

Sailing on Lake Maxinkuckee



YACHT CLUB GALA

Members of the Maxinkuckee Yacht Club celebrate a festive occasion sometime after the club was reorganized in the 1930s.

Once I heard about an old man, on an inland lake, who owned a lot of boats, sailed many more, thought about still more and was a philosopher besides. In his declining years, he built a model about twenty feet long, of a flat-bottomed half dory type that would go to windward like a haystack in a chop, and he swore that it was the finest boat he had ever sailed. He'd explain, "Anytime I can go sailing, I beat her to windward all day long and have a grand time watching her bob up and down, then when I get too tired and the going gets too heavy, I put my helm up and there I am, just off the bar, and in a half hour, I am home again."

Perhaps yachting needs more philosophers, as well as sailors, because it can be just as much fun with a minimum amount of equipment, as it is with a hundred thousand dollar yacht. We might divide the human race into classifications, the ones who enjoy cruising and those who like racing. This may apply to all kinds of people whether they ever saw a boat, for it is a strictly psychological distinction and works out nicely for everyone. The choice depends on taste, boat, weather, crew and temperature. I belong to the

cruising class and like the conditions comfortable, but on summer days during the race, I sit in a blazing sun following the boats in which I am interested.

– Frances Winslow – 1941

Sailing began on Lake Maxinkuckee in the summer of 1896. Five years later the first prizes, three pennants, were offered for a race sponsored by the Maxinkuckee Association. This race awakened the yachting enthusiasm of all those who owned sailboats. In August of that same summer, 1901, a number of sailors met at Edwards Boathouse and organized the Aubbeenaubbee Yacht Club. Henry Adams Sr. was elected commodore. Only one race was held that year.

In the September 3, 1903, edition, the Culver Citizen gave a detailed report on the closing of the racing season. The headline, "OLD SCOUT WINS" tells of the victory. The Old Scout and the Ellenor were two sloops that took part in the fastest race yet. Helping them was strong west wind. The Old Scout won by 24 seconds. The race was described as being a beautiful picture with the two larger boats and six smaller ones.

Competitive sailing continued on Lake Maxinkuckee until the beginning of World War I. Following the war, for several years, there was only occasional

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sailing. Early in the summer of 1931 a group of sailors met on Charles Barnaby's porch and reorganized the club, naming it The Maxinkuckee Yacht Club. Walker W. Winslow was elected commodore, and the club joined the Inland Lake Yachting Association. Only three boats raced that summer, but the following year thirty-one raced. World War II was approaching; when it came, sailboat racing simply stopped.

In the late 1940s, Oscar Perine's large Chris Craft Cabin Cruiser was an institution on the lake and most visible every Sunday afternoon as the Race Committee Boat.

It was not until 1956 that the club purchased racing markers that were located on the lake and numbered on a map bound into the yearbook. During much of this period – from 1956 to 1962 – Don Speer served as chief judge, and, as such, not only devoted every Sunday to managing sailboat races; he also introduced and developed many of the racing procedures that are followed today. E. Allen Becker manned the Judges Boat quite skillfully for many years (1963-1997). Allen and Judy have also been judging many regattas in Florida, Wisconsin, Michigan and New York.

In 1953 Oscar Perine established a Junior Fleet. Robert E. Hollowell Jr. managed the fleet from 1955-1960, and Rupert Esser from 1965-1973. There were many others who continued guiding the younger sailors.

Normally, Joe Schaub IV, in his early teens, would have sailed with the Junior Fleet. Since he was an experienced sailor, he was allowed to take part in the C scow races with the men. He was determined to win. He tried and tried, but it just didn't happen for him. At last, on this particular day, he was in the lead and nearly to the finish line. Not far from the judges boat, he fell head first into the lake. The hiking strap, which held his feet in place, broke, dumping him in the water and taking away his win. In the

following years Joe had innumerable wins and later served as the commodore of the Yacht Club.

In 1967, Joyce Hollowell Speer was elected as the first woman commodore. That same year Margaret Washburn became the club's assistant secretary-treasurer, a spot she held for over 10 years, giving invaluable continuity to the club as well as aid, advice and guidance to commodores and members alike.

In 1970, the club purchased a Boston Whaler to be used as a chase and rescue boat. Early that summer, during the race, a violent storm capsized nearly the entire C fleet. The Boston Whaler was put to good use, perhaps saving lives of the crew who were swept away from their boats.

For well over 50 years, C and E scows had dominated sailboat racing on Lake Maxinkuckee. (Class C scow carries one sail and is 20 feet in length. Class E scow is 28 feet long with one sail and a jib.)

Early in June in the summer of 1977, a group of young sailors met on Fred Wurster's porch and formed the Hobie Fleet 216, introducing a new class to the lake. Fred Wurster was elected the first fleet captain. The Hobie Fleet was active in the Maxinkuckee Yacht Club for 19 years.

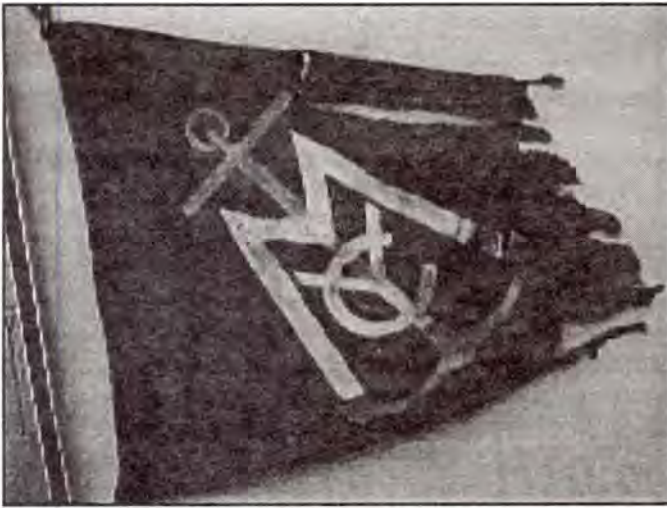
In September 1982 arose the first opportunity for the Yacht Club to host the National C Scow Sailing Association championship regatta. This was a five-day marathon event testing every conceivable organization skill of the club. It was truly an incredible performance. The club has also hosted the Inland Lakes Yacht Association and its own Fall Regatta the weekend after Labor Day. These regattas have been hosted by the club many times.

From its beginning, sailing has continued to flourish with the exception of July 2001. During that entire month there

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For over a century, sailboats competing on Lake Maxinkuckee have provided a beautiful picture for both participants and observers of races.



This Maxinkuckee Yacht Club flag flew on the pier of Walker W. Winslow during his reign as commodore.

was no wind and therefore no sailing. That year is referred to as the "summer with no wind."

The most recent addition to the Maxinkuckee Yacht Club is the Ladies Sailing School. That entity soon had its own class races.

– Jo Dugger

References:

Maxinkuckee Yacht Club – A History
The Yearbook

Excerpts from an essay by Frances Winslow
The Culver Citizen, September 3, 1903

Pete Recounts Old Days

Old times at Lake Maxinkuckee came to life at our July meeting, thanks to Pete Trone's excellent program. Pete, who has just spent his 75th summer on the lake, and who has lived here full time since 1949, shared his interest in the history of the lake by telling lively stories of the people who lived here in the long ago past. There was much laughter, as members recognized names and places and events, culled from old copies of the Citizen and other sources known only to Pete. For instance, did you know that the chimney on the outdoor grill in the yard at Joanne Bell's South Shore home was the chimney of Mimi Miller's parents' honeymoon cottage? Have you read the newspaper article about Uncle Billy Osborne, probably Will Osborne's grandfather, who in his 90s, was considering taking a new wife? He would only consider a widow, because an old maid would likely have a sour disposition, and she should not weigh less than 100 or more than 200 pounds.

Pete's astounding knowledge of history, his gift for storytelling plus his quiet sense of humor made this program, held at the Bramfeld cottage, both a lesson and a joyful experience for members of the audience, who participated with memories and "ad libs" of their own.

The July meeting was outstanding among the many unique programs brought to you by the Antiquarian and Historical Society of Culver.

– Agnes Bramfeld

A Message From the Board of Directors

This summer, at our annual meeting, Bob Kreuzberger became the second president in the 13-year history of the Antiquarian and Historical Society. Bob and his team of officers and committee chairs will direct the operations of the society. Jim Peterson, the founder and first president, has assumed an advisory and policy-making role on the board of directors.

During its initial years, the society has had great success in promoting and preserving the historic legacy of this remarkable lake community. Thanks to the dedication and commitment of its members, we have grown in membership, influence and stature in our community. However, we cannot rest on our laurels. We are ever challenged to protect the culture, the ecology and the built-in environment of this wonderful place.

The new team of officers and committee chairs has the talent and the energy to meet these challenges. We are fortunate to have people in this community who give their time to fulfill this purpose. As they move forward with new projects and activities, we hope that you will give them your generous support.

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Antiquarian & Historical Society of Culver Summer 2004 Newsletter
News Editor: Agnes Bramfeld
Feature Editor: Jo Dugger
Production Editor: Fred Karst

'I Scream, You Scream!'

"We all scream for ice cream." Most of us will remember this old chant, although I can't remember the occasions when we would use it.

However, we might have done so on August 8, when almost 300 people lined up for ice cream at the Old Boat Show and Ice Cream Social our society held at the Culver Cove again this year.

Our guests were enthusiastic in their praise for the boat show and the refreshments.

Seven wooden boats were on display, and four pontoon boats took passengers on a short tour of some of the historic and interesting lake houses. Everyone seemed to enjoy the afternoon, and many expressed the hope it would be repeated next year. Frank Stubblefield, chairman of the event, wishes to express once again his thanks and appreciation to the many members who helped make this year's Ice Cream Social a resounding success.

— Agnes Bramfeld

Movies at the Library

The Culver-Union Township Public Library hosted two showings of "Tom Brown of Culver" during the month of August. Thanks to Jeff Kenney, program coordinator for the library, Scott Pletka, who popped corn and served cold drinks in addition to his duties running the library, and

Alan Loehr from the Academy, who made the film available, many people saw this old movie about Culver. Tom Brown was the actor who played the part of Tom Brown, and Tyrone Power made his screen debut in the classic film. There was a brief appearance by Brig. Gen. Leigh Gignilliat, superintendent of the Academy at the time and grandfather of Paul Gignilliat. We thank the library and all concerned for showing the movie and for all the other services they provide and which we take for granted. Good work!

— Agnes Bramfeld

Fan Mail

We received a welcome note from Rudith Sheridan about the last issue:

"...I found the 'Newsletter' jammed full of very interesting articles....I remember very well being taken to a concert in downtown Milwaukee, I think in 1927. My father wanted us to hear Madame Ernestine Schumann-Heink. I'm afraid, since I was eight years old, and she was not at the peak of her career, I was not as impressed as my father thought I should be. I've never forgotten the occasion."

Thank you Rudith, for taking the time to let us know you enjoyed the newsletter. We hope others will be inspired to write, also. All praise will be duly noted. We would appreciate suggestions about what you might like to see in the newsletter and would even welcome and consider constructive criticism.