

OFF SOUNDINGS CLUB

OFFICE OF
COMMODORE
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March 17, 2002

Dear Member,

Our club is more alive and better than ever thanks to all of you. Last summer we completed two successful series on Block Island Sound and Gardeners Bay. Membership is hovering around five hundred. Bob Edmands (Membership) is willing and able to entertain as many new proposals as possible. Please take the time to nominate young blood to carry on the club legacy.

Lately our "C" class boats continue to grow in numbers and the "A" and "B" classes try to hold their own. This is not necessarily good or bad just a trend in yacht design. Our Off Soundings Board members are cognizant of these trends and are being thoughtful concerning our class makeup to accommodate the changes. This continual reshaping of the classes is an art of matching the rating spreads with the type of boats entered. Norm Rabe (Measurer) and Dick Roberts (Race Secretary) are doing their best to make fair adjustments. You might be disappointed one race series, but hang in there...the next season might be better. After all, racing in Off Soundings is really all about the fun of the sport of sailing and spending treasured time with your friends. As the world of yachting changes, we will continually reach out to examine and think strategically about those new directions.

Our multi-hull class instituted by past Commodore Bohlen and organized with the support of Blunt White will be welcomed back again this year. We now have several multi-hull owner/skippers in the hopper for membership. It is vital that the Club continues to broaden its constituencies and embrace new and diverse classes. In keeping with that idea, last fall was the first time in about thirty years that we had a wooden boat class. Thanks go to Steve Corkery from Long Island for organizing the classic yachts. It was a pleasure to see these boats again. They rekindled my own childhood memories of sailing Off Soundings with my Dad, Ed Maxwell, in his Atlantic, AVENGER. Those were the days of Past Commodore Blunt White's WHITE MIST, John Lockwood's DOLPHIN, and so many more. These classic yachts will always have a special place in the hearts of many in Off Soundings. They will be on hand again in the fall series to race with us on Saturday.

This fall our venue is changing slightly. We are sailing to Greenport. Jamie Mills and John Lockwood have opened the doors to make our Greenport stay possible. Dockage has been coordinated with Brewer Yacht Yard, Sterling Harbor Marina, and Townsend Manor. Moorings will also be available at Dering Harbor. The shore party will be held

at the Townsend Manor Inn on the lawn. More details will follow in the Notice of Race. For your convenience, a water launch service and shore taxi will be in place to move participants around the Sterling Harbor basin and downtown areas. Lodging space at Greenport is like Shelter Island...limited. Make reservations soon!

Why the change? The town of Greenport is in the process of constructing Mitchell Park and Marina adjacent to the Shelter Island Ferry Terminal. When completed, it will have sixty-two slips with ample, convenient parking. It will be a venue able to house our yachts and our shore parties with ease. Although the park will not be finished this fall, we will have the opportunity to enjoy the greater facilities in Greenport.

Special thanks are extended to Shelter Island Yacht Club. They have welcomed Off Soundings for decades and we appreciate their years of hospitality. We envision taking Off Soundings to other harbors as well as returning to Dering Harbor in the future.

In every non-profit organization it seems most of the volunteer work is done by a very few dedicated people. Off Soundings had such a treasure in Bill Ames. This past winter we lost Bill our "Worthy Historian." Bill became a member in 1957, sailed his wooden yacht VEGA and later BLACK ARROW. He served as our commodore from 1971 – 1972, Measurer 1960 – 1970, and Historian 1986 – present. Bill also served for years on the Race Committee checking in boats and crunching numbers. I'll never forget when I first started as Race Committee Chairman. Bill took me aside and said, "Nobody in your position has screwed up yet. No point in you changing things." He will be remembered as the person on the Off Soundings Board with the best sense of history and tradition. "This is the way we do it." I think it can be said that if you know where you come from then you can figure where to go. Bill knew. He served and guided our Club, Off Soundings, well. We will miss him.

There are other people who give selflessly to our club as well. Henry duPont is one. Henry has donated NOR'EASTER as stake boat and has been our Race Committee Boat for the last ten years. Henry not only provides his boat, but also supplies all the food and creature comforts for the Race Committee. Race Committee Chairman Chuck Chorlton does a first-rate professional job in race management. Henry sets the stage to enable and support that race management and all of Chuck's Race Committee team. NOR'EASTER has set the standard for elegance, grace, and tradition. What a lovely sight Spring and Fall! NOR'EASTER will not make it this Spring, but she will be back home with us in the Fall. Thanks Henry!!

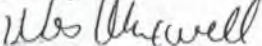
Vice Commodore Brooks is planning a great Winter/Spring party this April 6th at the Seamen's Inne. Last year we brought our celebration home to Mystic Seaport with cocktails in the Mallory Building and tour of the new VOYAGES Exhibit before dinner in the Seamen's Inne. This year we will be hosting a cocktail party instead of a sit down dinner. During the last seven years the attendance at this party has dwindled from 180 attendees to 110. What to do? Many people are not willing to spend \$35 for dinner, so we have lowered the price to \$18 for cocktails and hearty hors d'oeuvres. (A grazing affair.) Chris Cox, Vice President for Development and Communications at Mystic

Seaport (you know him "Nimble"... the stake boat guy) will take us on another behind the scenes tour of the Mystic Seaport Watercraft Collection. Our tour leaves from the front of the Seamen's Inne at 1700 sharp. We will return back to the Inne at 1800 for the lightening swift Annual Meeting, cocktails, and awards. I invite all to come celebrate the success of our Off Soundings Club and congratulate the winners of our Perpetual Trophies. It promises to be a something new, spontaneous, and fun! We also would like to hear from you... are we on the right tack?

Last, but certainly not least, Bruce Lockwood has volunteered to write a history of the Off Soundings Club. Old memories have started to fade so time is of the essence. Those with special stories and/or pictures are encouraged to contact Bruce. The project should encompass two years with a printed monograph as the final goal.

I look forward to seeing all of you April 6th for our spring celebration and launch of 2002 season!

All the best,



Wes Maxwell

Commodore