



Manasquan River Yacht Club:

100 Years Revisited
1899-1999



This Centennial History
is dedicated to all
MRYC members...
past, present and future.



Preface

Some things have changed.

The MRYC club and clubhouse for the first 60 years were summer only; club life today is year-round. For most of those years, many of Brielle's present streets were dirt roads; and many more not streets at all. And when MRYC was founded in the fall of 1899, the world hadn't yet suffered two World Wars. There were barely any telephones and cars, let alone telephones in cars and e-mail. There weren't any airplanes, let alone humans in space. There was no such thing as an income tax. And boats and tennis racquets back then were made of wood, and sails and clothing were of cotton.

Other things have remained quite the same.

MRYC was created with the stated purpose "to promote yachting and other sports on the Manasquan River, and to provide social entertainment for the members." Boating and racing — both sailboats and motorboats — as well as tennis and socializing were the heart of the club from the very beginning and remain so today.

And throughout the evolution of day-to-day life, MRYC as an institution has played a part — small and large — in the lives of its thousands of members over the last century.



Isabel, a 19'6" catboat, was owned by Arthur G. Donnelly, a MRYC member from 1904 to 1913, and uncle of current member Tim Donnelly. Skipped by Miss Grace Dalrymple, who later married George Molbman, Isabel took third place in the Ladies race in 1908.



The First 25 Years: Roaring into the Twenties (1899 – 1923)

As with most great institutions, the Manasquan River Yacht Club started with the vision of a few, and it has endured.

It was 1899, the turn of another century. Telephones were almost as rare as cars in southern Monmouth County. The local area including Brielle, then called Union Landing, had a small year-round population that swelled with summer residents who came by train from New York and north Jersey. The airplane and television had yet to be invented, and Marconi's "wireless" was just four years old. Composer Scott Joplin was writing his Maple Leaf Rag, still the most famous rag-time tune today, and Teddy Roosevelt and his Rough Riders were just coming home from charging through Cuba in the Spanish American War.

On the brink of fall that year, on September 13, sixteen people came together in the Union Lane home of John H. Folk, a summer resident from New York, to lay the foundation for the Manasquan River Yacht Club. It was a diverse group that met that day for this "Preliminary Meeting," half businessmen from New York City and northern New Jersey; the balance local residents who

made their living by the sea and seasonal resort trade. But they all shared a common passion for sailing.

The group included Capt. George Bailey, owner of a fleet of vessels operating from Maine to Florida; John Folk's sons, Frederick J. and Howard N. Folk; Willard C. Fisk, a celebrated attorney from Jersey City; Henry Wainright, proprietor of the Union House family hotel on the north bank of the River at the foot of Union Lane; Frank Earle, Clinton Fisk, Joel Parker, Standish Nichols, Walter Nichols, S.B. Pearce, Edward Schroeder, Samuel Storrer, Harry Bailey, and Amos Rodgers.

Willard Fisk was unanimously elected temporary chairman, and Frederick Folk the temporary secretary. Four committees also were formed — Constitution & By-laws, Rules & Courses, Regatta, and Membership — before the meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

The following June, the group reconvened, again at Frederick Folk's home, for their "organizational meeting." There were 18 in all, including many of the members of the original group, plus Capt. Forman O. Bailey, brother of George Bailey, who operated a similar business to



A 17'3" One Design. Ten or twelve One Designs were built by Johnson Boatbuilders, at a cost of under \$200. One Designs were referenced in club records as early as 1902, and in those years, minimum crew weights were strictly enforced.



his brother's, John Bailey and Orrin Bailey, Capt. T.S.P. Brown, William Brainard, W. Van Leer, and Ralph Pearce.

Together, they adopted a 1,000 word Constitution and By-laws that established four standing committees — House, Regatta, Timers and Measurers, Membership — and specified the Club's signal flag, which is the burgee we fly today.

Although sailing activities on the Manasquan had gone on informally for more than 20 years, the formation of MRYC marked the formalization of sailing on the Manasquan.

It was at this organizational meeting that they also elected MRYC's slate of officers for the year 1900:

Commodore	Willard C. Fisk, Jersey City
Vice Commodore	Capt. Forman O. Bailey, Manasquan
Treasurer	John I. Bailey, Manasquan
Secretary	Frederick J. Folk, New York City
Executive Comm.	Clinton Fisk, Jersey City Joel Parker, Manasquan William Brainard, New York City Capt. T.S.P. Brown, Brielle

It was a busy evening. After adopting the Constitution and By-laws and electing officers, a motion was carried "to hire a club and build a dock." Mr. Wainright, who was not able to attend, had earlier offered use of the grounds of his hotel, the Union House, for which the founders heartily thanked him for his kind and generous offer, but declined. This may have been fortuitous, for the Union House burned to the ground in February 1912. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

It appears that MRYC functioned without a clubhouse that first summer of 1900. In August, at the Executive Committee meeting, Capt. Brown offered to lease a building to the club for \$30 a year, plus his promise to paint it, for the 1901 season. That original clubhouse was a former wheelhouse for cyclists and ice cream pavilion, called "Wheelman's Rest," located on the west side of the Old Wooden Wagon Bridge to Point Pleasant, about a fifth of a mile east of the Club's present site. A dock directly in front of the clubhouse was available for use by members, and Capt. Brown was the proud owner of a naphta launch — reportedly the only power boat on the river at the time, although not for long.

The small frame building was situated on the property where once stood



MRYC's first clubhouse, 1901 to 1904, was a former cyclists' and staple ice cream pavilion, located next to the old bridge, between Brielle and Point Pleasant, at Higgins Avenue.

Brown's Inn, a large riverfront hotel next to where Bogan's Basin now is located. Built by Capt. Brown in 1890 and destroyed by fire sometime during that decade, Brown's Inn was one of many hotels that lined the river in the late 1800s, among them the Union House, Crestdale, Smarts Hotel and Shiabe Boarding House, all thriving with the arrival of train service to the area in the 1870s. In fact, train service in the late 19th and early 20th

centuries was not much different from today — with six or seven arrivals and departures daily between Brielle and New York, and the duration of a trip about two hours. One major difference, however, was that following the trip, a bath and a change of clothes were imperative.

The Executive Committee also hired a Steward, referred to as "janitor" in the early club minutes, for the first season for \$30 a month. Amos



Rogers' duties were clearly spelled out in the minutes:

- Raise the flag at 9 a.m. and lower it at sundown.
- Keep the clubhouse open from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.,
- Keep the Dock clean and in repair, mow the lawn, keep the clubhouse and surrounding ground in good condition.

- Put the range lights out at sundown and take them in at 10 p.m. unless otherwise instructed.
- Keep a record of all the boats cared for.

It's not clear how long Amon Rogers served as steward, although it is known that he was an MRYC member for many years, and lived on School House Road in Brielle, between Union Lane and the entrance to Greenwood Cemetery.

Membership during that first summer season of 1900 totaled 85. Dues were \$5, and the initiation

fee was \$5 initially, which was waived at one point until membership reached 100.

Perhaps because of the higher cost of living or just higher living, the rental of the clubhouse and grounds increased to \$50 in 1902. It was this year that the tennis court was added. And in 1903, the janitor's salary rose to \$40 monthly.

MRYC Moves Upriver

A new location for the club came under discussion as early as December 1903, when a committee was appointed to explore expanding the present clubhouse or finding another site.

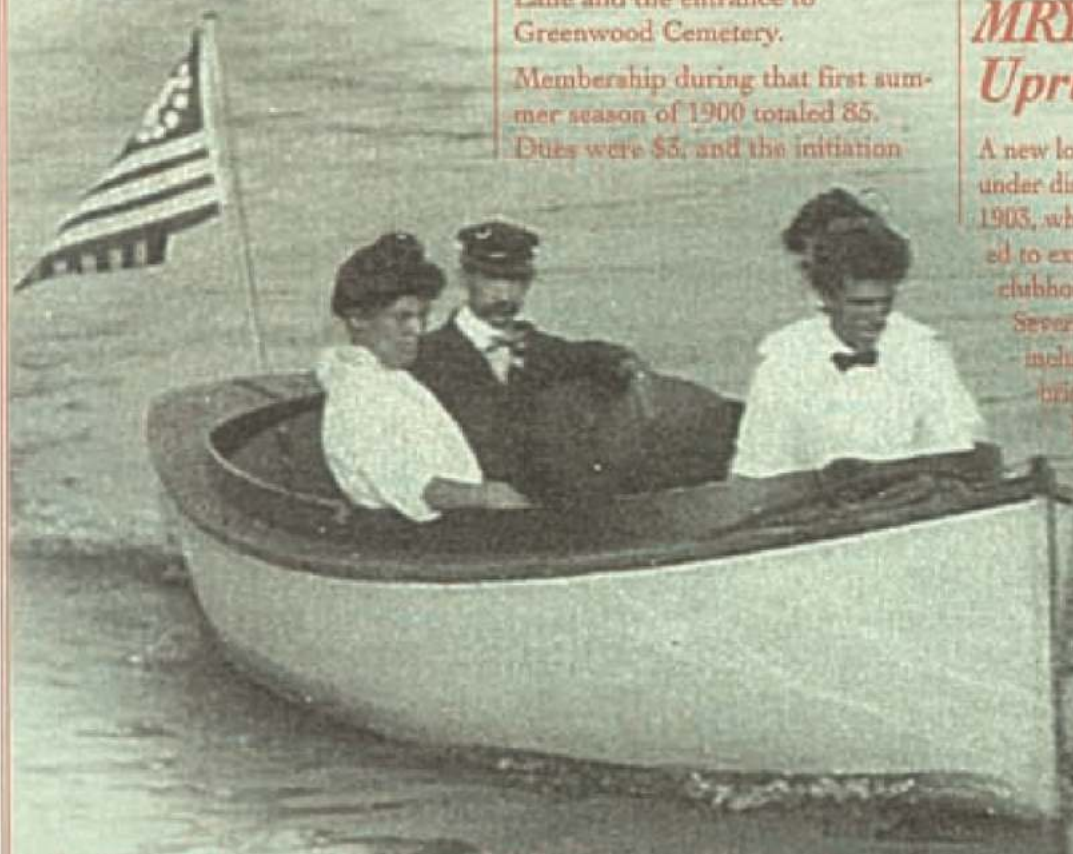
Several locations were considered, including ones to the east of the bridge, and across the river in Point Pleasant. Then in June 1905, MRYC leased a narrow strip of land, immediately west of our current property,

from George Rankin for \$75 a year for 3 years. At an Executive Committee meeting June 7, at Clinton Fisk's 15 Exchange Place, Jersey City,

office two bids for building a new clubhouse were presented. The job was awarded to Fred LaVance on the lower bid of \$895. The officers also authorized borrowing up to \$900 on a note from the Club to run for three months, to fund the construction project. Most likely construction was completed that season, for when the Trustees met September 1, they decided to pay off \$600 of the club's indebtedness when the notes came due that month, and okayed construction of solid shutters for the clubhouse windows. MRYC now had a home, if not the land under it, of its own.

As further evidence of the promise of permanency, MRYC's Certificate of Incorporation was officially recorded at the County Clerks' Office in September 1905. This document is the first record of the club's stated purpose, which was later incorporated word-for-word in the Constitution: *"The purposes for which the corporation is formed are to promote yachting and other sports on the Manasquan River, and to provide social entertainment for the members."*

Perhaps the founding fathers were hedging their bets by building the new clubhouse on leased property, perhaps because they liked that area best. It soon paid off, and in October the Trustees convened, again in Jersey City, this time to consider purchasing land adjacent to Rankin's.



Boating on the Manasquan, with the old Brielle Point Pleasant bridge in the background.



In January 1906, MRYC purchased, from the Manasquan River Land Company, the parcel of land on which the clubhouse and pool now sit. The cost was \$1900. This parcel had been part of the Wiley Estate, which was sold to the land company in 1901. In the late 19th Century, William Wiley had raced his sailboat on the Manasquan, and, in fact, many of the races started at this dock, which was where MRYC's east dock is today. William and his wife, Phoebe, had owned the land from the river to Riverview Drive, as evidenced even today by the brick columns at the

north end of Riverview Lane that once marked the entrance to their property. There also were several cottages, now gone, which the Wileys rented to summer visitors. But the original Wiley home remains, and is next to MRYC, to the east, and currently owned by Past Commodore and member Howard Wright.

MRYC acquired a second, adjoining parcel in 1907 from Club members Mattie and George Plume. The Plumes in 1905 had purchased part of the Wiley Estate, to the east and north of the initial parcel purchased by MRYC. Living in the old Wiley

home, the Plumes wished to preserve their unobstructed view of the river. So in September 1907, they sold MRYC an additional 90 feet to the north of MRYC's initial parcel in consideration for one-dollar, and a covenant on MRYC's property that prohibited creation of any structure in an area extending up from the river to what is now the deep end of the pool.

Two days later, MRYC purchased, from the Manasquan River Land Company, a 2-foot by 40-foot strip adjacent to the piece purchased from the Plumes. This was a move to mini-

mize the chances of a street right-of-way, which cut across the property, from ever being used. Ten years later, in February 1917, MRYC purchased from the Plumes the property where the tennis courts now sit for \$700. Four decades would pass before MRYC made any more land acquisitions.

A Permanent Home

In March 1906, the Trustees met in New York City to report on the newly-acquired property, and to authorize a 12-foot by 12-foot addition for the clubhouse, at a cost of \$110. While accounts are sketchy, it is almost certain that the clubhouse built the previous season was

MRYC's clubhouse and docks, circa 1915. The clubhouse was built in 1905, subsequently added to, and demolished in 1961 when the present clubhouse was built.





MRYC docks in the 1920s.

moved the short distance from the Rankin property, because disbursement records show an expense of \$165 for "moving house." The addition would then have been constructed at the new site.

To finance the land acquisition and the move, MRYC took out its first mortgage in 1906, for the sum of \$2,000. The building fund also included \$2,533.12

raised during the preceding four years by the Women's Committee – the forerunner of today's MRYC Women's Auxiliary.

That money went a long way, as shown in the Building Fund disbursements, including: \$1,827 for construction of the house, dock and walk, \$1,949 for land (Wiley Estate), \$165 to move the club house, \$197 for furniture, \$50 to build

the new tennis courts, \$23.68 for property taxes, \$259 mortgage interest and \$200 paid on mortgage principal.

Additional expenses for a few "sundries" left the building fund a balance of \$156. This balance, along with new money raised by the Women's Committee, was put to good use the following season, for a dock extension, grading the grounds, nets for the tennis courts, electric wiring, and flags and stands for the Military Euchre card games. In 1909, \$58 was spent building lockers and extending the porch, and in 1910 \$235 was spent for new "toilet rooms."

This would remain the clubhouse for more than 50 years, until the early Sixties.

Membership in the 1907 season was 172, and 185 the following year, swelling to 241 members in 1910, and receding to 143 in 1915 and the World War I years. Some of the Club's earliest members were prominent figures in the political, economic, and social circles of New York, Philadelphia and in-between. In 1908, 73 of the members were local, almost all from Brielle and Manasquan, with a handful from Point Pleasant and one from Bay

MRYC clubhouse in the 1940s, around the time of the Club's 50th Anniversary.





Forrest O. Bailey, a founding MRYC member, "skippered" the "Ma Too" to a Bay Championship in 1916 at the age of 73. Someone else was actually at the helm, as the registered owner only had to be at the helm at the start and finish, according to the rules of the day.

Head. Of the 112 members who were seasonal residents, 61 were from New York, 45 from North Jersey, and a half-dozen from Pennsylvania, Illinois and Ohio.

The River

The Manasquan River itself was completely different then, and, in fact, has had several personality changes before becoming the waterway it is today. Depth, tides, channel location and the inlet changed frequently. For one thing, there was no canal, and although the canal was begun in 1914, construction was soon halted with America's entry into World War I. Equally important, there were periods of time when the inlet was completely closed. It must have become somewhat routine, as indicated by an August 12, 1910 Coast Star article which reported *"The Manasquan Inlet closed up again on Tuesday night. The inlet was closed recently and volunteers from Manasquan and Point Pleasant opened it."* The closings became especially critical following the opening of the Point Pleasant Canal in December 1925, when the River was diverted through the canal, rather than flowing through the inlet.

And then there were the bridges. The original all-wooden "wagon" bridge, circa 1875, had a short draw near the

north end. This span was replaced in the late 1890s by an iron and wood plank auto bridge with a relatively short draw of 125-feet. The original clubhouse was just to the west. Again this bridge was replaced, in 1925, this time with a larger draw, but only with about 10-feet of clearance for boats.

Enthusiasm for organized sailing on the Manasquan long predates MRYC — and perhaps is the reason for the club's instant success. Hotels on both sides of the River, particularly the Union House in Union Landing and the Riverside House in Point Pleasant, sponsored sailboat races. As early as 21 years before MRYC's creation, the newspaper *Sea Side*, precursor of today's *Coast Star*, reported on "one of the grandest races that has ever been sailed on the Manasquan River." The race commenced at 1 p.m., on August 3, 1878, and "never did the sun shine fairer or wind blow more pleasantly" than for the race between the three fastest boats on the river. The *Jennie Arnold*, *Kate* and *Blackbird* finished the ten-mile race from the "new bridge to the old and back, twice repeated within two minutes of each other." After allowances, the *Blackbird*, at 1 hr. 45 min, 18 sec. took the "prize in the shape of a ten dollar bill."

During this time, Rod and Rosea Clark also ran an annual race to stim-





*"Elizabeth" M.R.Y.C. Winning Inter-Club Race.
At Regatta for
M.R.Y.C. Challenge Cup Aug. 16, 17 & 18/56. Aug. 15, 1906.*

The Elizabeth, a 20-foot catboat captained by Albert H. Ellis, winning a race in the 1906 Challenge Cup Regatta, in the first year of a five-year competition against the Belmar Yacht Club.

ulate business for Clark's Landing, where you could rent rowboats and sailboats, get ice cream, have a tintype taken or ride a merry-go-round, according to member George Mohlman's written recollections. This race reportedly was a "free-for-all." With no time allowance, these races started at Clark's Landing, sailed up river to the "third" bridge, back down to the wagon bridge, now Rt. 35, and back to Clark's. "There was always a fight at the island buoy, where the channel was narrow, and cries of 'give

me room' and much profanity were heard!"

References to sailing continued throughout the 1880s and 90s, several noting the start of the race at Mr. W. H. Wiley's dock – which is roughly where MRYC's docks sit today. And annual competitions between Monmouth and Ocean Counties for champions of the river were held.

No doubt this enthusiasm for sailing gave birth to the vision and reality of MRYC. In fact, as early as 1883, a

newspaper article made reference to "interest" in forming a Manasquan Yacht Club.

Early Boats and Races at MRYC

Both sailboats, primarily cat-rigged, and powerboats were raced from the club in the early years.

The cat boat races were run on time allowance – "...although I never knew the formula since it seemed to change every year," George Mohlman later wrote in his memoirs. The club seemed to be forever trying to find ways to give everyone a chance to win. Initially the time allowances were based strictly on length. In 1911, the "Universal Measurement Rule," was tried to take into account displacement. That must not have worked, because two years later the "Supplemental Racing Rules" were adopted to prevent the building of excessive lightweight and expensive boats. Mohlman concluded that perhaps all of the trouble over changing formulas had led to adoption of a One Design class.

References to One Designs appear in club records as early as 1902. Some of the early ones were built in 1904, 10 or 12 of which were built by Morton Johnson, whose shop was

opposite Bay Head Yacht Club. They were a skip-jack build, 17'3" long, with a bottom like a sneakbox and square sides turned in at the bow, sloop rigged with spinnaker and brass blocks. Before races, the weight of the heaviest crew of two men was taken and each crew had to come up to that weight, either with sandbags or another person. "We were strict about that, but there was no limit on the heavy side!"

An analysis of the club's fleet, between 1908 and 1915, which averaged 50 boats a year, shows cat boats and power boats were popular – about equally split in the early years with 19 cats and 20 power boats.

The mix shifted about 1911 with a half dozen sloops replacing some of the cats, and again in 1914 when eight of a new class of One Design "Class C" 17-foot boats were added.

Throughout the period there were a handful of One Designs, and from 1907 through 1910, an 80-foot yacht, the *Hurriot*, owned by Mrs. George H. Risley – the benefactor of many of the early trophies. Although listed among MRYC boats, the *Hurriot* was kept in New York, and was the boat used by Capt. Pearce to make his point with the New York and Long Branch Railroad in 1907.

About six races were held each season, with a few of these three- or five-



1906 – 1910 Challenge Cup Standings

	<u>MRYC Skippers</u>	<u>MRYC Boats</u>	<u>Winning Club</u>
1906	Albert Ellis Bill Brainard	<i>Elizabeth</i> , 20' cat boat <i>Kiowa</i> , 19'11" cat boat	Manasquan
1907	George Potter Albert Ellis	<i>Alacer</i> , 20'2" cat boat <i>Elizabeth</i>	Belmar
1908	George Potter Frank Potter	<i>Soubrette</i> , 22' sloop <i>Coquette</i> , 19'10"	Belmar
1909	Bill Brainard Ed Heyes	<i>Phantom</i> , 24'6" sloop <i>Soubrette</i>	Manasquan
1910	Clinton Fisk, Albert Ellis	<i>Phantom</i> , 24' 6" sloop <i>Oriole</i> , 23'	Manasquan

race series. Entrance fees of 50-cents a race, or \$1.50 and \$2.50 for multiple-race series, were always charged. The larger boats raced for the 1st Class Championship (Risley Cup) and the smaller boats for the 3rd Class Championship (Log Cabin Cup). Beginning around 1914 — perhaps coinciding with formation of the BBYRA — the 1st and 3rd Classes were replaced with Class A and Class C. An annual Ladies Race and Consolation Race, open to boats of any size or rig that had not won a race all season, were standard throughout the period.

On August 20, 1914 a special three-boat race of One Designs pitted a

father and two sons against each other for best sailors on the Manasquan River — Capt. Bartley Pearce and sons Ralph and Wheaton. The rules were that each had to race alone, steering, tending main and jib sheets, and center board. Wheaton won, and as he recalled 50 years later, "the bow of my father's boat was even with my mast, about one or two seconds apart...the hardest and closest race that I ever sailed...and was he tough to beat as he knew all the fine points of sailing, and if he had not lost his main sheet rope, the outcome would have been different." Wheaton's cup from that race is in the MRYC trophy case.

Challenge Cup

MRYC solidified its sailing reputation early in its history. One of the earliest competitions and most prized possessions of MRYC is the Challenge Cup, a stunning sterling silver trophy tooled by Tiffany & Co. in New York in 1906 at a cost of \$250. The cup is the legacy of a five-year series of annual three-race regattas that began that year between the Belmar Yacht Club, now defunct, and Manasquan River Yacht Club. The Cup was retired forever to MRYC in a tie-breaking regatta in the fifth year.

It was August 11, 12 and 13, 1910. All eyes were on the Manasquan River,

since the series was tied at this point, and this year's winner would retain the cherished Cup.

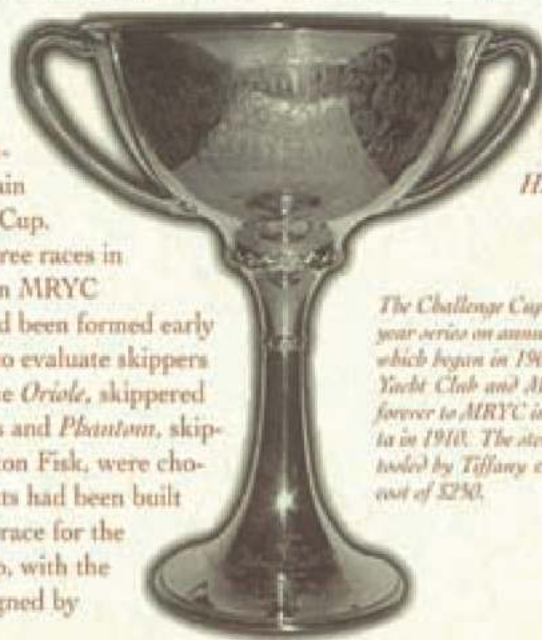
There were three races in three days. An MRYC Committee had been formed early in the season to evaluate skippers and boats. The *Oriole*, skippered by Albert Ellis and *Phantom*, skippered by Clinton Fisk, were chosen. Both boats had been built specifically to race for the Challenge Cup, with the *Phantom* designed by

Clinton Crane, who also designed the *Dixie II* (see below), from the boat building firm Tames, LeMoire and Crane, New York.

The preparatory signal was given at 2:40 p.m.; then the starting signal at 2:45; and the handicap at 2:47. Manasquan won decisively by a score of 20 to 7 — and there reportedly was more than a minor celebration.

On August 19, the *Coast Star* reported "The Manasquan River Yacht Club banded out the worst defeat to be administered to either club during the five years of racing for the inter-club trophy, when it won both first and second places from Belmar Yacht Club on Friday last. The individual trophy for the

yacht making the most points was awarded to *Oriole*, captained by Albert H. Ellis."



The Challenge Cup is the legacy of a five-year series of annual three-race regattas, which began in 1906 between the Belmar Yacht Club and MRYC and was retired forever to MRYC in a tie-breaking regatta in 1910. The sterling silver trophy was tooled by Tiffany & Co., New York, at a cost of \$250.



A Sterling Record:

MRYC's Trophy Case

As interest in sailboat racing grew, so did the club's trophy booty. During the last 100 years, many trophies originated at MRYC and many more retired here permanently after being won on the water or on the tennis courts. One can get a sense of MRYC's history at a glance, by visiting the trophy case in the club's Bridge Room. Most of the following trophies and more can be seen there, plus racing relics including a miniature "black-powder cannon" and a customized wooden box for time sheets.

- | | | | | | | | |
|------|--|------|---|--------|---|---|--|
| 1900 | Tippicanoe Cup, offered by Mrs. George H. Risley for competition among junior sailors, to continue the sailing reputation being established by adult members of the club. | 1907 | MRYC Motorboat Championship. | 1961 | Skinner Memorial Cup*: The prized objective of the Powder Puff races for many years. Today, the best MRYC Jr. in BBYRA. | 1982 | Mixon Trophy*, Auxiliaries, Michael Mixson. |
| 1903 | Mixed Doubles Canoe: the oldest trophy in the case. | 1911 | T. Tasso Fischer Junior Cup. | 1962 | Commodore's Cup*: A large silver bowl, donated by John Rodgers; originally for Junior races in Jet 14s; now for Auxiliaries. | 1985 | Ketelaar Trophy*, Auxiliaries, Dr. Pieter Ketelaar. |
| 1904 | Risley Cup, donated by the Risley family for 1st Class Championship competition, for larger boats. | 1913 | The July Cup, Class A Series. | 1964 | Brook Halsey Tennis Trophy ('64-'69). | 1989 | Davy Jones Memorial Trophy, Women's Sailing Champion, Richard H. Jones, Jr. |
| 1906 | Challenge Cup: A stunning silver trophy, created by Tiffany & Co., and specifically for interclub races between MRYC and the Belmar Yacht Club. It was purchased for \$250 through a subscription fund, and was retired to MRYC in 1910 for winning three of five years. | 1913 | The August Cup, Class A Series. | 1964 | Roty Smith Perpetual for Jet 14s. | 1991 | J. Michael Cleary* Offshore Sailing Trophy, Auxiliaries in the SquanTri-Sail Offshore Regatta, John P. Cleary. |
| 1906 | Log Cabin Cup, donated by the Risley family, and named for the family's home on the Manasquan River, for 3rd Class Championship competitions, for smaller boats. | 1914 | MRYC Edmund S. Higgins Cup for One Designs, won by Wheaton Pearce (<i>see story Ch. 1</i>). | 1965 | Chamber Pot*: Father's Duck boat race; Al Mollenkopf, a club member who owned a clam dredger, reclaimed this trophy from the ocean, redecorated it and donated it as a perpetual trophy for the annual Father's Duck Boat race. | <i>Dates Unknown:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wight Memorial Trophy* for Optimist Dinghys, donated by the Wight family. MRYC Women's Auxiliary Award*, for Junior Sailing. Beginner's Race Trophy, Jr. Sailing*. Rebecca Nefetiti, awarded in good humor each season to honor "great moments in sailing." Created by Bob Bossett from a "bust" statue donated from a member's attic to the Women's Auxiliary auction.* | |
| 1907 | Three horn-handled cup, inscribed Sept. 2, Open Sneak Box Race, Bay Head Yacht Club (MRYC sailors occasionally went to the bay to race, but could only do so by joining a bay club. Capt. Forman O. Bailey | 1916 | Tennis Singles. | 1976 | Heinrich Trophy*, for Auxiliaries, Past Commodore F. Michael Heinrich. | <i>* Active trophies in 1999</i> | |
| | | 1934 | Mantoloking to Seaside Race (All-night races held in the '30s). | 1976 | Bessemer Trophy*, Auxiliaries, Allen A. Bessemer. | | |
| | | 1946 | Berkhofer Memorial Race*: In memory of Bobby Berkhofer, killed at 18 years-old in WW II. For Jr. sailing; originally for sneakboxes, and later changed to permit other classes. | * 1982 | Chargette Cup*: for Auxiliaries, donated by Rich Halajian. | | |
| | | 1959 | Mohlman Cup Race*: Originally for sneakboxes Juniors and Seniors. Later changed to permit other classes, and just for Juniors. Today for Jr. Lasers. | 1983 | Davis Cup in honor of Bill LaRue, MRYC club manager, donated by Nelda and Hooter Davis for tennis. | | |
| | | 1961 | Perpetual Wardell Cup, donated by Ed Wardell. Originally for sneakbox races, later for M-Scows and today for off-shore auxiliary races. | | | | |



Capt. S. Bartley Pearce

One of the charter members of MRYC was Capt. S. Bartley Pearce, a master boat builder who owned a boatyard on the river, just west of the railroad tracks. He built a variety of boats, from surf boats, a series of small sailboats, sneakboxes and sloops. His cat boats were much in demand by MRYC members. Many races were won by his exclusive-design boats, including a 17-foot gaff-rigged prototype, which was later used to build a class of ten for the club by Morton Johnson.

Capt. Pearce won international boating acclaim in 1907, when he accepted command of a brand new racing boat, the Dixie, and challenged the British contender in the International Cup Races on the English Channel. He won the coveted Harmsworth Trophy — the first time for an American — at a breathtaking speed of 43 miles-per-hour to the thrill of locals back home who had excitedly watched the Dixie from the riverbanks when she performed her trial runs up and down the river.

Perhaps Capt. Pearce's greatest contribution to boating on the Manasquan — for which he won a lifetime membership to MRYC — was his successful campaign in 1907 to stop a solid-fill embankment across the river to support the railroad tracks. The New York and Long Branch

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*— from MRYC's
Constitution, 1910*

Railroad contended the river wasn't navigable because of the small draw and the river's narrow channel. Proving otherwise, Capt. Pearce borrowed the Risley's 80-foot, ocean-going yacht and brought it through the draw, anchoring well up river on the very day the War Department engineers were to visit to study the proposal. Capt. Pearce was honored at an MRYC dance, and presented with a watch fob inscribed: *"Lifetime Membership—Manasquan River Yacht Club, 1907."*



S. Bartley Pearce, right and "crew" in the Dixie. He was a charter member of MRYC, master boat-builder, world-renowned boatman and honored with a "lifetime Membership to MRYC" for his efforts to stop the railroad from building a solid-fill land embankment across the river, blocking the inlet.





Howard Folk, a charter member of MRYC, and "crew" in the early 1900s.

Women at MRYC

Although the Women's Auxiliary wouldn't be formed for decades, there was nothing auxiliary about distaff involvement at MRYC. Women were a mainstay from the very beginning, as best evidenced by their sailing record and fund-raising efforts.

The first Ladies Race was 1908, and won by Madeline Heyes (Donnelly), mother of current member Tim Donnelly, in the *Elizabeth*, the 20-foot cat boat owned by Albert Ellis which earlier won the first year

of the Challenge Cup – and again in 1909 in the *Alacer*, a 20-foot cat boat. Grace Dalrymple Mohlman finished third in the 1908 race in the *Isabella*, a 196" cat boat owned by Arthur Donnelly and her trophy remains part of the collection on display in the trophy case. Ms. Heyes also owned *Flirt*, which, skippered by Wheaton Pearce, won for her the Log Cabin Cup in 1909 and 1910. She also won the Risley Cup for keeps, and both trophies are on loan to the club from her son.

Early Tennis

Tennis dates to the original clubhouse, when members played lawn tennis, and records indicate that the first lawn court was built in 1902. New courts were built as part of the 1906 construction of the new clubhouse, at a cost of \$50, and \$15 for enhancements the following year, plus \$8.50 for net and tapes. The first formal tennis activity to appear in an annual schedule of events was a tennis tournament on September 3, 1910. Competitions in that period included Mixed Doubles, as well as "Men's Singles and Doubles."

During World War I, club life was pretty much "business as usual" at MRYC. Two major local events, immediately following the war, were the incorporation of the Borough of Brielle in 1919 with club member Richard Donnelly elected Mayor, and the formation of Manasquan River Golf Club in 1922. Past Commodore Greg Deppeler recalls a vintage tale passed along by his grandmother. During the late teens, the people who lived to the east of the old Wiley home had built four cottages, for their daughters, on what is today Riverview and Linden Lanes. However, the daughters never moved in and the cottages were rented to summer visitors, one of whom in the

Twenties reportedly was the brother of the infamous Bugsy Moran.

In the Twenties, cat boats were still all the rage. There were several 20-footers at the club, and they sailed together, under a handicap system with a few 17-foot One-Design sloops and a couple of 15-foot sneak-boxes. One class of these boats had an outrigger that held the pulleys for the sheet to the boom, and they leaked a lot under sail. In addition to regular crews, lightweight boys would go along to bail on the low side if the wind was strong, and to get out on the outrigger to keep the boat from diving when running before the wind. The boats also leaked in mooring, and many a young member was "sentenced" to bail them out by older boys who would hold court on the club lawn.

In addition to sailing, club life consisted of card games all week long, including Military Euchre, auction and contract bridge.

From the earliest days euchre and bridge whists were held almost every Wednesday night during the season, with dances every Saturday night.

A Watersports Day, clambake and moonlight sail were part of the formal festivities as early as 1901. Music was a big part of the social scene, with a piano rented in the early years and finally purchased in 1909. A few



years later, vaudeville came into vogue, and a 1914 MRYC treasurer's report shows vaudeville income and expenses balancing each other out at \$61. That year, the club also spent \$42 on a Victrola "talking machine" and records.

Today's young members may find it amusing that in pre-pool days of MRYC, swimming was allowed from the dock. In fact, water sports in the river were a natural part of club life, and at one time there was even a diving board on the bulkhead.

From club events books, which date back to as early as 1908, we know that some of these water sports were organized on special weekends. A newspaper account of a 1902 Watersports Day details activities, ranging from the traditional swimming, canoe and row races to the non-traditional "canoe tilting" contest, for example. One canoeer would paddle and the other would stand — or kneel — in the bow with a bamboo pole padded at one end like a Q-tip. The two boats would joust, with the object of knocking the opponent into the "drink" or capsizing the opposing canoe altogether.

And hot as it may have been, members and friends crowded the club's waterfront, women in their elaborate hats and ankle-length skirts, men in suits and hats. The earliest trophy in



Spectators line the river bank to view MRYC's Watersports Day, circa 1913.

MRYC's case dates to 1903, for Mixed Doubles Canoe — no doubt from one of the earliest Water Sports Days.

Tim Donnelly, who claims to have been born into the club, remembers the greased pole competitions. A mast would be lathered with lard, lashed to the dock and extended out over the water with a dollar bill at the end. We're told more fun than get-

ting the dollar — a lot of money in those days — was watching people try.

A later generation of MRYC-ers recalls the unique if not costly "water sport" of riding their bicycles off of the dock...and some say there's a bike or two buried in the riverbed, right off the bulkhead.

Keeping the Home Fires Burning (1924 – 1948)

For the next 25 years, life at MRYC was shaped largely by significant world events, including the Great Depression and World War II.

In December 1925, the one-and-a-half mile Canal opened, connecting Barnegat Bay and the Manasquan River and forever changing life on the Manasquan.

The River's tidal "scour" no longer forced the inlet open because much of the volume of the water flowing from as far away as Freehold was now diverted through the canal. Shortly after the canal opened, the inlet silted over, and had to be dug out periodically by hand and horse-drawn carts. These efforts met with limited success and the inlet became completely blocked in the late twenties. The Army Corps of Engineers began dredging for passage and building stone jetties in early 1930, and the river officially met the sea on a cold February day in 1931. The "grand opening," however, was saved until August when it could be celebrated in style with a water parade and New Jersey Governor Morgan



Larson in attendance as guest of honor.

The river was said to be fresh water during the periods the inlet was closed, and there was no tide. And since the water level was between high and low, club members could sail at any time. But with the opening of the new inlet which no longer closed, coupled with the new canal and resulting flow between the River and Barnegat Bay, tides became higher and lower. Ultimately, this forced the scheduling of sailboat races, which almost universally had started at 2 p.m. when the wind was generally at its best, to coincide with periods of high tide.

Interestingly, the canal, as well as the Manasquan River, were said to have played a role in Prohibition, which was repealed in 1933.

Local boat owners would steal in under dark of night and hide their contraband in the woods upriver and even in an empty summer home off-season.

But the canal played a bigger role in expanding the depth and breadth of sailing at MRYC. The Canal's opening also meant club members could

tow their boats through the canal to team race in the bay — including the all-night races from Bay Head. These were held in August, or just after a full moon, for two classes of boats; over 20-feet and under 20-feet. The car bridges at Mantoloking and Seaside-Toms River, and the now-defunct railroad bridge in Seaside were left open all night, except for

short intervals for car passage. At Forked River you rounded the mark, an anchored, well-lit boat, before your return.

On Memorial Day weekend, 1931, one particular E-Scow was returning from a regatta in Little Egg Harbor. It had been towed there from MRYC by a 25-foot powerboat, travelling through the canal — which had

no bulkhead at the time — and continuing down Barnegat Bay. That night the crew slept under the deck to avoid the expense of a hotel room, but they instead paid the price of feeding the famous local mosquitoes. A neighboring sailboat shared their Applejack with the crew that night — perhaps a competitive ploy, for the scow fared poorly in the regatta the next day. Skipper and crew decided to sail home rather than be towed. They sailed out the Barnegat Inlet, up the coast and into the Manasquan

Inlet, only to be met at MRYC's docks by a welcoming committee of the crew's irate mothers. As he recalled the story 60 years later, Ted Skinner still did not understand why the mothers were so upset. Other members of the crew included Bud

Branning, the skipper, his brother Paul, John Montserrat and Craig Severance. On another occasion, this same crew sailed out the Manasquan Inlet, only to spot a very large shark just minutes away. They decided they had sailed enough that day, and immediately returned to the club dock.



Watersports Day was a popular annual event, featuring canoe and swim races, canoe "tilting" and a grooved pole contest. Notice the "grooved pole" at the end of the dock.





An MRYC "Barn Dance" in 1932.

Sneakboxes

Sneakboxes were relatively inexpensive and became quite popular throughout the area. These were traditional 15-foot sneakboxes built by J. Howard Perrine of Barnegat, some of the Johnsons of Bay Head, and by Capt. Bart Pearce, mentioned in first chapter. In the early Thirties, there were enough of them to race as a class and they started after the handicap class, which would sail three laps while the sneakboxes sailed two. They continued to race until the

Beaton sneakboxes came along in the late 50s.

During the late Thirties, Perrine Sneakbox races, comprising seven or eight boats, were conducted over one of three courses. Member Joe Fitzpatrick recalls that marks weren't numbered as today, but were yellow cans named for areas of the River; Pine Bluffs, Island, Rae's and Home. Races were conducted around these marks in three basic configurations, including three laps between Island and Home for Northeast storms. It was not until after war that barrels

were no longer identified by river locations, but by numbers; and in the seventies, barrels were re-labeled with letters.

Races started between a starting buoy and the Committee boat, Commodore Wade's *Blorrie*, which was confined to the channel's deep water since it was an in-board. There were no patrol boats. So when boats capsized, and Perrine's really nose-dived according to Joe, they were rescued by skipper and crew in one of these fashions: lowering the sail; swimming to shallow water when

possible; standing on the centerboard and pulling on the halyard connected to the mast top to right the boat; and/or bailing "like hell."

Prior to MRYC joining BBYRA in the early Sixties, MRYC sailors occasionally joined a bay club in order to participate in BBYRA competitions. Capt. Forman O. Bailey was one of these and for years made his presence known to bay competitors. In 1916, at the age of 73, he "skippered" the *Mc Toy*, with Fred Bailey at the helm, to a Bay Championship. He repeated this feat in 1924, 1926 and 1928, and





Ferris Sazakbat, skippered by a young Bud Branning, in the 1920s.



apparently retired from active competition at age 85. The registered owner only had to be at the helm at the start and finish. According to Runyon Colie, Forman Bailey was almost blind in these later years.

The Depression Years

The early docks, prior to the Thirties, had four-inch by four-inch pilings, supporting sections of decking, which were taken up each fall and laid on the clubhouse lawn. This protected them from the elements, especially ice, as the river was not as salty or subject to tides

as it is today. In 1932, MRYC completed construction of the first bulkhead and permanent dock, as well as the first dredging of the basin and approach channel "to be 4-feet deep at mean low water" according to permits and correspondence with the NJ State Board of Commerce and Navigation, and the US Engineer Office of the War. Almost 70 years later, Margaret Riehl, Commodore Wade's daughter, recalls that because these were depression years, the need for the dock and how to pay for it sharply divided the club. *"It had to be built or no claim to a yacht club name. Good heads prevailed, the work was done and slip rentals over the years certainly repaid the cost as well as saved the club."*

During the Great Depression the membership struggled to keep the club open. Most of the membership was of above average means and could manage to get there. But as in the war years past and those that would follow, just about anyone was allowed to come to the social events. "Friends of members not personally accompanied to the club house, but properly introduced by members, will be admitted to dances for a fee of \$2 for gentlemen, attending alone or with a lady," according to the 1934 Schedule of Events.

These dances not only featured live orchestra, but there was usually a receiving line where the Commodore or his representative greeted everyone.

Bridge every Friday night attracted 20 tables. In the mid-30s the initiation fee for active members was reduced in half to \$25, most likely because of the Depression. That year, the first female "Associate Trustee," Mary Eleanor Watts, was elected.

Margaret (nee Walker) Watts, whose father was club secretary and brother of Commodore Wade's wife, said she remembers in the early Thirties helping her father hand-address weekly postcards to all members, which served as the newsletter of the day.

During the Thirties, a season fee of \$4 for tennis privileges was charged, plus a \$1 fee for the Invitational Tournament

Perrine Sloopbox fleet on the Manasquan River in the 1930s.





Perrine Sneakbox fleet on the Manasquan, in the first race of MRYC's 1954 sailing season.

which included men's and women's singles, and men's doubles, and the Annual Club Tournament, for men's singles and doubles. Tea was served every Saturday, between 4 and 6 p.m. to follow the 2 p.m. races and tennis matches. Mrs. Riehl remembers that tennis never was as popular as sailing, because there was no great interest in physical fitness in those days. But A.E. (Major) Carpenter, a member who also belonged to the Germantown, PA. Cricket Club, frequently arranged exhibition tennis tournaments with young men he brought over from

Philadelphia, and there was always a good audience! He also sponsored the membership of a young man from the Germantown club who helped him defeat the club's best players, Bob Heidt and Bud Oswald, for the MRYC doubles championship.

A 1935 letter on club stationery, author unknown, offers a witty account of club life and a history of beer at the club: "Well we had quite a party to the club last Sunday evening. We got a postal last week to bring your dinner and come down to the Club and eat — the dinner not

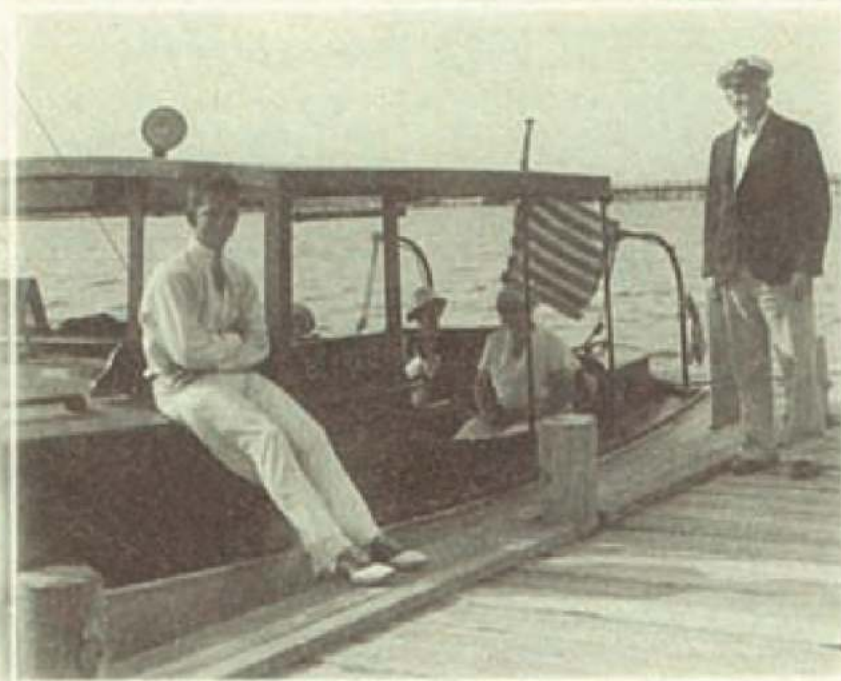
the club. So we went and took a couple of crullers, figuring the Widels and Heids would bring plenty. And they did. There was enough to satisfy even the Trustees—and you know they're hard to satisfy. There was some nice cold bottled beer, and it was the first time the demon got kissed on both cheeks and pretty near everybody was glad to see him. Only three people took iced tea. Eleanor Watts brought her Pa. Said he'd drink anything but beer. ...Here we wade knee deep into blood

and oratory to allow beer in the Club, and that's the only thing Fred don't want!"

(cf. note: Fred Watts was MRYC Commodore in 1918 and 1919.)

Boating and tennis weren't the only competitions. In 1939 MRYC competed, mostly in softball and track, against the Jack Fish Camp, for a couple of years located in the big house on top of Holly Hill (today Holly Hill Drive), which previously had been the 44-acre estate of the Wing Piano company founder.

Commodore Wade with his yacht, Mervic, circa 1953. Also, left to right, Billy Heidt, who went on to serve as Commodore in 1939, an unidentified woman and Mrs. Wade.



The War Years

As throughout the country, the war years were somber ones at MRYC. For one thing, there were less people around because many were off to the war. Membership declined from 147 in 1940 to under 100 members during the war years; of that total 16 to 23 members, depending on the year, were in the service. And most members, who were summer residents, had to take trains from north Jersey or New York because of wartime gasoline rationing. Still, club life went on, with everyone pulling together. During these years, even those who were not members, found respite at the club. Guest status had little meaning, with an ebb and flow of friends of the teenagers and adults alike. Because of wartime demographics, membership comprised mostly the very young or senior citizens. But one young member at the time recalls that the heroes of this difficult period were the older men who kept the club together and operating. "It was a happy time for the young because the older members made sure they were not denied any of the activities that makes growing up at MRYC so very special – including Commodore Wade, Judge Ragsdale, Arthur Clark, Wilbur Potter and Walter Browne," Phil Schneider remembers.

Arthur Clark, a retired vice president of engineering of the Edison Company, is credited with keeping the physical club going during the war, personally doing a lot of the repairs and maintenance.

He later served as a club officer in the Fifties.

Racing was informal with a "motley" fleet of two Perrine sneaks, a moth, a converted row boat, a Duck Boat and a snipe which reportedly carried a Coke bottle filled with sand to ward off power boats that began to appear in the mid-Forties.

During these years, MRYC's clubhouse was used by organizations helping in the war effort.

Sadly, the winds of war were felt at MRYC, with two members, Dick Donnelly and Nelson Rae, and another member's 18 year-old son, Bobby Berkhofer, killed in action. Bobby's aunt, Mrs. Ida Bacon, donated the club's second floor board room in his memory, as you can see to this day inscribed on a plaque, which hangs on the door leading to the second floor. A Berkhofer Trophy Race has also has been sailed since 1946, for Juniors originally in sneaks, and more recently in Blue Jays.

That first post-war summer of '46, with everyone returning and jubilant that the war was over, MRYC mem-

bership bounced back to 162 and 172 the following year. In another sign of the times, that year there were 11 sailboats racing, up from six in 1943. And "Victrola music (was) available for dancing at all times" in the post-war MRYC.

Also in 1946, the Brielle to Point Pleasant Bridge collapsed, and rumors soon circulated that the new bridge would be built farther to the west. MRYC's board immediately passed a resolution in opposition, which perhaps had an impact. The new bridge, the fourth and present one, was opened in 1951 slightly east of the old one. Prior to the building of this span, races could be held an hour or more both before and after low tide – not possible with the shoaling and channel changes resulting from the bridge construction and removal of fill.



Commodore Wade Wright.

A very full schedule of events followed in the '47 and '48 seasons, with "Monte Carlo" nights, croquet matches, dessert bridge, archery contests, watermelon races, treasure hunts, and a return to a solid schedule of sailboat races.



The Watch of Commodore Wade

While each commodore made his own mark on the club, perhaps none was quite so indelible and sweeping as Commodore Wade's, who led the club for almost one-quarter of its existence. Commodore Wade served for 23 years, almost consecutively except for the 1939 season, between 1934 and 1958. He was known for many things from nurturing of the club and its children during World War II, to his infamous punch served at the opening and closing cocktail parties, to presiding over MRYC's 50th Anniversary.

He was a busy man. Commodore John E. Wade served MRYC during the summer season, while year-round he was Dr. John E. Wade, superintendent of the New York City school system, one of the finest systems in the country at that time.

The Wades owned the stately home and magnificent gardens adjacent to what is today the club's picnic area, as well as all of the land on the west side of Riverview Lane, from the entrance of the Club to Riverview Drive. On several occasions they loaned money to the Club to pay for dredging, a new roof, in amounts ranging from \$300 to \$1,500.

Commodore Wade's wife, Annie Walker Wade, is remembered fondly by those who were junior members during the Fifties and Sixties. In her later years, she would sit on the big open veranda and invite the neighborhood children for cookies and lemonade.

One of his greatest legacies was Commodore Wade's attention to the club's youth. Margaret Riehl, one of his two children, both daughters, recalls *"it was an active period during my Father's time, with emphasis on sailing and activity for the young...race competitions with BBYRA and Belmar Yacht Club in an effort to improve young sailor's skills and arousing interest in other fathers in sailing with some success."* During World War II years, he continued to hold racing for the young sailors of the club, although informally starting and finishing all races from the end of the dock – a practice that would continue into the early 1960s.

Commodore Wade had originally stepped down after his first five years. But with war clouds looming, he returned as Commodore in 1940 to pro-

vide the much-needed leadership during those years when membership declined to under 100. Commodore Wade's one-year hiatus in turning over the reigns to William (Billy) Heidt, who was only 24 years old, was rooted in his belief that more youth was needed in leadership positions. Young Billy, who had been hired by the Commodore himself as a mate on his large power boat, was well liked by everyone and the Commodore pushed for Billy's election. The board must have thought Wade was retiring for good, for they passed a resolution thanking him for his long service to the Club. But at the two meetings of the membership held in 1939, Commodore Wade, as Trustee, was in attendance and the next year he was back at the helm, re-elected Commodore, a post he would hold for almost two more decades.

In 1959, Dr. John E. Wade was appointed Commodore and Trustee Emeritus by the MRYC board, which has the power to appoint members to positions of emeritus with life tenure. On November 20 of the that year, Commodore Wade died.

*"Let us all
make the
second half
century,
upon which
we are
entering,
the most
enjoyable of all
the years."*

*—Joseph F.S. Fitzpatrick,
Chairman of Trustees,
and John E. Wade,
Commodore, 1949*





Boston Swinkboats were introduced in 1957 to replace the aging Perrine Snarkboat fleet. This photo is from 1963.

Booming through the Baby Boom (1949 - 1973)

For the country and for MRYC, the end of the war meant the beginning of a boom. The men and women that Tom Brokaw has labeled the "greatest generation" had endured and triumphed, and now they were ready to live life. From houses, to jobs, to babies, America was booming as memorialized in the quintessential television programs of the times, including *Ozzie & Harriet*, *Father Knows*

Best and The Donna Reed Show.

MRYC's 50th Anniversary was celebrated on September 3, 1949, attended by several hundred. New Jersey Governor Alfred E. Driscoll telegraphed his regrets, but sent his Attorney General Theodore Parsons. Howard N. Folk, one of MRYC's founders and the current borough tax collector, who had served as MRYC treasurer for 13 years and was elected Trustee Emeritus by the MRYC board, attended. At the time of the anniversary, it was thought that Howard Folk was the only surviving founder; however, John Bailey later wrote to the Trustees to set the record

straight. On hand also were Past Commodores Edwin Heyes (1908-09; 1912-13) and Charles Fraser (1923-24), and Wilbur Potter, Club Secretary for many years and one of the oldest active members at the time of Jubilee.

The celebration got underway Friday afternoon with water sports for younger members, and a 4 p.m. Cocktail Party on Saturday, which featured a quiz contest, complete with Jackpot questions, amateur hour, and a buffet dinner served at 6:15 p.m., followed by dancing and trophy awards for the season's

yachting, sailing and tennis competitions.

Daily activities at MRYC in the summer of '49 included tennis, horseshoes, water sports, archery, croquet, badminton, table tennis. Bridge was scheduled for 8 p.m. each Friday.

Club membership grew steadily after the war, peaking at 264 in '62 and '63. So did club dues. In 1952 Dues were \$10 active/\$12.50 spouse/\$25 family; they were raised to \$15/\$15/\$30 in 1960; and again to \$20/\$20/\$35 in 1961.

Beston Snarks in 1971.





Duck Boats were introduced in 1959 for Junior Sailing, and also became popular with the Powder Puff fleet.

The legendary Blue Blister, the first MRYC-owned committee boat purchased in the early 1960s.



place sporting an old silk bathing suit and carrying a parasol. Her husband, Tim, remembers the revelers nostalgically taking souvenir shingles as they headed home.

Nostalgic it was. For most members,

New Clubhouse and Pool

As a sign of the building- and baby-boom times, MRYC was destined for a new, modern clubhouse. The seeds were sown in the late Fifties, with the post-war boom in general and the resulting "revival" of sailing activities. It was an ambitious undertaking, and Tom Mason and Reg Hyde were the movers and shakers in getting the project started and completed. John C. Dodd, a local architect who lived on Riverview Drive and who also designed the Church of Brielle, prepared

the plans for the project, which included a three-story clubhouse and 30-by 60-foot Olympic-size swimming pool with terrace. Art Colabella was the builder. In April 1961, the Borough Council granted a variance giving the green light for construction.

After that summer season, the old clubhouse was demolished. But it wasn't before before one last party – on the night of September 16. Dodie Donnelly recalls it was a Costume Party, and she won first

actually seeing their old clubhouse torn down was traumatic. Many members today remember it fondly and remember it well. It was a one-floor frame structure, with a screened porch facing the river that had ping-pong tables and a window that teenagers reached through to hit the replay on the jukebox – playing some records over, and over and over, and ejecting ones they didn't like. There was a raised platform forming a "stage" on the east end of the clubhouse, and the kitchen on the north side, immediately to the left as you walked in the door. It wasn't all that long ago, and yet Riverview Lane was still a dirt road, and lined with hitching posts, and the river so clean members caught crabs to eat right off the dock.

Many a lively meeting was held at the home of Commodore John "Jack" Deppeler that winter, his son Greg recalls. The original expectation had been to move into the new clubhouse by July 1961, but that proved overly optimistic, largely because fund-raising took longer than expected. It was not for lack of effort by the Club Treasurer Tom Mason. The Club Trustees had authorized raising \$35,000 by pledges from members for Class A non-interest bearing bonds to help finance construction of the new club house, and Mr. Mason took to writing personal letters and pledge forms. By the end of 1961, MRYC had 105 bond pledges from members, totaling \$33,000. They were



almost there.

Although the entire project cost about \$75,000 it was worth much more from the beginning, with much of the time and materials generously donated by members. Reginald Hyde, a Trustee at the time and a well known builder from Sea Girt, personally supervised the building, while Ward Wight, Jim Kelly and Carl Wiedmann, all of whom went on to be Commodore, did much of the interior work. In addition, the Wade Memorial Fireplace was donated by the

Past Commodore's family, and as mentioned earlier, the third-floor boardroom was donated in memory of the late Bobby Berkhofer by his maternal aunt, Ida Bacon, and the trophy case was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Richard Watts.

On a warm June evening in 1962, four months after John Glenn first orbited the earth, more than 350 people congregated

inside the new clubhouse for a dedication ceremony. Commodore Deppeler presided and, once again, Howard N. Folk, was on hand to play a role in yet another milestone of the club he helped to found six decades earlier.

Officers once again had an "official" meeting place, and held the first Trustees meeting in the new club on June 29, 1962.

The new clubhouse in 1962 offered much more than a bigger, more modern roof over the membership's head. Because the new clubhouse was winterized, it marked the beginning of year-round club life. The old clubhouse had opened in late June and closed just after Labor Day. Screens were stored, water turned off and the club's only boat, a rowboat, and some of the Perrine's were stored under the clubhouse.

Many classic '73





M-Sonno arrives in the spring of '64

More than ever, the club would become the nucleus of social lives, family bonding and friendships year round. It has played a part—small or large—in the lives of its thousands of members over the last century. Perhaps Past Commodore Dick Cocks summed up this sentiment best in his written recollections of MRYC, *"I must admit that that when I first joined the club in 1925 until the present time, the club has meant a lot to me."*

For the first time, members now had a pool, and for the first time swimming in the river was prohibited. Bob Leete was hired as manager. The pool was originally designed for salt water—but that concept was soon scrapped

because the tides didn't allow the pool to fill. Also, the pool originally had a diving board, which was removed in 1989 because of liability risk. No matter; some young members of the club—during off-hours—would climb the antenna mast to use the lower roof as a diving board. Taking a cue from the old water sports game, Commodore Heinrich ordered maintenance man John Mihok to grease the pole, thus ending the sport of roof-top diving.

The clubhouse today is virtually the same, with minor repair and enhancements (see the 1990s). It should be a source of pride to the club that virtually all of the upkeep of both the old and new clubhouses and grounds was



Jet 14s, introduced at MRYC in 1962, caused much excitement because they were fast. The Jet 14 was a recognized fiberglass, national class sailed in the BBYRA.



achieved through the volunteer time of members.

The chandeliers in the main deck are original. The beautiful arches forming the ribs of the main deck were transported by train from the Pacific coast, each in one piece, but the 4-inch thick all-wooden ceiling it supported ultimately had to be covered with acoustic tiles to reduce noise levels. The handsome ship's wheel over the fireplace was the idea of Ward Wight. Ward had found the wheel in a Farmingdale

antiques shop. When Ward couldn't get the board to fund the approx. \$500 purchase as Peggy Wight recalls, he turned to a handful of members who donated to the cause.

And the tables and benches on the lower deck, that have seated generations of MRYC children and untold layers of paint, came out of the old Stockton Hotel in Sea Girt.

This was also a period of resumed land acquisition, the first since 1917. In September 1959, MRYC purchased a narrow strip, running the length of the

club's westerly boundary, from the river to where the picnic area begins. This was part of the "BelAire" property, and purchased from Mort Hansen, who had purchased it a year earlier from Annie and John Wade.

In 1962, the Borough of Brielle vacated a long-standing street right-of-way, which cut across 40 feet MRYC property.

The next few land deals were all but simple, and engineered by Commodore Wight. In March 1966, MRYC purchased the entire Wade estate, which is all of the property west of Riverview Lane, from the end of MRYC's parking lot to Riverview Drive. The club then re-sold all of this land except for what is now the picnic area.

In November of that year, the Club purchased the house and property next door – to the east on the river – from Past Commodore Tom Mason. In April 1967, MRYC sold the Mason property to Stanley and Howard Wright, leasing from them for 99 years an 11-foot strip along the bulkhead. MRYC is responsible for maintenance of the bulkhead, as well as the docks and boathouse and a pro-rata share of the property taxes, and Past Commodore Wright is entitled to use the slip at the end of the dock.

1962 was a watershed year for MRYC for other reasons, as well. After some years of trying, MRYC was welcomed into the Barnegat Bay Yacht Racing Association (BBYRA), which had been an institution on the bay since 1914. Earlier resistance to MRYC stemmed from the fact that MRYC is not physically located on the bay.

That year, MRYC entered the Summer Series, open to all BBYRA members. The club's first BBYRA Championship title came in 1964 when Sue Doscher won the Jet 14 title. Two years later, MRYC won 4 of 5 individual titles, the first club ever to win that many cham-



In 1976, the docks and harbor were improved to accommodate deep draft sailboats. Left to right, Commodore E. Michael Heinrich, Rear Commodore Oliver Conover and Vice Commodore E.N. "Ted" Skinner.



pionships in the same season. In 1968, MRYC won the "Past Commodores' Trophy," awarded annually to the member yacht club fostering the most participation in yacht racing on Barnegat Bay." MRYC's continued success in the BBYRA is evidenced by the wheels of Bay Championship flags hanging in the main hall today.

Everything boomed throughout the post-war period, and sailing was no exception.

More Sneakboxes

In the early 50s, boating activities occurred at high tide since the dock area was not regularly dredged. All of the boats were still Perrine sneaks, kept on moorings during the summer and under the club porch during the off season. The *Gray Ghost* was the last of the MRYC Perrine's to give up the ghost, remaining under the porch and on the club grounds for a long time after its counterparts were gone. All races started and finished at the "A" barrel, since the club didn't have a committee boat – or a patrol boat for that matter.

Then, in 1957 new Beaton sneakboxes were introduced at the Club. With the Perrine sneakbox fleet aging, owners and other members decided it was time for a new fleet,



In the winter of 1985-1986, 18 prams were built by members' hands in the lower deck of the clubhouse, and sailed in every winter series since 1986.

Lengthy discussions were held debating Lightnings, Snipes, Comets and others, because they did not want a diverse fleet with different handicaps. Sneakboxes won out, since they seemed best suited to the river, and six members ordered seven boats from David Beaton & Sons boat builders of Mantoloking, who already was making an improved sneakbox design, which had been racing down bay for a few years. Between the new Beatons and old Perrines, the fleet expanded to 15 that year – the largest in

years. Within a few years there were almost twenty. A letter from MRYC's Regatta Committee Chairman to sailors, sneakbox owners and the committee in 1959 outlined the need to place restrictions on Beaton Class boats to keep all boats and sails as alike as possible. New sails had to come from Ratsey and Lapthorn, made to prescribed dimensions. As part of this process, the regatta committee adopted the rule that there had to be five boats registered to have sanctioned racing. So popular were the new sneaks

with parents and children alike, that they resulted in spreading out the racing over the entire weekend. Until that time, series races were held on Saturdays. Jim Kelly recalls a pontoon-based floating "hotdog stand" that literally got caught in the middle of this popularity and relinquished its prime river location after it was broadsided by an MRYC sneakbox. *"All the kids helped bring the equipment ashore."*

That year the Challenge Cup, captured by MRYC in 1910, was rediscovered by Commodore Cocks in a vault of the Manasquan Savings and Loan, where it had been stored decades earlier for safekeeping. Green from oxidation, the grand cup was polished to its original luster and once again was put into competition, but only within MRYC for sneakbox competition.

During the Fifties and Sixties, many boats were moored off the western boundary of the club, near a "silver" swim raft that resided in the river. But many a sneakbox was kept across the river, on a stretch of riverbank in Point Pleasant, which was humorously marked by a hand-made sign reading "MRYC Annex."

In 1958, MRYC registered with Lloyd's Yacht Registry and joined the North America Yacht Racing Association.





Optimist prisms, or "Optis" were introduced into the Junior Sailing program in 1962, replacing the heavier, wooden duckboats, which served the club well for 50 years.

Junior Sailing

In 1959, MRYC hired its first paid sailing instructor, Jim Dunn, who went on to become commodore years later. A 15-ft. outboard was purchased for use by the junior sailing program. The cost for instruction that year was \$10 for the first five weeks and \$10 for the last four weeks for advanced sailors. Jim's employment put an end to the informal "off the dock" lessons of Tom Cocks and Gail Wardell, whom Jim later would marry. But it marked the beginning of a formal Junior Sailing program.

The Junior Sailing program was launched that year with a new fleet of seven duckboats racing weekly and thirteen sneakboxes racing twice weekly, introducing 26 young skippers to the thrills of sailing. Commodore and Mrs. Wade donated their sails and Perrine sneakbox, *Gusty*, as the instruction boat for the juniors. Jim Dunn recalls having to simultaneously pump out the leaky *Gusty* with an iron pump while instructing students. That ended when, in the middle of a class, *Gusty* had had enough and with little warning her seam opened and she sank leaving all aboard to walk ashore.

The first Frostbite series, which was actually a fall series rather than the later winter-long series, was a huge success as evidenced by 115 people attending the first Frostbite Series dinner in 1961. The dinner was held at the Beacon Manor in Point Pleasant since the new clubhouse was under construction. Up until this time, races at MRYC took place in the summer months only.

It was about this time that the club purchased its first committee boat — the legendary *Blue Blister* — so named for its constantly peeling layers of canvas and deck paint, and reportedly a former "Ice Breaker" bought from a hunting club.

Ginny and Carl Wiedmann, and Shirley and Bob Schwarz formed the race committee. Bob Bossett remembers making sandwiches for 100 on the *Blister's* engine block, and throwing them in the back of each Junior's boat; sodas were handed over, and if you missed yours you had to sail back. With a committee boat and a committee, races now could be held anywhere on the river. Until now, races started at the dock and continued to the bridge and golf club. A cannon signaled the start of every race, until it was retired to the Trophy Case by an official complaint from the borough. But not before one past commodore accidentally shot a hole in the *Blue Blister* during a race.

It was also during this period, and just

prior to the new clubhouse, that changes were made to MRYC's waterfront. In 1960 the dock was rebuilt, with the addition of electrical outlets and water, at a cost of \$1,900; the basin was dredged for \$848; and, the bulkhead extended for \$300. The following year a hoist was added, and a usage fees established: \$5 for half-season; \$10 full-season. Only four people were allowed to operate the hoist: the chief steward, sailing instructor and two members appointed by the Regatta Committee. To accommodate increased popularity of sailing, a second lift was added in 1964 and the list of authorized operators expanded to Trustees, officers and eight more selected by the Regatta Committee.

New Sailboat Classes

In 1962, the Jet 14 fleet made its debut when Jim Dunn brought one to the club to demo for the juniors. It was an instant success, causing much excitement because it was so fast, and a recognized, fiberglass class sailed in the BBYRA. And through the efforts of Ward Wight, a considerable number were ordered from Island Heights boat builders Siddons and Sindler. "Ward was quite a salesman," Carl Wiedmann recalls. "He got all the guys in the club



to buy Jet 14s. They were a great training boat, 14-foot, the best boat we ever had." MRYC was host for the National Junior Jet Championships in 1964, when some 35-40 boats participated from as far away as Ohio, New York and the Carolinas, and members took racers into their homes.

In the fall of 1963, the M-16, or M-scow, made its MRYC debut, when it was shown off at the club, again thanks largely to the efforts of Ward Wight. Despite the cold, raw day, the scow impressed members with its handling and planing, and six were ordered for spring delivery. These boats were easily trailered to Beechwood and Mantoloking Yacht Clubs for special regattas and BBYRA races, and they remain the mainstay of our fleet today. M-scows were a popular boat from the beginning, as evidenced by the 1968 Jr. M-Scow Invitational Regatta, which attracted 37 boats.

Blue Jays were added sometime in the early Seventies. Following a statement at the 1960 annual meeting that "Blue Jays" were being considered, Joe Fitzpatrick replied in frustration, "We've been talking about adding Blue Jays for eight years!"

In 1972 Lasers were added to the fleets. At the 1973 annual meeting, Mike Heinrich, Rear Commodore at the time, reported the club had 23 sneakboxes, 7 Jets, 13-M-scows, 2 E-scows, 27 duck-

boats, and in the bay had won two out of five NAYRU events.

Ward Wight

As noted above, MRYC sailors excelled in the BBYRA in the mid-Sixties. A 1967 feature story in the *Asbury Park Press* credited Ward Wight with skippering MRYC to the forefront of sailing in his tenure at the helm. The article noted that "hard work, desire, sailing ability sportsmanship and encouragement played major roles, and these officers provided the cooperation and encouragement to put their sailors on top." The article was referring to Ward and his team of Jim Kelly, Vice Commodore; Carl Wiedmann, Rear Commodore; and Joe Fitzpatrick, Junior Race Chairman. Through most of the Sixties, Ward served as either Rear Commodore or Commodore. He worked hard to get the club into the BBYRA, and to keep up enthusiasm for sailing among the juniors and adults. Carl Wiedmann remembers that on weekends, there would be 36 or more boats out on the river. Marge Heinrich summed up Ward's passion for sailing and contribution to MRYC's sailing tradition: "Ward is the reason most of us are sailors."

Powerboating was popular too, as evidenced by the second annual powerboat rendezvous at Nansen's



A nor'easter on December 11, 1982, severely damaged the old boathouse, on the east dock.

Restaurant in 1961, which drew 129 people. Peggy Wight recalls that during the late Fifties and early Sixties, there was friction between the sailors and power boaters at the club, but that it was ultimately resolved by Reg Hyde who was friendly with both.

A series just for women began in 1961 with four entries. It all began when Jim Dunn gave lessons to some of the club women, who wanted to learn to sail. They started to race informally, late in the afternoon so their husbands could watch the children. At the end of that first season, the group celebrated

with a barbecue at Davey Jones' home, where Dunn presented each of his "students" with a popular gift of the times — a box of powder with a large puff. Hence the series was christened "Powder Puff." It grew to more than two fleets of 30 boats, and was said to be the largest women's racing fleet in the east.

Tennis was booming as well in this post-war period. In the mid-Fifties, a weekly class for juniors started, and in '59 Ed Torres was hired as tennis instructor with responsibility for maintaining the courts and being night stew-



ard as well. The courts were being used more than they had been in years. The following season 75 members plus juniors were playing and a water line was run to the courts. By the mid-Sixties, inter-club play started and Mike Mixson was hired as the new tennis pro. Group lessons were \$2; private \$2 a person, per weekend.

Another sign of the booming times was the 1959 Constitutional revision expanding from the traditional four Standing Committees to 14 adding: Membership, Grounds, Dock & Harbor, Jr. Entertainment, Jr. Sports, Planning, Budget, Auditing, and Publicity. This was the first change

since 1930 when the four committees were established: House, Tennis, Social and Regatta.

Social

The Social Committee was busier than ever with the opening of the new clubhouse and scheduling year-round activities. A social phenomenon was occurring about this time, that had to have impacted the popularity of the club: Brielle and the surrounding area were becoming more of a year-round community, and more club members lived near the club all year rather than just during the summer season. The first New

Year's Eve party was held in 1963 as well as the first Sr. Entertainment pool party. Dinners were scheduled for Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Gay Nineties with a Barber Shop quartet. Sr. Entertainment made a profit of almost \$2,000 in 1963 and reservations always neared club capacity.

Adult Treasure hunts were open to any boat that floated. Throughout the day, clues hidden the night before anywhere from the bulkhead, to Treasure Island, to underneath racing marks. Many of the "hunts," began with a "shot gun" start and sails down, from the beach. Annual "Gambling nights," were popular, and members did everything from building the craps table to cutting the felt, to soliciting gift donations. And elaborate haunted houses were created at Halloween.

MRYC's Ladies Bowling League was started in 1965, with two teams of eight women. At its peak in the 70s and 80s there were 12 to 16 teams, which eventually dwindled until its last year, 1993. The end of each bowling season was celebrated with an Awards Luncheon, and often a Mixed Bowling evening with husbands and friends.

So popular was the club, and so much going on, that Commodore Jim Kelly and Ginny Wiedmann, club secretary, started a weekly newsletter in 1968. In fact, this newsletter would take the place of the "Annual Stated Meeting" as a way

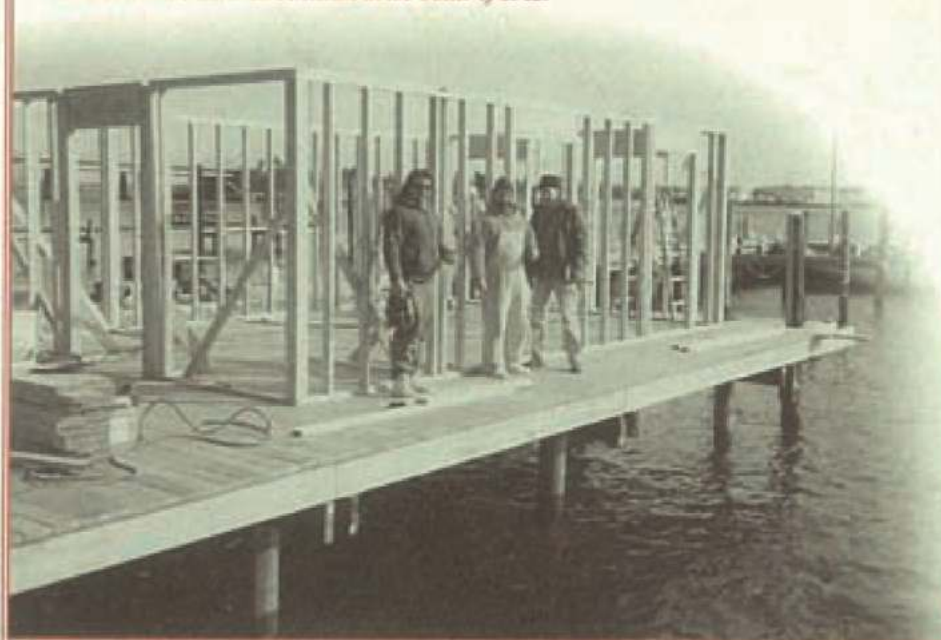
to keep members informed, as called for in addition to the Annual Meeting in the club's By-Laws of that time. After 26 years, Ginny retired from club secretary in 1991.

During the Sixties, Seventies and Eighties, member and artist Doris Baker created the original "pen and ink" scene for each year's Schedule of Events.

*"I must admit
that when I
first joined the
club in '23...
until the
present time,
the club has
meant a lot
to me."*

*—Former Commodore
Richard Coe, written
recollections, 1970s*

New Clubhouse under construction in the winter of 1962.



Woman's Auxiliary

Women have been a mainstay at MRYC since its inception. But in 1965, they took that involvement to another level when a small group formed the MRYC Women's Auxiliary. Nancy Skinner was the first president. Throughout the 50s and 60s women ran card parties and luncheons to raise money for improving the club, which led to the formal organization of the Auxiliary.

At that time, they articulated their purpose: "to promote the unity of the women participating in the various activities of the club, and to lend assistance and support to the proceedings of the Board of Trustees." And ever since, the Auxiliary has become a key component of the club and club life.

Through its many and successful fund raising initiatives, the Auxiliary has made the club a more comfortable place to be for all members. Over the years, the Auxiliary has donated many of the amenities we take for granted such as the wicker and other furnishings of the Bridge Room, china, first a dishwasher and later the modernization of the kitchen, and chairs.

Auxiliary Officers include president, vice president, recording secretary, a corresponding secretary, and treasurer, all elected for a two-year term. An Auxiliary Trustee also sits on the MRYC board.

Booming with the Boomers (1974 – 1999)

MRYC continued to flourish as the baby-boomers became adults. A testament to their own fond memories, many who grew up at the club are now adult members, with their children enrolled in junior sailing, tennis and swimming.

The 75th anniversary was marked in 1974, with an anniversary dance and tennis round robin during the summer season, and a pre-season anniversary brunch to which representatives of every club in the BBYRA "came in record numbers."

For the 1973 season, and several thereafter, three stewards lived in a dorm set up in the upper floor, across from the Berkhofer Room. This was a return to the tradition of the early part of the century when employees were available around the clock in emergencies. This arrangement allowed the hours of operation to be extended, and most important it helped eliminate some occasional vandalism, which included the theft of "hi-fi" equipment.

A welcome capital improvement to the club came in 1975 with the addition of air conditioning.

Throughout the club's history, the Fourth of July has been a special event. But probably none was more spectacular than July 4, 1976, when MRYC along with the rest

of the country celebrated the nation's bicentennial in fitting tribute — shooting off 200 fireworks from the club's west docks.

Auxiliary Racing

MRYC-sponsored auxiliary ocean racing, started in 1975, supported by the discovery of the Atlantic Handicap Racing Fleet Organization. Actually, the club's auxiliary racing began two years earlier, organized by owners who established their own performance rating systems, according to a history of MRYC racing written by Past Commodore Mike Heinrich, who offers the following account. The first race was sailed off of Manasquan Inlet. It was decided that a triangular course would be set, with a windward mark four miles off shore. When the committee asked how they would measure four miles — these were the days before Loran and the like were common — they were instructed, "when you can see the boardwalk, but you can't see the sand, drop the mark."

The first ocean trophy race was the Wardell Memorial Trophy Race. On the morning of June 14, 1975 the fleet sailed out of Manasquan Inlet into a "pea soup fog." Two hours later it was postponed to September 6, when 18 boats started under spinnaker from the Inlet to Shark River. Most fin-



ished under double reef, back at Manasquan, with Al Bessemer's *American Jane* the winner.

The following year, a full series was established with two additional trophy races: the first Heinrich race, with Al Bessemer's *American Jane* again the winner of 21 boats; and the first Bessemer Race, with Howard Wright's *Ziggurat* the winner, of 16 boats.

And in September 1977, the first John Rodgers Memorial Commodore's Cup overnight race was sailed on a 52-mile course to the inner Barnegat Inlet buoy, then to the Barnegat ship lane buoy and back to Manasquan. Fifteen boats set out in light northeast air under spinnakers. The beat back, however, was cold and sloppy under reefed main and small jibs, as the wind kicked up to 20 knots. *Ziggurat* was the winner. This race is still sailed at night, more recently between Manasquan and Shark River inlets.

In 1979, MRYC joined with Bay Head Yacht Club to form the Bay/Man race weekend. The following year, the Kettelar, Mixson and Chargette races were added to the schedule.

Some of the auxiliaries in early years included *Cricket*, Dave Massey; *HighLife*, Harry Wardell; *Phantom*, John Wardell; *Dolphine* and *American Jane*, Al Bessemer; *Ziggurat*, Howard

Wright; *Wizard*, Mike Heinrich; *Bobolions*, Bob Bossett; *Grand Dame*, Tom Dames and Carl Wiedmann. These were later joined by: *Green Machine*, Bob Beavis; *Chargette*, Rich Halajian; *Family Affair*, Wayne Patterson; *Dutch Treat*, Pete Kettelar; *Sweet Air*, Ken Dimon; *Sabrella*, Harry Wardell and Jim Dunn; *Aubrey Burr*, Bob Warren; *Griffin*, Art Roberts; *Pandora*, Don Shield; *Shadowfax* and *Hot Tub*, Mike Mixon; *TriStar*, Wayne Patterson, Al Bessemer and Doug Calhoun; *Force Ten*, Bob Beavis, et. al.. The current fleet comprises:

Wizard, *Ziggurat*, *Merlin*, *Alley Cat*, *Courageous*, *Invictus*, *Griffin* and *Purple Haze*.

In 1983, with the acceptance of the Metedeconk River Yacht Club into the "partnership," the Bay/Man race evolved into the Squan Tri-Sail Regatta. Toms River Yacht Club joined in the late 1980s. The 3-day tradition continues today, usually beginning the last Friday in July.

One of the milestones that fostered the popularity of auxiliary racing at MRYC came in 1976 when the docks and harbor were improved to accom-

modate auxiliary sailboats. But as with most major changes at the club, it was not without controversy. A heated discussion ensued at the 1974 annual meeting about plans and costs for the dock and harbor project. One of the proponents' main arguments was that although the main dock was rebuilt in 1960, it was sitting on pilings installed in 1938. During this time, there also was competition between tennis players and boaters for project funding. Both needs were accommodated. In '75 the club's three tennis courts were resurfaced, and court #3 reshaped, its retaining wall raised, and new fencing installed the following season. In 1976, the waterfront project was completed. Funds to pay for these improvements were raised through interest-bearing bonds — Class A — sold to members. To raise capital and to demonstrate the demand for slips, Slip Security bonds were introduced at this time. These "Dock Bonds" were equal to the value of the slip rental and gave right of first refusal.

In the winter of 1985-86, the "Manasquan River Boat Works," as it was affectionately known, got underway in the lower deck of the clubhouse. Member Don Loughran was the catalyst, securing plans for a pram design that could be sailed either as a sloop or a cat boat by moving the mast forward. The boats were built by hand and as Tim Donnelly recalls, "we didn't



New Clubhouse under construction in the winter of 1962.





Rear view of new Clubhouse under construction.

cut off any fingers!" Since there is no class in the BBYRA, these MRYC prams sailed only on the River. They first sailed in the inaugural winter series, from November 1986 through April, 1987, and have sailed every winter since — only by the hardest of sailors. Of the 18 original prams, 17 survive, 16 of which are at MRYC and are still sailed in the Sunday winter series, which kicks-off each year in November.

Today, MRYC conducts races year-round, through spring, summer, fall and the winter frostbite series, with fleets of Optimists, Lasers, M-Scows,

Blue Jays and the unique Manasquan River prams.

Optimist prams were introduced into the Junior Sailing Program in 1992. They gained immediate acceptance replacing the heavier, wooden duck boats, which served the program well for more than 30 years.

MRYC entered the nineties by joining the "Computer Age," computerizing the member billing system. And probably just in the nick of time, because Ginny Wiedmann, who had served as secretary of the club since the 1960s, was to retire in 1991.

During the nineties, the clubhouse and grounds saw some "normal wear-and-tear" maintenance changes, including:

- 1994 Pool deck's concrete replaced with pavers; fence and wall replaced. Original windows on upper deck replaced.
- 1995 Club Secretary's Office moved from Berkhofer Room to lower deck.
- 1996 Ladies room was completed renovated.
- 1997 Dormers removed from pool-side roof; new roof installed.
- 1999 Men's room completely renovated. New mahogany front doors installed.

There were also plans for an open deck on the rear of the club house, overlooking the pool. That proposal was ultimately defeated in 1993 in the Brielle Board of Adjustment.

There were two major projects of note during the decade. The December 11, 1992 nor'easter severely damaged the boat house, located on the east dock. Club Members of Dock and Harbor wasted no time removing the old boathouse and building a new one all through that winter to have it ready for spring sailing.

Then in the spring of 1998, an entire new bulkhead was put in. The dock was also treated to a new lift, and an additional floating dock. The entire project cost \$125,000, and once again the club issued bonds to members.





MRYC's new clubhouse was dedicated in June 1962, with Commodore John Deppeler presiding over the dedication ceremony attended by 350 people.

In the mid-90s membership declined to 205 — the lowest it had been in many years, and after long periods of waiting lists to join. By the club's centennial, membership rebounded to its maximum, and the waiting list reinstated.

In 1999, MRYC marked its centennial year with a full slate of events — under the direction of Commodore Dave Kuykendall and Past Commodore and Director of Centennial Operations Greg Deppeler — designed both to reflect on

traditions of the past and to carry those traditions into the next century. An original watercolor of the clubhouse, by well-known Bay artist Virginia Perle, was commissioned in honor of MRYC's centennial and today hangs in the main deck of the clubhouse, flanked by photographs of the original and second clubhouses. A massive framed timeline, titled "Racing Into History," depicts MRYC's history at-a-glance. Created by member Ken Payne, it serves as a

focal point in the northwest corner of the main deck. To preserve this club's rich history, this book, as well as a video and slide show were also prepared, for sale to club members.

The Centennial celebration formally got underway with the Spring Cocktail Party on May 29, during which the timeline was unveiled to a record crowd of 300. While no one is exactly sure when this tradition started, records indicate this event originally was referred to as the "Opening Cocktail Party," held when the seasonal structure was ready for activities, the boats had been made seaworthy, and the tennis courts open for play.

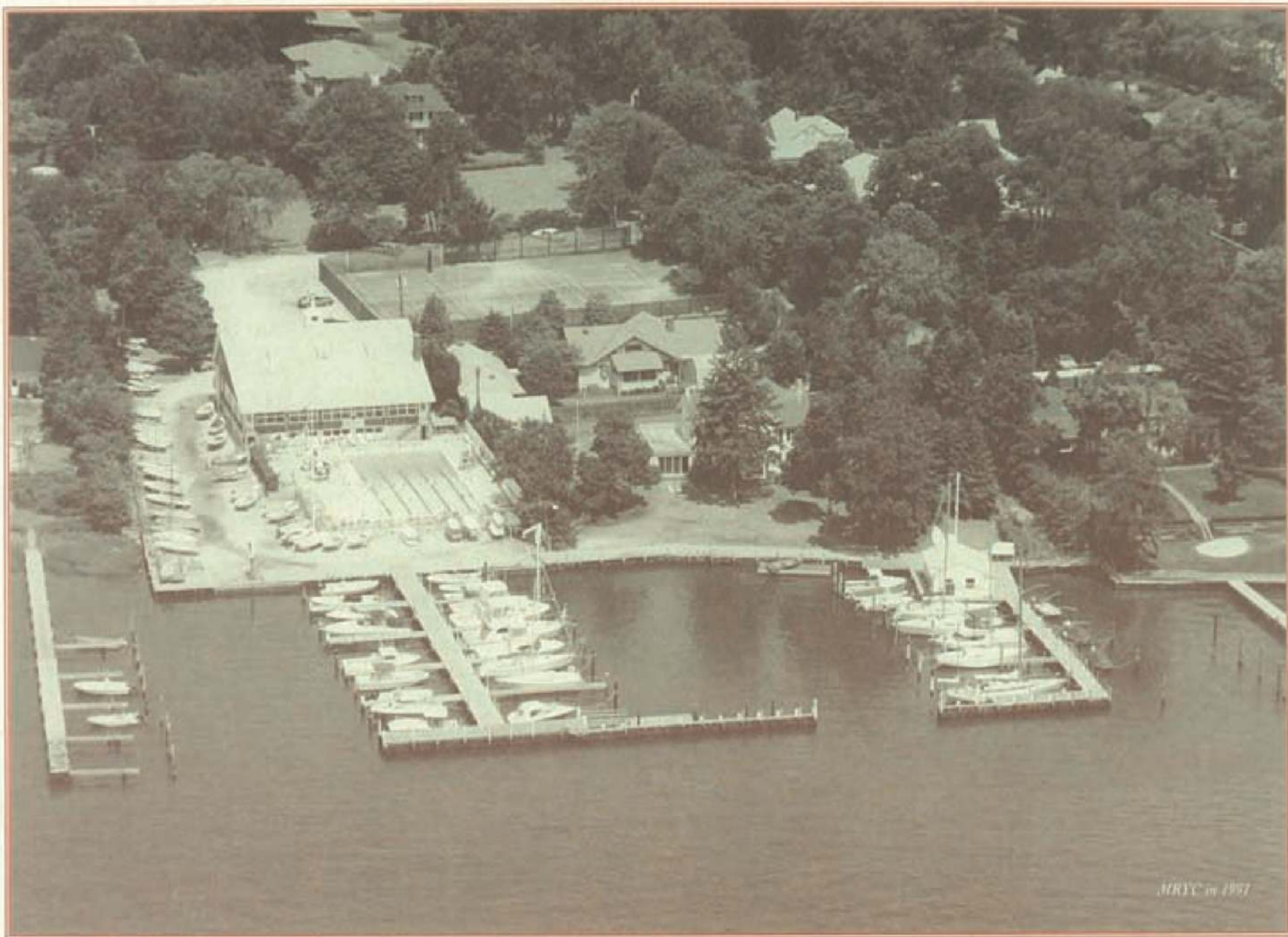
Special centennial events followed each month including:

- **MRYC Day at the Races,** June 25: At Monmouth Park, a special MRYC Centennial Race, honoring the earliest members, many of whom were prominent figures who would have been just as comfortable watching the horses at Saratoga as sailing on the Manasquan.
- **Throwback 4th of July Barbecue:** Sponsored by the Women's Auxiliary, this traditional barbecue, with period items and activities, honors every generation of members who partook in this All-American staple.

- **Centennial Weekend,**
- **Slide Show, August 13:** Reminiscent of this regular form of entertainment at the Club in the Sixties and Seventies.
- **Tennis Round Robin, August 14:** A tribute to MRYC's clay court ancestors.
- **Lawn Games, August 14:** Horseshoes and Croquet were popular past-time with many generations of MRYC-ers.
- **Seafood Fest, August 14:** Sponsored by Dock & Harbor, this repast has been a tradition in a variety of incarnations, including early clambakes, at the Club.
- **Water Sports, August 15:** From sailboat racing to canoe competitions to swimming events, river-based events have always been at the center of MRYC's organized activities.

As this book went to press, the cornerstone of the formal centennial celebration was not yet laid. But, plans were well underway for the Centennial Ball on September 18, a lavish cocktail reception and black-tie dinner.





MYC in 1997



Our Constitution

In 100 years, the MRYC constitution has been amended at least 20 times, evolving from a 1,000-word handwritten document to a printed text of more than 5,000 words. The number of membership categories has grown to eleven from one; the governing body to 16 members from six, and standing committees to 24 from the original four (House, Regatta, Timers and Measurers) to 24. And yet, the core of the constitution today is unchanged from the original adopted that June evening in 1900 by the 18 charter members.

MRYC's purpose was articulated in the 1905 Certificate of Incorporation and in the 1910 constitution as: "The objects of this Club shall be to promote yachting and other sports on the Manasquan River and to provide social entertainment for the Members." That statement endured intact until 1983, when the phrase "and adjacent waters" was added, obviously to end the slight to Barnegat Bay and the Atlantic.

For the last century, supervision and control of MRYC's property and

activities has been vested in an Executive Committee or Board of Trustees elected by the membership. In 1900, this Executive Committee comprised four elected members, plus the Commodore and Vice Commodore as ex-officio members. Within a few years, this was expanded to a nine member Board of Trustees, but officers were no longer a part of the board. The Commodore's duties, in fact, as stated in the 1938 constitution read, simply, *"The Commodore shall preside at all meetings of the Club and shall be a member of all standing committees."*

In the early 1950s, the Board was expanded to 12 members, and officers were still not board members but could be elected to the board as a trustee. In 1959, the number of trustees was reduced back to nine, and four officers — Commodore, Vice Commodore, Secretary and Treasurer — were restored to the board, with the Commodore as chairman. In 1968, the board was expanded to include Rear Commodore, Fleet Captain and Immediate Past Commodore, bringing

it to its current 16-member configuration.

Membership categories have evolved. In 1900 there was one membership category — individual — with no restrictions of age or gender. Not all members of a household were necessarily members of the club. The only requirement was that members be approved by the Executive Committee. In 1910, members were divided into two categories — Active and Associate. Active members were *"...all persons who are members of the Club in good standing on the first day of October, 1910, together with all those who shall thereafter be elected and qualified as Active members."* Only Active members were entitled to vote, hold elective office and have interest in assets of the Club, which is still true today. After 1910, incoming members in both categories were elected by a majority vote of the Board of Trustees. By 1930, a Junior membership was added, with reduced annual dues, for children under 16 whose parent or parents were members. Annual dues that year were \$7.50 for Active, \$10

for Associate and \$5 for children under 16, although Active members paid a substantial initiation fee of \$50. With everyone returning from the war, a Family category was added in 1946, which gave families the option of having a single membership for the family rather than multiple individual memberships. Subsequent refinements and additions to the Constitution were made to accommodate various family configurations. Finally, in 1987, "a la carte" memberships for individual family members was eliminated completely, reflecting the club's tradition of emphasizing family activities.

This "Family" membership trend continued, and in 1995 a constitutional revision vested the same membership privileges in both spouses, including Active status. With this change, each Active family was given one undivided vote that now could be cast by either spouse. Likewise, either spouse was now eligible to hold elective office.

Despite the many other changes over the years related to rules and regulations, dues and fees, meetings and committees, the fundamental concept of an elected Board of Trustees, vested with authority to supervise the operation and activities of the club, has remained the same since June 1900, and has served MRYC well.





MRYC in 1973



Appendix 1: A Century of Commodores.

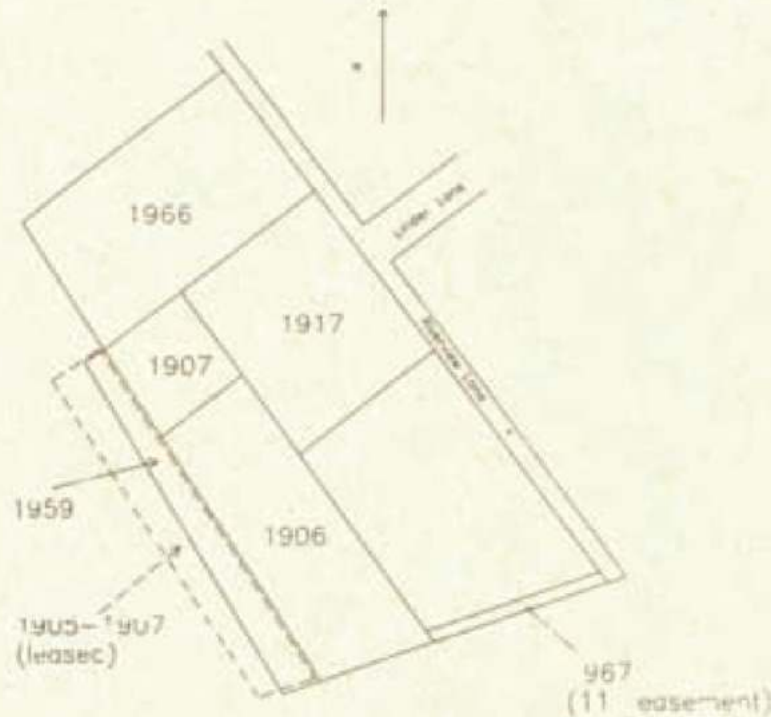
1900 Willard C. Fisk	1940 John E. Wade
1902 Frank Brainard	1958 Richard R. Cocks
1903 E. Carroll Beckel	1960 John H. Deppeler, Jr.
1905 Clinton Fisk	1963 Thomas W. Mason
1906 Albert H. Ellis	1965 L. Ward Wight
1908 Edwin B. Heyes	1968 James E. Kelly
1910 Richard B. Beaumont	1970 Carl M. Wiedmann
1912 Edwin B. Heyes	1972 Leonard G. Rydhold
1914 Edmond S. Higgins	1973 Howard H. Wright
1916 William M. Morgan	1975 F. Michael Heinrich
1918 Frederick N. Watts	1977 Oliver B. Conover
1920 Richard B. Beaumont	1979 William E. La Rue
1923 T. Tasso Fischer	1981 Robert A. Schwarz
1925 William B. Leavens	1983 Donald R. Lintner
1927 Walter B. Browne	1985 J. Gregory Deppeler
1928 Charles L. Frazer	1989 F. Michael Heinrich
1929 Harry Q. Mahle	1990 James I. Dunn
1931 Mott V. Marcellus	1992 G Wayne Patterson
1934 John E. Wade	1994 Robert S. Underhill
1935 William J. Heidt	1996 Dennis M. Day
1936 John E. Wade	1998 David S. Kuykendall
1939 William J. Heidt	

Appendix 2: MRYC 1908 Schedule of Events.

This design, created by club member Harry Bailey, was used on the Club Events books from 1908 until 1938 and was adopted as MRYC's Centennial logo in 1999. The sailboat scene in the middle was taken from the early 1900s photograph that appears on the cover of this Centennial History.



Appendix 3: Acquisition Map & Purchase Dates.



MRYC Property Acquisitions

June 1, 1905 – Narrow strip, leased from Rankin, for \$75 year.

Jan. 10, 1906 – Purchased from the Manasquan River Land Company a parcel which had been part of the Wiley Estate, and on which our pool and clubhouse now sit.

Sept. 10, 1907 – Purchased an additional 90-feet on the north side from neighbors George and Mattie Plume for consideration of \$1 and a covenant that prohibits structures in an area extending from the river to what is now the deep end of the pool.

Sept. 12, 1907 – Purchased from the Manasquan River Land Company a 2-foot by 40-foot strip adjacent to the piece purchased from the Plumes.

Feb. 19, 1917 – Purchased from the Plumes, for \$700, the property where tennis courts are today.

Sept. 9, 1959 – Purchased narrow "BelAire" strip along westerly Border.

March 8, 1966 – Purchased all of property west of Riverview Lane, from MRYC driveway to Riverview Drive. Subsequently resold all but the area that is now the Picnic area/upper storage.

Nov. 10, 1966 – Purchased "Mason" house and property to the east of the club.

April 22, 1967 – Sold "Mason" property.

April 22, 1967 – In the sale of "Mason" property, MRYC retained a 99-year lease on 11-foot strip along the bulkhead. Also, MRYC assumed responsibility for maintenance of bulkhead, docks, boathouse and paying a portion of the property taxes. Owner has use of slip at southerly end of dock.



Sources and Acknowledgements

Official MRYC Records
(1900 to 1999)

- Minutes of Board Meetings
- Minutes of Annual Meetings
- Annual Club Events book
- MRYC Board Minutes

Written recollections and histories of

- George Mohlman in 1934 and 1963
- Richard Cocks in 1990
- Ward Wight in 1964
- Wheaton Pearce in 1964
- Recollections of Ted Skinner, as told to Don Loughran
- History of Boating on the Manasquan River, by Michael Heinrich

Asbury Park Press

Coast Star

The SeaSide

The History of Brielle, Union Landing Revisited, Published for the Union Landing Historical Society, Inc.

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Throughout this book, every effort has been made to accurately capture the historical facts, traditions and spirit of MRYC's first 100 years.

— Nancy Stark McFadden, Author

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