

September, 2011



# Classic Yachting

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER BY AND FOR ALL THE FLEETS OF THE CLASSIC YACHT ASSOCIATION



*Classic  
Summer  
Boating*

# Pacific Northwest Fleet Report

## Reflections on Lake Union – Boatyards and Boats

By Steve Wilen, CYA Life Member

There was a time when Seattle's Lake Union was not the *au courant* place it has become in the 21st century. Oh, you could find a lakeside eatery, perhaps with a neon sign that read "Eats," where you could "do lunch" for 35 cents – though no one back then would have known what "do lunch" meant. Houseboats were floating (at least partially) contraptions frequently inhabited by folks who could not afford a real house with a yard, and who didn't mind the smell of industrial effluence, rather than today's variety of "architecturally designed" multi-story floating palaces for tech-world millionaires. It was a gritty, industrial place in a less complicated time when people were unmindful of a need to care for the environment; pollution from manufacturers that lined the lake was unchecked. But it was in these days that a number of boat building operations ringing Lake Union turned out some of the finest vessels built in the Pacific Northwest, many of which today are in the roster of the Classic Yacht Association – firms such as Grandy Boat Company, Shain Manufacturing Company, Schertzer Boat & Machine, Vic Franck's Boat Company, Blanchard Boat Company, Lake Union Dry Dock Company – and if you ventured a bit east into Portage Bay there was Jensen Motor Boat Company. With the exception of Jensen and LUDDCO, neither of which any longer builds boats, but are actively engaged in all types of repair, all of these yards are gone, most for decades.

A number of these firms started elsewhere. Lewis Grandy began in Tacoma in 1903, teaming up with Charlie Taylor in 1908 and opening Taylor-Grandy in Burton (Vashon Island). In 1911, Taylor-Grandy built *Lawana* to a design of Otis Cutting, the prototype of what would 15 years later become known as the Lake Union Dreamboat. (*Lawana's* centennial was observed at this year's CYA Bell Street Classic Rendezvous in June.) Another Taylor-Grandy collaboration is PNW member *Glorybe*.

After the Hiram Chittenden Locks (formerly Government Locks) were opened in 1917, connecting Puget Sound with Lakes Union and Washington, Lewis' son, Earl Grandy, moved the operation to the west shore of Lake Union in 1922. Grandy began turning out pleasure boats, a number of which were designed by Ed Monk, Sr., who for a time had an office at the Grandy yard. 1937 *Flying Cloud*, PNW member, is an excellent example of this collaboration. Through the 1950s, the yard continued to turn out production pleasure craft. The Grandy marque ended in 1967, when a fire destroyed the plant.



Blanchard Boat Company, Fairview Avenue  
Ed Monk, Sr., leaning against door

Like the Grandys, N. J. Blanchard also began elsewhere, forming Johnson Bros. & Blanchard in 1905, located on the former oxbow of the Duwamish River. In 1911, the yard turned out the 100-foot, Ted Geary-designed canoe stern motor yacht *Helori* for O. O. Denny, at that time the largest motor yacht built on the west coast. In 1915, Johnson Bros. & Blanchard went broke. The Johnsons, having fled north to Canada, N. J. went to work for the huge Skinner & Eddy yard. In 1919, Skinner & Eddy loaned N. J. to the Tregoning yard on Ballard Beach, to supervise the building of the Geary-designed 84-foot motor yacht *Sueja* (formerly in the USA Fleet as *Princess Mary*, current fate unknown) for Capt. James Griffiths. With earnings from that job, N. J. was able to open his own yard at the foot of Wallingford Avenue on the north shore of Lake Union in 1919. Like the Grandy yard, the Blanchard yard burned in 1922, and N. J. relocated to Fairview Avenue on the east shore of Lake Union. When N. J. died in 1954, his son, the late Norman C. Blanchard, became head of the firm until closing it in 1969.



Perhaps the most commonly thought of motor yachts turned out by the Blanchard yard are the mostly 36-foot stock raised-deck cruisers of the 1920s, designed by Leigh Coolidge, a number of which are CYA members – such as *Mer-Na* in the USA Fleet, *Arlene* and *Faun* in the PNW Fleet, and *Blanche* in the SC Fleet – but the yard turned out some large motor yachts, such as the 90-foot *Wanda*, formerly in the NC Fleet, and the 100-foot *Malibu* in the PNW Fleet, to designs of Ted Geary, and the Monk-designed 62-foot *Silver King*, formerly of the SC and USA Fleets.

Between 1902 and 1917, the Schertzer Brothers, William and Frank, operated a boat house in the area of Madrona Park on Lake Washington. The opening of the Montlake Cut in 1916, connecting Lake Washington



with Portage Bay/Lake Union, resulted in a lowering of Lake Washington; likely that contributed to the Schertzers moving their operation to the north shore of Lake Union near the foot of Stoneway Avenue, naming it Schertzer Boat & Machine, where they continued to turn out boats until 1937. The plant, which was next door to the Vic Franck yard, later became the first location of Edison Tech's (now Seattle Central Community College) boat building school. Norm Blanchard recalled that the Schertzers worked for his dad, and moonlighted on their own. During what period this might have been is unknown, but certainly could have occurred after they shuttered their own operation.



Arguably, the most beautiful of the Schertzer-built motor yachts is the Leigh Coolidge-designed *Kiyi* of 1926, a stunning 50-foot fantail and long time member of the PNW Fleet. Other CYA Schertzers, both members of the PNW Fleet, include the Monk-designed and beautifully restored *Shearwater* of 1933, and *Rumrunner* of 1930, with its “Scuffy the Tugboat” pilot house windows.

[Editor's notes: there are many other CYA vessels not listed here that were built by these boatyards. All deserve merit and mention. This article will be continued/ concluded with more PNW Lake Union boatyards and boats in the next issue of the CYA newsletter.]



The **2012 International CYA Board of Director Meetings and Change of Watch Banquet** will be held in historic Mystic, Connecticut, over the weekend of **January 13-15, 2012**. Hosted by the USA Fleet, the long weekend promises to be informative, productive, and fun. Watch this space, your mailbox, and your mailbox for more information. Put the weekend on your calendar!

# Canadian Fleet Report

## Cruising Close to Home – Saanich Inlet

by Mike O'Brien, CYA Staff Commodore

Peggy and I live on the end of the Saanich Peninsula and keep our classic yacht, *Euphemia II*, at Canoe Cove Marina, just five minutes from home. We love local cruising, particularly in winter when the waters are less crowded. One of our favourite two or three day trips is around the corner to the Saanich Inlet.

Saanich Inlet was formed about 11,000 years ago by retreating glaciers. Rubble left by the glacier left a sill at the mouth of the inlet, which accounts for much of its unique character.

The inlet is located on the South Eastern corner of Vancouver Island; is 23 km long by 3 to 7 km wide (14.3 miles by 1.8 to 4.3 miles) and has a depth at its mouth of 70 metres dropping to 200 metres at its deepest (230 ft to 656 feet).

The inlet ends at Goldstream Creek at the start of the Malahat highway leading from Victoria to Nanaimo and Campbell River. Goldstream Creek is a major salmon spawning creek and a Provincial park has been established at its entrance to the inlet.

The aboriginal population found the inlet to be a hospitable home with a wealth of fish, game, and plant life readily available. The Northern Straits Salish peoples harvested here and throughout the Gulf and San Juan Islands. Many of their descendants still live in the area and are represented by the Saanich and Malahat groups.

Although modern population growth has depleted the marine life in the inlet, crabs, prawns and, in season, salmon still are easily harvested by both commercial and recreational fishers. Seal populations are large and local and transient Orca pods make regular forays into the inlet.

For the boater, quiet anchorages, sophisticated resorts, and spectacular scenery are all available.

The marina located at Mill Bay on the West side of the inlet was devastated by several major winter storms in recent years and is currently not recommended for transient moorage. A number of development proposals are under consideration and there is optimism that new facilities will become a reality over the next few years. A unique ferry service runs from here to Brentwood Bay on a year round basis.

In any event, the community of Mill Bay is easily accessible from temporary anchorages at the head of the

Bay. Grocery, hardware, adult beverages, and many sundries can be obtained in this charming community.

Senanus Island located at the entrance to Brentwood Bay is part of the Tsarlip reserve and is reputed to be haunted by ghosts of natives buried here for many centuries. This is considered a sacred site by the Tsarlip band and landing should not be attempted without permission from the band office.



Brentwood Marina at sunset

Brentwood Bay Resort provides excellent transient moorage with power, showers, and laundry dockside ([www.brentwoodbayresort.com](http://www.brentwoodbayresort.com)). The resort boasts luxury hotel style accommodations with a spectacular view of the Bay along with spa facilities. A great dining room and fun pub complete the picture.

If you prefer to anchor out, there is safe anchorage in the Bay just west of the Inn behind the rock marker.

There are several small seaside shops in the vicinity of the Marina, including the Seahorses Café just a two minute walk from the Marina and the Blues Bayou Café, a Cajun restaurant within an easy 15 minute walk.

Abernethy and Gaudin Shipwrights offer a complete yacht repair service at their haul out facility next to the Ferry terminal at Brentwood Bay. AGBoats ([www.agboats.com](http://www.agboats.com)) specializes in repairs to wooden vessels and have been the major custodians of *Euphemia II* for many years.

The community of Brentwood Bay boasts a full range of services including more restaurants, groceries, liquor store, and many more – BUT – it is a steep uphill walk of about twenty minutes. If you are running low on supplies or just plain like the best in meats, the Orr

Brothers Butchers on West Saanich Road is a renowned local treasure of Scottish butchery.

No description of Saanich Inlet is complete without a mention of the world famous Butchart Gardens ([www.butchartgardens.com](http://www.butchartgardens.com)), just at the west end of Brentwood Bay. This stunning fifty acre National Historic Site boasts spectacular gardens that will delight the senses. There is a dinghy dock for those anchored in the Bay and several mooring buoys available on a first come first served basis.



Marine Entrance to Butchart Gardens

Speaking of anchorages, our favourite year round is Todd Inlet, a small appendix just past Butchart Gardens and part of the larger Todd Gowland Marine Park, the second largest in British Columbia. The inlet is always crowded on a summer Saturday night as boaters arrive to witness the spectacular Butchart Gardens fireworks show. On the other hand, on a crisp late September day, you may have this haven all to yourself. There is a

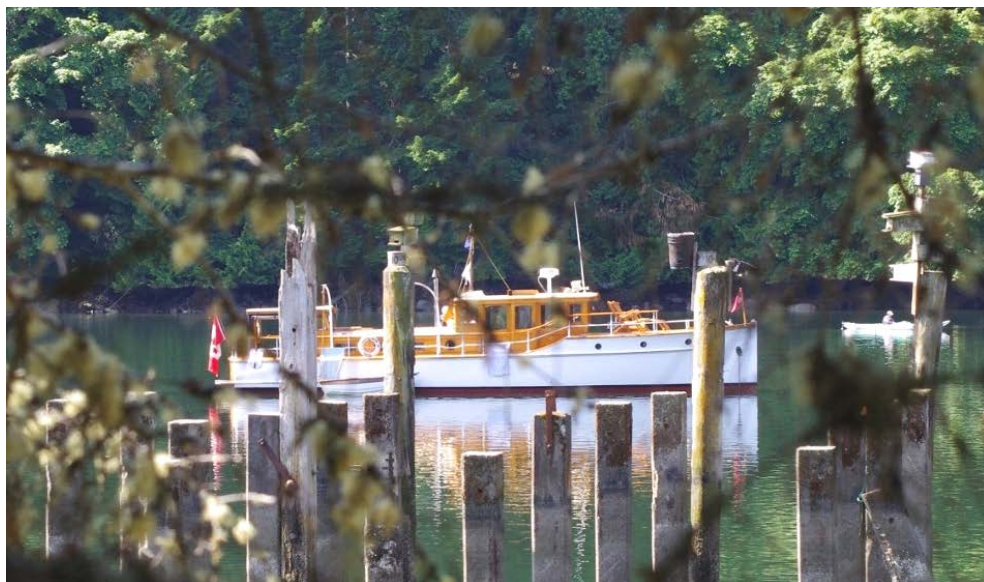
dinghy dock from which you can explore the hundreds of miles of trails and old logging roads all the way to Goldstream Park. For maps and full details, [www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/gowlandtod/](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/gowlandtod/).

Short term anchorage may also be found at McKenzie Bight several miles south of Todd inlet as well as several unnamed nooks closer to Goldstream Park. If you are visiting Saanich inlet in July or August, a day anchorage off the beach at Bamberton, on the west side of the inlet just across from Brentwood Bay is a great place to drop a lunch hook and have a dip or a beach walk on this popular sandy shore. Be careful where you anchor as the water is shallow quite far out from shore – which of course provides the warming influence for great swimming.

Complete your exploration of Saanich Inlet with a day trip down Finlayson Arm to Squally Reach and on to the end of the inlet to experience some beautiful scenery and relatively peaceful surroundings. Moorage, fuel, haul out service, and a marine store are available at ([www.goldstreamboathouse.com](http://www.goldstreamboathouse.com)) the Goldstream Boathouse.

And this is what classic boating is all about: protected waters, quiet anchorages, good food, and spectacular scenery. Just add some good friends and nothing beats it!

Mike O'Brien  
International Staff Commodore  
Member #319



*Euphemia II* at Todd Inlet



# USA Fleet Report – USS Sequoia

by Robert Webber, USA Fleet Member

*Sequoia II* was launched in 1926 and was commissioned the *USS Sequoia* in 1933. This stately vessel has served eight US Presidents including Hoover, Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, and Ford. While there have been a number of Presidential Yachts, *Sequoia* has officially served more of the USA's chief executives than any of the others. But for President Carter's wish of not wanting the appearance of an imperial presidency this boat might still be serving in some official capacity as an enduring symbol of this nation's highest elected office. Since 1977 this remarkable boat has faced bleak times, even the wrecker's ball. She has been restored more than once, seized and held hostage for 10 years by a boat yard, and today survives as a charter boat in the heart of Washington, DC.

Excerpt from the *Sequoia*'s history:

Despite the exceptionally dark night, the channel ahead looked clear to Capt. Giles Kelly but the radar scope didn't agree. A line showed on the screen, moving right across Clear Creek channel from Galveston Bay, about 100 yards ahead of the presidential yacht *Sequoia*.

In unfamiliar waters, with 104 feet of yachting elegance and years of presidential history under his command, Kelly would take no chances, especially with a candlelight dinner party of visiting Houston area dignitaries and supporters on board in the main saloon.

Even with binoculars, Kelly could make out nothing so he finally gave the order to switch on the searchlight. And there, dead ahead and on a collision course with *Sequoia*, was -- a mother duck and six ducklings, paddling double-time to get across the channel.

"Fortunately, our passengers back aft were never aware of the danger that night," says Kelly, tongue firmly in cheek. "We got a good laugh out of it later but there really were some tense moments in the pilothouse."

This anecdote and others collected from former Navy commanders and crew will appear in a book in the not-too-distant future. That's because Kelly is in the process of writing a history of this 1925 Trumpy that served as a floating White House for presidents for 44 years before she was auctioned off in 1977.

Kelly, a BOAT/U.S. member, knows his subject well. He commanded *Sequoia* on an eight-month, 6,000-mile "comeback" tour of the eastern US in 1984. And while the then-owners, the Presidential Yacht Trust, failed to raise the money to return her to presidential duty, *Sequoia* has been in and out of Kelly's life ever since. Today Kelly is embarked on a second "voyage" -- this time in corporate boardrooms as well as in the wheel house -- to save the yacht that served eight presidents, entertained visiting heads of state, and witnessed history in the making.

CYA member and Florida artist Robert Webber has announced the availability of "USS *Sequoia*", his latest release in a series of fine art prints devoted to boats from an earlier era. This edition will be added to "Great American Yacht Classics", a documentary series portraying distinguished traditional yachts that have managed to survive "America's Golden Age". The edition is limited to 100 signed/numbered prints. Materials used in the production of the prints are the highest archival/museum quality. For additional information visit [www.classicyachtportraits.com](http://www.classicyachtportraits.com).



# Southern California Fleet Report

## Old Fashioned Day at Burton Chace Park

Reprinted with permission from the Marina del Rey Patch [marinadelrey.patch.com](http://marinadelrey.patch.com)

Article and photos by Alaena Hostetter

More than 50 vintage yachts and antique cars descended upon Burton W. Chace Park in Marina del Rey on Sunday for Old Fashioned Day in the Park, an event the Classic Yacht Association has been holding for the last 34 years.

Model A's, hot rods, and classic woodies were all on display, with nostalgia from a bygone era strewn across their seats. Vintage license plates like "Hoover for President" and stickers adorned the cars. And nearby, docked in the boat slips bordering the park, vintage yachts were moored, resplendent in their varnished wooden glory.

The Classic Yacht Association's Southern California Fleet has held this event in the park each year for decades to allow classic yacht owners and vintage car enthusiasts a chance to share their passion with the public. People were invited to peer under the hood, gawk at the interior, and climb aboard the vessels and look around. For a boat to be displayed in the event, its owner and captain must be a member of the Classic Yacht Association, and among other things the yacht must have been built before 1959.



*Gracie*, a 36-foot yacht built in 1950, won Old Fashioned Day awards in two categories, People's Choice and Best Interior. The cozy interior space featured all kinds of vintage finds, such as old clocks, radio, lamps, and original wooden fixtures.

The maintenance on a wood boat is much more costly and more demanding than that of a fiberglass-constructed boat, which owners say contributes to the allure. Upkeep on their vessels is a labor of love and a full-time job.

"We like antiques," said *Gracie's* owner, Larry Walker, about why he and his wife, Terri, bought the vintage wooden boat four years ago after owning a modern fiberglass boat for many years. Walker, a retiree, does most of the maintenance and upkeep himself. He varnishes sections of the boat every six months. "We've reupholstered and added a new ceiling, but the wood is pretty much like it was originally," Walker said.

The *Enchantress*, docked a couple of slips away, is 12 feet longer and a much bigger vessel with an upper and lower deck. It was built in 1947, commissioned by brothers who were cotton and cattle farmers near Bakersfield. They purchased the yacht for \$36,000 when the average new home price was around \$6,000. It is the equivalent of a modern-day, million-dollar mega yacht.

Drew Miser has owned the *Enchantress* for 20 years, and lovingly maintained the boat's original fixtures and woodwork, including original stained glass and wood cabinetry in the galley, or kitchen.

"The boat energizes me," Miser said. "It's a great lifestyle." Miser described himself as a third-generation wanderlust, always looking for his next adventure, and he spent a good portion of his 20s living full-time aboard his first watercraft, also a vintage boat, built in 1937.

"If every day I spend on the water adds a day to my life, wouldn't that be cool," Miser said. "It does relax you."



Forward cabin in *Enchantress*

"Even if it doesn't extend your life, it certainly helps you celebrate your life," added Rick Olson, fleet captain of the Southern California Fleet of CYA.

Miser and Olson talked about these vintage yachts as more than just simple watercraft or an assembly of wood and machine. They spoke of these vessels as having souls and transferring energy to the present owners from past generations, from the original crafts-men and women who constructed the boat through all of the owners who have spent many hours refurbishing these boats to their present state. Miser describes himself as a steward of his watercraft for future generations to enjoy rather than an owner.

"People want their boat that they've cared for, if they're going to sell it ... they want it to go to somebody that's going to take care of it," added Olson. "A lot of times the sale is contingent upon the new owners joining the CYA. They know if they join the CYA, they will get good guidance from other people and the boat will live on."

In the neighboring slip, *Sparkle* was docked for the day. It is similar in size to the *Enchantress*, also a 48-footer, built in 1950 and was voted "best party yacht" at the event. Live-aboard captain Christine Rohde, also Commodore in the CYA's Southern California Fleet, said she had no idea what buying a vintage yacht would entail in terms of restoration and upkeep, but she added, "I wouldn't change it."

*Sparkle's* owner, Rohde, who has worked in architecture design for many years, describes her boat in such terms. "It's beautiful. It's a piece of historic architecture," said Rohde. "That's how I look at all

of these boats: They're a piece of American history and we need to do all we can to preserve them."



*Sparkle* wins "party boat" award of the weekend!

Rohde, who organized Old Fashioned Day, tears up as she explained the magic of an event like today's. "I think people really enjoy seeing a part of society that they don't have a chance to see. It's neat to step back into that little niche in history, to have a chance to come onboard and see older classic yachts as they were 50 to 100 years ago. And same with the cars, to see the way they used to be that some of us remember when we were young. They're beautiful treasures," Rohde said.

That's exactly the sentiment that makes Old Fashioned Day more than just a venue that allows owners to display their old cars and yachts. Owners get to share their passion, hard work, dedication, and the love they have for their vessels.



## Northern California Fleet Report What CYA Means to Me

by Beverly Partridge, NC Fleet Director

Now that I am approaching another milestone birthday and *Fantasea* will have a new caregiver (CYA member Les Cochran), I have been reminiscing about the fifty-one years this boat has been part of my life and the thirty-one years she has been a member of CYA.

Most of you know the story of our buying the 1925 Matthews *Fish Hook II*. Briefly, when a fellow racer was killed at Laguna Seca Raceway in 1960, I suggested to my husband Bob that he might want to consider a different hobby – a slow boat perhaps. He sold his MGTD number 90 and we headed for the Delta to find that slow boat. Find her we did and not being fishermen we changed her name, as each previous owner had done, and called her *Fantasea*. Now our leisure time focus was on the waterways instead of the raceways, a change that made me very happy.

Our children were young – six and nine – so family activities were water oriented. We didn't buy a classic yacht. There was no Classic Yacht Association. We bought an old boat that we could afford and one on which Bob would



enjoy working. Now all our vacations were on *Fantasea* and all birthday and important occasions were celebrated aboard. We sailed to Ensenada, Mexico, in 1962 before it was the fashion to go out the Gate and turn left. We spent summers in Santa Cruz and sailed up the coast as far as Point Reyes and, of course, there was the Delta closer to home.

Bob's commute was a triangle, from home to Pete's Harbor in Redwood City to San Francisco and often the reverse on the way home. It was no real surprise when he discovered the new development of Ballena Bay in Alameda in 1969 – a waterfront home with a dock in the "backyard"! We made the move in 1970 as Bob Ekoos and his merry band from the Long Beach Yacht Club were organizing this wonderful organization. We heard about CYA from Warner Holcombe, the first Commodore of the newly formed Northern California Fleet, who encouraged us to apply for membership. In 1980 *Fantasea* was awarded membership #269.



We met the Hamiltons, Johnsons, Owens, Settles, and the senior Engfers – still familiar names in our CYA Roster. In those early days there were just two events per year – a rendezvous at Village West in the summer and a fall rendezvous at San Rafael Yacht Club. The summer event was a gala affair with members often attired in vintage clothes and with vintage cars sometimes making an appearance. There was a dinner-dance on Saturday night and gin fizzes on the dock on Sunday mornings. Sometimes there was an auction which often led to morning high jinks. Ask Mel Owen if he remembers his harmonica serenade with Bob Hamilton on his keyboard as Bob and I were led to SKOL for breakfast one Sunday morning.

Our circle of friends expanded as we added summer events and new members to our fleet. We had big events to celebrate – bridge building, Carquinez and Oakland Bay, and of course the gala celebration for the Golden Gate complete with firefall from the bridge and lighting for the first time. This was particularly exciting as Bob was NC Fleet Commodore that year.

So, what does CYA mean to me? A life style, and enduring friendships not just in our local fleet, but through our International meetings, friends from all fleets – the Jim Butz family from SC, the Payntons from PNW, the Gillespies from USA, the O'Briens from Canadian to name just a few – wonderful people whose paths would never have crossed mine otherwise. It also means travel as Bob and I visited national meetings and for me as a fleet representative it is a particularly rewarding experience. It's like a family reunion because CYA is like an extended family to me. I cherish each member.

Don't get me wrong – this is not my farewell address, just a report from my heart, as I am looking forward to our fleet activities this summer and to the International Meeting in Mystic in January. That will be my last meeting as fleet representative, but certainly not the last one I will attend!



## **Norm Blanchard at Rest in Puget Sound Waters**

By Steve Wilen, CYA Life Member

During a drizzly, chilly pacific northwest Saturday afternoon on June 18 this year, Mary Blanchard and I drove to Tacoma with the ashes of the late venerated Seattle boat builder Norm Blanchard. (Norm died July 9, 2009, aged 98, and was an Honorary Member of the Classic Yacht Association.) We met with Terry and Renée Paine, long-

time owners of the schooner *Red Jacket* and CYA members, at the Foss Waterway Seaport, for a brief cruise to accommodate the ceremony.

*Red Jacket* seemed the perfect venue for this, having been built by Norm's father in 1920 to designs of Ted Geary, who was Norm's boyhood hero. Also, Norm had been pleased that *Red Jacket* was featured on the dust cover of our joint 1999 book, *Knee-Deep In Shavings*. (The Geary-designed, former CYA member, 86-foot *Westward* was tied up right next to *Red Jacket* and was due to depart for Port Townsend the following morning.) The Paines were delighted to host today's event.

At the time of Norm's death, memorial services were held at both Emerald Heights in Redmond, where he and Mary had lived for a number of years, and at the Seattle Yacht Club, where Norm had the distinction of being their oldest member. Thus, the scattering of ashes this day was a small affair.



*Red Jacket* anchor windlass

The rain stopped as we departed the pier. The only hitch was that as Mary scattered

the ashes over the starboard side some of them blew onto *Red Jacket's* deck. Mary tried to brush them off, but Renée told her not to worry, that it was perfectly OK for part of Norm to remain on *Red Jacket*.

As we secured *Red Jacket* to the dock back at Foss Waterway Seaport, the rain began again, having allocated just enough time for this small but important ceremony to take place.



## From the Bridge of *Thelonius*

By Larry Benson, CYA Commodore

For many of us, one of the joys of owning a classic yacht is in piecing together its history. No less with me, so when Mel 'Whitey' Thornquist came into my life on Father's Day weekend at our PNW Fleet Bell Street Rendezvous, it was like hitting the jackpot.

I was aboard *Thelonius* that day, answering the usual questions, inviting curious lookers aboard. I noticed an elderly gentleman intently studying the information card in the window but then wandering on. A few minutes later he returned and again read the information card. So I started chatting with him. After a few moments he announced 'I BUILT THIS BOAT!' I couldn't get him aboard fast enough.

It turned out that Mel now lives in Mt. Vernon, a town north of Seattle. His son had driven him to Seattle to see our show. After all, Mel had been a boat builder his whole career and what could be a more fitting Father's Day weekend outing than this. So, I asked questions and my dear Tina acted as recording secretary.

Question: I had heard that the boat was custom designed and built for a Portland Oregon dentist. Why, then, was there an ad-for-sale in a 1953 yachting magazine (CYA member David Huchthausen had found it in one of his

extensive collection of old yachting magazines)? Answer: While the boat was under construction, the dentist had come to the conclusion that the world economy was soon going to tank, and he decided that keeping his money rather than investing in a new boat was the prudent choice. So he paid to have it finished, then authorized its sale. *Thelonius* was sold to the incoming commodore of the Seattle Yacht Club for \$27,000. Mel recalled that the dentist paid \$34,000. (I remember I was working for \$1.50 an hour in 1953).

Question: Why was a 1920's style boat being built in 1953? Answer: The dentist had wanted a traditional style boat, so Ed Monk, Sr., modified one of his 1928 designs.

Question: I had heard that boat-building students at the Edison Technical School had a hand in its construction? Answer: Not so! Earl Wakefield, owner of Admiral Marine (which had contracted with the dentist to build the boat) had received an offer to head the school. So he acquired a shed adjacent to the school on Lake Union in



Seattle, and for a year ran back and forth between the school and the boat project. Mel, Earl, and two other craftsmen were the builders.

Question: I had heard that the hull construction was not traditional caulked seams, perhaps even tongue-and-groove?

Answer: Not caulked, not tongue-and-groove. The hull planks had a deep bevel top and bottom, forming a V between each plank. A glue-soaked wedge was driven into the V. The wedge was then faired down to be perfectly smooth with the planks, forming a solid wood hull. Apparently an idea of Ed Monk, or Earl, or both. This explains why the hull of *Thelonius* has none of the caulk-line cracks typically seen in planked hulls. (But, lord help me if I ever need to replace a plank!)

In a subsequent letter to Larry Benson, Mel 'Whitey' Thornquist writes:

*I thought you would like to have this early picture of the Admiral boat crew. Not all these men were involved in the building of Thelonius. The ones that were, Earl Wakefield, the first man standing on the right, next to him is Bill Kuss. I am standing next to Bill. Finally Stan Strickland is the man sitting in front of Bill Kuss and me, wearing the glasses.*

*I thoroughly enjoyed my time on your beautiful boat. I was still puzzled that I could not remember the original name of Thelonius. My impression is that the events concerning the sale of Thelonius happened so quickly that the boat did not yet have a name.*

*Sincerely,  
Mel (Whitey) Thornquist*

I'm not sure for whom that encounter was more gratifying, Mel or me. For Mel, a memorable touch with the past (he appeared very pleased with how well *Thelonius* had weathered the years). As for me, important pieces of a puzzle falling into place, and meeting a wonderful gentleman.

Larry Benson  
International CYA Commodore



# NEW CYA members – welcome!

**Reinstatements:**

Kuhrt Wieneke  
**LINMAR**  
 78' 1933 New York Launch and Engine  
 PNW Fleet

William and Kathryn Ruddy  
**PRINCETON HALL**  
 65' 1941 Harold Lee  
 PNW Fleet

**New Regular members:**

Kevin Kincheloe and Deanna Fulton  
**MARY ADDA**  
 30' 1928 Vic Franck  
 Pacific Northwest Fleet  
 Seattle, WA  
 Dorin Robinson, sponsor




Michael Wright and Joanne Reynolds  
**CYGNUS II**  
 56' 1930 Jakobson & Peterson  
 USA Fleet  
 Jacksonville, FL  
 David Gillespie, sponsor



Sidney and Ellen Hoover  
**AMANHA**  
 29' 1937 Malcolm Shipyards  
 Northern California Fleet  
 San Rafael, CA  
 Alan Almquist, sponsor



CYA Blazer Pocket Patch  
 with dual red and blue pennants  
 \$25 each including shipping  
 Contact Margie Paynton, CYA Historian



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