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Island Heights, Seaside Park Sailor Among Sailing Hall Of Fame Inductees

The Barnegat Bay Sailing Hall of Fame induction ceremony is scheduled for October at Ocean County College in Toms River.



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Toms River, NJ -- A former Island Heights and Seaside Park sailor who helped lay the path for today's Barnegat Bay Yacht Racing Association is among nine people who will be inducted into the the Barnegat Bay Sailing Hall of Fame later this year, officials announced.

The Barnegat Bay Sailing Hall of Fame Class of 2016 will be formally recognized at the 6th Barnegat Bay Sailing Hall of Fame induction ceremony at 6 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 1, at Ocean County College.

The event also raises funds to support the Ocean County College Sailing Program, according to RoseAnn D'Urso, spokeswoman for OCC.

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The nine inductees are Paul N. Smith, boat builder at Beaton's, Brick; Robert "Bob" Adams, of Bay Head Yacht Club; Dr. William W. "Bill" Fortenbaugh, Bay Head Yacht Club; F. Thompson Brooks, Island Heights Yacht Club; Erik Johnson, Barnegat Bay Yacht Racing Association; Terry Kempton, Barnegat Bay Yacht Racing Association; Nelson T. Hartranft, Ocean Gate Yacht Club; John and Gretchen Coyle, Little Egg Harbor Yacht Club;

The Barnegat Bay Sailing Hall of Fame promotes and preserves the area's maritime heritage by recognizing individuals whose accomplishments on the water and/or on shore have significantly enhanced Barnegat Bay's maritime character and strengthened its status as a maritime center. Organized in 2004, the Barnegat Bay Sailing Hall of Fame recognizes not only sailors with ties to Barnegat Bay but those who have achieved excellence in the sport of sailing and/or contributed to the sport in some extraordinary manner.

As New Jersey's largest inland body of water, Barnegat Bay has attracted sailors ever since Henry Hudson first looked through Barnegat Inlet some 400 years ago. Sailing the bay has evolved over the years from a means of local transportation for commercial watermen to all forms of recreational sailing, including fiercely competitive sailboat racing. Boat builders from the Barnegat Bay area have been recognized throughout the world for their skills. Racing sailors from Barnegat Bay have reached the pinnacle of their sport, having won countless regional, national, and world championships. Others have been named collegiate All-Americans, won Olympic medals, or been part of winning America's Cup teams.

Tickets for the Barnegat Bay Sailing Hall of Fame induction ceremony, which will be held at the Health and Human Performance Center on the main campus in Toms River, are \$75. For information, call Ocean County College's Office of Student Life at [732.255.0348](tel:732.255.0348).

The 2016 inductees are:

Robert "Bob" Adams: As he enters his 69th year of racing on Barnegat Bay, Bob Adams (of the Bay Head Yacht Club, Mantoloking Yacht Club, Shore Acres Yacht Club, and Barnegat Bay Yacht Racing Association) is one of the most enduring and accomplished racers, having represented the Barnegat Bay Yacht Racing Association on the national and world stage. Now 81, Adams continues to race, last year finishing third on the bay and first for the summer at Bay Head Yacht Club. With a long and varied history, his more notable accomplishments include the Mallory Cup finals (1956); 2nd place Penguin North Americans (1970); five World Lightning Class Championships, finishing in the top 10 three times; qualifying in nearly 25 Lightning North American Championships; and winning numerous other lightning regattas including the Central Atlantic Districts, New Jersey State Lightning

Championship, New Jersey Governor's Cup, Pennsylvania State Championship, and Quantico Regatta. Adams is also an eight-time BBYRA Champion, earning six in the Sanderling. From 1985 to 1998, he was the most accomplished B-Cat sailor on the bay, finishing in the top two, eight out of 12 times, and in the top five, 11 out of 12. Adams has dedicated himself to campaigning the most traditional of Bay boats, the 1922 A-Cat Mary Ann, qualifying her from 1999-2013. Despite the challenges of being the oldest skipper in the oldest boat, he finished no less than third in the A-Cat Worlds during a six-year span. Adams served as race chairman of the United States National Women's Sailing Championship (Adams Cup), the M-Scow National Championship, and the Women's National Lightning Class Regatta, and has served as chief measurer and president of the International Lightning Class. Adams initiated and chaired the BHYC Annual Fourth of July and Labor Day Handicap Races, served as Chairman of Bay Head Junior Sailing, and is one of the founders, first president, and continuing trustee of the John Callahan Memorial Sailing Foundation. Since 1998, Adams has been a member of the Ocean County College Sailing Advisory Committee.

F. Thompson Brooks: Among his sailing accomplishments for Island Heights Yacht Club, Thompson Brooks first sailed the bay on July 4, 1914. He skippered a wide variety of boats, including many famous early Catboats (Vanity, Bouquet, and MaryAnn, among others), 20-foot Sneakboxes, large Bilgeboard Scows (IHYC and Stars). Brooks is winner of the Skemerhorn Trophy, a challenge race in Bilgeboard Scows between Ocean City Yacht Club and Barnegat Bay Yacht Club), sailing IHYC (1916, 1917, 1918), leading to the retirement of the trophy. He was the original skipper of the A-Cat MaryAnn, winning the Sewell Cup (1922, 1923), BBYRA Championship (1922, 1923, 1924), the Toms River Challenge Cup (1922, 1923, 1924), the Middleton Cup (1923, 1924), and the Morgan Cup (1922, 1923, 1925) and earlier in 1920 with Bouquet. In 1925, Brooks became the owner of MaryAnn. Brooks is one of the

founding members of the Star Class on Barnegat Bay and is a six time BBYRA champion (1935, 1936, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941), sailing his boat Sue, and is winner of the Bamberger Trophy in Stars (1938). Brooks' race officer accomplishments for Seaside Park Yacht Club include BBYRA Commodore (1955-1956); SPYC Commodore (1954-1955); Longtime BBYRA Regatta Committee member, over the course of three decades, setting the race courses for most of the 1960's and 1970's; SPYC Regatta Committee Chairman (1958-1978); and SPYC Executive Committee Chairman (1970-1980). Brooks was awarded the O.G. Dale Memorial Trophy (1975).

Dr. William W. "Bill" Fortenbaugh: Racing on Barnegat Bay for more than 60 years, Bill Fortenbaugh began sailing Duckboats at Bay Head Yacht Club in 1944 at the age of 8. Since then he has won 16 Barnegat Bay Yacht Racing Association championships in five classes spanning 50 years. Fortenbaugh won his first championship in B Sneakboxes (1950) then another in A Sneaks, five in G Sloops, five in A-Cats, one in Blue Jays, and two in M Scows. He was the youngest winner ever of the O.G. Dale Memorial Trophy (1954) at the age of 18. The crowning achievement of his years on the Bay were an unprecedented seven consecutive Bay championships (1994-2000) in his A-Cat Ghost, which he built at Beaton's Boatyard in 1994. Fortenbaugh won the Barclay Trophy team races and was runner up at the Sears Cup Finals on Lake Erie. He served as Chairman of BHYC Junior Sailing for seven years and introduced inter-club sailing.

Nelson H. Hartranft: In his early years, Nelson Hartranft was a summer resident, sailing 15-foot Sneakboxes at Ocean Gate Yacht Club; there may even have been a championship or two won in the dawn of his sailing career. Hartranft has owned or been a partner in all of the original four A-Cats (Bat, Lotus, Mary Ann, and Spy), in addition to being the sponsor/owner of the Wasp, built on plans of the fifth true A-Cat, Tamwock. Today, the first race at

Bay Head has an A-Cat award, the Hartranft Trophy. Hartranft's Wasp began the whole resurrection of the fleet. A renewed interest was injected and Wasp was the bay champion for several years. Wasp was just the beginning of a new A-Cat era; part of that interest was that this new boat didn't go to the bottom after the race or during the competition. After Wasp's success, a few of the originals were bought and rebuilt; a few more were built from scratch to try and beat this new boat. The rest is history (14 built and 12 active). It seems that none of this would have happened if Hartranft hadn't ventured forth and took the gamble fueled by his love for the "Traditions of Barnegat Bay." Hartranft is still owner of Wasp and she was out on the water to campaign in the Barnegat Bay Yacht Racing Association 2012 season. Hartranft is past-Commodore and a major contributor during the reconstruction of the OGYC (1994).

Erik Johnson: An eight-time E-Scow Eastern Champion, Erik Johnson holds and unmatched record for this prestigious event, with the most ever wins over four decades at all five Eastern Championship venues. Outside of Barnegat Bay, Johnson had 15 top-10 finishes at the national championship. Equally as impressive as his wins, Johnson and Terry Kempton pioneered junior sailing in the late 1990s that helped put Barnegat Bay on the map. Johnson directly had a hand in the development of many successful sailors from the area. He ran practices, introduced these sailors to national and international competition, and fostered a competitive and inclusive sailing environment.

Terry Kempton: One of Terry Kempton's biggest accomplishments and contributions to the Barnegat Bay was his dedication to helping youth sailors. Over the course of his coaching years, his sailors won six straight United States Optimist Dinghy Association Opti National Championships. He also coached five sailors who went on to represent the U.S.A. in the Optimist World

Championships. Kempton's awards include: 1st place Intermediate Penguin (1970); 1st place Junior Penguin North Americans (1973); 9th place (1973) and 3rd place (1976) Penguin North Americans; 1st place Open Penguin Regatta (1978, 1979); O'Day District D Champion (1980); BBYRA, Easterns, Downbay, Upbay E Scow Champion (1978); 2nd place E Scow Nationals and 3rd place E Scow Easter Regatta (1978).

Paul N. Smith: 50 Years as a Key Boat Builder at Beaton's – Paul Smith started his career in 1963 at David Beaton & Sons in West Mantoloking (Brick). At the time, Beaton's was a well-known builder of several wood one-design sailboats including Duckboats, Sneakboxes, Comets, Penguins, Lightnings, and Bluejays. It was an ideal opportunity to learn the boat building trade from some truly talented craftsmen. In the years that followed, Smith learned all aspects of boat building as well as painting, rigging, spar making, and fabrication of fittings. Smith learned that being a skilled boat builder was an important goal, but it was even more rewarding to understand the individual boat owner's needs. The resurgence of the 'A' Class Catboat fleet brought a new set of challenges. Beaton's staff rebuilt two of the original boats in the fleet, Lotus and Spy. During the next 20 years, Beaton's built four new A-Cats named Wasp, Ghost, Raven, and Lightning. Smith considers these projects as an apex time in his career because of the importance of the A-Cat Class to the traditions of racing on Barnegat Bay.

John and Gretchen Coyle: This husband and wife team are true sailing ambassadors. John is founder of the Long Beach Island Historical Association and Gretchen served two terms as president. Sailing and campaigning E Scows for years, the pair have sailed to Block Island, Bermuda, Martinique, St. Martin, and Venezuela. Among their restorations, John and Gretchen bought White Cap and had her completely restored, sailing her for a number of years. Upon Gretchen's retirement as president of the Tuckerton Seaport

Board of Trustees, White Cap was given to the non-profit. Rip Tide, built by naval architect and builder John Trumpy, was the next restoration. She was one of the few sailboats Trumpy built along the Delaware River in Camden in 1932 during the Depression. This restoration was donated to a historical museum in Camden. Twenty-five years ago Gretchen and John started the first Useppa Rendezvous for Catboats from all over, gradually turning it into the largest Sandpiper Rendezvous and Sandpiper Worlds in existence. The couple has also campaigned Sink 'r Swim, their Sandpiper in the Biscayne Bay, FL Barnacle Regatta, winning four times for historic designed sailboats in memory of Commodore Ralph Monroe.


John Coyle has been a member of Little Egg Harbor Yacht Club for more than 50 years, chairing numerous committees, serving as a Trustee, Senior Trustee, and Commodore (1993), and chairing the National E Scow Regatta that won the St. Petersburg Cup. John has always had a great interest in A-Cats, organizing and towing them down the Bay, making sure they were available to all age groups. He ran an A-Cat Regatta at the Tuckerton Seaport and organized the donation of A-Cats Ghost and Raven to the New Jersey Maritime Museum. John has crewed on a J/24 International One-Design Keelboat over the years in places such as Key West, the Chesapeake, and Barnegat Bay, and has sailed from Tortola to Key West.

Gretchen Coyle started sailing a Sneakbox, built by Jim Priestley in 1950, when her family built a home in Beach Haven and joined LEHYC. She sailed a Comet, and spent countless years crewing on Walter Browning's E Scow. As a teenager, she was a counselor in the Skipper and Skipperette Program teaching sailing and seamanship to hundreds of youngsters. Gretchen started Sea L'Eggs, teaching ladies of all ages to sail at Little Egg Harbor. She has served on numerous LEHYC committees and was official historian for many years. Gretchen is a freelance magazine writer and author, with a specialty

for sailing and is a noted New Jersey maritime historian, having written more about NJ maritime history than any other author including 100 Summers: Little Egg Harbor Yacht Club 1912-2012 and Inferno at Sea (co-authored with Deb Whitcraft). Inferno at Sea was honored by the Cuban government at the 2015 Havana International Book Fair. As Editor-at-Large for the Catboat Association's Catboat Magazine for over 25 years, Gretchen took Catboat sailing from New England to Barnegat Bay to Florida.

Competitors sail in the Ocean County College Regatta in 2014. Karen Wall photo

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