht club records. He saved what he could, and thanks to his alertness we are now able to reproduce here what amounts to the official "birth certificate" of the yacht club. The organizers named it the Savin Hill Beach Association. Following are the handwritten minutes of the first meeting and a portion of the first Constitution. And thus, the first written records of the club were established. As time went on, the Constitution was expanded into twelve articles and a book of by-laws printed and distributed. This book was the first published under the new name of Savin Hill Yacht Club.

Since that time many subsequent books were published as the changes and amendments of by-laws required.

It may be history's coincidence, that the Centennial of the Savin Hill Yacht Club happens to be in the same year when our country celebrates its Bicentennial. The growth of the yacht club paralleled the growth of the nation; with the exception of the number of the club's commodores easily doubling the number of Presidents.

100 years is a Century.

It is an honorable age for an organization. The very nature of a yacht club point to that fact. By and large, it is a seasonal club, for not many are so located or so outfitted that they can carry on cold weather programs. Accordingly, when such an institution can point to an unbroken career of a century it is a matter of hearty congratulations. This is particularly true in the case of Savin Hill Yacht Club, which has no backers of wealth and which has to plan well whenever money has to be expended. That it has carried on despite the restrictions imposed by global wars and the worst depression this country has ever known, speaks well for the men who have guided its destinies. That the battering of three disastrous hurricanes failed to quench the spirit of the membership reflects the innate love of boats and the sea that is the backbone of a yacht club.

Now Savin Hill Yacht Club has come to its centennial celebration, an honor which has been attained by but seven other clubs on Massachusetts Bay. Boston Yacht Club was organized in 1866. South Boston Yacht Club in 1868, Bunker Hill Yacht Club in 1869, Lynn Yacht Club in 1870, Eastern Yacht Club in 1870, Beverly Yacht Club in 1872 and Quincy Yacht Club in 1874.

When the task of compiling this book was begun, many, many hours were spent in search of records. Bundles of faded old documents were scanned painstakingly. The Boston Public Library was visited numerous times, as well as the libraries of the Boston newspapers. A number of Dorchester residents were interviewed with varying degrees of success. Many letters were written and much telephoning was carried on. Bit by bit the picture of the yacht club's history emerged. It was suggested that the club must have had a golden anniversary celebration and that the record of that year would surely provide the needed facts. The secretary's report for 1925 had been meticulously kept, so far as the various meetings were concerned but there was no mention of any anniversary committee having been established, no word of any special observance, no program nor souvenir booklet nor correspondence pertaining to such an event. So we turned to the old-timers

and from them learned that in the early 1870s many people living adjacent to the beach at Savin Hill kept boats and that those whose yards fringed the beach, maintained small boathouses. They held impromptu sailing and rowing races and finally decided to organize for their mutual pleasure and benefit.

In the early summer of 1875 the Savin Hill Beach Association came into being. Article II. of its constitution stated:

"This Association is formed for the purpose of encouraging yachting, rowing and nautical science, for social meetings, the preservation and improvement of the natural beauties of Savin Hill, its beaches and surroundings, and otherwise advancing its interests for the benefit of all residents in every possible way."

For a time, meetings were held in the homes of members. Then an old wooden schoolhouse, 30 feet square, was rented as club quarters and finally purchased, after which it was moved down to the beach at a point directly behind the present Navigation School property on Savin Hill Avenue. The box-like structure was set on piles, its lower part given over to lockers and the second floor made into a lounge and meeting room. Acquisition of a clubhouse brought in new members at the rate of \$10 for an initiation fee and \$5 for annual dues.

Great racing rivalry sprang up between what were known locally as the Savin Hill crowd and the Harrison Square crowd, the last-named group being the forerunner of the present Dorchester Yacht Club.

However, the Savin Hill Beach Association operated without benefit of a channel and at low water the greater part of the fleet rested on the flats. Finally, a basin was dredged and the club immediately grew in popularity. In that era, Savin Hill was a popular watering place for Bostonians and some of the early programs that were printed included a timetable of the trains to and from the city. At one club meeting it was reported that a special committee had been successful in inducing the railroad interests to put on an extra afternoon train for the benefit of members of the Savin Hill Beach Association.

The section took its title from the scenic hill. First known as Rock Hill, it later became Old Hill and then Savin Hill, a title bestowed by Joseph Tuttle, who operated a summer hotel in the area and took the name from the red cedar trees that formerly covered the rocky eminence. One author described the district as "a delightful semi-marine paradise of peaceful luxury, with yachts and horses." In 1633, Dorchester was New England's greatest town and Boston was but a suburb. Dorchester was to be made a great seaport and the ship Mary and John was followed by many others, which dropped anchor in the upper bay, directly off the present site of the yacht club. But apparently there was too much trouble from the same source that still bothers yachtsmen, for an early chronicler wrote, "But ye channel being poor and landing difficult, they changed plans for Boston and Charlestown." The original settlement, which included the first of several forts built atop the hill, was made June 6, 1630, or a week before the Arbella,

carrying John Winthrop and his party reached Salem and then continued on to Charlestown.

In 1888 the name was changed to Savin Hill Yacht Club and on October 10 of that year, Henry B. Peirce, Secretary of the Commonwealth, granted the charter. The names of those who sought incorporation, as set forth on the official document, were James H. Stark, Henry G. Patten, Joseph Herbert Shaw, Ira Herbert Odell, Charles Newell, Linus Darling, J. D. McBeath and A. Lawrence Kidd. Mr. Stark, who was exceedingly active in the affairs of the club, was the last president of the Savin Hill Association and the first commodore of Savin Hill Yacht Club. At that time, annual dues were \$8 and the initiation fee was set at \$10. The 1888 fleet roster showed steamers Tam-O-Shanter and Ris the last named 25 feet overall; a 26-foot cabin yawl, a centerboard cat, no name or dimensions given; the keel sloop Wanda, 30 feet overall; the 25-foot cat Freak; keel cat Lillian; sloop Madolin; cat White Fawn; schooner Rambler, with a length of 32 feet, and the Flirt, Irma, Gazelle, Peri, Nora, Maya, Gypsy, Carita, Siko, She, Hist, Merline, Herminia, Cygnet, Helen, Anemone, Blue Bird, Iris, Frolic, Ethel S., Bertha, Maud, Ustane, Annie Maud.

In a race held in June, 1888, prizes of \$1 each were awarded to William H. Besarick's Jester, W. E. Coffin's Peri, LT. Howard's Moya and J. H. Shaw's Snag. The Alice, Avis, Gull, Minnie, Sprite and Baby were other winners of the era. At a meeting held in April, 1889, it was voted to petition the city to widen the bridge by which Savin Hill Avenue crossed the tracks of the Old Colony Railroad to the full width of the street, presumably to permit more freedom of horse and buggy traffic. On that same occasion, a committee of three was appointed to watch for and report immediately any defilement of the waters of Dorchester Bay. The same committee was given the job of looking into the nuisance created by gas odors, "presumably from the works on Cow Pasture."

Those altruistic old pioneers should be around today.

A typical list of fixtures for a season is the following, as laid down by the Regatta Committee for 1890: June 3, moonlight; June 7, pennant; June 21, club race; July 31, moonlight; July 5 ladies' day; July 26, championship race; July 31, moonlight; Aug. club race; Aug. 23, championship race; Aug. 29, moonlight; club cruise from August 30 over Labor Day and the sail-off on September 6. To carry on this program the members voted to turn over \$50 to the committee. Increased interest boosted the membership to a point where the packing box that served as a clubhouse no longer was adequate and in May, 1889, what was recorded as "the greatest improvement the club has yet seen, that of enlarged quarters," was planned upon. The contract was awarded in June and a few weeks later, at a meeting called to discuss and plan the all-important matter of fund raising, and while the always controversial subject of assessments was being debated, the clouds were swept away when a member, whose name was not given, made a voluntary subscription which, according to one of the few records extant, placed the club in "an easy financial condition."

It was formally opened on July 15, 1890, and among the too few photographs and similar records of the period that remain is an ornate, pen-and-ink testimonial which states:

"We, the undersigned members and guests of the Savin Hill Yacht Club, on the occasion of the opening of the new club house, cheerfully avail ourselves of the opportunity to express our feelings of gratitude and our appreciation of the successful efforts of Fleet Captain William R. Besarick as architect of our new house, in its beauty of design, thoroughness of construction and complete adaptability for the purpose for which it was planned."

This bears the signatures of Commodore Fred O. Vegelahn, Vice Commodore Louis T. Howard, Treasurer Henry G. Patten, Secretary J. Herbert Shaw, Fleet Surgeon J. P. Lombard, Commodore Arthur Fuller and Vice Commodore C. H. Morrell of South Boston Yacht Club and more than 100 other men and women who attended the affair. At that time there were 74 active and four honorary members, while the fleet included two steam launches, one schooner, 17 sloops, 13 cats and two double sprit sailboats, a total of 35. About that time a committee was formed to procure a design and estimates of cost of a club uniform or a cap, "as customary in all first-class yacht clubs." It is recorded that a cap was decided upon. The report of Secretary J. H. Shaw referred to 1890 as "a most progressive year, with comfortable quarters, finances in good shape and increased membership." He also mentioned "Savin Hill Luck" in noting that four regattas held became drifting matches because of lack of wind.

1906 marked the turning point in the career of the club for that was the year when the momentous decision was made to move the clubhouse and lockers. A meeting was held February 9, to discuss the purchase of Fox Point, as recommended by the executive committee. It was estimated the site would cost \$5000 and that an additional \$3000 would be required to move the main building and the lockers, as well as to finance other necessary work. There were 38 of those present who favored the plan and five who opposed it. When the vote was announced, 31 of the proponents went a step further when they signed an agreement to mortgage the property for \$5000. Of that sum, \$4000 was borrowed at 4 1/2 per cent interest and the remaining \$1000, representing a second mortgage, at 6 per cent interest.

At that time, the land from the clubhouse to the boulevard was marshy. Plans called for a 20-foot driveway from Savin Hill Avenue to the club house. When the drawings were shown to the members, one objected strenuously to placing the main building so far out over the water and he argued in favor of a 25-foot setback. On August 30, members attended a meeting at which \$20 bonds were offered, to secure the mortgage. The sum of \$4400 was needed and the bond issue was over-subscribed to the tune of \$5920. Piles were driven for the foundation of the clubhouse at a cost of \$525. It was decided that, at that price, piling under the lockers would be set aside in favor of cedar posts, which was done at an outlay of \$161.94. T. Ahearn's Sons, lowest of three bidders, agreed to move the structures and to elevate the clubhouse three feet above the former mark, at a cost of \$1300. Early in October, the moving was completed. It had been done by the old method of cribwork and rollers, with a horse-driven winch as the source of power, and the movers had followed along the shore line.

The building committee, headed by Charles W. Hull, decided that new sills should be placed beneath the clubhouse before it was set in place. As finally constructed, the approach from Savin Hill Avenue consisted of a 13-foot macadam roadway, with a

fourfoot sidewalk and paved gutters, while across the marshland to the location of clubhouse and lockers, the roadway had a gravel surface and was 25 feet wide.

It was decided to fill the marsh from the club road to the beach, an area 350 feet in length and 150 feet across. Some sections of the fill had to be replaced, as the land sank, but it finally was in satisfactory condition. A 10-inch water main was laid to the club by the city and some member persuaded the city's superintendent of street lighting to install boulevard-type lamps from Savin Hill Avenue to the club house. At that time, the club had 158 active members enrolled, 41 limited members, seven non-resident members and four honorary members. An invitation was extended to members of the Colonial Club to join. The club was now headed for some of its best years. In the last meeting of 1906, it was voted to build 50 additional lockers at a cost of \$3000, which would be provided by demand notes of \$12 or its multiples, at 6 per cent interest. When the new lockers were in prospect in 1906, those who purchased the notes to finance them were given opportunity to use them in payment for lockers in advance at rentals of \$12 a year. Those who purchased enough notes to represent five years rent were given first choice of new lockers that were not assigned to members whose old ones were to be torn down. Another indication of deep interest in the organization was the vote to have Eastern Dredging Company figure on digging out a basin 80 feet wide, an inner channel 36 feet in width and an outer channel with a width of 50 feet all with a depth of five feet at low water. At that time, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was spending \$25,000 on dredging Dorchester Bay. The club's dredging was completed without cost to the organization, although the work was estimated to be worth at least \$2500. The dredging company took its pay in gravel from the outer section of Fox Point. The deposit was under water at half-tide and its value for club use was questionable because of its inaccessibility. Considerable grading was done around the clubhouse and the circular grass plot was started that now divides the driveway.

Records for 1907 include reference to the furore that sprang up when a couple of members "appropriated" a jug and its contents which the entertainment committee had provided for opening night. Apologies, and the handing over of \$7.50 by the culprits, smoothed out the trouble. Early in 1907, it was voted that members would be permitted to have running water in their lockers, the yearly charge not to exceed \$1 in each case. Later, it was decided to take the janitor's room, so-called, and remodel it with suitable furnishings, including a wood-burning Franklin stove, so that it could be used as an office and a smoking room. The vote included provision "to make arrangements for the janitor to sleep elsewhere."

It was then that membership cards were first issued and a rule made that the cards must be used for admission to the club and must be shown upon the request of any club officer, any member of the House Committee or the janitor. Your historian is informed that that ruling has never been rescinded. In 1908, the club fleet numbered 125, including 11 sloops, 6 yawls, 17 jib and mainsail boats and 17 catboats for a total of 51 sailing craft, against 67 powerboats. They took their racing seriously in that era for, at the end of 1907, the Regatta Committee issued a report deploring lack of interest on the part of members and noted, "the life of a yacht club is almost wholly dependent upon the interest shown in the scheduled races, runs and cruises." An interesting comment in the records for that year dealt with 18 meetings of the Executive Committee, one of which lasted from 1:30 till 7 p.m., with the committee members the guests of Commodore Frank

Merrick aboard the flagship Llewelyn, with a run to Hull, luncheon at the Boston Yacht Club, a cruise around Graves and home.

Who remembers the big storm of December 25 and 26, 1909? It created such an abnormally high tide that many boats were washed from their cradles and out of their berths on the hauling ground. The situation was so serious that some members were notified by the Executive Committee that their boats were in such positions as to be in danger of damage to themselves or of damaging other boats. The committee offered to have them moved to safe berths and made secure, at the expense of the club. In that storm, the top was torn from one of the floats and resulting conditions were such that the House Committee hired a member of the club, at \$2 a day, to look after property of the club and the members, while the Executive Committee secured police protection of the premises on the night and day following the storm. Weeks later, the work of replacing boats on the beach was still going on.

Early in 1910, Loring Sears, long an ardent worker in the affairs of the club and for a number of years its secretary, tendered his resignation, though several months elapsed before he departed. They had sinners in those days, too, for it was reported to the Executive Committee that someone had cut 25 feet off one of the club lines and another member tied up the hauling gear for from 18 to 20 hours while other members wanted to get their boats over. The advantage of the new system of supplying ice to boats of club members is in sharp comparison to the system in use in the Summer of 1910, when it was voted to permit the Dorchester Ice Company to place an order box in the clubhouse for the use of those who wanted a supply.

That was the summer when Claude Graham-White, Ralph Johnstone and other airmen of the period competed in Boston's first big aviation meet, staged at Squantum at practically the spot where the Naval airport was situated. It lasted a week and the clubhouse was, in effect, a grandstand seat as the contraptions that passed for planes in those days went through their paces. In anticipation of the crowds and the "gate crashers" expected, it was voted to close two of the three doors and to admit only members and their guests. The courtesies of the club were extended to officers and crew members from government craft present during the meet.

In 1911, plans were started for a gasoline pump on one of the floats. A 10-barrel tank, 230 feet of piping and a self-measuring pump were acquired for \$175. At first, "gas" was sold to boat owners at 11 cents a gallon in lots of 25 or more gallons, but the club soon found that price was too low. The first four days of July in that year were given over to the annual cruise to Marblehead, Gloucester and return for percentage cups donated by Commodore James A. Boyd. Quakeress won first prize in Class A, with Smilax III second prize winner and Sentinel in third place. In Class B, the award went to Caprice. In that season, the highest percentage was acquired by the Sigrid among Class A sailing craft and by Caprice in Class B. In the power divisions, Vivace and Hessian, Jr., were the winners. Late in the year, the club took up the matter of building a structure to house supplies, hauling gear, a bench and vise for use of members, etc., also, a kitchenette in the clubhouse for use of the Entertainment Committee.

In the spring of 1912, a committee was appointed which voted to erect a mast on which would be flown storm signals when warnings were received by telephone. The House Committee instructed members to weight their mooring logs so they would be floating upright. Delay in the delivery of mail brought a vote that the janitor pick up club

mail twice a day at the home of Parke Snow. In September, with the smelt season looming, the Executive Committee voted that the House Committee should handle shrimp for the convenience of members and that others should not sell shrimp or supplies at the club except when the janitor was absent or the club out of supplies. Apparently it wasn't exactly a losing venture, for a later entry showed receipts of \$44.13 from the sale of shrimp. The House Committee requested occupants of the westerly row of lockers to install window curtains matching those in the clubhouse. A group of 43 members petitioned for the right to repair and paint tenders on the inner float. They were given leave to withdraw their request.

Events that arose in 1912 impelled the members to vote to establish the Savin Hill Yacht Club Association, to which was conveyed all personal property of the organization except the cash, and the club became the lessor of the property from the Association. Although there was agitation to dissolve the holding organization in 1918, the plan was continued in effect until the Metropolitan District Commission had an idea with regard to a public reservation and took over the property by eminent domain. Subsequently, the Court set the price at \$37,500. When the money was handed over, a substantial amount went into the reserve fund and the rest was divided among members. Since that time, the club has been an uneasy tenant at times when there has been doubt as to whether or not the M.D.C. would renew the lease and, meanwhile, has been subject to various restrictions.

Now that the members have officially acted in favor of purchasing the property from the Commission there seems to be no reason why much-discussed plans for improvement and expansion cannot be carried out, to the great benefit of the organization. Certainly the amount that has been spent annually for rent would take care of the interest on a short-term loan to finance improvements.

In making its annual report in 1913, the Entertainment Committee offered a suggestion that might well be kept in mind: It was proposed that an auxiliary committee of three ladies be named to assist in arranging the program for ladies' night. At that annual meeting, the Executive Committee went out of existence and was succeeded by a Board of Directors. In its final report, the expiring Executive Committee reviewed the progress made in the preceding 17 years. It included the new clubhouse, additional lockers, the digging of a channel from the outer float to the main channel. The organization had been forced to economize in every way and usually had to borrow each fall in anticipation of receipts from dues to be paid by the following March.

The report showed that in 1905, the club's income was \$1,610.79 and expenses were \$1,693.55. The outlook was far from promising and was a potent reason for the decision to move to the present location. That the move brought with it comparative prosperity was further revealed by the report of receipts of \$7,216 in 1913, with \$1,760 on hand at the time of the annual meeting. The records for 1914 contain the first mention of a club steward. Up to then, he was classed as the janitor. At the January meeting, it was decided to form a Power Squadron, with the dues for affiliation in the parent body to come out of the club treasury. By the following year, the group had held one regular, three special and four informal meetings, there were 20 certificate holders and marked interest in the idea. In November, 1915, Commodore Vose appointed John M. MacLeod Commander of the Squadron for the following year, during which period seven meetings were held.

In 1917, war clouds gathered. It was voted that the club purchase a \$1,000 Liberty

Bond. The Entertainment Committee was providing cigars and light luncheons for members at Saturday night gatherings but acceleration of the war movement made the officers economy minded. The treasurer reported a balance of \$1,262.95 but mentioned probable reduced revenue in the coming year and a recommendation that a budget be set up. Although no action was taken on that item, it was decided not to press the M.D.C. for a lease, which, however, came the following June at the rate of \$750 annually. Action was postponed on building a railway, estimated to cost \$500 and, in May, it was voted to purchase a service flag. Unfortunately, there is no Honor Roll in the records, so the names of members who were in service cannot be set down here. Fixtures announced by the Regatta Committee included a clam bake in July, two outings and two smelting trips. That fall, because of transit difficulties, there was trouble in getting sufficient shrimp to meet the demand and it was necessary to send the janitor to Providence for a supply.

Probably imbued with military ardor, two senior and one junior member engaged in rifle practice on the club grounds. They might have gotten away with it except that one of them chose a mooring can as a target and sank it. A session with the directors followed. As a gesture of appreciation, it was voted at the January meeting in 1919 to remit the dues of all members discharged from armed services prior to March 1.

In that year, the bowling team won the title in the Inter-club League. As a commentary on what was expected of the janitor, or steward, or whatever his title, the 1919 record shows he was hired at \$21 a week for 39 weeks of the year and \$12 weekly for the remaining 12; that he was not given a boy to assist him and that while he was permitted a day off each week during the 39-week period, he had to give full-time the other 13 weeks. Don Adair and Alfred Swallow were delegated to file a protest with Congress against the increased tax on boats and the necessity of numbering them. Letters were sent to Senators Henry Cabot Lodge and David I. Walsh and to Congressmen James J. Gallivan and John F. Fitzgerald. Add to the rigors of war the note that the Regatta Committee was unable to purchase shells for loading the signal cannon so decided to buy a used cannon, which came with 200 shells, all for \$20, or less than the cost of the cartridges, according to the record.

In 1922, the State Department of Public Works was approached with regard to dredging the float basin. The Metropolitan District Commission approved the suggestion and Public Works Commissioner John N. Cole cannily suggested that Savin Hill Yacht Club contribute \$1,000 toward the cost. So voted. The work was completed in July and some piling was replaced at that time, but a few months later it was recorded that the pilings, in general, were in poor condition and that to replace them with longer and heavier piles would result in an estimated outlay of \$1,500. Late in 1922, John R. Samuels, a junior member, went before the Board of Directors with a proposition for formation of a junior organization. The plan was favorably received, the Savin Hill Junior Yachting Association came into being and Samuels was named as acting chairman. Not until 1945 was the present junior setup placed in effect, after it was advocated by Frank R. Harding.

In 1923, the Membership Committee launched a drive which brought in 38 members in April, 21 in May, 25 in June, 23 in July, 16 in August, seven in September, six in October and four in November. In May plans were made to install electric lights in the clubhouse and on the piazza, provided the Edison Company would lay the necessary feed wires. That fall, word was received from the Metropolitan District Commission that it



planned to cut a strip 150 feet wide from the hauling ground, now known as the front beach, for the purpose of laying out the new highway. Also in the late months of the year, the Entertainment Committee came up with a program that must have created mixed reactions. It was announced that a well-known Boston music critic had been hired to lecture on the modern development of the opera.

Early in 1924, it was voted that the ladies could remain on the premises till 11 p.m., instead of 10 o'clock, during daylight saving time. Later, it was decided to bar sleeping in lockers between November 15 and March 15 and also that the "dangerous practice" of sleeping in a locker where a gas or oil stove was burning must be stopped. Soon after, it was decided that the mid-winter ban on using lockers as dormitories was too drastic and the vote was rescinded.

In March, 1925, Charter Member A. Lawrence Kidd resigned but the directors voted that the privileges of the club were to be his at all times. Up to then, he had been the official measurer.

In 1926 the M.D.C. was assailed because a suction dredge at work in connection with the building of the boulevard, was dumping mud into the basin. That fall, the directors requested the Light House Department to install a gas buoy on No. 6, to replace the spar buoy. The late Congressman James J. Gallivan was requested to use his influence and in March, 1927, the spar was removed and a gas buoy set out which was to be in position between April 1 and November 1.

The spring of 1927 brought a storm so severe that the inner crib and parts of the runway and floats were damaged to the extent of several hundred dollars.

In March, 1928, The United States Weather Bureau gave the club a set of storm warning flags to be flown. Also, it was voted to replace all piling, at a cost of \$1,000. The Entertainment Committee served notice that for opening night it had provided a magician, a female impersonator, a story teller, a piano player, a fine singer and a quartet, as well as 50 pounds of corned beef for making hash, with coffee and near beer. An Old Timer's Night was to be staged later. In July, the directors voted to place in the records of the Board official tribute to the courageous acts of Ex-Commodore Frank W. Merrick and Vice Commodore Farnsworth. Of Farnsworth, it was reported that "during a heavy squall, on July 4, he upheld the finest traditions of yachting by rescuing three young men from an overturned sailboat off Marblehead," while Merrick, during the same storm, picked up a disabled motorboat that was fast drifting to sea and towed it into Newburyport. In 1928, the club had about 250 members and the fleet numbered 80 boats.

The record for January, 1929, included an item that even today, follows a pattern. A letter had been received from a public official seeking to obtain more gasoline tax money from the club. You guessed it - he was Henry F. Long, and he was promptly informed that there had been no gas in the tank in the period covered by his communication. It was decided to install electric lights on the lower floor of the clubhouse, the piazza and the runway, at a cost of \$197, but a proposal to spread the lighting system still more was held up until the organization received more positive information as to its tenancy of the property. That year, Commodore Robinson sent postals to members asking for ideas and suggestions to make the club of greater service to members. He received six replies which were read to the Board of Directors and one seemed so pat that it was posted on the bulletin board. It was just a slogan: "Give the other fellow a chance." The directors decided not to sell gasoline to the general automobiling public and that, as far as yachts

were concerned, members would pay a profit of two cents a gallon, with a spread of four cents to outside boats. The outboard motor had reared its head and complaint was made that owners were testing the contraptions in the barrels of water placed here and there for fire protection. This practice, it was argued, left the water with dangerous accumulation of oil and grease. It was decided to place a spring board on the outer float but ready-made ones cost from \$115 to \$165, so a couple of members made one and even refused reimbursement for the hardware they used. On June 29-30, the Massachusetts Bay Yacht Club Association sponsored a run to Gloucester and our records show that 12 boats from Savin Hill "went through the sloppy, choppy sea to a safe anchorage in Smith's Cove." About that time the club ran into sewer trouble and a strong letter of protest was voted, to go to the Commissioner of Public Works, opposing a plan to transfer a drainage sewer outlet from Savin Hill Beach to Fox Point. The M.B.Y.C.A. also was requested to lend its weight in the controversy. At a hearing held in City Hall, it was announced that the drain would empty into Patten's Cove, north of the clubhouse, and would discharge at a point of deep water, with more dredging if necessary. In addition, the plan would be changed so that the sewer would pass north of the clubhouse instead of in front. The project brought subsequent headaches, which still prevail. The directors found the chairs used at board meetings too uncomfortable and voted to have six new ones, as well as a directors' table. Two new lanterns were purchased and hung as range lights to mark the channel and word was received from the M.D.C. that June 15 had been established as the deadline for getting boats off the hauling grounds.

At the start of 1930, Creighton Adams was officially thanked for presenting "a beautiful gavel, trimmed with gold and adorned with the club colors," and for providing food for a crew of members who painted the lockers. That fall, the club was represented at a Legislative hearing on the proposed new draw bridge to Hull. The measure was reported as "dead" the following spring, thanks, in part, to the opposition of yacht clubs. In April, 1931, in an effort to gain more space on the floats, it was decided to classify the tenders and at a meeting held in June, it was voted that no applicants for membership would be considered unless coming from a citizen of the United States.

During the summer of 1932, tender races were being held three evenings each week. The construction company that had built the sewer extension, handed over \$50 for damage to the runway, thus indicating that the city's promise about not running the drain in front of the club was not carried out. The contractor also was asked to pay for gasoline lost on each of the 150 times (by record) it had been necessary to disconnect the pipes. Another claim was filed to cover the cost of moving the floats during construction but that was abandoned and a settlement made in the gasoline matter. That year, a power winch was purchased and the House Committee was instructed to install it. That was the era of Frost Bite dinghy racing and on November 13, 1932, a regatta was held at Savin Hill in which 17 boats competed, of which 11 were owned in the club. Another regatta was planned for February but was abandoned because of bad weather and there were no further races in this area, because the Frost Bite Association obtained regular quarters on the Charles River Basin.

A special meeting was called in March, 1933, to consider the matter of danger from incendiary fires. It was voted to confer with fire department officials as to prevention methods, to purchase additional hose and fire extinguishers and there was so much interest in the project that fire drills were held. That year, the directors decided that

lobster fishermen could run in at the floats and sell their catches to club members. Savin Hill Yacht Club is one of the very few in existence where members may haul their boats and work on them. That this system was not too favorably received by others was indicated when the Lawley Company complained to the Dorchester Board of Trade that Savin Hill custom was taking away business from private yards. Frank W. Merrick represented the club at a hearing which resulted in the Board of Trade ruling that there were not sufficient grounds on which to consider the complaint. In October a club race for large sail boats and one for tenders was held, with a total of 16 entries. It must have been some day, from the evidence taken from the club chronicles. The big ones were given a course between Thompson's and Spectacle to Wreck Rock buoy, off Hough's Neck, and return. The tenders had to circumnavigate Thompson's Island. The wind was sou'west and strong enough to dismast the Kingsbury yawl, Nereid, while Homer Hill's 8-meter was disabled by loss of her rudder. Alvida, owned by Donald Merrill, won the time prize in the large class. Four of the nine tenders that competed finished their course after hard going. The others were forced out by rough seas. William Holler, sailing Snider's tender, finished first and John MacLeod was second.

Entering 1935, the meeting of the directors set for February 8th was postponed "because of extreme cold, temperature 14 below zero." That year the club was plagued by the specter of possible sale by the state, to others, apart from the club, of land on the flats that had been taken by eminent domain and a protest was registered. In May, there was discussion of installing an electrically operated gasoline pump but the price was considered too high. However, it was voted to transfer the pump to the floats, with the supply pipes running under water. That was done and almost immediately, trouble arose when members persisted in mooring their boats to the gasoline floats when not fueling them.

It seems almost incredible now, but in 1937, a contract was made with Patrick J. O'Connell under the terms of which he was to build a Radio Class boat and deliver it to the club complete, including spars, rigging and sails, for \$290. It was raffled, to add to the club's revenue, and was won by Otto Connere. In the following year, use of the club's facilities was extended to a Troop of Sea Scouts directed by a member. Clarence Marcoux, who, however, resigned his membership two months later. In December, it was decided that as the club had no Class I Knockabouts in its register, it did not care to continue in competition for the Quincy Yacht Club challenge cup and to return it to the donor. Two months later, South Boston Yacht Club challenged Savin Hill to race for the trophy.

In 1939, Gordon Russell was authorized to work out a plan for constructing a new derrick and \$200 was earmarked for setting new piles at the outer float. A contribution was made to the Quincy Chamber of Commerce to aid its battle against pollution of the harbor. In December, Jack Wood was engaged to lecture before the members on five successive Friday nights, under the direction of the Regatta Committee. A pin-pong, table was added to the club's entertainment facilities.

The advent of 1940 brought white gasoline, with the Shell Company assuming all expense of supplying it at the floats. It also brought the fence at the rear of the club building. The following year, 1941, Fred Goeller joined the club and was immediately appointed to the Regatta Committee. The directors voted to remit the dues of all members called to military service and here, again, no Honor Roll can be found. Some of the

names of those who served their country were Ralph Meyer, Donald Allen, Andrew Moore, Walter Robinson, Henry Sheehan, Paul Bauer, David Houston, Kermit Ascher, Ted Kaakinen, Goeffrey Dean, Horace Dunkle, Jr., Harry Perola, Walter D. Taylor, Ed Ferguson, Frank Viano, Jr., Wilton D. Taylor, Frank Lucia, Harry Patrick, William Besarick, William Armstrong, Ollie Aldrish, Ed Twyman. Later, membership cards and friendly notes were sent to those in service and it was voted to subscribe for 15 copies of the Massachusetts Bay News to be sent to members in service. In the same year, Commodore Winchester offered to resign because the Army had taken over his boat, but the offer was refused. The club was purchasing Liberty Bonds, a night watchman was guarding the premises, closing night festivities were omitted but it was voted to heat the building that winter if possible.

In 1942, Steward Fred Cornell asked for leave of absence in order to take a job at the Hingham shipyard and he requested to be permitted to sleep in the clubhouse because rooms were difficult to find in the Quincy area. He was permitted to do so until April, 1943. No gasoline was sold during the 1944 season.

In February, 1945, a set of rules were adopted, which had been prepared by Frank R. Harding for control of the junior organization. That summer, the directors discussed the relative value of accepting large numbers of new members and it was decided that the club was fast approaching its limit. A prize was provided for a series of junior twilight races.

In 1946, the directors considered a proposal to beautify the grounds by planting shrubbery but it got short shrift when it was found that the shrubbery would cost \$320, plus the expense of filling and planting. A notation in March of that year read, "No lockers available, no tender space available and the mooring grounds crowded."

In 1947 there occurred the death of Arthur Tuttle, a member for 40 years. The loudspeaker was purchased, to bring to the club one of the greatest improvements in years and the tool shed was removed from the rear of the clubhouse to its present location. The junior members carried out a program of sounding in the anchorage area.

The year 1948 saw the end of the faithful old pool table and it also saw the advent of the M.D.C. ban against hauling boats on the front beach. In 1949, Commodore Thomas realized his plan of having a skidway built on the back beach to facilitate hauling boats. The work was done by members, under his leadership. In 1950 the membership made the very important decision of starting the paper work for the purchase of the building and property that is now the Savin Hill Yacht Club. The fear in 1950 was the possible delay caused by the Korean conflict of many projects scheduled to be done after the purchase of the property had been carried out. The membership's idea was to make Savin Hill Yacht Club the envy of many of its neighbors and a source of even more pleasurable yachting hours for its members.

The Diamond Jubilee year saw the lobby of the clubhouse transformed into an attractive part of the club, through the work of Steward Harold Wells, with the assistance of members Sidney Milgate and Otto Connere and the wiring was done by Commodore Thomas and Ed Twyman. A marked improvement on the back beach was an airplane tractor for use of hauling boats. It handled all but the larger yachts, and worked much faster than the power winch. During 1950 one of the big discussions of the members were the building of more large lockers.

The Anniversary Committee chaired by Howard Perry turned \$126.27 over to the club at the annual meeting . The Diamond Jubilee Book consisted of 740 ads. It grossed \$1,612.08. Its cost was \$1,430.81 leaving a net income of \$181.27 of which \$55 was never collected. At a General Membership Meeting in 1951 there was a long debate on whether women should attend Closing Night. After an eloquent speech by Joe Cameron against women attending this function, it was voted 41 for, 18 against.

During 1952 the dues of the club went up from \$20 to \$25 and during that year Commodore Howard Perry finalized the purchase of the club property on April 17th, for a total of \$14,800. He also donated 50 gallons of paint to the club to be used on the clubhouse and related lockers.

In 1953 Commodore Perry signed a contract with Mr. Frank Connelly to run the club galley. This was the start of many years of excellent food being availed to the members and visiting yachtsmen.

During the late 40s and the early 50s, the club was at its peak with the Boston Fleet Charter No. 22 for the Thistle Class. During these years the Thistles were actively campaigned in the Boston area. Due to the forethought of the Cameron brothers and John Behm, these Thistles became a very popular class in the Bay. There were many evenings the members of that time will not forget, when after a race the Thistle Band under leader Dick McGrath, on the horn, would keep the club moving 'til early Monday morning.

In 1954, under Commodore Behm and the direction of Ed Twyman, a new float was built and the launching deadline for all boats on the back beach was June 15th. On August 31, 1954, Hurricane Carol paid Boston Harbor a visit. Many of the boats lined the Boulevard shore. A few boats ended up where the lockers are today. Commodore Behm had a special meeting of the membership and a special assessment was voted. \$1,500 were appropriated from the reserve fund to pay for the damage incurred by Carol.

In 1955 Past Commodore Hosea D. White passed away. Commodore White had won the Quincy Challenge Cup for Savin Hill Yacht Club in the late 30s. His crew in these races was A1 Woodman. With the passing of this great sailor, Commodore Frank Gettings had a cup made in his honor to be raced for by sailboats. This trophy, along with the Boston Lightship Trophy, started the dominance of Savin Hill Yacht Club as a leader in offshore racing in Boston Harbor. In 1955 the club was finally granted a malt license from the City of Boston. During the past years it was always necessary to obtain a weekend license when running an event. During the years of the 50s, the junior membership was also at its peak. The junior members were actively racing sailboats, had there own flag officers, and were participating very actively in Marblehead Race Week.

In 1956 under the hard work of A1 Wynot, a bill was passed by the State Legislature, with the help of Senator John E. Powers, to approve dredging for our mooring area. Also helping with this project was Mr. George Black. In these years the club records show many of the House Rules were being broken by members, non?members frequently visiting the club, cars parking illegally in the lot, float violations were flagrant, especially in the years 1956-57 and 1958. During 1956 we saw the first attempt of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the registering of boats. Much credit must be given to Carl Gable for keeping the Yacht Club insured at its proper value, which to this date, the Board of Directors has continued to do.

Commodore Harry Perola passed away while in office during 1958 and was succeeded as Commodore by Vice Commodore Ross. In 1958 the first mentioning of a Membership Committee to screen all applicants joining Savin Hill Yacht Club was made. This was done in order to keep the club from getting overcrowded and to fulfill its objective of promoting yachting. In the late 50s there was much discussion among the members regarding building of a railway or more floats, and what to do to increase sailboat racing; which was at a very low peak. Pilfering became a problem in 1959, when the club's TV was stolen from the clubhouse. The same year a Maintenance Fund was established, so that the club property could be kept up, since it was showing signs of deteriorating. Many complaints were also sent to the Harbor Master regarding the wakes of vessels using the channel. There was a small appropriation by the Board of Directors for the purchase of cat food for the clubhouse's pet cats. This appropriation was requested by Nick Fennessey and Fred Faulstich, caretakers. 1959 was also the year the Harry Perola Trophy was established by the Board of Directors. This trophy is given to the winner of the Annual Log Race. The log races were under the direction of Arthur Vienott. Under his guidance, over the next few years, the club established an excellent reputation for running a log race, even today there is a trophy in Mr. Vienott's name given by the New England Cruiser Association.

In 1960 A1 Wynot was elected Commodore. He had done many things for the club before being elected, and was more consistent than any member in offering assistance to the club to this date. On September 12, 1960, Hurricane Donna hit Boston, but damage to the club was minimal. Few boats were damaged as compared to previous hurricanes. This was probably due to modern technology in communications by the weather bureau. In the 60s, the club was insured for \$68,000 and some of the maintenance necessary to keep the club going through the 60s were new piles, the club's plumbing, the pilings under the club, insulating the building and painting the clubhouse. The records show float fines being served on members, and it was voted to increase the dues to \$50. The gross income for 1961 was just over \$45,000. In that time span the membership increased from 251 to 280 members by the 90th Birthday of the club.

In 1962 there was much discussion regarding float violations, the closing of the city dump on Cow Pasture, now the University of Massachusetts. The main driveway was paved, the second deck hall was paneled and a new ceiling installed. The kitchen was changed from the west side of the building to its present location on the east side.

During the years of 1964 and 1965, the club was being put to a test. The records show that there was much disagreement among the flag officers, board members and members themselves, on just how the club should be run. It was so bad, that it took better than a year for the club typewriter to be returned to the club via the courts and past Commodore Roger Lyons.

For the years 1966 and 1967, the membership elected Joe Cameron as Commodore. Under his leadership the club started to move forward and regained its position in sailboat racing of all types. Again, maintenance was mentioned but a lot of times the money was not available for what had to be done. In 1966 a trophy was given for the largest striped bass caught. This Derby was run by Tom King, who, as we all know, is still the leader when it comes to landing any type of fish and there are very few bass that ever got off his hook alive. In 1967, another cry for new stateroom lockers was heard, and the painting of the building was completed, the front porch repaired, and five ocean races run by Ron

Gaudet as Race Committee Chairman. Larry Bedell's trimaran, the first in the club, brought others to our races from Manchester and Marblehead.

In 1965 Commodore McGonagle could not find a secretary, a treasurer, and a financial secretary to fill the vacancies. It seemed that these offices required much work with no vote on the Board. This started a series of years in which financial statements were always presented late to the membership. Finally, after a by-law change this was corrected. That year, under the direction of Fred Hersey, twenty new small lockers were built. This was one of the first projects of many more to come. The club was worrying about the City of Boston sponsoring a World Fair in the vicinity of Dorchester Bay. A general meeting was adjourned early so that 29 members could go to a State House hearing, to oppose the location of the proposed World Fair. Also of concern was the increase of vandalism in the mooring area.

In 1969 the existing pierhead leading to the floats was torn down and rebuilt under the direction of Ron Gaudet with the help of many knowledgeable members. A new by-law established a Planning Committee. Through the efforts of Ed Pratt and Tom King, the club received all the riprap that is now surrounding and protecting the club property. A new roof was installed over the lockers. The Regatta Committee sponsored two New England One-Design Championships: the Snipes and Larks. Tom King started some researching at the University of Mass. when the state has taken the Club property by eminent domain.

The 70s started with many thunderheads hanging over the club; the unsolved location of the World's Fair, and trying to regain possession of our property were only two. Through the years of 1970-1972, Commodore Cappadona started to move the club at a faster than normal pace. In 1970 the interior of the first deck was completely re-paneled, dues were increased to \$85, the Planning Committee submitted the plans for our present lounge and the start of a \$25,000 bond issue to finance the lounge was inaugurated. The first Christmas party for the underprivileged was given. While in office, Commodore Cappadona led the club successfully through many difficulties that were caused by the memberships opposition to new ideas and the construction of the University of Massachusetts.

In 1971 a new float regulation was put into effect and because of the construction of the University of Massachusetts, 45 moorings had to be removed so that the dredger could work the barges smoothly. This created a large problem for the next few years. A contract was signed in March of that year, for the present lounge and completed by Opening Night. Again Fred Hersey, with the help of the membership, constructed 20 more small lockers out on the back beach. 1971 was a big year, not only because of the success of the lounge in relieving financial obligations, but with the hard work of Vice Commodore Tom King, a bill was signed by the Governor giving the club back the property the Commonwealth had taken earlier for the University of Massachusetts. Initiation fee increased to \$150 and because of the new float arrangement, the club purchased tenders for the use of members. Vice Commodore Tom King got a license for our floats and piles in that year. The Board established fines for people who were violating the float regulations.

In January of 1972, the Yacht Club had over 5,000 linear footage of boats stored on the hauling grounds. The women have as yet not received any further liberation, because at a special meeting it was voted not to issue card keys to members' wives. During the

past few years, Tom King and Al Cappadona were able to obtain all new moorings for the membership who had lost their moorings and had them replaced at no cost to the club. Commodore Cappadona also arranged to have new pilings installed, completely gratis, so that the new float arrangement could be put into effect. Commodore King kept the club active in 1972 and it was established that all hauling fees be paid before a boat is hauled. All the new moorings were replaced in the proximity of their original spots. Plans were started for the construction of a new east wall and alcove for the second deck main hall. In the spring of 1972 one of Boston's largest disasters happened at the Hotel Vendome fire, where seven firemen lost their lives. Of the seven firemen, member Charles Dolan was one whose life was lost. Over the past two years the club's property has been kept in good shape through the efforts of Tom Walsh and Charles Kruger. Commodore King, at a special meeting that June, established the present night security watch which we now have and which has been successful in keeping vandalism down. At another membership meeting, Commodore King stated to the members that he would fight the property tax which was to be imposed by the City of Boston. Eventually, through his efforts, the club assessments on boats hauled was held stable. Savin Hill Yacht Club continued to establish itself as an offshore racing club in Boston Harbor by running races for auxiliary sailboats through the efforts of Ron Gaudet. The club also sponsored the East Coast Championship for the Lark Class.

During 1973 a new roof was installed on the main clubhouse and again Fred Hersey helped the club by designing and constructing a new ramp and float off the launching carriage. The year of 1973 will be remembered by all members as the start of the energy shortage, and Commodore King allowed only members to purchase gas at the club, closing the sales to outside yacht clubs. In June it was unanimously voted to establish the security patrol that obligated all members to stand a night of watch each summer, or to pay a \$20 fine. That year the yacht club also collected \$2,250 in damages incurred by a rainstorm, since the roofing contractor had failed to do his job properly. Again, as in the year before, float fines were dealt out and it seemed that the members were willing to pay the fines rather than to keep their boats on the moorings.

Commodore Jake Giacobozzi came into office in 1974. A by-law change increased the initiation fee to \$200, it was felt that the membership was again getting too large. The restrooms on the first floor were completely renovated and the plans approved by the Board of Directors in 1973 finally became a reality. The first and second deck verandas were enclosed and the clubhouse was covered with white vinyl shingles. Rear Commodore Ed Pratt gave a report at the June meeting, listing many obstacles that had to be overcome if the yacht club was ever to have a marina, but stated the chances in the near future were very poor. The club reaffirmed its position with the government of being a non-profit organization. During the 1974 season the gasoline shortage was still showing its effect at the club. The problem of continued maintenance of the clubhouse was discussed. The club lounge was turning over a \$16,000 gross profit and the bar is still being manned by volunteer bartenders. As our Centennial Year approached there were still many problems pending, which will be answered by the time the next history is written. Will the future solve the float violations, the maintenance problems, the ability to work with a club manager and finally, women membership? For the past century, the officers and members of the SAVIN HILL YACHT CLUB devoted their time, their money and their efforts to "encourage yachting, rowing, the nautical sciences and social



meetings." The same goals are ahead for our present membership, and we all hope, that whoever will write the history for the bicentennial book will be able to make the same claim as above. We can all start helping him now!