

## INTRODUCTION

The past fifty years have seen the dramatic evolution of the Otsego Sailing Club. From the day five families met at Owen D. Young Central School in Van Hornesville back in 1961 to formally organize the club until today when our membership has grown to a strong seventy families, the organization has seen remarkable development.

The club harbor is dotted with forty masts of cruisers swaying in the summer breeze, while the field of thirty dry-sailed racing boats each wait a turn to slip into Otsego Lake. The leasing of land, building of the clubhouse, purchase of the grounds, and enlargement of the docks were milestones thoughtfully planned and undertaken to create a facility which meets the membership's needs. The overriding goal from the beginning, of encouraging recreational and competitive sailing using safe sailing practices and good sportsmanship, still prevails.

All of what the club has accomplished at Otsego Lake has been done through a mutual interest in sailing. We now have twelve active committees working to maintain the facilities and sailing programs to insure the next fifty years. Dedicated volunteerism by members for five decades has made it possible for us and hundreds of other sailors to come down each spring to the sparkling waters of Otsego Lake to launch our sailboats. This historical booklet contains a wonderful collection of marvelous stories and glimpses of our membership during those first fifty years. So, I hope you enjoy reading about and reliving those good old days!

Commodore John Ford

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

John Ford • Commodore  
Gary Herzig • Paymaster  
Diane Nash • Trustee

Wayne Mellor • Rear Commodore  
David Ainsworth • Keeper of the Log  
Ronald Streek • Trustee

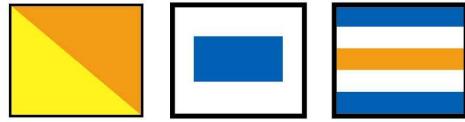
## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

David Ainsworth • Glimmerglass  
Joseph Begley • Facilities  
Roger Davidson • Harbormaster  
Susan Ford • Membership  
Heidi Jones • Social

Jonas Kelly • Race  
Diane Nash • Long Range Planning  
Mary O'Connor • Communications  
Ronald Streek • Past Commodore

[www.otsegosailingclub.com](http://www.otsegosailingclub.com)

# *Otsego Sailing Club*



*Cooperstown*

## COMMODORES OF THE OTSEGO SAILING CLUB

1961 Art Schnell	1978 Ron Streek	1995 Grace Fenno
1962 Art Schnell	1979 Ron Streek	1996 Wolf Wilde
1963 Henry Troeger	1980 Chris Kelly	1997 Wolf Wilde
1964 Jack Huntington	1981 Chris Kelly	1998 Ted Kantorowski
1965 Warner King	1982 John Sanik	1999 Ted Kantorowski
1966 Warner King	1983 John Sanik	2000 Dan Patsos
1967 John Fenno	1984 Les Mollach	2001 Dan Patsos
1968 Don Stehle	1985 Les Mollach	2002 Butch Weir
1969 Gus Neuss	1986 John Fenno	2003 Butch Weir
1970 Neil Ryan	1987 John Fenno	2004 Kathy Brooks
1971 Bill Carpenter	1988 Dennis Baker	2005 Kathy Brooks
1972 Gene Canfield	1989 Dennis Baker	2006 Ron Streek
1973 Duke Vicks	1990 Larry Guzy	2007 Ron Streek
1974 Duke Vicks	1991 Larry Guzy	2008 Ron Streek
1975 Ed Harcourt	1992 Paul Schweizer	2009 Ron Streek
1976 Nelson Allen	1993 Paul Schweizer	2010 John Ford
1977 Scott Baldwin	1994 Grace Fenno	2011 John Ford

## OTSEGO SAILING CLUB — THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS

- 1961 Otsego Sailing Club founded by Natalie and Fran Combar, Barbara and Jack Huntington, Lisel and Bus Romeling, Flo and Art Schnell, Lorena and Henry Troeger. First meeting at the Van Hornesville School Library
- 1962 By-Laws established. Harry Cook allowed OSC to moor boats in his cove. Race program initiated with 16 races completed. Docks installed. Seven new members joined.
- 1963 Removal of 20 wood pilings located a few inches below the water level in harbor. Otsego Sailing Club notice of incorporation filed June 18, 1963 in Utica. Race committee ran 20 races and accrued expenses of \$12.50. Swim float discussed. Picnic table built. 12 boats sailed up the lake to Rathbun's in first Hyde Bay Labor Day race. Yearly fee structure: initiation \$5, dues \$10, racing fee \$5. Mooring fee of \$25 paid by boat owner directly to Harry Cook. Covered dish supper in November. Awards banquet in December.
- 1964 First OSC building erected on Cook's property – the outhouse. Up to \$100 appropriated for a ladies' changing room/outhouse. 25 Class A races (experienced sailors). 15 Class B races (new sailors). 15 junior races. Dock space enlarged. 23 family memberships. All protests decided by executive committee.
- 1965 Spring, summer, fall race series plus junior series. 33 family memberships. Additional docks built. Sam Smith billed OSC \$509 for Boston Whaler. Cook rent \$850. OSC receipts \$2,423 and expenses \$2,330. Proposal to change starting time for Saturday races from 11:00 to 12:30. Discussion of restricting membership to racing sailors only. Charter received for OSC Thistle Fleet 123.
- 1966 Formal 10-year agreement with Harry Cook allowed club to lease property for \$1,000 per year plus \$25 for each boat-owning member in excess of 40 members. New outhouse for men built. Spring racing began on May 22. 35 memberships. Yearly fees: General area use \$10, racing \$5, mooring \$25. Club purchased pipes and fittings for docks.
- 1967 Construction of clubhouse; Chris Kelly designer and Frank Marn builder. Materials \$2,500, labor \$2,000, misc. \$600, total cost \$5,100. Project included indoor plumbing with water pumped from lake. \$3,000 loan from First National Bank of Cooperstown. Bonds sold for \$25 each. Launch ramp built. Previously boats were launched at the country club, the village launch ramp or at Sam Smith's boat yard. Club burgees, sewn by Toni King and designed by Estelle Byrne, were distributed. Harry and Bob Cook hosted OSC members for cocktails in the garden cottage. Charter received for OSC Rhodes Bantam Fleet 49.

- 1968 First Glimmerglass Regatta, chaired by Len Doak.  
*Gusts and Puffs* masthead designed by Toni King. Bill Carpenter served as editor.  
Lawrence Cup club championship award established. John Feno--first winner.  
Storage building built on dock. Concrete ramp poured.
- 1969 Ed Nixon died when his mast contacted high voltage wire above Cook driveway.
- 1970 Expense of \$12 for 1965 Boston Whaler insurance.  
Glimmerglass dinner at the Hickory Grove attended by 175 people. Total cost  
\$743.  
Glimmerglass trophies (3 tankards, 9 trays) purchased from Oneida Ltd. for \$96.  
Telephone installed - \$5.37/mo. \$20 connection fee.  
Sam Smith's labor for boat repairs - \$7/hr.
- 1972 Rent to Harry Cook \$1280.
- 1973 OSC moved from Cooperstown to Association Island, Henderson Harbor, Lake Ontario for one August week to host the Thistle Class Association 28<sup>th</sup> National Championship races. 107 Thistles sailed. John Feno finished 25<sup>th</sup> place.  
3 ½ kegs of beer consumed at Glimmerglass Regatta.
- 1974 Glimmerglass Regatta participants ate 207 lbs. of steak cooked at the club by Audrey and Ed Harcourt. Cost per person \$2.85. Total cost for dinner \$938 plus one missing plate. Regatta Committee organized mooring for 74 boats including Thistles, Highlanders, Flying Scots and variety fleet. Income \$2,161 and expenses \$1,974. Sandy Douglas, famed designer of the Thistle, Highlander and Flying Scot held sailing/racing clinic at OSC.
- 1975 Smith's bill for boat and motor \$1,200.  
Prizes for Memorial Day races: hat and Coppertone, case of 7UP, bucket, sponge, can opener, whistle, thong for whistle, and a six-pack of Utica Club. Cost: \$14.
- 1976 Four years in a row OSC Highlander sailors competed in a regatta at Duxbury, MA.  
Brook's supplied 205 Glimmerglass Regatta dinners @ \$3.10 each and 100 beef BBQ Sunday lunches @ \$1.25. Total food bill \$1,152.  
Sam Smith's labor rate \$10/hr.
- 1978 Spring meeting at Sue and Ron Streek's home in Fly Creek continued until midnight.  
Members voted to buy property from Harry and Bob Cook after lively discussion.  
Price for property: \$50,000, with \$10,000 down; \$5,000 every six months until paid.  
Bank loan interest 6%. Members bought \$1,000 bonds to raise funds.  
OSC welcomed cruisers into the club.  
OSC displayed "sails up" Thistle and Rhodes Bantam with spinnaker filled with fan-blown air at Utica's Riverside Mall indoor boat show.  
OSC hosted Rhodes Bantam Regatta.  
New used committee boat purchased \$1,200. New used motor purchased \$450.  
Open house held May 20 and 21 to attract new members.

- 1979 Aluminum docks purchased - \$1,750
- 1981 Sailing Rodeo -- short contests designed to test sailing skills on July 18.  
Rhodes Bantam International Regatta at OSC. Winner - Butch Weir.  
Laser class officially recognized by OSC in effort to encourage junior sailing.  
Memorial Day rescue clinic focused on self-rescue and assisting a capsized boat.  
Duties and procedures of weekend host committee were codified.  
Charter received for OSC Laser Fleet 404.
- 1982 Last payment made on mortgage for club property. Bonds remain to be paid.  
OSC built a new driveway across northern boundary of property.
- 1983 Infamous yellow boatlift purchased \$500.
- 1985 OSC hosted Highlander National Championship.  
Kevin King, Don Canfield and Stephen Smith rode bicycles from Utica to OSC.  
Blessing of the Fleet by Reverend Henry Geerkin.  
OSC hosted Thistle Districts and Rhodes Bantam Districts.
- 1986 Surveyor hired to determine location of western boundary of OSC property.  
Special social events included a Greek feast and an Italian feast.
- 1987 Tent rental for summer \$300.  
OSC traded approximately 8 feet wide strip of land along driveway for  
approximately 10 feet of lake frontage to settle western property line dispute.
- 1988 By-Laws amended.
- 1989 Dues \$328. New Evinrude outboard purchased \$2,034 with trade in.  
Tractor-assisted installation of docks for the first time on Dock Day.  
Force Five Regatta hosted by OSC. Dennis Baker – race committee chairman.  
Legal documents moved to local bank safe deposit box.  
Executive committee decided OSC will no longer buy beer and liquor for events.
- 1990 Polish Luau dinner chaired by Henry Geerken. Shrimp and clams steamed on July 4.  
Flying Scot Districts hosted by OSC for 18 boats. All property bonds redeemed.  
\$625 expended for metal grating at bottom of ramp.
- 1991 Zebra mussels discovered in Susquehanna River.  
OSC budget \$18,739. Henry Geerken organized Italian dinner.  
Members voted against constructing pavilion.
- 1992 Kurt Ofer suggested junior sailing program.  
Thistle Districts hosted by OSC.  
Used motor boat purchased from Sam Smith \$4,200.  
Cook Foundation established.  
Joyce and Butch Weir married at OSC by Reverend Henry Geerkin.

- 1993 Four lasers purchased for junior sailing program.  
Sailing School commenced with Butch Weir as first director.  
Concrete pad added to ramp. Italian night huge social and culinary success.
- 1994 Grace Fenno - first female Commodore.  
Dick Allen Memorial flagpole installed.  
Flying Scot Districts hosted by OSC.  
Henry Geerken organized first pig roast.
- 1996 Spring dinner at 1819 House, Cooperstown.  
June 13<sup>th</sup> open house.  
Polish Luau was culinary highlight of the season.
- 1998 Clubhouse expanded with gift from Munckenbeck family.  
Dan Patsos - with OSC - sponsored an Explorer Scout post based on sailing.  
Art and Flo Schnell and Munkenbeck families honored at corn roast.  
John Fenno built bench dedicated to Art Schnell.  
Notice stated corn roast will be held regardless of snow, hail, sleet or rain.
- 1999 Friday night Laser racing initiated.  
July 4<sup>th</sup> cruiser race around Sunken Island. July 24<sup>th</sup> Cooperstown Cup race.  
Dan Patsos and OSC received Boy Scouts of America National Quality Unit Award.  
Handicap ramp added to clubhouse. John Fenno led knot-tying class.
- 2000 Winter outing featured skiing and dinner at Stan and Kathy Brook's house.  
Boat launch day initiated.  
John Fenno led sailing seminar.  
Butch Weir and Dick Staley cooked pancake breakfast on main dock.
- 2001 Paul Schweizer and Fred Joyce collaborated to inaugurate OSC website.  
Polish luau, Hawaiian brunch, lobster bake highlighted social season.  
June 30<sup>th</sup> - OSC 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary with John Fenno as Master of Ceremonies.  
Special guests - OSC alums.  
July 4<sup>th</sup> cruiser race around Sunken Island.  
Electric stove installed in clubhouse.  
Ladies' Lawrence Cup inaugurated.  
Red maple tree planted near clubhouse in memory of Ed Harcourt.
- 2002 Winter party at Stan and Kathy Brook's house.  
Culinary events included Launch Day brunch and ice cream social.  
Friday night laser races continued.  
First mention of zebra mussels in Otsego Lake.  
William Karl Family gift enabled drilling a well to obtain potable water in clubhouse.  
Canoe and kayak owners became members of OSC.
- 2003 New used barge purchased.  
July 4<sup>th</sup> pig roast.

- 2004 New roof on clubhouse.  
New septic system, designed by David Karl, moved and upgraded with gift from Harcourt Family.  
New heavy-duty floating wood docks constructed by OSC members.  
Thistle Districts hosted at OSC.  
OSC sailors assisted with Brookwood workday.
- 2005 Justin Hobbie hired as instructor at OSC Sailing School.  
Used race committee boat purchased.
- 2006 Thistle tuning clinic brought latest “go fast” techniques to OSC.  
Additional heavy-duty wood docks built for launch ramp.  
Sail trim clinic held at OSC.  
*Take a Friend Sailing Day* at OSC.  
Purchased new Ollie system for starting races.  
June floods necessitated moving Thistle Districts to Seneca Yacht Club.
- 2007 Microwave oven and cabinets donated for OSC clubhouse.  
Ron Streek initiated commitment to writing history of OSC.
- 2008 Thistle Districts hosted by OSC.  
Cruiser race to Three Mile Point and back.  
Additional heavy-duty wood docks constructed.
- 2009 Additional heavy-duty wood docks built. Used chase boat purchased.  
First finger docks installed and rented to cruisers for summer dockage.
- 2010 As a result of right-of-way issues with *Glimmerglass Queen* tour boat,  
NYS DEC and Otsego County Sheriff place OSC under code of procedures for conducting all races.  
Old aluminum docks no longer used for main dock.  
May 30<sup>th</sup> Memorial Day weekend featured main dock social hour at 4 p.m.  
Docks, equipped with bubblers, remained in water over winter 2010-11.
- 2011 Celebration of Fifty Years of the Otsego Sailing Club at July 2<sup>nd</sup> gala party.  
Long-Range Planning initiative underway.  
OSC offering scholarships to Sailing School.  
Purchased one new motor and one used motor.  
Additional heavy-duty docks constructed on Dock Day.

## THE FOUNDERS OF THE OTSEGO SAILING CLUB

The founding families of the Otsego Sailing Club were creative, generous and colorful personalities who had a wide range of talents and interests. They all appreciated the unique beauty and sailing opportunities of Otsego Lake. Their early dreams and plans set the course for future development of OSC, and the enduring legacy they created has brought great pleasure to sailors for fifty years.

### Natalie and Fran Combar

Fran and Natalie Combar and their children sailed a Highlander at OSC. Fran was a metallurgical engineer at Special Metals in New Hartford and Homogeneous Metals in Clayville. His truly remarkable athletic abilities and love of hiking, long distance running, down hill skiing, European and American mountain climbing, long distance bicycling, and rafting took him and Natalie to many interesting and distant places in the world. When he climbed Mt. McKinley, the

temperature was a frigid minus 20F and the wind was blowing at 35 mph. Fran was an Adirondack 46er as well as a ski mountaineering and avalanche instructor for the National Ski Patrol. Fran would often run or ride his bicycle from his home in Bridgewater, N.Y. to OSC for a day of sailing. Always in a hurry, Fran was an enthusiastic person who loved to share his exciting adventures with his many friends

### Barbara and Jack Huntington

Jack Huntington grew up in Winsted, Connecticut on the largest poultry farm in New England. He graduated from RPI and in 1952 settled in Utica. He was a founder of Special Metals, Inc. in New Hartford, where he was Vice President of Engineering for 32 years until retirement in 1983. He continued as a consultant until his death in 2001. Jack designed and built the world's first vacuum furnace for which he received a patent. This furnace is now displayed in front of Special Metals on Middle Settlement Road. Jack built his Highlander, *Moreland Meg*, in the basement of his home, and

after some 400 hours of work, which he methodically recorded, the boat was ready for launching. However, first a partition had to be removed to allow the boat to exit the basement through the garage. Fran Combar, Jack's longtime close friend, helped direct the operation. Joan Huntington Gorton, Jack's daughter, enjoyed sailboat racing with her father and going with him and Fran to Cleveland on Oneida Lake to "shoot the stars." Using his sextant, John determined exact longitude and latitude. Barbara enjoyed OSC and the sociable people, although she did not sail. She died in 2003.

## Lisel and Bus Romeling

Bus and Lisel Romeling both were raised near Schenectady. For some fifty years, they lived in Van Hornesville where they raised two children and Bus taught art at Owen D. Young Central School. Bus studied at Pratt Institute, and from Syracuse University he received a B.A. in Art Education and an M.A. in Fine Art. Father of a son and daughter, Bus was well known as a very talented painter of watercolor landscapes depicting the upstate New York countryside and the coasts of Maine and Nova Scotia. Bus displayed his work in regional exhibitions

and galleries and received many awards. Today his paintings are owned by museums and private collectors. The most cherished award for an OSC sailor was a Romeling painting given to the sailor who sailed in the most races but did not qualify for a trophy. Bus typically would sail his Snipe in the early mornings, and by 10:30 a.m., when many sailors were arriving at OSC, Bus would be stowing away his sails for the day. Bus was the club's first Keeper of the Log. Bus died in 1993 and Lisel in 2003.

## Flo and Art Schnell

Art served as the first Commodore of the Otsego Sailing Club. He and Flo met at Ithaca College, and as music educators at the Owen D. Young Central School in VanHornesville, they provided leadership over many years to numerous community musical events, bands and combos. With their three sons and daughter and their numerous sailboats, they were very active members of the sailing club for many years. Flo and Art were very committed to

the preservation of the natural environment and were active in the Adirondack Council, Sierra Club and Florida Pack and Paddle. They enjoyed hiking in the Everglades and the Swannee hiking trail and they canoed on the Swannee River. Their winters after retirement were spent in Vero Beach, Florida. In 1998, the club dedicated a bench built by John Fenno to commemorate Art's legacy at OSC

## Lorena and Henry Troeger

Henry and Lorena Troeger built their unique house in the 1950s on Otsego Lake to the west of the property OSC eventually purchased. The Troegers were proud to say the designer of their home studied with Frank Lloyd Wright. The Troeger sons, Don, Tom and Mac, shared the house with their dog Drumson, the only dog to ever freely roam the sailing club property. Hank was chief engineer and inventor at the Bendix Corporation in Utica, and he received numerous patents. He commuted to work in his red MG

coupe. Tom remembers that his father enjoyed sailing every evening after work and that he built his red wood Thistle from a kit that he named *Sunny Side Up* after his favorite breakfast. Hank chaired the by-laws committee when the club was founded and served as the second commodore. After retiring from Bendix, Hank and Lorena moved to Maryland where Hank sailed on the Chesapeake in larger boats. Hank died in 1988, Lorena in 1999 and Mac, another avid sailor, in 2004.

## REMEMBERING OSC FOUNDERS

### by George Ehrmann

I was very fortunate three founders of Otsego Sailing Club were good friends -- Art Schnell, Bus Romeling and Fran Combar. Jack Huntington I also knew but not to the extent of the others. I was unable to participate as a founder because of my financial situation at the time. My dad was a pharmacist and I am an active practicing pharmacist at Bassett Healthcare in Little Falls. We ran the Raymond G. Ehrmann Prescription

Pharmacy on the clock corner in Richfield Springs from 1931 to 1983 when I closed the pharmacy and became Pharmacy Director at the Delaware Valley Hospital in Walton, N.Y. Sue Ford was my Pharmacy Assistant/Technician for over 18 years. A wonderful person to work with, Sue is friendly, has a good sense of humor and is a very hard worker. John Ford became a very good friend and I know their sons Chris and Jonathan.

### **ART SCHNELL** **1918 - 1996**

Art and Flo Schnell and the children Art, Jr., Larry, Billy and Penny were a wonderful family and very good friends and pharmacy customers. Art taught instrumental music at the Owen D. Young Central School in Van Hornesville from 1941 to 1969, and in the 1970s was a substitute teacher in music and a BOCES guidance counselor. Flo taught music in Van Hornesville.

One year Larry received a chemistry set for Christmas and conducted experiments. Because of my pharmacy and chemistry knowledge, Larry would stop by and ask lots of questions. One time he came up with a potent mixture, which exploded, either in or just outside their home. Art and Flo asked me, please, not answer anymore of Larry's chemistry questions. I thought he would become a chemist, but he teaches another subject. In Florida, Larry sails a 40' Canadian-made Hughes boat weighing 14 tons.

Billy is a surveyor and lives near Remsen. Art, Jr. lives in Portland, Maine where he

works with disabled children. Penny, an accomplished musician and music therapist, lives in Brookfield, Conn.

I sailed with Art in various types of boats over the years. In his Rocket cruiser we would come in last in races, but have a very good time with our families and that was what it was all about. We also sailed in Art's Olympic class catboat. Ed Badgley and I owned one (#88) for a long time that I gave to Sue and John Ford. Art also owned a Rhodes Bantam and a Pintail and a midget ocean racer and the cruiser Aquarius. We kidded that they owned about every sailboat ever made.

With Flo and Art, I played in community bands including the Cooperstown Community Band where I played trumpet for 58 years. Art and Flo's big band, *The Villagers*, played in the region and our combo with clarinetist Ed Badgley played at OSC parties.

## **BUS ROMELING 1909 - 1993**

Waldemar “Bus”Romeling taught art at the Owen D. Young Central School from 1942 until 1969. He and Lisel and their children Chris and Mike were good friends and pharmacy customers. Bus was an excellent skier and we skied together at Mount Otsego in Pierstown.. When everyone switched to metal skies, Bus preferred the Hart brand and after skiing on his, I soon acquired my own set of Harts.

Bus was a noted central New York watercolorist and had a great following. He painted several beautiful views of skiers at Mt. Otsego—I wish I had purchased one. My wife Joyce took art lessons from Bus for many years and she continues to paint watercolors.. Studying with Bus was a profound experience for her because he was not only a great artist, but also a superb teacher.

## **FRAN COMBAR 1927 - 2008**

Fran Combar was a good friend for many years. A many-talented individual, Fran’s wide-ranging athletic abilities and special interest in mountain climbing led him to remarkable accomplishments. He climbed all 46 Adirondack peaks, climbed Mt. McKinley and scaled Mont Blanc, the highest mountain in western Europe. Fran, with Natalie, traveled the world.

He played bass drum in the Ziyara Shriners Drum and Bugle ensemble based in Utica and I would see him at the Shrine Circus at Utica Aud as I played in the first trumpet section of the Shrine Band.

When the National Ski Patrol, Cooperstown, recognized me for 30 years of service at Mt. Otsego, Fran was section chief and came to present me with my National award # 3574 of which I am very proud. I skied with Fran both at Mt. Otsego and at his home area Snow Ridge in Turin. Fran was an active Rotarian and he was known as a “super geek” because of his expertise with computers.

I enjoyed seeing Fran during his bicycle rides from Bridgewater to the OSC. He would stop at the pharmacy in Richfield Springs for a vanilla ice cream cone.

## HOW OTSEGO SAILING CLUB AQUIRED PROPERTY

### by Jack Tenney

The beauty and sailing potential of Otsego Lake attracted the attention of Utica-area sailors in the early '60s, but most of Otsego Lake was privately owned and rarely for sale. In their search for a spot, the original Otsego Sailing Club sailors located the ideal property, which Harry Cook owned. They succeeded in renting mooring space for their boats in the cove bordering his property. Everybody in Cooperstown knew Harry Cook. He was always friendly with a smile, wave and warm greeting for everyone. However, Harry was not interested in formally leasing dry land adjacent to the cove to the sailors. Many attempts to reach him on the topic had failed and it looked like one more shattered dream.

Fran Combar, Jack Huntington and Warner King, three Highlander owners, came to my house one evening to discuss the situation. Their recent attempts to even open up the subject had revealed that Harry was simply not interested. It seemed to me that a lease still might be possible, although the sailors were skeptical. The sailors authorized me to approach Harry and try to work out a lease.

After several visits and numerous telephone calls, it turned out that Harry and I had several mutual friends in the Herkimer and Utica areas. A few of them called Harry and were instrumental in softening him towards the sailors and their Utica lawyer. Harry did not have a high opinion of Utica or lawyers. There were many frustrations and discouragements because Harry vacillated and frequently changed his mind. Harry's most common argument was that he did not need or want the

money. Frequently he would contend that it would be too noisy.

"Children will annoy Bob," he would say.  
"Do you feel that way, Harry?"

"No, I would like to hear the sounds of happy children."

"Well, the members will try not to upset Bob," I said.

And so it went on for several months. At last, he agreed to go with me to look over the land and tell him what we wanted. We walked above the cliff and Harry kept telling me how useless it was. Even at this stage, he was not agreeing to anything.

"There's no room for docks. They can't be permanent. They will be destroyed by the snow and ice" said Harry  
Fortunately, I had been well prepped and I explained the use of seasonal docks. He seemed to accept that and I started to relax. Without a word, he turned and started to walk back towards the house.

"What have I done?" I said to myself.

"Have I come this far to blow it?"

The exchange then went on.

"How many members?" asked Harry.

"There are only a few but we will keep a limit on new additions. But, you know sailors will need competition," I said.

"No more than 50. No noisy motor boats," Harry replied.

"We may need a couple," I said.

"Only a couple," he said.

I had the lease in my briefcase. I showed it to him. He didn't seem surprised, read it over and handed it back saying, "Come to the house."

We sat at the dining room table after he pushed aside a bunch of old magazines. Then, he took the lease from me and read it again.

"What is this launching area?" he asked.

"We still have to clear a path through the woods and build a place to launch the boats," I replied.

"All buildings will be temporary," he said.

"If you wish," I said.

"How much?" asked Harry.  
I had left it blank. "You tell me," I said.

He wrote in a number, showed it to me. I nodded okay. Then he signed it and handed it back. It was \$ 1,000 per year plus taxes and utilities for up to 40 members for 10 years. It happened so quickly, I was caught off guard. He poured me a drink and shook my hand saying, "I usually don't like lawyers."

We drank slowly and there was no further discussion about the property. After a time, I thanked him, we shook hands again and he walked me to my car and said good-bye. I felt like I'd just won a 30-day trial as I maneuvered my way up the driveway. The sailors were ecstatic. Since they had no money, they agreed that if and when I ever bought a boat, I would have a free life membership. The thought was there and much appreciated.

As for Harry, that was only Round One. The next problem was to renew the lease, and finally buy the property before he gave it away. In 1967, a clubhouse was built at the top of the escarpment with a large porch overlooking the bay area. It housed bathroom facilities. The ingenuity of the members also created a safe stairway to the water level.

Bob Cook stopped in one day and said his father was not going to renew the lease. He wanted his property and his privacy back. This was a crisis of major proportions and demanded an emergency meeting of the Executive Committee. We wrung our hands and fretted and fussed and once again we all agreed to meet with

Harry. At first, we were all ready to go when someone suggested that might aggravate Bob even more. So, I was elected. Actually, Harry liked the others very much and I had a feeling he might be a little sick of me. Don Stehle, John Fenno and I discussed the possible strategies. Should we go right over, wait, let it cool down, talk to Harry, with or without Bob?

Harry did not want to fight with Bob. They lived together and Harry claimed he was too old for controversy. (He was well into his 70's.) I knew that we would never be able to buy the property without Bob's approval. Harry had made that clear on many occasions when we chose to dance around that subject, which was very seldom. This incident occurred on a Saturday, so we agreed to sleep on it and decide the next day. Sunday was a gorgeous day and as we prepared for the 1:00 p.m. race, Harry emerged from the bushes, like a specter from somewhere. He approached me saying,

"Bob and I were talking last night and we decided to renew the lease with a slight increase in rent."

End Round Two. Neither of us mentioned a purchase. I was too shocked by the lease extension. One obstacle at a time.

After getting the lease extended, we started a full-court press to buy the property. As a member of the club's executive committee, I pushed for some action. Most agreed we should try to buy the land, but a good many were concerned about the money. It had to be 100 % participation. The property was very valuable and there was no easy way to solve that problem. We could try to get a mortgage but how would we guarantee it to satisfy bank requirements? It was doable, depending on Harry. Would he? How much? Time was of the essence. Harry was not getting younger and

anything could happen if we didn't act.

I spoke to Harry all fall and into the winter of 1977-78. Finally, he and Bob agreed to meet me at their home in Cooperstown. It could not have been a worse day. Heavy snow and freezing conditions made a nightmare of getting down the Cook driveway. My wife and our son, Bob, were with me. With Harry you just never knew, but I had prepared the contract and brought it with me.

We all sat at the dining room table and I explained to both father and son the nature of the land we would need.

"Basically the area we occupy which has access to the lake because of our stairway down the cliff. It probably wouldn't be worth a lot to a home builder," I said.

"We don't want to sell," Bob interjected.

"Be quiet," said Harry. "How much are you willing to pay?"

"Just as we discussed," I said.

"Fifty thousand," said Harry.

"That's not enough," said Bob.

Harry glared at him and turned to me.

"The weather is really bad and we want to go to Florida. Can we have the money right away?"

"Harry, I will go to the bank tomorrow and bring it down."

"That's okay. We need it by the end of the week."

"You'll get it."

Harry signed the contract, then he handed it to Bob. Bob stared at it for quite awhile. Harry handed him the pen and said:

"Sign it."

He did and that ended Round Three.

There was one more to go. The next night there was a meeting of the club membership. That day, the bank offered me a line of credit until the final closing. Everything was set at my end. After much discussion among the membership, unanimous approval was achieved. We worked out a payment plan and after many, many exasperating and frustrating years, the Otsego Sailing Club owned its own property.

THE OTSEGO SAILING CLUB

SCALE 1:300 FEET

SURVEY BY AND BY

Richard A. Bachelder L.S.

26 JULY 1978

COOK - BROOKWOOD PROPERTY

KATHARINE JEROME THOMAS AND CHARMAN TO J MARY COOK & ROBERT W COOK  
JO DECKER - 1978

AREA = 2.50 ACRES:  
TO BE CONVEYED

OTSEGO SAILING CLUB

N 55° 20' W 366.97  
DOVER PLANE 23  
J MARY COOK & ROBERT W  
COOK RECEIVED OF KATHARINE  
COOK & ROBERT W COOK  
2.50 ACRES



L A K E  
6 0  
S E L F O T

## SPECIAL OSC FRIENDS

### BY NORMA LEE HAVENS

#### JIM MARONE

First of all I need to admit that the members of the Otsego Sailing Club are a creative, inventive lot. Most can fix things up in no time flat. I guess that comes from our adventures as sailors. Jim Marone was always a quiet humble sort of guy. But no man or woman was more helpful about solving thorny problems. He'd patiently look things over, listen to the symptoms, think quietly and come up with a solution. He could even make the part that you needed. And almost the

best part was that he had the tools with him to solve a dilemma. What a guy. We Cape Dory Typhoon sailors especially enjoyed his talent for getting boats in and out of Otsego Lake. Each fall we would gather around and help each other get our boats out and take down the masts. Jim was always there. We became good friends in other places too. We camped, canoed, kayaked and sailed together. We knew his family and celebrated good times together. Jim died in February 2008 and he is missed.

#### DICK ALLEN

We met Dick Allen at the sailing club. Dick had been a member for many years. The flag pole in the garden is dedicated to Dick. He was a devoted member; no matter what the task, the weather or forecast, Dick was out there helping or in his Flying Scot ready to roll. He was in the regatta circuit. Jack and I sailed with him and did those trips for a couple years. He taught Jack how to fly a spinnaker while I worked the jib. Dick was one of those guys who could repair anything that ever broke. He always had a project going at the club.

When the first aluminum docks were purchased, Dick drove all the way to Ohio

to pick them up and save a little money for the club. Our teenage son, Steve, also a racer, went with him to help with the lifting and provide company. Our families became friends and shared many good times cross-country skiing on Dick's dairy farm in New Lisbon or on the trails in the New York State forests.

Dick was a handsome, fit, white-haired man in his seventies when we first met him. In his eighties he looked the same as when we met. He died very suddenly at the club down at the dock while getting ready for the day. Just the place he'd want to be.

## **COMMODORE ED AND AUDREY HARCOURT**

Ed and Audie Harcourt and the family were dear friends to all of us. They took time to talk to you and get to know your family. Ed was an engineer with Chicago Pneumatic Co. in Utica and a dedicated Thistle sailor. These engineers are so valuable as club members. Ed was always around to help. Audie and Ed were a team and Glimmerglass specialists. Audie was co-chair of the Glimmerglass more than once. You would always see her at the registration desk or counting lunches or suppers or steaming clams on July 4<sup>th</sup>. They did it all and their children helped with sailing and work. It is a family that had joy in abundance. When Ed was commodore, he never left a job undone.

The Harcourt family included all the Harcourt kids: Greg, Geri, Eddie, Glen and

Gary. They are very talented people and all were sailors. Geri and her husband Dean charmed us all with their twin boys who never had a quiet day. One twin would go one direction and the other the opposite.

When I was learning how to fly fish, Ed took me up to the upper field at the club and provided some casting lessons. I was inspired by his stories about fishing for salmon in the Salmon River near Pulaski, N.Y. He always took time to give you a hand.

Ed's family and many friends dedicated the purple maple tree on the lawn of OSC to Ed's memory. Audie now lives in Florida and I'm sure enjoying her family.

## **COMMODORE JOHN SANIK**

John was a science professor at the State University College in Oneonta and a former Navy man. He brought many skills and interests to the club. He came into the club to learn more about single-hand cruiser sailing. John wanted to sail and man his sailboat through the inter-coastal waterways, which he did. He got involved with the weeklong adventures popular with club members of sailing on Lake Champlain and other interesting places. John, with other members, organized a plan for putting in the docks in much less

time. He also liked making repairs and improvements to the physical buildings. When I hear the bell ringing out from the deck of the clubhouse for captain meetings, I think of him. The brass bell and wood bench for the lower deck were given to the club in his memory by his children. John left a large collection of books and encyclopedias on sailing which you can still borrow from the clubhouse library. John was a wonderful friend to all the members.

## GRACE AND JOHN FENNO

by Chris Kelly

For many years, no decisions were made at the sailing club without first hearing the opinion of John and Grace because everyone valued their knowledge, experience, wisdom and commitment. John was commodore for four years and Grace for two years and between them at one time or another they held almost every office and led every committee. They never missed a Dock Day or an event and were absent only on the weekends when they traveled to a regatta to represent the OSC. With their three boys, Chris, Dan and Nate, the Fennos

sailed in their classic natural wood Thistle #2026. John and Grace followed the rules and expected the same from every other sailor. John, along with his family crew, is legendary in the Niagara Frontier Thistle District because of his racing prowess. I thank John and Grace for making us better sailors and for thoughtful guidance of the OSC. The Grace and John Fenno Trophy was established to recognize the highest scoring OSC Thistle sailor at Glimmerglass Regatta. John died in 2011, but his legacy to OSC will continue.

## A FENNO FABLE

by Jerry Phelan

One day I was crewing for John Fenno. Must have been in the late 1990s before I got my own boat. Anyway, it was just the two of us and there was a strong wind. We tacked and, as we were crossing, John slipped and went down. I hooked in and

after sheeting the jib, I turned towards the stern to see John. There he was flat on his back, head up and tiller in his hand. “*No problem, we’re on course. Sheet in will ya, Phelan!*”

## OSC FRIENDSHIPS

by Ron Streek

### DICK ALLEN

My introduction to OSC came through Dick Allen. Our auto shop serviced his car. He would stop by and say, “I’m going up to the lake...why don’t you come along and go sailing. You can take a few hours off.” Next thing I knew I was crewing on his Scot during the Glimmerglass. From there, it went to, “I have an old Bantam... I’ll let you use it this summer...after you join the club.” Well, that boat!! The wind would come...the sail would fill...the mast

would flop and sides would give...and the wind was gone...with little forward motion. The first year at the OSC, I received an award of a Bus Romeling painting—for sailing the “mostest but not necessarily the fastest.” Then there was the other award at our first Bantam Nationals. The *Old Joe*—for sailing all races and finishing last. What a distinction. Some of the other sailors did not sail the last race, because they did

not want such a special award. My son, who was about 6 years old at the time, danced around at the ceremony saying, "My Dad won a trophy!"

Back to Dick Allen. He was someone special. He believed very strongly in the club and doing his duty. He served as facilities committee and race committee chairman and other roles. He would cut the grass around the club house even though he did not have the duty. He would impress upon me that you had to honor the duties of membership. When

You make a commitment, you honor it. Dick and Art Schnell and I would backpack through the Catskills and had great times and a lot of stories to tell. In his eighties, Dick would cross-country ski 100 miles as recognized by the Sierra Club. Just prior to his death, he crewed in the fall for me in the Glimmerglass in 18 knot winds, and he was as good a crew as I ever had. We had a great time. The following spring, he died on the OSC launch dock doing what he loved the most. Helping others. He never goes far from my mind.

## BUTCH WEIR

I met Butch in the '70s and convinced him that sailing and the Bantam and OSC needed to be in his life. He took to it like a duck to water. He purchased Bantam #1330 and became a tough competitor. He worked on ideas for our boats —like an aluminum mast support that tied into the rails to give it more stiffness and faster acceleration. Even as a competitor, he helped me cut the inner bottom out of my new-old boat. It was slowing down due to water absorption in the foam core. We poured new foam in and fiber glassed in a new inner bottom. We were fast again.

The Bantam fleet at the time was a busy fleet—until the class demise. Butch, Wolf, Greg Hall, Ralph Zulak and myself, and

many others competed at a high level as you can see from plaques on the walls of OSC.

Like Wolf and the Zulaks, Butch was always there at the finish line. God help me. But Butch is more than just a great sailor. He loves the club and has served on virtually all the committees and leadership roles. He is one of the anchors of the club. Somehow through all the racing years, we still remain friends and work for the best of OSC.

My claim to fame is I brought Butch into OSC, as Dick Allen brought me. And Butch brought Justin Hobbie in. Who's next in the relay?

Some of the highlights of Butch's leadership:

- ❖ Serving as Commodore and Trustee as well as all seats of the governing board
- ❖ Receiving the John Sanik award 1998, 2001, 2009
- ❖ Club Champion five years
- ❖ Chairing the Race Committee and the Facilities Committee
- ❖ Organizing sailing education, safety initiatives and host committee operations

What more can you ask of a member!

## RON AND SUE STREEK AND OSC

### by Butch Weir

It is impossible to think of Ron without including Sue. These two individuals have been members of the club since the mid seventies when they raced a Rhodes Bantam. Ron and Sue are very good sailors and extremely competitive. The plaques in the clubhouse testify to just how successful these two have been. Ron was the “spark plug” of the Bantam Fleet. He and Sue provided the “hoop for the barrel” and really kept the fleet together.

Their commitment to OSC appears to be easy and natural and among the very strongest. Ron’s leadership abilities were readily apparent at the club, and in 1978 he was elected as Commodore. The club he “inherited” was facing declining membership. Up to that time, memberships were granted primarily to owners of racing boats including Rhodes Bantams, Flying Scots, Highlanders and Thistles, which usually were dry-sailed. Ron’s solution was to open the club to cruising sailboat owners who would moor in the harbor. Memberships grew and the OSC fiscal situation greatly improved (just look at the harbor).

Less visible, but just as important, is Ron’s long-term dedication to all aspects of boat and motor repair. There have been several years when this was a weekly task. Ron is always picking up gasoline and oil for the club. If you are there at the right time, you will see him almost every weekend making sure the boats are fit for duty. Recently he spearheaded a program to upgrade and replace the aging fleet of OSC watercraft. In fact, this very spring, he is looking for a new(er) boat and motor to add to the fleet. Ron is one of the few individuals

who has received the OSC’s most prestigious award, the John Sanik Award, two times.

In 2006, Ron found himself in the office of Commodore for the second time. Once again, with an eye toward the future, Ron began building docks. These docks have changed the way we look at the club and the harbor. They have increased the number of boats in the cruising fleet and they have changed the way we do Dock Day. They also have provided another source of income for the club. Ron is the guy who orders the hardware, orders the wood, builds the jigs, cuts the wood to size, provides tools and supervises the work details building the docks. He even checks on them all winter.

Sue and Ron are also fully engaged in supporting and participating in the social activities of the club. They always seem to work together. For instance, it is hard not to notice them at the Commodore’s Corn Roast, scrubbing and rinsing clams, getting their clam steamer ready and finally steaming clams. They are always helpful and supportive and always find a way to do what needs to be done.

The Rhodes Bantam class lost its builder and, in the mid eighties, the class disappeared. Shortly after that Sue and Ron began racing a Flying Scot. About a year ago they sold their Flying Scot and bought a cruising boat. Then, last year they bought another Flying Scot to race of course. Ron has mentioned to me that “Nobody flies a spinnaker like Susie.” Sue told me once, “I know when he is going to tack, he doesn’t have to say a word.” When they are together, they are very tough to beat.

## **OSC SAILING SCHOOL**

Butch Weir, who has directed the program for the nineteen years of its existence, shares some details of the operation.

### ***Why did OSC begin the sailing school?***

We designed the program to introduce people to sailing by teaching and developing basic sailing skills. Lessons are discussed thoroughly and explained on land and then practiced and honed on the water with an instructor nearby.

### ***How did the program work?***

Initially in the early 1990s we taught a beginning class in the morning for kids over age ten. After a few years we added an afternoon class for advanced juniors. Each lesson was two and a half hours long and the course was two weeks in duration. Then adults voiced interest so we began teaching evening adult courses consisting of five lessons per course.

### ***How has the program developed?***

Over the past few years, the junior classes have been taught in the morning and the adult classes in the evening. Last year the club sponsored a supervised sailing activity time for juniors in the afternoon. This year the same program will be in place and expanded to include adults who want to sail a Laser.

### ***Discuss the Lasers the students sail.***

Initially the club purchased four Lasers and then two more. Also, club members have graciously allowed the sailing program to use their privately owned Lasers so we have ten Lasers available for the classes.

### ***Who teaches the classes?***

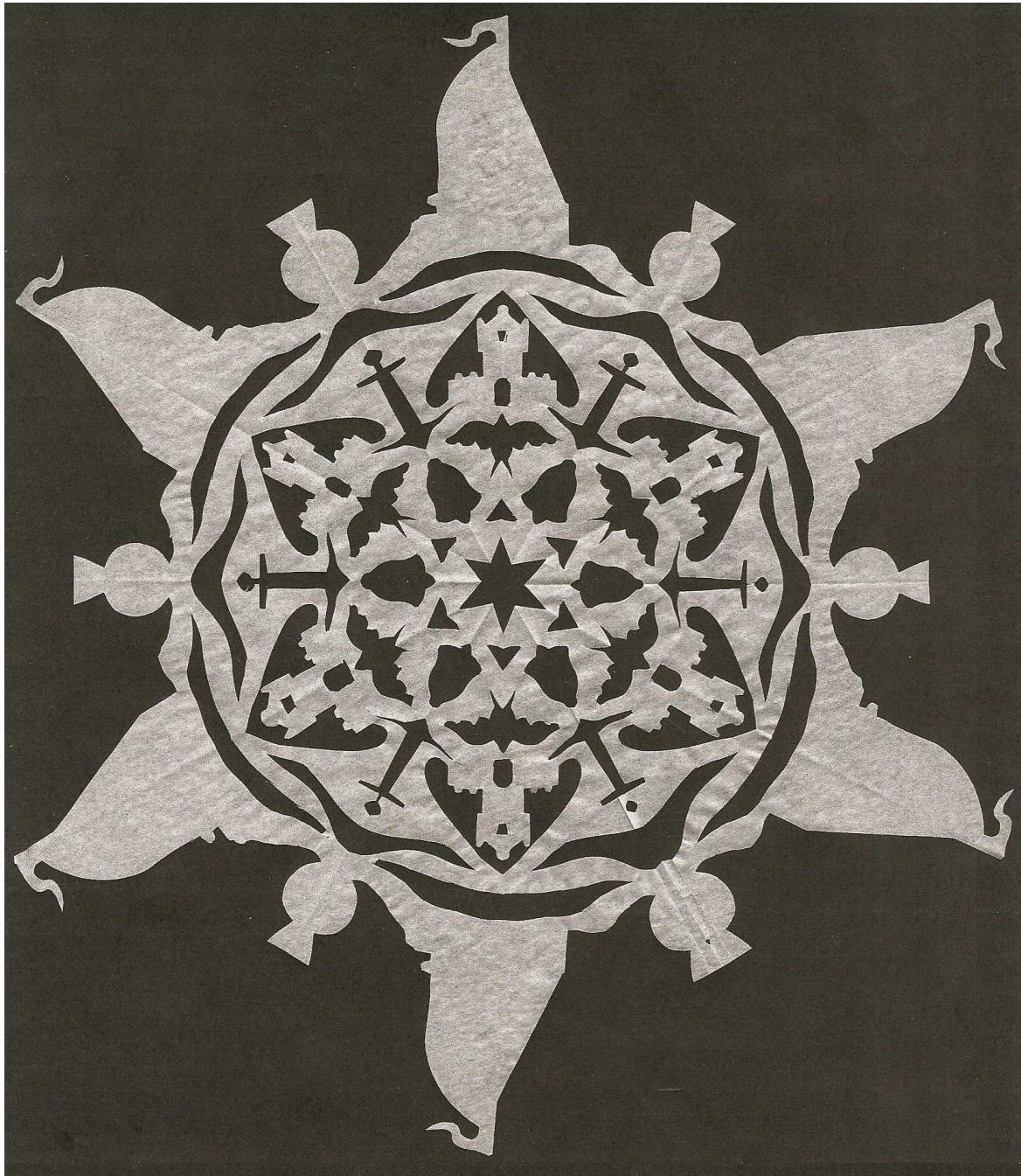
Justin Hobbie, who has been sailing and racing sailboats since the age of twelve, teaches the courses this year. Justin is assisted by junior instructors who are former students with exceptional sailing skills.

### ***Has the sailing program fulfilled OSC goals?***

It is not unusual for students who have completed the classes to join the OSC and continue sailing by crewing in racing boats or by buying a boat and sailing on the lake. Often students continue to sail in college and many just mess around in boats the rest of their lives.

### ***What is happening in 2011?***

OSC is actively advertising and promoting sailing lessons this year. In order to attract more students, the club has funded sailing scholarships for junior sailors and applications are available on the OSC web site. OSC is continuing a program to purchase a new Laser each year to replace the older boats. The structure of the sailing program is designed to be flexible, enabling it to expand as enrollment requires. The future looks strong.



Dan Patsos designed and created this folded paper cut-out which includes a thistle, boat, anchor, Kingfisher Tower, bell, and bird.

**JOHN SANIK MEMORIAL AWARD  
OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE OTSEGO SAILING CLUB**

1984	Dick Allen	1998	Butch Weir
1985	Frank Hulse	1999	Ed Harcourt
1986	Larry Guzy	2000	Nancy Berman
1987	Doug Krum	2001	Butch Weir
1988	Nate Fenno	2002	Chris Kelly
1989	Dick Allen	2003	Ron Streek
1990	Don Lane	2004	Mary O'Conner
1991	Herm Lintner	2005	Mary O'Conner
1992	Buddy Philips	2006	John and Sue Ford, David Karl
1993	Teresa Drerup and Kurt Ofer	2007	Heidi Jones
1994	Dennis Baker	2008	Diane Nash
1995	Dan Patsos	2009	Butch Weir
1996	John Fenno	2010	Ron Streek
1997	Bob Sperling		

**SPECIAL GIFTS TO THE OTSEGO SAILING CLUB**

**BENEFACITOR**

Dick Allen Family  
Ed Harcourt Family  
William Karl Family  
Russ Munkenbeck Family

**CONTRIBUTOR**

John Sanik Family  
John Tenney

**NON-MEMBER OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD**

2007 Bill Waller for Glimmerglass Race Committee  
2009 Bill Waller for Glimmerglass Race Committee  
2010 Bill Waller for Glimmerglass Race Committee

## DON LAWRENCE MEMORIAL CUP OTSEGO SAILING CLUB CHAMPIONS

Cynthia Lawrence and sons Jim, Bob and Rick established this trophy in memory of Don Lawrence. An engineer at the Bendix Corporation in Utica, Don was an avid sailor who first sailed a Rhodes 19 at OSC and then the yellow Thistle # 2027. Don died in 1965. Bob, with brother Rick as crew, was the second winner of the Lawrence Cup in 1970.

1968 John Fenno	1983 David Wilber	1997 John Fenno
1969 John Fenno	1984 Jim Freeman	1998 Butch Weir
1970 Bob Lawrence	1985 John Fenno	1999 Jonas Kelly
1971 John Fenno	1986 Chris Kelly	2000 Jonas Kelly
1972 Don Stehle	1987 John Fenno	2001 Jonas Kelly
1973 Ralph Zulak	1988 John Fenno	2002 Jonas Kelly
1974 John Fenno	1989 John Fenno	2003 Jonas Kelly
1975 John Fenno	1990 John Fenno	2004 Jonas Kelly
1976 John Fenno	1991 Chris Kelly	2005 Butch Weir
1977 John Fenno	1992 Chris Kelly	2006 Jonas Kelly
1978 Ron Streek	1993 Chris Kelly	2007 Butch Weir
1979 John Fenno	1994 John Fenno	2008 John Ford
1980 John Fenno	1995 Chris Kelly	2009 Jonas Kelly
1981 John Fenno	1996 Wolf Wilde	2010 Butch Weir
1982 David Wilber		

### **FLYING SCOT O' OTSEGO FLEET CHAMPIONS**

1973 Jim Light	1987 Russ Munkenbeck	1999 Dick Staley
1974 Jim Light	1988 Ron Streek	2001 Ron Streek
1975 Jim Light	1989 Ron Streek	2002 Ron Streek
1976 Dick Allen	1990 Rich Fleury	2001 Ron Streek
1977 Larry Blackhurst	1991 Rich Fleury	2002 Ron Streek
1978 Larry Blackhurst	1992 Ron Streek	2007 Ron Streek
1979 Dick Allen	1993 Ron Streek	2008 Ron Streek
1980 Howard Needham	1994 Ron Streek	2009 Ron Streek
1982 Les Mollach	1995 Ron Streek	2010 Jeff Reynolds

### **HIGHLANDER FLEET 132 CHAMPIONS**

1969 Warner King	1973 Ron Smith	1983 Will Tenney
1970 Gus Neuss	1974 Nelson Allen	1984 Will Tenney
1971 Jack Tenney	1976 Ron Smith	1985 Brian Guzy
1972 Jack Tenney	1978 Jack Tenney, Phil Reitz, Harold Baum	1986 Brian Guzy

### **RHODES BANTAM FLEET 49 CHAMPIONS—WILLIAM F. SCHNELL MEMORIAL AWARD**

1968 Larry Schnell and Ann Katovich	1976 Ralph and Jean Zulak
1969 Robert and John Bowers	1977 Ron and Sue Streek
1970 Robert Bowers and Clay Hoes	1978 Ron and Sue Streek
1971 Robert Bowers and Clay Hoes	1979 Ron and Sue Streek
1972 Larry and Aline Schnell	1980 Butch Weir and Tara Smiley
1973 Ralph and Jean Zulak	1981 Butch Weir and Jonas Kelly
1974 Ralph and Jean Zulak	1982 Ron and Sue Streek
1975 Ralph and Jean Zulak	

### **THISTLE FLEET 123 CHAMPIONS**

1965 John Fenno	1981 John Fenno	1996 Wolf Wilde
1966 John Fenno	1982 John Fenno	1997 John Fenno
1967 John Fenno	1983 John Fenno	1998 Butch Weir
1968 John Fenno	1984 Chris Kelly	1999 Jonas Kelly
1969 John Fenno	1985 John Fenno	2000 John Fenno
1970 Bob Lawrence	1986 Chris Kelly	2001 Jonas Kelly
1971 John Fenno	1987 John Fenno	2002 Jonas Kelly
1972 Don Stehle	1988 John Fenno	2003 Jonas Kelly
1973 John Fenno	1989 John Fenno	2004 Jonas Kelly
1974 John Fenno	1990 John Fenno	2005 Butch Weir
1975 John Fenno	1991 Donald Stehle	2006 Jonas Kelly
1976 John Fenno	1992 Chris Kelly	2007 Butch Weir
1977 John Fenno	1993 Chris Kelly	2008 John Ford
1978 John Fenno	1994 John Fenno	2009 Jonas Kelly
1979 John Fenno	1995 Chris Kelly	2010 Butch Weir
1980 Don Stehle		

**GRACE AND JOHN FENNO AWARD**  
**HIGHEST SCORING OSC THISTLE AT GLIMMERGLASS REGATTA**

2002 Jonas Kelly	2005 Jonas Kelly	2008 Paul Coughlin
2003 Jonas Kelly	2006 Butch Weir	2009 Jonas Kelly
2004 Jonas Kelly	2007 Paul Coughlin	2010 Jonas Kelly

**ART SCHNELL LABOR DAY HYDE BAY RACE WINNERS**

1997 Nate Fenno	2001 Butch Weir	2004 Paul Coughlin
1999 John Fenno	2002 Nate Fenno	2005 Paul Coughlin
2000 John Fenno	2003 Paul Coughlin	
<b>North- OSC to Hyde Bay</b>	<b>South- Hyde Bay to OSC</b>	<b>Overall winner</b>
2006 Paul Coughlin	2006 Nate Fenno	2006 Karen McShane
2007 Brian Kent	2007 Paul Coughlin	2007 David Ainsworth
2008 Paul Coughlin	2008 Michael Heaney	2008 David Ainsworth
2009 Wayne Mellor	2009 Adam Owens	2009 Wolf Wilde
2010 Paul Coughlin	2010 Wolf Wilde	2010 Wayne Mellor

**CRUISER LABOR DAY HYDE BAY RACE WINNERS**

<b>North-OSC to Hyde Bay</b>	<b>South- Hyde Bay to OSC</b>	<b>Overall winner</b>
2006 Charlie Mueller	2006 Norma Lee Havens	2006 Diane Nash
2007 Chris Kelly	2007 Norma Lee Havens	2007 Charlie Mueller
2008 Diane Nash	2008 Gary Herzig	2008 Charlie Mueller
2009 Gary Herzig	2009 John Ford	2009 Carol Matousek
2010 Gary Herzig	2010 John Ford	2010 Diane Nash

**LASER FLEET 404 CHAMPIONS**

1980 Curtis Hartmann	1981 Curtis Hartmann	1982 Peter Kellner
----------------------	----------------------	--------------------

**ANTHONY G. CIMINELLI AND FREDERICK H. GEERKEN MEMORIAL TROPHY**

<b>First to Finish</b>	<b>First on corrected time</b>
1986 Henry Geerken	1986 Sue Simmonds
1987 Frank Hulse	1987 Rich Watkins
1988 Dennis Baker	1988 Rich Watkins
1989 Art Schnell	1989 Dennis Baker
1990 Art Schnell	1990 Frank Hulse
1991 Ralph Zulak	1991 Rick Walters
1992 Art Schnell	1992 Ralph Zulak
1993 Dick Allen	1993 Ralph Zulak
1994 Jim Marrone	1994 Bill Waller
2008 Charlie Mueller	

Anthony G. Ciminelli is the father of Diane Geerken and Frederick H. Geerken is the father of Henry Geerken. A plaque in the Lake Front Motel states Frederick H. Geerken was Commodore of the Otsego Lake Association.

## BROKEN OAR AWARD WINNERS

These sailors were recognized for the most believe-it-or-not moment of the season.

1994	Diane Geerken "Mooring Ball Split"	2006	Paul Schweizer "Walk on Water"
1999	Butch Weir "Launched More than Boat"	2007	Jerry Phelan "Man in Water"
2000	John Fenno	2008	Jerry Phelan "Where the Trailer Go"
2001	Paul Coughlin "Total Launching"	2009	Jerry Phelan "Lifetime Achievement"
2002	Tom Tys "Two Time Turn Over"	2010	Wayne Mellor "Fastest All Year"

### Dates unknown for these Broken Oar winners

Jim Brayden "Boom Boom Brayden"	Karen McShane
Jim Brayden again	John Morgan
Henry Geerken "Shuda Listened to Wife"	Jerry Phelan "White Boats Hard to See"
Ed Griesmer "Drift Anchor Expert"	Byron Sheesley
Ted Kantorowski	Bob Walters
Bill Karl	

## EDWARD P. NIXON MEMORIAL JUNIOR SAILOR OF THE YEAR

1970 Stephen Smith	1983 David Hulse	1999 Mary Karl
1971 Donald Canfield	1984 David Hulse	2000 David D'Amico
1972 Geri Harcourt	1986 David Hulse	2001 Arianna Phillips
1973 Liz Stehle	1987 Adam Kelly	2002 Mary Karl
1974 Dennis King	1990 Sarah Garellich	2003 Mary Karl
1976 Ed Carey	1993 Nicholas Garellich	2005 Andrew Green
1977 Donald Stehle	1994 Reuben Wilde	2006 Andrew Green
1978 Michael Carey	1995 Justin Hobbie	2007 Brian Kent
1979 John Carey	1996 Alexis Schweizer Natalie Schweizer	2008 Andrew Green Brian Kent
1980 Michael Carey	1997 Jeff Weir	2009 Shaya Miller
1981 Andrew Porter	1998 Alex Patsos Nick Patsos	2010 Shaya Miller
1982 Matthew Needham	Arianna Phillips	

## **OUR HAPPY MEMORIES OF OSC**

**by Toni and Warner King**

- ❖ Huge parties
- ❖ Very special parties in the Cook's summer house
- ❖ Always a lot of children running around OSC playing
- ❖ Sewing the first OSC burgee
- ❖ Son Dennis caught a large snapping turtle at OSC. He brought it home to New Hartford on the roof of the car and made turtle soup which tasted too terrible to eat.
- ❖ Toni sending the race results to the local newspapers each week
- ❖ Toni beginning the OSC scrap book
- ❖ Son Kevin learned to sail at OSC and eventually sailed in Lightening World Championships in Switzerland
- ❖ The Bus Romeling painting prize awarded every year
- ❖ Each summer a group of OSC children would swim across the lake and back followed by a row boat
- ❖ The first swim of the year in very cold water
- ❖ Fossil hunting along the shore
- ❖ Good steak and corn roasts
- ❖ Annual Thanksgiving Day sail (many boats) to the village for lunch and back in freezing rain and snow

## **AN EVENTFUL SAIL AT OSC**

**by Natalie Combar**

I do remember that a great group of people belonged to the OSC, and it was a wonderful place for youngsters to spend their free time. One time that remains in my memory is the day that Fran took a group out in Jack Huntington's Highlander

instead of ours. It was the only time that he ever capsized a boat. He brought back a soggy bunch of passengers who thought twice about ever sailing with him again. I think the main sheet got hung up on the centerboard.

## MY OSC MEMORIES

by Mary Ann Smith

- ❖ Wonderful years filled with fond memories of family togetherness in a most beautiful place
- ❖ The full support of everyone on the docks when the aluminum mast on our Highlander snapped as we were testing the water before a race. Our daughter got disoriented under the sail and needed help to surface. The hull was totally capsized and had to be towed into shallow waters to be righted. It was a time of true cooperation and care for one's fellow man.
- ❖ Some of the teenagers –Kevin King, Don Canfield and Stephen Smith – rising at dawn to ride their bikes from Utica to the club. When their families arrived, the teens were ready to take their places as crew.
- ❖ Another group of young men—with Kevin King, and Stephen Smith—swam across the lake after a full day of racing with Warner King following on the committee boat as the security patrol.
- ❖ Stephen Smith receiving the first Outstanding Young Sailor Award with Gus Neuss as his mentor. I was one proud parent. Stephen now has his own business building and repairing mostly wooden sailboats. He and his family live in Eastham on Cape Cod.
- ❖ Planting the first flowers around the flag pole. It just needed to be done.
- ❖ Shortly after I joined OSC, Commodore Stehle asked me to take the position of Social Chairman The first big challenge was organizing the cocktail party for the initial Glimmerglass Regatta. To me a cocktail party meant white linens, silver candelabra, fresh flowers and fancy napkins. So that was what we offered the sailors as they ascended the stairs from the water. We served two kinds of beverages--gin and tonic and whiskey sours. John Fenno always mixed the sours in a large canning kettle and could hardly keep up with the demand. Everyone in the club provided their favorite gourmet appetizers which always were served in an elegant fashion. For two hours we kept everyone happy. The first party was so well received that it became an annual tradition. I took responsibility for the presentation as long as the Smith's were active members.

## RECOLLECTIONS OF OSC

### by Dottie and Don Stehle

Harry Cook was Bob Cook's father. He used to give a cocktail party in the summerhouse of the Cook property every year -- at the end of the summer. It was an adult's only party – we had to dress and it was very special.

In the sixties and seventies a member of the club was Jack Miller from Delhi. He came alone and enjoyed the friendliness of OSC, and he used to baby sit during races for our youngest son.

Bus Romeling sailed a Snipe – the only one for a long time. He was an artist – a watercolorist who was known in upstate NY, and he captured Otsego Lake beautifully in his pictures. We have one of Thistles racing down the lake.

We used to bring dinner on Saturdays to OSC. There was no shelter in the fields – and no clubhouse – so we ate on the dock. Not too many of us did that (Fenno and Stehle) but it was peaceful watching the fading light on the lake.

Len Doak, a Thistle sailor in the mid and late 1960's, dreamed up Glimmerglass

Regatta. I (Don) was Commodore the summer of 1968 and Len kept bugging us to put on a regatta. I finally said "yes" provided he would chair the event. He agreed and then wondered how we would go about getting it organized. We sat down and made a scenario of all the factors that went into running a regatta, day by day, until the weekend of the regatta itself. Our plan, including the Saturday night cocktail party, has been followed ever since.

In the first couple of years when Glimmerglass Regatta started, we had lots of boats. One reason was that we had forty plus Highlanders come. We had more than the Highlander Nationals one year. Forty plus Highlanders, almost forty Thistles, twenty plus Bantams all added up to over one hundred boats.

We also had parties, for whatever reason we thought up and they were on the dock, too. We remember being at one party that collapsed the dock along the shore. People were standing with a beer in their hand and suddenly were wading in water.

*Dottie and Don moved to Cazenovia and although they became inactive OSC members, they continued attending Glimmerglass Regattas where Dottie and Don worked on the Race Committee. In 2010, Dottie passed away.*

## **REMEMBERING SUMMER DAYS AT OSC**

**by Kathy Stehle Chase**

OSC was a great place to spend summer weekends. It was a family affair with the 6 Stehles (plus a dog sometimes) loaded in the family station wagon traveling to and from OSC. Mom (Dottie) and Dad (Don) raced the Thistle with one of us as third crew. When not crewing, I spent my days sailing in the Sailfish or Sunfish, rowing to the swamp in the dinghy or a kayak or swimming.

I remember the first few buildings and the excitement when the new building with

flush toilets was completed. For at least a few years most of the sailing club knew Mom's birthday since Dad used 7832 for the combination locks for all of the buildings.

The Stehles still have a Thistle which my brother Don continues to race. It's always fun to hear about his races and realize many of the same people are still actively sailing. I made some great friends at OSC.

## **WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND**

**by Sue and John Ford**

The spring after joining OSC, we bought green Thistle # 2423 from Ed and Audie Harcourt. At the time we lived in Walton. Several years later, we were in a local store and happened to mention that we were headed to Cooperstown to sail. Winnie White, owner of the store, said that her family had raced a Thistle on Otsego Lake. We learned, to our surprise, the Whites had purchased Thistle # 2423 new and were listed as charter members of OSC Thistle Fleet 123.

We remember one fine day at OSC when Beach Boys' music played, we did cannon balls off the swim raft to make waves so that Audie and Ed Harcourt's twin grandsons could surf on John's 9'2" surfboard. We also recall one evening as the moon rose, a group of us stood on the main dock and serenaded Kathy and Stan Brooks (who were trying to have a quiet evening on their boat at its mooring) with every song we knew that included the word "moon."

## **RON STREEK'S ADVICE TO THE RACE COMMITTEE**

*When you snag a mark anchor line with the chase boat prop, it's easiest to jump overboard to free it.*

## **MEMORIES OF EARLY OSC**

**by Bill Schnell**

Living in Van Hornesville and having parents who worked as teachers provided our family with the great opportunity to spend the majority of the summer on Otsego Lake. Our parents had several sailboats in the 1950s that were moored at various places on the lake. In the late 50's they purchased a Rocket, which was a twenty-three foot wooden boat, and later a fourteen feet open Rhodes Bantam.

My earliest memories of the roots of the sailing club are meeting the future charter members of OSC on the lake and racing to arbitrary points on the lake. I distinctly remember my father saying one day, "We ought to form a sailing club"

The first structure that I remember after the club was formed and the land leased, was a shed that served as a storage area and a privy. In the early days of the club, our family had the week days at OSC all to

ourselves. I had several birthday parties there. One of our favorite activities was the "borrow" any dinghy on shore and have battles in the bay, seeing who could remain afloat.

The weekends were different. I recall one race in particular. My mother and I were racing in the Rocket, and my father and brother Larry were racing the Rhodes Bantam. There was a strong breeze and my father and brother capsized. My mother and I were behind them and to the east. My father waved to us. My mother thought for a moment and then continued racing. After several minutes it became apparent that they wanted us to pick them up. As we approached them my father said,

"Why the hell didn't you pick us up?"

"I thought you would get mad if I quit the race," said my mother.

Racing was serious business.

## **COOPERSTOWN COUNTRY CLUB MEMORIES**

**by Larry Schnell**

My father was a great organizer of sailing. He and Rod Carter from the Cooperstown Country Club decided it would be a good idea to team up and have joint Rhodes Bantam races. Combined, we often had six or seven Rhodes Bantams racing and serious competition. One fringe benefit of the joint sailing program was that we were allowed to use the Cooperstown Country Club's facilities including the restaurant and bar. We were told to sign our names, then write OSC. At the end of the season we would settle up. My older brothers Art

and Bill and I quickly took advantage of the restaurant and bar, ordering dinner and drinks without restraint. We would order James Bond style extra dry martinis, shaken, not stirred, with pearl onions and many other food and drink specialities that we read about in *Playboy* and *Esquire*. It was summer and we were oblivious to the reality that the season would end and the bills would come due. Of course fall came and with it the annual banquet at the Otesaga Hotel.

My brothers asked me how much money we might have spent? How much does an extra dry martini cost multiplied many times, or filet mignon, or whatever else we ate and drank and invited friends and dates to join in? We did not know, but we knew it would be expensive.

We prepared ourselves for the most severe punishment our father could inflict, likely to be imposed immediately

after the banquet. We were truly concerned for our well-being. As part of the banquet, Rod Carter stood up, a stack of bills in his hand, and he praised the joint sailing program. I recall sweating as he waved the bills around in gesturing. At the end of this speech, he held up the bills and said,

"If this is the best you can do, it's on us."

## MY LOVE OF SAILING by Bob Sperling

My first interest in learning to sail was in 1941. My uncle owned a sailboat and was in the process of selling it. He had sold his camp on Otsego Lake and moved to Margaretville, New York. The boat was parked in a lot across from our home and he gave us kids permission, using a ladder, to get into the boat to play and dream. From that day on, I always wanted to sail. My first sailboat was a wish gift from my wife Kay (toy sailboat), which I still have.

A round 1981 I attended a sailing class sponsored by OSC at Herkimer County Community College. After class ended, I

sailed at the club for my first time on John Feno's boat. John's boat was, and is, a picture of excellence. I was reluctant to step into the boat for fear of dirtying it. We had a great sail. Some of the other instructors were Butch Weir, Jack Havens and Ron Streek.

Kay and I purchased our Venture 21 (finally, a real sailboat) in 1987. We began our membership with OSC in 1995 and continue to enjoy sailing. In large measure, this is the result of the effort put forth by those who presented the class at HCCC. Thanks to all.

## WHY I BELIEVE OSC IS SPECIAL By Virginia Kelly

I have long appreciated OSC for the unique opportunities it has provided for young people to interact in various ways with adults of all ages. Youth always have been encouraged to join in conversations with adults who are sitting around under the tent or on the dock waiting for the wind to rise or calm down or are grouped around a dry-sailed boat recalling the day's races while the gear is stowed away. Most importantly, OSC always has

provided the opportunity for a young person who knows a bit about sailboats to be welcomed aboard to participate as crew for an experienced adult sailor he or she is not related to and may barely know. I don't believe there are many golf courses in the world where young people are welcomed to hang around the grounds and encouraged to join in a golf match with experienced golfers (except as caddies in the days before golf carts.)

## OUR FIRST DAY AT OSC

by Henry, Diane and Katie Geerken

One of the many reasons I married Diane was the fact that she owned a Super Snark sailboat. However after one season the need to move to a larger boat became paramount. One day while looking around Samson Smith's boatyard we spied an open deck "day-sailor" that had belonged to Tom Dixon. It was a 14' Rhodes Bantam. The price was right so we bought it. Jim Freeman, who worked at the yard, suggested we join the OSC up the road and keep our boat there so off we went.

We arrived at the club, put up the mast and yanked on the jib and main, and because it was blowing "stink" I told Diane that we would only sail on the jib until we got the hang of things. We pushed off and the boat immediately turned and went into the willows. We tried it again. Then a voice with authority came down from the clubhouse saying:

"You can't sail a Rhodes with just a jib." With trepidation I told Diane to raise the main and within seconds we were flying across the water. Little did we know that our "day-sailor" was in reality a racing machine.

With white knuckles I gripped the tiller easing the mainsheet whenever we started to heel enough so that when I hiked out I was looking through my feet at angry white-capped water. Diane kept

mumbling something about "Hail Mary." On shore we understand that they were taking bets as to when we would capsize and were ready with a chase boat. We fooled everybody including ourselves by not capsizing.

Now came the test --sailing the boat to the dock. We watched as other boats sailed to the dock and at the last possible moment rounding up and dropping sail. Having no experience in docking and with other boats being hauled as we came thundering in, I decided that the best thing to do was jump overboard when we got close to shore and prevent crashing into the boats waiting their turns at the docks.

"How deep is it?" I yelled to shore.

"Five feet," was the reply from Butch Weir. I prepared to jump with the bowline in my hand and leaped over the side of the boat with sails still set. I plunged into the water braced to hit ground in 5 feet. I was amazed as I went deeper and deeper into the water. I sputtered to the surface still holding onto the bowline and shouted.

"I thought you said it was 5 feet." The reply from Butch was "Here!"

Such was the start of many long years of fun at OSC including the day when I performed Butch and Joyce's wedding.

## **REMEMBERING A PIG AND CORN ROAST**

**by Henry Geerken**

In our first year with the club we volunteered to do the pig roast. We cheated. Instead of roasting a whole pig with all the inherent problems of getting it done on time with no rare sections to the amount of "waste" (snout, feet and tail) we used fresh hams and precooked at home using a charcoal fire at the club to warm things up and blacken the surface keeping the "purist pig roasters" happy. At the end of the roast someone said, "Let's have a corn eating contest." The

only rules were that you had to show all your eaten ears to the judges. After 10 ears most people had dropped out groaning. At 14 ears it was a contest between Flo Schnell and Diane Geerken. At 15 ears the munching and chewing was slowing down. At 16 ears Flo barely finished and at 17 Diane was the victor. Oink! At the awards ceremony that year Diane got a plaque with a model of half an ear of corn on it with a brass nametag.

## **A THISTLE LESSON**

**by Wolf Wilde**

Having had some very good experiences sailing my Rhodes Bantam and feeling perfectly up for the task, I joined the Thistle class and bought my first Thistle in the mid '80s. It took half a dozen

capsizings for me to learn to keep from doing so. After much embarrassment, the lesson learned was NOT to head up while running downwind, but to go with those big puffs.

## **FAMILY SWIM**

**by Elizabeth Wilde**

The water felt cool and refreshing one lazy summer weekend as my brother Reuben, our friends Jaci and Justin, and I all decided to go for a swim at OSC. All of us went in, except my mother, who preferred to soak in the sun. She happened to be lying out on the last green dock close

enough to keep an eye on all of us kids in the water. As we splashed around we suddenly realized the dock was creaking and leaning while my mother began eeeeking! With stunned faces we watched as the dock fell over and Mom went swimming with us after all.

## **GIRLY GIRLS**

**by Elizabeth Wilde**

As a young lady, one of the most unpleasant things about swimming at the lake was coming to terms with the slippery seaweed that was unavoidable when swimming out to the floating dock. My friend Jaci and I decided we would just Think "happy thoughts" when going

through those gross areas of the lake. To us at the time, what could be happier than rainbows and grilled cheese? So that's what we chanted as we swam through. "Rainbows and grilled cheese! Rainbows and grilled cheese! Rainbows and grilled cheese!!!"

## **MY FRIEND JIM MARRONE**

**by Diane Nash**

Jim Marrone was a remarkable, multi-talented person who was also very humble, generous and kind-hearted. He loved adventure and he always had a great story to tell. His experiences as a pilot, musician, photographer and avid camper were the sources of just some of his stories.

Jim was one of those “behind the scenes” kind of person. He would quietly fix anything that needed to be repaired or replaced at the sailing club. His ingenuity was impressive, and his skills were extensive, as he was an engineer by profession. He was a seasoned sailor and a long-time club member when I first joined OSC. He took me under his wing in 2001 when I was learning to sail my “new” Cape Dory Typhoon. I was thrilled to have him as my mentor.

As a novice sailor, I was eager to get out on the water as much as possible. One July afternoon, when it was 90 degrees and the wind was “light and variable,” Jim was a good sport and

agreed to crew for me on the Cape Dory. As we inched our way toward Kingfisher Tower, Jim was telling me about his adventures of sailing down the Hudson River to see the 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks from the New York harbor. The sun was “baking” hot and the lake was becoming a mirror. Being resourceful, Jim suggested we set a course for Sam Smith’s. So we docked, cooled off in the shade of the Blue Mingo Grill, and enjoyed a refreshing Pina Colada! It was a fun experience and a great way to spend a hot afternoon. When the wind picked up, we sailed back to OSC on a broad reach.

This is just one of the many fond memories I have of Jim Marrone. I still think of him, especially when I’m sailing on the lake. I am so grateful and so honored to have developed a true friendship with him. Jim was a wonderful person, mentor, friend and a valued member of the Otsego Sailing Club.

## **HELPFUL OSC FRIENDS**

**by Diane Nash**

Leon Nowakowski, Norma Lee and Jack Havens, Chris Kelly, Jim Marrone, Cindi and Brian Benjamin, Ed Capria, Butch Weir (who was the sailing instructor in 1999) and Mary O’Connor (my partner in crime as we took lessons together) are just some of the very special people who

were always there for me, especially as I was new to the world of sailing. They were always eager and willing to lend a hand, give support, and share their wisdom with me. I sincerely appreciate their “pay it forward” kindness.

## MY OSC MEMORIES

### by Erica A.C. Baker-Heinegg

Dennis E.J. Baker, Professor of Animal Science, SUNY Delhi, our daughters Adrienne and Allison and I first came to sail on Otsego Lake in 1971. We had moved from New City, Rockland County, NY to Bovina, Delaware County, nine miles south of Delhi. Our boat was a Highlander # 246. We had brought this boat with us on recommendation of Dick Bracken, National Highlander Champion for many years, who sailed out of Nyack Boat Club. Dennis and Dick had been crewing on Lightnings, Thistles and Highlanders on the Tappan Zee. Both liked the Highlander best and the fact there was an active Highlander racing class on Otsego Lake.

Neil Ryan, who was commodore and ran a "tight ship," was afraid our daughters were going to run havoc. We had the feeling that children are not allowed until age of 21. Our membership expenses were double what they are now for a time when the club was paying for the newly acquired land that Jack Tenney had negotiated.

The Highlander class was a lively group. The members at that time were: Jack and Cynthia Tenney with four children and one on the way, Duke and Mary Vicks, Ron and Mary Ann Smith, Warner and Tony King, Archie and Regina Burton. The Guzys came later.

Arrangements were made for organized babysitting, games and other activities while the elders sailed. The Bakers often oversaw the children when the parents went partying in Cooperstown after particularly spectacular races. In the winter the partying was not neglected and continued in Utica where the Bakers were

invited with girls to stay with various families for overnight sojourns.

In 1972/73 I entered the nursing program at Hartwick College to graduate in 1977 with a B.S. and R.N. degree.

Dynamics changed in the early 1980s. The children grew up, the Highlander fleet dissolved because many boat owners lacked crew. We bought a Taser – a larger version of the Laser, advertised to be the ideal boat when the children were no longer around to crew. The boat was so tender that Art Schnell, who had also bought one, capsized while tied to the dock. We won one race but the balancing act on that boat was so precarious that it took all the fun away.

In 1981/82 we bought the Catalina #122, a 24' cruiser we sailed until 2006 when I had to sell it for health reasons. Dennis enjoyed Race Committee duties after giving up active racing. He would gladly volunteer at big regattas.

In the late 1980s, we were getting our Catalina 22 unwrapped from winter covers and had pulled it in front of our house in Bovina ready to take it to Sam Smith's to be put into the lake. The procedure was to drive it to Cooperstown and leave it at the boatyard for a week to be taken to our mooring. That all went as planned. The following week or even two, our sweet small Coon cat Eppy was missing, and I even assumed a fox had taken her because I saw a ball of her color fur close to the woods. We were all very sad. The weekend to go on the water came. I packed a lunch and the whole family trundled off to have our first lunch on the mooring. I used the time to dust

off the cushions and saw some fur that looked like Eppy's. I opened the bilge and saw a tail. Our grandson Jacob pulled on it and Eppy was at the end. Now imagine our surprise that the cat had been in the boat without food for at least eleven or twelve days and had survived. Fortunately I had a pillowcase into which we put her to transfer her into the dingy and the car and home. Although we had wanted to sleep on the boat, Dennis was the hero to take her home, feed her and save her. Talk about the nine lives of a cat. She had lost some weight but soon was her old self again, and she lived many more years.

Living in the mountains of Bovina, we had a powerful truck and would donate it for Dock Day to transport the docks from the water's edge to the upper level and vice versa. Dennis never missed a Dock Day and provided many a soup for this occasion. In fact, he became a gourmet cook after his retirement from the college

and delighted many a social committee chairperson with his contributions to club cocktail parties. Dennis died in 1998.

I served the club as treasurer from 1996 to 1998 and continued sailing the Catalina. I loved the boat; it was easy to sail and to relax in the cockpit, sleep on board and most of all, wake up in the morning with the haze over the water and the sun creeping over the horizon. What a beautiful place. What beautiful memories.

I married Fritz Heinegg, M.D. who was a charter member of the Flying Scot class. He too loved the lake and sailing, and the company of members and the camaraderie. He died in 2002. Since sailing is too difficult to pursue singly, I have developed a fondness for hiking, paddling, cross country skiing and other forms of outdoor exercise. I love to meet with the members of the club and continue to visit.

## REMEMBERING OUR FIRST DAY AT OSC by Bob Davidson

When Alice and I joined the sailing club in 1985, we had a brand new Flying Scot. When we arrived at the club, we did not know where to park the boat, but there was an open spot in the front line of dry-sailed boats. This was a very prime position. We thought the place was meant

for us so we started to park there. Someone very quickly advised us that the spot belonged to a long-time racer and that we would be wise not to even think about parking there. We followed the admonition and learned soon enough that it was in fact very good advice indeed.

## MY NAUTICAL ADVENTURES

### by Tom Tys

This incident I believe took place during my first year racing my Thistle Shamrock #3523. It was a windy and shifty day and I was lucky to get Wolf Wilde to crew for me –at least I think I was lucky. I recall that we were doing very well in one of the races except my brain became overloaded with directions from Wolf on what to do to sail fast. Soon after being overwhelmed with better sailing tactics, we were hit by a heavy gust and wind shift and I got my first baptism in Otsego Lake. I could tell Wolf was a little upset as he told me he hadn't flipped into Otsego in ten years. Then he asked why I didn't let the main out, I replied, "you didn't tell me to." It all went well after that and I really was glad Wolf was there, not only for his sailing tips, but also on how to upright a turtled Thistle.

Early in my racing career I was able to get Charlie Clark as crew. It was a very windy day but we successfully completed three races without capsizing. I was very tired and knew it was going to be difficult coming into the dock. I decided to swing close to the Brookwood dock and then turn into our dock while letting out the main sail for a safe docking. Unfortunately, I ran into a little snag—to be more precise, with my extended main sheet, I snagged a cleat of a motorboat that was moored at the Brookwood dock. Then it seemed like all hell broke loose as the wind flipped my Thistle Shamrock onto the motorboat. It not only startled us but also the motorboat's owner who was on his deck covered with my main sail. I don't recall exactly how we got out of the mess but do remember thinking that at

least I have a good attorney aboard. I later learned that Charlie had raised the centerboard to "help" me in docking but may have caused me to slide a little closer to Brookwood. Anyway, the only damage, other than my ego, was a bent fishing net handle and a bent spreader on the mast. The boat owner was very forgiving and declined my offer to buy him a new fishing net and may have thought it safer to decline my offer to buy him lunch.

I received the Broken Oar award for flipping my Thistle twice in one day. It guess it all caught up with me as the award committee missed a few other opportunities as when I flipped onto the motorboat or when I was so intent on getting out for the races that I locked my keys in my car with the motor still running (didn't know until I got back and couldn't find my keys). Luckily John Ford and others got into my car and shut off the motor so I didn't run out of gas. Another time I launched my boat and while bringing my trailer topside, it separated into two pieces.

On one fine day while running the races, we were enjoying the good company of the Mc Dermotts. The Glimmerglass Queen tour boat (or big barge) turned suddenly and made a beeline at ramming speed towards us in the committee boat. At the last minute, it took a sharp turn to be alongside us and told us through their PA system that "our" sailboats were endangering the safety of their passengers. We were speechless as the Queen took off before we could respond to such a ridiculous statement.

## WE WITNESSED A MEMORABLE EVENT

by Ron Streek

One beautiful day of a Glimmerglass Regatta weekend, Susie and I were waiting on the OSC dock to launch our boat. George Ehrmann and Ed Badgley were getting ready to leave the launch dock in high winds. On the dock, George held the boat while the sails flapped and the hull rocked when suddenly the boat slipped away from George's grasp. Ed tried to keep his composure as he sailed away from the dock as a single handed skipper. However, the centerboard was not down properly and his progress was sideways into the Brookwood trees.

George scurried around to the Brookwood property by the big old elm trees where he entered the water. He tried to push the boat off shore but the mast was by then caught in tree branches. This is where the fun begins. While Ed tried to keep the boat in the right direction and figure out how to get George back into the boat, the masthead snagged deeper into the branches and George stood up to his chest in the water. Ed, at the same time, was figuring how to get George over the transom and into the boat--not an easy task.

I think there was an unspoken agreement. As we watched from the dock, George would push the boat off suddenly and

jump...and Ed would pull. Well, the first try didn't exactly work -- George only got his shoulders over the transom. Ed encouraged him to jump higher, but the boat slid back into the trees even further. Now George was waist deep in the water. We're gonna try this again.

"Push harder and jump higher, and I'll pull harder," said Ed. Well, they were getting close but not quite there yet.

George was still in waist deep water and the boat was still in the trees when suddenly there was a little shift in the wind. As a result, the boat had a clear exit from the trees. George pushed and jumped and as the boat started sailing away. George's body, from the waist down, was hanging over the transom.

"Get in the boat," yelled Ed.  
"I'm trying, I'm trying," George yelled back.

As they slowly sailed out into the heavy winds, the only things to be heard were loud conversation and laughing.....and more laughing from the bystanders.

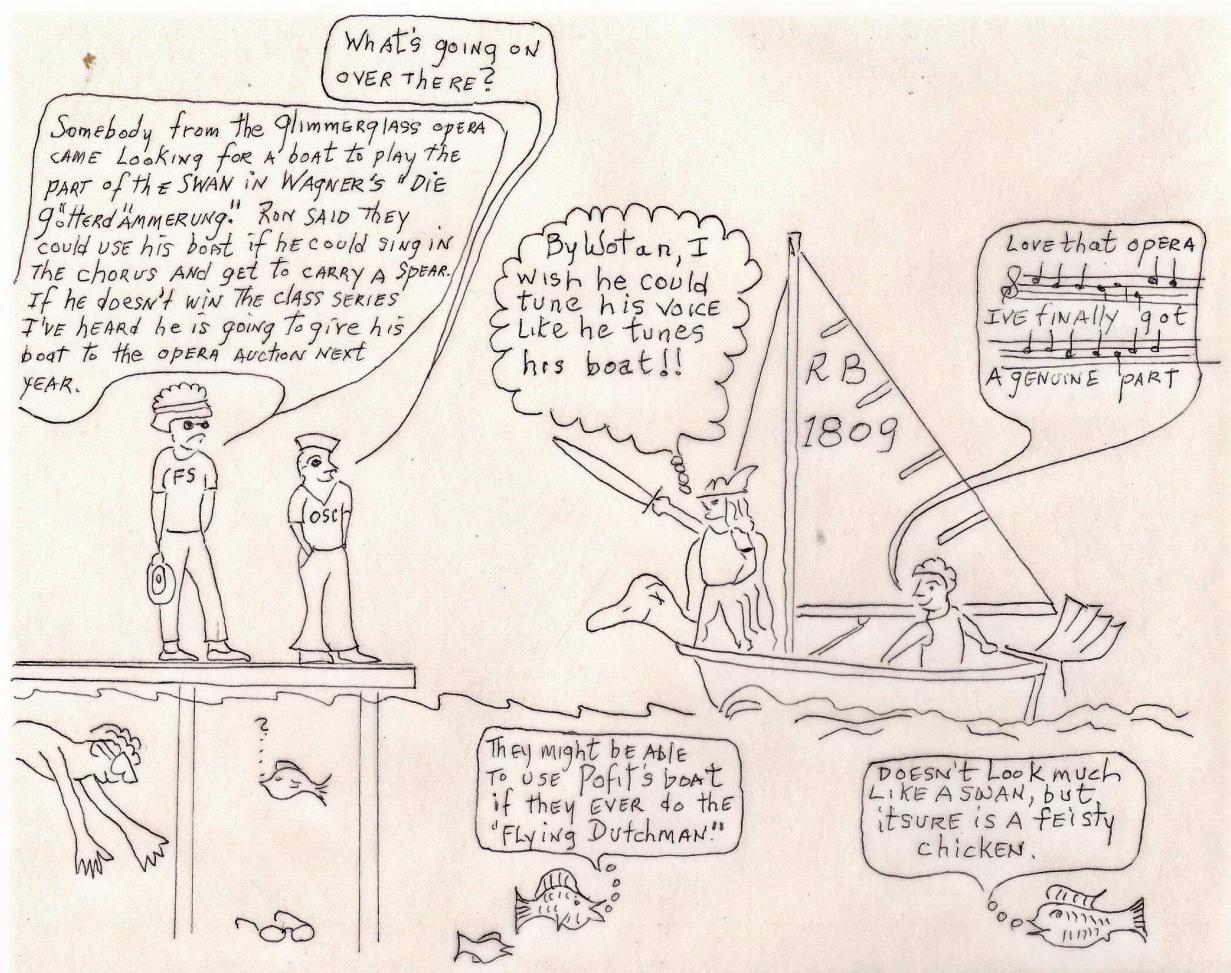
We surely feel that if the Broken Oar award had been in existence at that time, this event would have rated the highest of merit.

## OSC SPINNAKER RACING RULE FROM 1963

*Spinnakers may be used provided the Race Committee or committee boat is notified prior to the 5 minute signal. 10% will be added to the sail area and the handicap adjusted accordingly. If the spinnaker is not used, the handicap adjustment will still apply. If spinnakers are used without notification, the boat will be disqualified.*



This original *Gusts & Puffs* masthead was designed by Highlander sailor Toni King.



Les Mollach taught American Literature, poetry and English 101 at Onondaga County Community College for 35 years. He built furniture, violins, a viola, a cello and three kayaks, including one from willow branches and gut. His delightful OSC cartoons included this scene in which he depicts himself standing on the dock in FS shirt while commenting on Sue and Ron Streek (RB1809) practicing for operatic roles.

## AUDREY HARCOURT APPRECIATES OSC

OSC was a large part of our family's life; we spent every weekend and holiday at the club and at regattas away at other sail clubs. We made many friends and have

many happy memories. Our children, Gregg, Geri, Gary, Eddie and Glen virtually grew up there. Ed truly loved sailing and OSC.

## OSC ADVENTURES by Gary Harcourt

Ha! I win! I would never let my two little brothers beat me. No way! Not at that age anyway. Glen and Eddie were both on the inside of the club house door. The door was all glass and I could see their faces smashed up against the glass as I pushed harder and harder against the door until I finally overcame them and crashed right through the glass. I WIN! Uh oh...I knew I was in trouble then. Luckily I was bleeding and instead of getting yelled at I got cleaned up and bandaged. No stitches! Lots of doctors at the sailing club to give their opinions so Audie didn't have to worry. I don't think I ever got in trouble for breaking that door. Mark Canfield, Donald Stehle and I were always getting into some kind of mischief at the club but it must not have been too bad because I don't remember any really good stories.

I remember running the committee boat one day. I must have been a bit older because my friend Joe was with me and we were running the races ourselves. We started the race and had everyone out on the course so we went to start the engine of the Whaler and BOOOOM the cover blew right off the engine. It must have gone 30' in the air. Holy \*&%\$#\*. Now what? The way I remember it, we used the race flags and some towels to sail the

Whaler to a point where we could set up a finish line. Perhaps I am mixing stories here. It was over 30 years ago! My favorite story however is about sailing with my dad. We kids all took turns as crew on GWHIZ. Dad could be difficult. Ok, he was insane when he was a skipper. All the other dads seemed to be fine. Why did sailing make my dad crazy? Stop. Go. In. Out. *Make up your mind.* My favorite, however, was the whisper "nobody move, sit still goddammit." Audrey didn't say a word. She just trimmed the jib when he said trim it. *I'm out of here!* I jumped ship as soon as we sailed the leg closest to the club and swam all the way back in. I think Dad might have been mad at me for that one.

Funny thing is, when you finally do get to skipper a race, you realize two things. #1 It's not as easy as you thought and you end up doing a lot of the same stuff your dad did and #2 you are turning into your old man! OH NO....Now, of course I'm proud to be like my old man. We were so lucky as kids and we had no idea how good we had it. Corn on the cob, that barbecue for the Glimmerglass and how awesome was the Hyde Bay race. I miss the sailing club days and thinking about them has me missing Dad.

## MY OSC MEMORIES

by Geri Harcourt Chapman

GWIZ! That was the name of the Thistle our family raced at Otsego Sailing Club. I don't know how old I was, but I remember the day Dad took us to take a look at a sailboat he wanted to buy from Mr. White. Before that the only sailing we did was when we'd load up our little "Nipper" with gear and head off for two weeks of camping on Eighth Lake. It must not have

been a hard decision for him; after buying that boat our summers changed forever! From May's Memorial Day race to the September Glimmerglass Regatta, with few exceptions, every weekend you'd find the Harcourt family at Otsego Sailing Club. The few exceptions being the away regattas we attended.

Here are some of the things I remember most.

- ❖ The ride to the sailing club and deciding which one of us was going to be crew
- ❖ Scrambling at the start to be the first across
- ❖ Keeping a look out for starboard boats
- ❖ Yelling STARBOARD...hearing HOLD YOUR COURSE! Then feeling the rush of that boat as it crossed our stern
- ❖ Searching for that gust of wind that would make us point higher into the wind and get to the windward mark first
- ❖ Dad "whispering" his commands on those *glimmerglass* days
- ❖ Jibing the spinnaker and trying so hard not to dump the wind from it
- ❖ Working race committee—I loved that
- ❖ Picnics, jumping from the docks, swamping dinghies, fireworks over the lake

I feel very fortunate for so many memories; each one leads to another.

## OSC WITH THE HARCOURT FAMILY

by Dean Chapman

Geri (Harcourt) and I sailed with a pick-up crew in California, on a Columbia 50 that raced in the Pacific, but it was through family visits that I grew to understand the sailing experience of the Harcourt Clan. After many exceptional sailing experiences out west (Eddie Harcourt vomiting but still changing sails...Dad looking stark as I brought my first charter into dock a bit too fast under auxiliary power) it was not until we returned to New York that I learned about the Thistle life.

Geri and I took our twin sons to OSC often. What a remarkable place, although there was an undercurrent of tension. I struggled to fit in and identify what it was. Water. Wind. Smart men and women wanting to compete. My wife, Geri, and her Mom and Dad were immersed in OSC culture. I was enthralled. Always a devout student, but never, I felt, competent. I loved the concept of sailing. Ed was a relentless taskmaster; by that I mean he never gave a moment on the water that was not directed to the performance of his boat. This single-minded focus was of much concern to his offspring, but I arrived to sailing by the back door, and I relished his constant attention and focus. Plus, we, I still genuinely hope, were true friends and his company was unique and, to me, remarkably enjoyable. Even when totally soaked.

My young sons were exposed to such fine phenomena as crowds under tents....great

meals....great fires and great discussions. What child would not love the environment that OSC created?

*The Dreaded Turtle.* Geri and I crewed for Ed and at one point did “turtle.” I saw Geri immediately on the keel, I saw me in the water and I saw Ed out of sight but booming instructions, not commands,

“Get back in the boat.”

My memory shows the rails below the water. Dad was telling me to bail, and I think what??

“We will sail out of this.” And they did, Ed and Geri, that is, with me just being there but seriously determined to be a part of the remarkable experience. And not drowning.

I remember crewing for Ed who knew all the rules. At a mark, he decided to shave things, and with the starboard rail in the water, the boat began filling. Although rounding the mark was a total loss, we sailed out and Ed said, “You may have to take your shorts off and stuff them in the centerboard trunk.” Sure Dad....

I am still searching for Ed’s booming laughter on the fog shrouded river that I fish to this day. Memories of OSC will remain with me forever. It is not just the place, nor is it the people, but it is more the idea that exceptional people and places should remain in our lives. OSC has provided us with memories for a lifetime.

## MEMORIES OF OSC

### by Nate Fenno

- ❖ In my earliest days, I have strong recollections of the outhouses on hot summer days. The addition of the club house was a great improvement.
- ❖ Racing was really the focus of the club then, with little, if any, cruiser activity that I remember other than Jack Miller. Many of the racers moored their boats, particularly the Highlanders. I also recall those days ('60s and early '70s) that there were a lot of Utica area members, and it seemed like more of a family affair. It was common for many families, with numerous kids, to stay and cook dinner on Saturday night, kids to play, etc. Stehles, Tenneys, Smiths, Canfields and others.
- ❖ I don't recall exactly when, I'd guess early '70s, that many families got together and all purchased Sunfish boats at the same time to have boats for a youth sailing program of races. I also recall that the wind hardly ever seemed to blow for those races.
- ❖ Also, the dock days, putting in wooden docks at first, and then those with the pipes, were I'm sure hard on the adults. I do recall one boy (an Enright?) about my age that would always go swimming on Dock Day in the spring.
- ❖ Bus Romeling sailing his Snipe in the very early morning, and the paintings he would do as prizes.
- ❖ The lake seemed much busier as I was growing up, with a lot more motor boats, big cruisers, and, of course, the Country Club sailboat races. It was great to see 5 or 6 Star class boats out sailing.
- ❖ The two years of Association Island events— hosting the Thistle Nationals one year and then Thistle districts.
- ❖ My mother running the races in the one Boston Whaler
- ❖ The Hyde Bay race on Labor Day, before the state park existed; going in to Rathbun's.
- ❖ The year my father hit Len Doak's dark blue Thistle and stove in the side.

## A WINDY DAY ADVENTURE AT OSC

by Dan Patsos

It was May 31 of 1998. Ironically, the day of Pentecost. I was on host duty for the day, but no one came to race. The winds were strong, maybe 20 to 25 mph, and we figured it would be fun to go for a sail. Well, Brian Benjamin was a fairly new skipper at the time. He wondered how it would be to sail in such heavy wind. So, he and I talked about conditions and finally decided to go for a sail. Brian, Cindy, my boys Alex and Nick and I climbed aboard his 21' McGregor to give this idea a whirl. The winds were coming steadily from the south and the clouds cast an ominous curtain of darkness. I asked Brian if he thought it might rain, and he replied: "Yeah, maybe in an hour or so." So, we decided it would be a good idea to sail near the harbor.

With the main up, we cut the engine and raised the jib. We sailed for about ten minutes and the wind got eerily calm and the air pressure dropped. All of a sudden, a white streak of lightning cut through the air, followed by a crackling explosion. We turned to each other and decided to go in and try again later. We tied up the boat to his mooring and paddled in to wait it out. It only rained slightly and about a half hour later, it seemed to have blown over. So we decided to give it another try, but this time the boys and Cindy stayed back. Brian and I hoisted the main sail, figuring

that since the wind was strong enough, we could sail out off the mooring without a motor. We did and went moving along on just the main.

Brian was saying: "My boat sails pretty well in heavy air." It must have been blowing 25 at least. "Yeah, just keep her steady and your hand on that main sheet," I said. As we got to the edge of the harbor, a good bolt of lightning struck just below Cooperstown. I instantly said: "We better go in," as the sky turned a shade darker. We came about, dropped the main, and motored in like a bobcat with a bird under its tail. We hustled to put the boat away as the rain began to fall.

Luckily, we made it back to the club house by the time the sky opened up and dime size hail started falling. The storm flared with more hail and straight line winds of 50 to 60 mph. Flying Scots and Thistles were lifted off trailers. Limbs were down and a chaotic mess was made across the region. As we waited in the clubhouse, the storm intensified and ebbed several times before we decided it was safe to make our way home. We learned several tornados had hit the region that day. Over 500 acres of Milford forest were flattened by the wind....and we thought it was a good day for a sail.

## A ROGUE GUST

by Ginny Patsos

We were once sailing on our cruiser for the last sail of the season in October. The boys and I were down below eating Ramen noodles out of “fancy” metal camping bowls, while Dan was up top, sailing the boat. It was about 7:00 in the evening, and we were the only boat on the lake. Since it was getting dark, we thought we should head back soon. Out

of nowhere, noodles went flying in the air, as a huge gust knocked our heavy blue boat on its side. I was so scared, I prayed. I was worried because my boys were not very strong swimmers yet and there was no one around to rescue us. Miraculously, the boat righted itself, and I cleaned up the noodles.

## MY EARLY INTRODUCTION TO OTSEGO LAKE

by Nick Patsos

When I was about three years old, my parents would take me out on their cruiser *Zephera*. I can remember my first intimate experience with the lake. We were in front of Kingfisher on a bright, sunny midsummer afternoon, and my parents figured I should get used to being in the water. Being a toddler, and not knowing how to swim, naturally I had

some apprehension about the idea. While I was lowered to my doom, although I was wearing a life jacket and was not alone, all I remember is that I felt like I was sinking. This is an excellent example of how scary something can be, having never tried it before. Take a dive, and you may be pleasantly surprised of what you are capable.

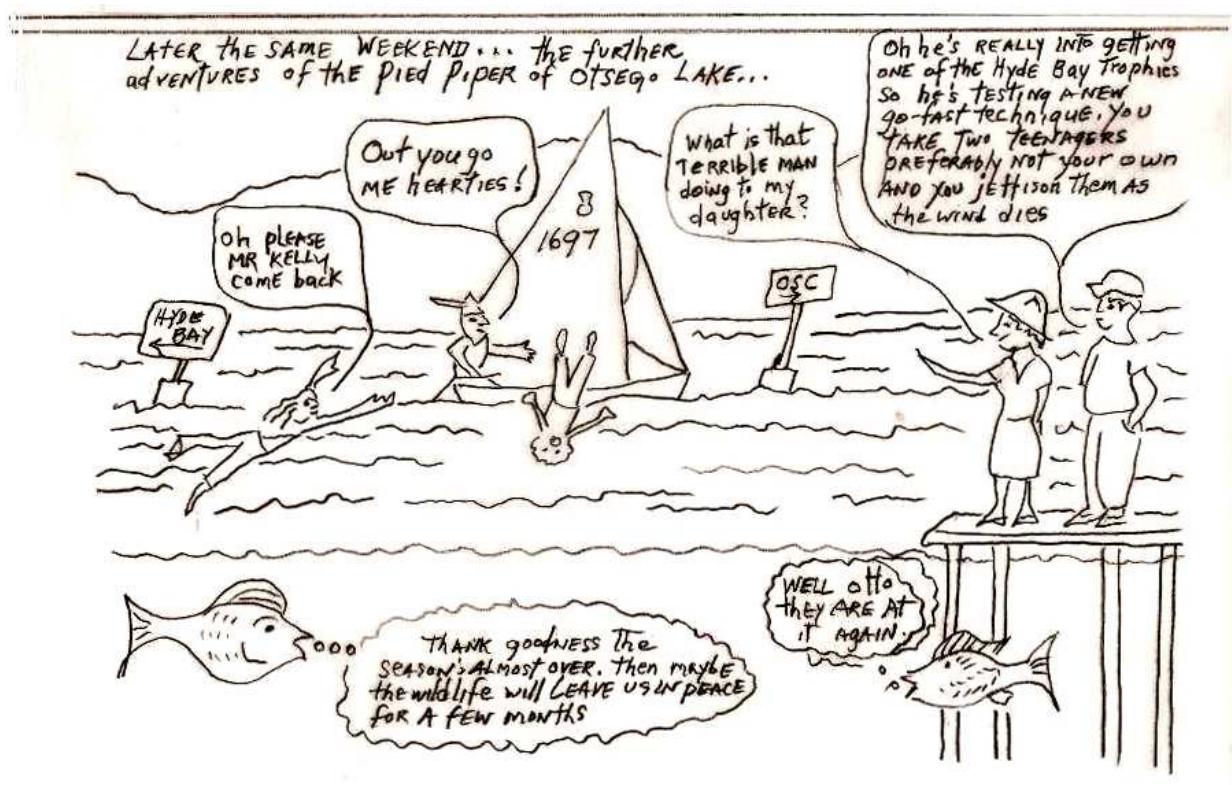
## WITNESSING PROBLEM SOLVING

by Alex Patsos

I remember one day Tom Tys was pulling out his Thistle with his dark green minivan and had an awkward moment. He had gotten out of his car with the engine running, and he had locked himself out. Meanwhile ,there was a line of cars and

people waiting to pull out their boats after the races. You never saw someone move so fast, as did Tom, who raced to get a batten and jimmied open the door, all within five minutes. I guess an engineering degree is worth something.

A not altogether fanciful depiction of the HALL-KELLY FIASCO



Above: Les Mollach depicts the entire fleet following Pied Piper Chris Kelly #1697 to the wrong mark while John Fenno #2026 heads alone toward correct mark.

Below: Sue and Harold Baum watch as their daughter, who is crewing for Chris Kelly, falls out of the boat.

## MY OSC MEMORIES

by Chris Kelly

- ❖ No one will ever know about and appreciate all the behind-the-scenes work Ron Streek does for OSC
- ❖ Norma Lee Havens planting flowers around the flagpole and filling dock planters
- ❖ Cindy and Brian Benjamin scuba diving in harbor to retrieve dropped mooring chains and long-lost anchors
- ❖ Hearing John Fenno say, “The property line goes down the middle of our neighbor’s driveway
- ❖ Dan Patsos’ famous whistle to get everybody’s attention
- ❖ Grace Fenno--the best, most loyal crewmember ever
- ❖ Arriving at OSC and seeing our boat drifting about a mile offshore
- ❖ Twice seeing trailers, on the ramp, come unhitched and careen into the water
- ❖ Tony King saying to me, “Don’t you get tired of always finishing back in the clump?”
- ❖ Ed Harcourt saying, whenever anything needed to be done, “I’ll do it.”
- ❖ Seeing Leon Nowakowski’s sons abandon ship and swim in at the leeward mark
- ❖ Butch Weir and Dick Staley working hard all day at the pig roast
- ❖ Moving the outhouse each spring Dock Day
- ❖ Worst OSC decision: buying boat hoist. Best OSC decision: scrapping boat hoist
- ❖ Funniest time: watching 50 men on Dock Day shout instructions to five brave men on how to drop the #%@# hoist from the barge into the water
- ❖ Butch Weir introducing a new young sailor to racing every year
- ❖ John Fenno taking his Thistle into his Canajoharie house through a 36” wide door
- ❖ Harcourt family weekend housing throughout the years included green multi-room tent, Winnebago, truck camper, motor home
- ❖ When the original stairs to the water were on the west side of the clubhouse and went straight down to the water with no landing

## **GLIMMERGLASS MEMORIES**

**by Chris Kelly**

- ❖ Norma Lee Havens and Audrey Harcourt flawlessly working the registration table year after year
- ❖ Sailing around and watching and waiting and watching and waiting for John Fenno or Don Stehle who stood on the bow of the barge at the starting line before each race and held up a stick with string into the wind to get the windward mark in the perfect spot
- ❖ The cocktail parties with two kinds of potent punch and Sue Streek the mix master
- ❖ Archie Burton's topless bar
- ❖ Seeing how many people we could load on John Sanik's boat late Saturday night
- ❖ Big bonfires in summer weather or freezing rain with ice on tents on Sunday morning
- ❖ Over 100 boats in attendance one memorable year
- ❖ John Fenno with Bill Wilson as crew (probably the two best sailors in the regatta), capsizing while leading
- ❖ Bill Waller's stellar work as chairman of the Race Committee

## **CAMPING AT OSC**

**by Debbie Dorr Hunsberger**

My parents Joan and Ed Dorr were members of the OSC in the mid to late '60s. We enjoyed many times sailing and helping with the races though there was no club house then and only an outhouse. We kids camped out overnight to be there for early races. It was fun.

## **DOCK DAY PROGRESS**

**by Mary O'Connor**

One of the stories I enjoyed hearing was told to me on one of my first Dock Days. As we were standing on the back deck of the club house watching the tractor bring dock pieces down and put them in place, I was told how this all used to be done by hand. Members lifted, pushed, pulled and carried with the help of pick up trucks and

a trailer or two but without tractors to move the very heavy loads down to the water. It gave me a whole different picture of the club and the people who so wanted to sail that they found a way to each spring transport docks down the steep hill and assemble the parts in the water in order to have access to the lake.

## OSC MEMORIES

### by Adam Kelly

Growing up with the Otsego Sailing Club was enriching and rewarding. Sailboat racing and all the experiences surrounding sailing offered diversity of life experience that every person should have a chance to enjoy. In addition to the sailing, the people at OSC provided me with life-long remembrances.

I remember, as a young boy, surveying the inside of Butch Weir's Rhodes Bantam and being awestruck by the number of lines and the fact they came in that many colors. I was reminded by Butch each time that the lines "all did something." Meanwhile, growing up on a Thistle instilled in me a certain toughness because of the tricky tacking maneuvers and the painfully necessary hiking. Comfort was never physical, but could only be offered by the quality of the skipper. For a number of years, I took for granted that tacking came on a "moment's notice" and that the moment you let your guard down, you were at risk of being caught on the low side of the boat and potentially going for a swim. However, as I got older and started to crew in other boats, most notably, Ed Harcourt's, I realized that tacking did not have to be an exercise in agility matched by the finest athletes, but could be a process where notification was in seconds, rather than one second, or maybe even less.

Every season the OSC offered a new set of experiences, and no summer was the same as the last. Each weekend offered a new adventure, whether it was peering at the stars through Les Mollach's telescope, or learning magic from Dr. Harold Baum. One summer, at the annual clam bake, a corn eating contest was part of the festivities. I still remember, as if it

were yesterday, the pile of well-chewed corn cobs sitting on Flo Schnell's plate. An impressive feat, especially in light of her slender physique. Another year, the annual spring dock day included a search and rescue of a number of docks that had floated away and were located at various points around Otsego Lake. I remember riding in a Boston Whaler with three docks lying horizontally across the front of the boat. I thought to myself had we enough speed, we could take off like a seaplane.

Yearly, the Lawrence Cup was a summer high point. I can still remember our first win and the Sunday sailing required to capture the Cup. I was eleven. Weather was chilly and it was windy. I was dressed in a yellow rain suit from head to toe. Making the sailing even more challenging was the fact that the suit was about two sizes too big and baggy in all the wrong places. Moreover, a healthy amount of duct tape had been applied to the several holes and tears in the fabric. Nonetheless, I was relatively dry and warm. The wind was scary and I was hesitant to sail. But, knowing that a change in crew on day two of the regatta was against the rules, I expected that I would receive heavy pressure from the skipper (Chris) and crew (brother Jonas). I'm not sure what convinced me to go, but I did, and we won! It was a great win and a momentous occasion to finally obtain a victory over John Fenno, who had established himself as a dominant sailor.

Today the OSC continues to reflect that identity I remember as a kid growing up---competitive sailing, friendly people, simple living on the weekend, and a strong appreciation of a sunny day with a southerly breeze.

## REMEMBERING OSC

### by Aaron Kelly

In the very early '70s, my brother Jonas ate a bunch of the berries growing next to the stairs below the clubhouse. Apparently he went to the hospital but has not appeared to suffer any lingering damage. Since then, 35 years later, my mother still reminds me not to eat the berries.

In the early '80s, driving the motorboats was a huge thrill for me as a young lad. Especially when the oldest person on the boat was 14 and everybody was eager to go fast. It's amazing nobody got killed. I have vivid recollections of being dispatched, along with a group of unlicensed adolescents, to pick up the marks. That was followed by a fierce negotiation on who got to drive to which marks to ensure no one got to drive more than the others. As in "if you get to drive to the start/finish mark, I get to drive from the Country Club to the A frames, via the scenic route by Kingfisher." (early '80s mark placements.) Things got a little more serious after I almost hit a water skier.

In the early '80s, the decision was made to have the club purchase a keg each weekend for the benefit of the members. Free beer. It was promoted as one of the social aspects of the club, I believe. The benefit to me was

that I couldn't have been much over 10 years old when I learned how to tap a keg. Talk about a life skill.

On one 4<sup>th</sup> of July the Harcourt family seemed to have an endless supply of fireworks. Glenn in particular was very eager to make sure they didn't go unused. I'm sure it reached the point of driving everyone crazy, but I was thrilled. Limited adult supervision and fireworks. What could be better?

In the early '80s, my older brother Jonas hit John Feno's boat and put a hole in it. I felt awful for him. But I was glad it was him and not me.

In the mid-90's, when I first took my girlfriend Laurel (now my wife) sailing, we won a couple of races. Every time I remind her of what a good sailor I am, she says, " You didn't do anything. Your dad was sailing the boat."

Sailing taught me the importance of finesse, patience and minding the details. Squeezing more speed out of a boat comes from having a plan, making subtle adjustments and everybody keeping his cool. You'll never get beat by a boat that is being manhandled and everyone is screaming at each other. A lot of that carries over in the real world.

## A PAINFUL SAILING MEMORY

### by Jonas Kelly

"STARBOARD!" I think I can make it.  
"STARBOARD!" I think I can make it  
Uhhhh...not going to make it. WHAM! T-Bone. Right in the side about midship.  
"PROTEST!" I hear as I slide away from the collision. I had just T-boned John Fenno, and I hit him hard.

It was the Hyde Bay Race. I was about 14 years old. I raced our Laser--pretty cool--and a long race in a Laser. I had steered the Thistle a bit as well as the Laser, but had not held the helm much during races. We raced up to Hyde Bay, ate lunch and started the race back. About two minutes into the race, I made a serious misjudgment and nailed John. As we raced back to the club (after my 720 penalty), my enthusiasm significantly diminished, I replayed the event in my head. I always came up on the losing end. When I finally got back to shore, most of the other boats had already finished up and were on trailers. I hauled the Laser up on the dock as my dad walked down.

"So you hit John," he said.

"Yes," I said with a sick feeling.

"You better go talk to him," my dad replied.

Gulp, gulp (churning stomach) as I walk toward John and his boat. The mast was down, the spinnaker was on the ground and John was folding it up. I walked up to him. He was kneeling down working on folding the spinnaker. He looked up at me. I said I was sorry and that I didn't mean to hit him. It was a mistake. He looked me in the eye and said, "No problem, apology accepted. It's not the

first time I've been hit and it probably will not be the last. Would you grab the other end of the spinnaker and help me fold it up?" Of course, I fairly leapt to the end of the sail and we folded it and stowed it in the bag.

Now, all this happened before I saw the damage to the boat. I had hit him hard with the pointy end of the Laser, but when the collision took place, I didn't really see the damage. After packing the spinnaker, we walk over to his boat #2026. The same beautiful woodie Grace has today. The nicest Thistle in the club. With a splintered hole in the side. Not a very big hole, but I could see daylight through it.

"It's not too bad," John said.

"We've patched worse than this before." It looked bad to me.

"I'll help with the work, if you'd like," I offered.

"Nah, it's not a big deal and there are a few other things that need fixing anyway. Don't worry," he said.

"Um, ok. I'm really sorry" was the best I could get out.

Fourteen. Punk (of sorts) putting a hole in the side of his boat. Port—Starboard. The most fundamental rule. If John was mad, he didn't show it. He treated me with respect. Man to man. To this day, my stomach still churns a little when I think about it. And then I think about how John treated me, and I feel better. Several years after this mishap, I was delighted and honored when John invited me to travel with him to Lake Erie and crew on his boat for a week at the Thistle Nationals.

## MUSINGS AND MEMORIES

### by Jonas Kelly

Overcast day... kind of bundled up...my dad at the tiller. His regular crew Al Woods in the middle and myself in the front. In those days we also regularly had a fourth, my brother Aaron, who was small enough to curl up in the bow and stay reasonably clear of the action. I can remember Al, who had a cool Boston Whaler and lived up the west side of the lake, always cautioning during tacks to "not get into irons." I wasn't real sure what he meant at the time, but apparently it was concern enough to him to emit the cautionary word. The four of us sailed that way for years (or so it seemed to me), but eventually I shifted back a spot and Aaron came back from the bow and joined us on the rail.

YEA!!! High fives all around. AWESOME! FANTASTIC! And every other superlative an adult could appropriately spew in the midst of two kids who were under the age of 12. When we beat John Fenno for the first time, I remember being quite excited. A major hurdle had been jumped. We were now mixing it up with the fast guys. For years we had been looking at the sterns of John Fenno, Don Stehle, Scott Baldwin, Ed Harcourt and others that I can't remember. Those guys were the ones to beat and John Fenno was at the head of the pack. We finally did it! We beat Fenno!

I recall racing back then to be a bit more cutthroat. Granted the rules were different than today. Back then, contact seemed to be more frequent and the rules were utilized to leverage advantage over one's opponent. Of course, the same holds true today, but the rules have changed, maybe clarified, and the racing

Seems more genteel. I think it's for the better.

Rules are always paramount. Everyone always sails by the rules...always...or at least tries to. The OSC always has had high standards for the procedure of the races and subsequent application of the rules. Protest hearings are not uncommon as on-the-water disputes demand resolution. The high standards we strive for stem from the club's founders and torchbearers. The rules are there for a reason and we are obligated to abide by and enforce them.

EDDIE!!!! LET IT OUT!!! EDDDDIEEEEEE!!!!!! NOOOOOOOEDDDIEEEENOooooooooo!!!! As water starts to gush over the rail. We had just been hit with a hard gust and Eddie Harcourt Jr. has been handling the jib. I was in the forward spot and my Dad was steering. It was a nice sunny summer day, albeit a bit breezy. This puff hit and as we hiked for our lives, my dad was pleading with Eddie to let the jib out. They were mournful, pleading cries, whipped by the wind, hopeful and all at once, full of dismay. Eddie struggled with uncleating the jib, despite being highly motivated from both the skipper's pleading and the raging torrent of water coming over the rail. Needless to say, the jib never did come uncleated and we tipped over. In the moment after we dumped the mast in the water, we were all sitting high and dry on the rail. In an instant, Eddie lost his balance, fell forward and did a big belly whopper onto the sail. Edie swam around on top of the sail as we laughed hysterically. To this day we still laugh about the whole incident and still mimic my dad's cries to Eddie to "LET IT OUT!"

How many ears of corn can you eat? It was always a contest. with Ed (Jr.), Glen and Gary Harcourt, Don Stehle and Sean Streek. How many ears did you eat? 10? 15? Wow. Not until just recently did I come to know that Flo Schnell holds the record. We kids never had a chance against Flo.

Ed Harcourt, Sr. had a whistle on his boat. Every boat is supposed to have a whistle to hail others in case you need help. Ed's

whistle was a nice shiny silver referee type with a long lanyard to hang around your neck. One summer my brother Adam got his hands on that whistle. Adam was about 6 years old and big enough to run around on his own, but not really old enough to be unsupervised. Adam liked the whistle. Maybe it was the sound, maybe it was the had the whistle. The upside was that everyone always knew Adam's location. The downside was he was always tooting the thing.

## **OSC MEMORIES** **by Jonas Kelly**

- ❖ So many boats for Glimmerglass there were mooring lines extending into the harbor and water taxis shuttling sailors to and from their boats
- ❖ The Otisco Disco at the OSC
- ❖ Butch Weir at one time was the Rhodes Bantam World Champion
- ❖ Stars racing up and down the lake on Sunday mornings
- ❖ The Chief Uncas
- ❖ The docks all being wood pallets
- ❖ Drilling in all the pipes every year to support the pallet docks
- ❖ Butch Weir's Land Rover backing down the ramp into the water up to the windshield
- ❖ Gary Harcourt going backwards through the glass doors on the clubhouse
- ❖ Ed Harcourt, Sr. heaping wood on every bonfire he encountered
- ❖ Big silver vat of whiskey sours at Glimmerglass
- ❖ Mike Carey tossing the committee boat's unconnected anchor overboard circa 1978
- ❖ Dan Patsos tossing the committee boat's unconnected anchor overboard circa 2006
- ❖ Someone having a miniature cannon and firing coffee cans filled with sand from the docks out into the lake and narrowly missing (by like one foot) a motorboat that unexpectedly intersected the trajectory of the sand-filled coffee can

## THISTLE CHAMPIONSHIP REGATTA ON LAKE ONTARIO

### by Virginia Kelly

August 1973, Thistle Fleet 123 of the Otsego Sailing Club hosted the Thistle Class Association 28<sup>th</sup> National Championship Regatta. Association Island, off Henderson Harbor in Lake Ontario, was the location for that memorable undertaking. The successful operation of the seven-day regatta on an island far from home base was a remarkable logistical accomplishment for the Otsego Sailing Club fleet. With 107 Thistles and about 300 crew and skippers attending from far and wide, that National Championship Regatta holds the record to this day for the number of participating Thistles.

General Electric Company had purchased Association Island in 1906 and it became a recreational center for GE employees until 1959 when GE gave the island to the YMCA. By 1973, the island was owned by Association Island Recreation Corp., a non-profit group that actively promoted the island as a national sailing center. In August 1973, Association Island welcomed both the Laser and Thistle national regattas. A modern hoist, well-equipped race committee boats and spectator boats were provided by the sailing center.

With John Fenno serving as General Regatta Chairman and Don Stehle as Assistant Chairman, excellent leadership was guaranteed. OSC Thistle sailors coordinated various aspects of the regatta. Dottie Stehle and Grace Fenno oversaw registration. Bill Carpenter organized the measuring and weighing of 107 boats and also ran the publicity. Gene Canfield managed charter boats.

Duke Vicks, OSC Commodore, and Sandy LaMonica, OSC Fleet 123 captain, solved Problems. Ed Harcourt, Vice Commodore managed the afloat communications, and Chris Kelly, secretary of Fleet 123 , served on the National Race Committee. Saturday, the first day of the regatta, involved registering, measuring and weighing each boat. Following a tune-up race on Sunday, the sailors raced for the next five days.

Some sailors slept on the island in rustic cabins and lodges while many camped. Those seeking more luxurious accommodations stayed in motels in Watertown, Sackets Harbor and Henderson Harbor. The sailors ate box lunches distributed to them on the racecourse. Dinners were served family style in a large dining room. A steak roast and awards banquet were the festive social highlights of the regatta.

Chris, Jonas (age 6), Aaron (3) and I hauled the essentials necessary for a week of outdoor housekeeping. We pitched our tent near the lake on a former tee of the GE golf course. Fortunately, the weather was warm and dry the entire week. An energetic gang of OSC children enjoyed the wide open spaces of the island. Everyone remaining on shore watched 107 boats each morning sail from Association Island to the racecourse and return late in the day. Along the shore we avoided heaps of dead mooneyes, a small fish indigenous to the southern Great Lakes. Occasionally the "sheep ship" passed on its route transporting lambs between the mainland and pastures on another island.