



FROM THE CBYC ARCHIVES



Yacht Yak Release #1
By Leigh Lyon, Charter Member
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Damm! Damm! Damm!

That's a four-letter name every Coos Bay Yacht clubber worth his salt should know!

When Kurt first asked me to "jot down" a few thoughts on the early history of the club and its objectives, I eagerly accepted the invitation – but when I started to mentally frame a few highlights, my thoughts started to bounce from one memory to another much like a rack skipping across a pond.

So – let's start with first things first. Carl Damm and his wife, Alice, started our yacht club from scratch. Where he learned his sailing skills was always a mystery to me. But he certainly had them. Perhaps his Dutch ancestors who lived by the sea guided him. Anyhow, Carl gathered together a group of bright-eyed, young hopefuls, including the Vaughans, Schepmans, Quicks, Lyons, Hodges, Irelands, Russells, Magles, Gorbutts, and D'Ambrosia, and under his watchful eye, we would receive our share of praise and criticism. We had a few boats among us of which we were vainly proud and scared to death of. Every time we sailed our 15' 3" Sunray, "Flight", we wore life jackets to survive because almost every time out we capsized. We would always explain to our non-sailing friends that the Sunray class was a very unstable design and prone to submarine under stress.

Without fail, every sailing weekend was followed with a two-day sail-drying ritual. Of course, the only place large and warm enough for this was the living room. As the automobile was to the horse and buggy so the Dacron sail was to the cotton sail. I think it must have been in the fifties before we could plan Monday and Tuesday functions in our living room.

Our yacht club was spawned on the bay and thrived on its environment of salt water, rushing tides, slippery float logs, hi and lo water, pilings and teredos. Perhaps this hostile environment, which also included all types of water traffic from log rafts to offshore freighters, pressured us into a continuing search for a better moorage.

Probably only a few of you remember "The Tourist", the Marshfield – Eastside ferry that ran on about an hourly schedule until highway bridges doomed it to extinction. "The Tourist" was beached at about the foot of Newmark and it was there in the passenger section the first formal meeting was held more than forty years ago. The club aims and objectives and conduct codes were formulated at this time and shortly afterwards were tested in the club's occupancy of a city block of the North Bend waterfront property.

Signed, Leigh Lyon