

Agamenticus Yacht Club History

It was September 1937, and yachtsmen everywhere were toasting the recent win of the J-Boat "Ranger" at the America's Cup in Newport, RI in late August.

The J-boat's of 1930 could be called the Vanderbilt era, as Harold S. Vanderbilt was skipper in 1930, 1934 and 1937. He was also the principal backer of the magnificent J's, ENTERPRISE, RAINBOW, and RANGER, financing the latter entirely himself. RANGER was the first Cup Defender in fifty years not built at the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company in Bristol, but instead designed by Burgess and Stephens. She totally dominated the trials and Cup Races of 1937. She was longer – 120+ feet, more powerful, had a bigger rig, was sailed better and was more refined in nearly every respect. Vanderbilt had an easy time with Ranger in 1937 beating Sopwith's Endeavour II in four straight races. It was, in a sense, a victory for American engineering as the Ranger was the first America's Cup design to be tank-tested. America's Cup racing ended with World War II and it seemed as if it might have come to a permanent end, mainly because J-boats had become prohibitively expensive.

York Harbor was the summer destination for many business men and their families who wanted to escape the heat of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC to their summer shingled 'cottages'. Yachtsmen in the Harbor were also celebrating the America's Cup win in their own way.

Establishment of the Club



Three of AYC's founding Fathers (L to R): C. Richard Steedman, John W. Adie and Morgan LaMontagne.

From the AYC minutes - September 8, 1937: On Wednesday, September 8, 1937, the following gentlemen met at the wharf of Mr. Anthony Jackson to discuss the possibilities of organizing a yacht club at York Harbor: Morgan E. LaMontagne, Laurence F. Brown, C. Richard Steedman, Anthony Jackson and John W. Adie.

The first meeting took place aboard the fishing launch "Three Sisters" owned by Mr. Brown and matters were discussed during an hour's cruise off York Harbor. It was unanimously decided that the name of the club should be the "Agamenticus Yacht Club of York Harbor, Maine"; the reason being that Mt. Agamenticus, long identified with York, has been a landmark for mariners for generations. It was furthermore suggested that Mr. Clarence Bush be urged to design a burgee for the Club.

On returning to York Harbor, the "Three Sisters" put in at the Marshall House Wharf to inspect it with the idea of making arrangements with the management to lease it. Upon returning to Mr. Jackson's wharf, Mr. Joseph Simpson was summoned and he agreed to speak with Mr. Frank Marshall regarding the above ideas. Mr. Jackson and Mr. Adie contributed a case of beer. Meeting adjourned - 8 minutes.



Creating The AYC Burgee

On September 12, 1937, an informal meeting was held in the Reading Room attended by Mr. LaMontagne, Mr. Brown, Mr. Long and John W. Adie. The matter of the burgee was discussed. An old house flag carried by the schooner Belle which

sailed out of York for many years was produced by Sheriff Philbrick. It was decided to ask Mr. Bush to follow the design of this flag. Five dollars apiece was deposited in the treasury in the custody of John W. Adie as initiation fee. End of Sept. – 12 minutes.

The Agamenticus Yacht Club was founded in 1937 to promote and organize sailing activities in York Harbor. The initial officers were Morgan LaMontagne, Commodore; John Adie, Secretary; C. Richard Steedman, Treasurer; and Dr. R. Frothingham O'Neil, Fleet Surgeon.

York Harbor Class



One of the early class boats at AYC was the York Harbor Class that was in use in the Harbor up until the war years of the early 1940's. The York Harbor Class was most likely a B.B. Crowninshield design that was adapted for the local region. It is reported that the York Harbor Class was about 24 feet overall, and 15 feet on the waterline.

In 1908 B.B. Crowninshield was asked to draw up a one-design class of knockabouts to be initially known as the Manchester 17 1/2. The class was to become one of the most popular and long-lived of the Knockabouts; about 200 boats were built in Maine, for example, where the name was altered to reflect yacht club affiliation. The most common name for the design is now the Dark Harbor 17 1/2, named after the summer colony at Islesboro that once had the largest number of these boats.

The Original Location of the Club



The Agamenticus Yacht Club was originally located across the harbor near where the Stage Neck Inn is currently located. This was the site of the Marshall House Hotel and the club leased a dock, and a small shed from the Marshall house for \$1 dollar/year. This was the location of the club from its formation in 1937 to 1992 when the lease was not renewed, forcing the club to find a new location across the harbor at its present location. Early records from 1938 would indicate that an arrangement was made with the Marshall House to have a dedicated room in the hotel for the Club for relaxing and reading the newspaper or have a cocktail. There was also the hope that visiting yachtsman traveling up and down the Maine coast would stop in York Harbor, check in at AYC, and stay at the Marshall House overnight, benefiting both the hotel, and the yacht club.

The Search for a New Class of Boat – the International 210

Following World War II, the old gaff-rigged York Harbor Class sloops were virtually non-existent. The club decided to try a new class and initially experimented with International 110's. They were found to be too small to handle the seas which we frequently had in the area. In 1947 the Club established a new class of International 210s. In the winter of 1946-47, eleven 210's were commissioned to be built by the Marblehead Yacht Yard (Graves) under the direction of C. Raymond Hunt by the following AYC owners:



No:	Boat Name:	Owners:
107	Mogreene	Marshall Morgan & Edward Green
108	Like Mad II	Frances Stone
109	Shadow	Moses Williams & Fergus Reid*
110	Cygnets	Mark Hollingsworth
111	Reckless Rebel	Margery Merick
112	Inchcliffe Castle	John Adie & Richard Steedman
113	Dickie	Harold Richard
114	Phoebe B. Beebe	Gale McLean
120	Skuttlebutt	Charles L. Harding, Jr.
121	Unknown	Nathaniel Wheeler
123	Imp	Stores G. Decature

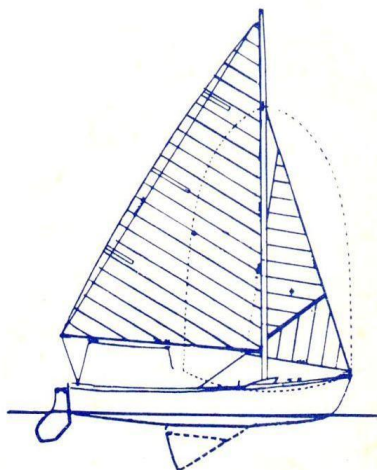
*Note: Fergus Reid transferred ownership in #109 to M. Williams, and bought #111 from Margery Merick in 1947

The first Trial Race for the 210's was July 4, 1947. The only reported incident in 1947 was with "Reckless Rebel" that was demasted in a collision with a fishing boat. It was not reported who was at the helm at the time!

In the early 50's a Junior Race series began using the 210's on Friday mornings. Skippers were Ally Fuller, Joey Donnelly, Jimmy Gibson, Carol Greene, Marie Harding, Leith McLean, Ellie Morgan, and Chris Steedman.

The 210 fleet sailed actively until 1979. During that time some boats changed ownership or generations and new sailors joined the fleet including: Earl DeR. Barondes, John Bockstoce, Stuart O. Dawson, Carol G. Donnelly, Joseph C. Donnelly, Jr, Henry M. Fuller, Edward P. Harding, Henry Harding, Mark Hollingsworth, Jr., Marshall M. Jeanes, Gloria Kent, Ronald Ledger, Mary Morgan, Randal Morgan, Christopher L. Steedman, Edmund C. Tarbell, and Alexander B. Warrick.

First Children's Programs Created



In 1958 a formal children's program was started and the Puffin Class introduced. Early Puffin families were: C. Bockstoce, H. Brooks, H Cadwalader, R. Earle, H. M. Fuller, C. L. Harding, Jr., J. W. Gerrity, R. M. Lord, D. Lusty, D. H. Mauran, D. Strater. Puffin races and classes were held on the ocean and up river. The first full-time sailing instructors, hired for the 1962 season were Carol Donnelly and Nick Strater. At that time classes were located at the Lusty's dock. To broaden interest in sailing, 1980 saw the start of the Laser fleet. The first year Laser families were: Anderson, Brooks, Donnelly, Finley, Freeman, Jarvis, Johnston, M. Newick, S. Newick,

Miller, Reid, Robinson, Southall, and Wieting.

Recent History of the Club

In 1992, the club's long term lease at the Stage Neck docks expired, and AYC needed to find a new base of operations. We were able to secure a similar arrangement on the wharf and floats of the Simpson Lane property, our present location. A capital campaign raised sufficient funds to build our new clubhouse, and to repair the dock, floats, and fleet to good condition. During this transition, the club also secured its current non-profit corporation status (501(c)3), allowing donations to AYC to be tax deductible.



By 1995, the last of the Puffin fleet was retired and the club moved into the modern era of junior sailing instruction with the purchase of a fleet of Optimist dinghies. Within a year, we expanded the fleet to include four JY-15s, and a year after that we added a 23' Sea Sprite daysailer for adult use. Recent years have seen the addition of new Lasers, kayaks and a canoe, and a small fleet of 420s to move us back into competitive dinghy racing with other clubs along the Maine coast.

The last boat in our International 210 fleet (Nomad) was retired along with our 23' Sea Sprite daysailer. In their place we have acquired a fleet of three J-22's that are used for day sailing, racing, junior sailing instruction and adult sailing lessons.

The Husky – An icons of AYC

The Husky remains one of the true 'icons' of the Agamenticus Yacht Club. In 1955, in a letter from Charles Harding to Henry Fuller, Charles describes buying a new launch – that he's named the "Husky" at a cost of \$3300. AYC is expected to get \$1000 for the old launch, and ask the membership to kick in for the balance. The Husky went into operation during the summer of 1956. It was a surplus WWII, 26 foot fiberglass launch. In 2006, 50 years after it was first put into service, the Husky was significantly refurbished by Bob Egar through a capital campaign of the AYC members and continues to this day to be 'unsinkable'!



AYC Officers



Commodore

Morgan E. LaMontagne	1938-1946
Storer G. Decator	1947-1954
Charles L. Harding, Jr.	1955-1957
Nathaniel G. Wheeler	1958-1963
Alexander B. Warrick	1964-1967
Earl DeR. Barondes	1968-1978
Robert G. Fuller, Jr. (acting)	1979
Joseph C. Donnelly, Jr.	1980-1989
John H. Finley III	1990-1993
Marshall N. Jarvis	1993-1994
Michael D. Ciancetta	1995-2004
Michael Brassard	2005-2009
Douglas Tuttle	20010-Present

Vice-Commodore

Laurence F. Brown	1937-1938
Charles L. Harding	1939-1953
W. Wallace Lanahan	1946 (?)
Mark Hollingsworth	1954-1956
Nathaniel Wheeler	1957-1958
James McM. Gibbon	1958-1961
Edmund C. Tarbell	1962-1965
Mark Hollingsworth, Jr.	1966-1980 (?)
E. George Pollak	1981-1987
Mason Newick	1987-1991
Marshall Jarvis	1992
Michael D. Ciancetta	1993-1994
Henry Harding	1995-2004
Douglas Tuttle	2005-2009