



Potomac River Yacht Clubs Association

Volume 7

Issue 4

September 1995

Officers 1995

Commodore

John Hancock
(Aquia Harbour)

Vice Commodore

Penny DeMarco
(National Potomac)

Rear Commodore

Bud Clark
(Tantallon)

Secretary

Ineke Lavoie
(National Potomac)

Treasurer

Harriet Douglas
(District)

Immediate Past Commodore

Ned W. Rhodes
(Occoquan)

Members-At-Large

Steve Wexler
(Occoquan)

Mark Viehoever
(Washington)

Steve Donock
(Mount Vernon)

From The Commodore

John Hancock

Your PRYCA Bridge certainly hopes our member clubs and its participants in the 1995 PRYCA Float-In enjoyed the event as much as we did. Thanks to our superb chairperson, Steve Wexler, and all those who so ably assisted him, we truly had a fabulous event! Notwithstanding the very hot weather, reports back indicate all had an outstanding time. Of course, this successful event would also not have been possible without all of you who participated. This, our tenth anniversary of the Float-In, resulted in the largest number of participants and vessels to date as well as a financial success. A great big THANK YOU to all who made this our most successful event in the history of the PRYCA. Congratulations also go to the Aquia Harbour Yacht Club, who retained control of the coveted Aquia Cup.

As we continue into the last quarter of the year, please ensure that your member club is represented at two important Delegates meetings which will occur in September and November. We have some rather far-reaching by-law revisions to consider as well as voting on your PRYCA Bridge positions for next year. Legislative activities will also intensify this fall and we will keep you fully informed of issues on the national, state and local levels as concern us as recreational boaters. Of course, we will continue to have fun on the water with our End of Summer Party scheduled at Tantallon Yacht Club in September. See the details elsewhere in this newsletter.

Thank you all for making this a most enjoyable and rewarding year for me as your Commodore. I look forward to our remaining months ahead.

From the Vice Commodore

Penny DeMarco

We certainly had a MOST SUCCESSFUL Float-In this year in spite of the nearly unbearable heat. We all need to give a special vote of thanks to MAL Steve Wexler. His organization, attention to detail, and superb leadership guaranteed a great event. I personally enjoyed working with him on the registration—we were burning up the fax machines for a good part of early July. I am looking forward to the write-up about the event in an upcoming issue of Soundings. 115 boats—that's really something!

Commodore John Hancock pointed out to all of us at the Float-In that 1996 will be the 25th anniversary of PRYCA. I want to plan some things to make the year a special one. I am looking for ideas. Please contact me if you can have any suggestions for how PRYCA should celebrate its silver anniversary year. For a start, mark your calendars for Saturday, January, 27, 1996 for the Change of Watch Dinner Dance. The Change of Watch will be held at the Old Colony Inn in Alexandria and we have already booked The Wright Touch Band!

At the September Delegates Meeting you will be hearing that we are working on a reissue of the PRYCA Constitution and By-Laws. A By-Laws Committee set about to review the entire Constitution and how it relates to the PRYCA organization as it exists and functions today. The committee found that many of the specifics in the By-Laws really did not apply and some were too restrictive. The committee has proposed a rewrite to remove some of the specifics (such as obsolete standing committees) and to allow the Officers more flexibility to establish committees and procedures which are more workable for the needs of the organization.

The general idea is that the Constitution and By-Laws should be specific in such areas as qualification and procedures for acceptance of new Member Clubs and nomination and election procedures for officers and board members, but does not need to describe all the duties and responsibilities of each officer and board member.

The By-Laws Committee presented a proposed rewrite of the Constitution and By-Laws to the Bridge and Board at the August Board Meeting. All comments on the draft are to be discussed at the September Board Meeting. The intention is to mail a copy of the Proposed new Constitution and By-Laws to Delegates in a timely manner (as required by Article XIII) to allow a vote on the new Constitution and By-Laws at the November Delegates Meeting.

From the Rear Commodore

Bud Clark

Modern Navigation Systems

From time to time the Tantaloon Yacht Club Fleet Navigator, Charlie McFadden, has forcefully expressed his view that dependence on high-tech electronic navigation systems is unwise, potentially dangerous, and very possibly indecent if not immoral. Well, I'm overstating things a little bit, but you get the point. At other times, I have made the point that, with the advent of the Global Positioning System (GPS), these capabilities are just too useful to ignore. Portable GPS navigators (with route storage and display capabilities) are now on the market for just a few hundred dollars, so they can be used in small, as well as large, boats. In addition, they can replace or supplement other instruments (knotmeters and logs for exam-

ple), since they give true course and speed over the ground, rather than relative to the moving water. It is easy to imagine that before long they will be almost universally used in all but the smallest boats. Still, warnings and reservations against undue dependence on them need to be kept in mind, because the more they are used and the more capable our equipment, the greater the potential for disaster. Just consider the following:

On June 10th 1995, a 33,000-ton cruise ship enroute from Bermuda to Boston ended up on a shoal 17 miles west of its planned track. At the time of the incident, the ship was about 10 miles east of Nantucket, and was equipped with the following navigation aids and equipment:

- Integrated navigation computer and chart display system
- Global Positioning System (GPS)
- Loran - C
- Two radars (X-band and S-band)
- Depth finder
- Gyrocompass
- Autopilot

Now the question is: "How could a fully-equipped and professionally-staffed vessel end up aground 17 miles off its intended course?" Well, here are some of the answers. [This information was extracted from "Where Are We Anyway?" by Bill Brogdon on pages 32-34 of the September 1995 issue of Yachting.]

- The watch officer was relying solely on GPS because he considered it the most accurate.
- The GPS lost signals because of a faulty antenna connection. When this went unnoticed, the electronic navigator automatically switched over to a dead-reckoning mode; in this mode there is never a cross-track error (never a difference between position and DR).
- Only the navigator understood the navigation computer, so there was

no cross-check and incorrect waypoint data may have been entered. If this happens, the vessel is guided accurately to the wrong destination.

- Clearly, it took some time (at least hours) for a 17 mile cross-track error to develop, but either no other checks were made or available information was ignored or misinterpreted.

- The Loran system was not checked until after the ship went aground; when checked, it showed the location exactly on the shoal. (With the advent of GPS, there are plans to shut down Loran, thus removing one of the alternative all-weather navigation systems. A good case can be made that Loran should continue in operation just to provide a cross-check. Unless there is very strong pressure from the boating community, this is unlikely to happen in the current cost-constrained budget environment.)

- The radars were set for a six-mile range scale, so that the nearby lighthouse and cliff at 10 miles did not appear. (During this whole event, apparently no one thought to increase the radar range for even a short time just to check the surrounding area.)

- Depth finders apparently were not monitored; traffic lanes should have shown 30 to 45 fathoms, while the actual path led through waters of less than 20 fathoms (sometimes much less). The alarm on the depth finder was set to 3 meters (about 10 feet), so that it gave little or no advanced warning of the grounding.

- A light house which was clearly visible for an hour before the grounding was not checked, nor were lighted buoys marking the shoal observed. Buoys marking traffic lanes were misidentified. Apparently they were seen on radar and assumed to be the those expected on the correct course, but they were never positively identified.



Clearly, there was a violation of the cardinal rule, NEVER RELY ON A SINGLE NAVIGATION INSTRUMENT OR TECHNIQUE! The problem was compounded by a failure to observe any of the other available indications that the ship was off course. It really is important to maintain a valid, current plot of your boats location; this means positive identification of markers and other navigation aids. (Those of you who pilot aircraft will remember how important it is to hear the NavAid identifier, as well as just tuning to the appropriate radio frequency.) Finally, keep in mind that modern electronic navigation systems are remarkable, but NOT infallible. Just as buoys can be displaced from their plotted locations, so can electronic navigation system provide aberrant data from time.

For example, GPS is a dynamic system which depends on data derived from constantly moving satellites. Thus every position fix is a new solution and accuracy does not improve with usage. (On the other hand, Loran uses fixed transmitter sites, so that accuracy can be improved on return to previously located position - repeatability.) When Selective Availability (the deliberate degradation of position data for national security reasons) is in effect, GPS can have errors of several hundred feet. Using a supplementary differential receiver, GPS accuracy can be improved by an order of magnitude, but even with a differential receiver some significant location errors will occur (several tens of feet). Practically, most coastal charts are at a scale of 1:40,000; very few are any larger than 1:20,000. At the largest scale, a sharp pencil dot has a scaled diameter of about 25 feet; this is about the accuracy of GPS with a differential receiver. GPS with Selective Availability (no differential receiver) has a probable error

on the order of ten times that; this is roughly the size of the tip of your finger placed on a chart. But in either case, there can be individual readings with much greater errors, and these have occurred during evaluation tests. So don't rely on unique or short-term readings from a single instrument and don't depend upon a single navigation technique. [This information on GPS performance was taken from articles on pages 9-14 of the August 1995 issue and pages 15-22 of the August 1994 issue of Powerboat Reports.]

More on Boat Operations

Recently Maryland's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reported (Washington Post, page C6, 24 August 1995) on deaths and injuries resulting from the operation of Personal Watercraft (PWC), the increasingly popular "jet skis." As we all know, they can be rented by almost anyone and the operators seem to be unaware of the rules for collision avoidance. Here are a few items of interest.

- Three people have died from PWC accidents in Maryland waters thus far in 1995; the first such fatalities reported in Maryland. In addition, there have been 50 accidents that resulted in injuries.

- Earlier in August 1995, a 13-year-old was killed when she fell off a PWC and was struck by another PWC; the four girls riding on the two PWCs were all under 14. DNR has asked that parents prevent children under 14-years from operating PWCs, which can reach speeds over 50 miles per hour.

- Most PWC accidents are caused by operators who ignore regulations on speed, separation, and collision avoidance. Maryland regulations limit PWC speed to 6 knots when the craft is within 100 feet of land, other boats,

piers, bridges, swimmers, etc.; on the Atlantic Ocean, the 6 knot limit applies within 300 feet of a swimmer. These regulations can be used as the basis for reports to the Maryland DNR, Natural Resources Police (Marine Police) and other enforcement agencies when dangerous operation of PWCs is observed near our boats. It is important that incidents be reported, so that DNR and Marine Police can focus their enforcement activities in problem areas. (Most of us have had some experience with PWC operations near our boats; now there is something we can do about it!)

Relevant to this discussion of PWC accidents, Commodore John Hancock has corresponded with the Director of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources about unsafe boating operations in the upper Potomac near the Woodrow Wilson Bridge (Smoots Bay and Spoils Cove north of the bridge). As a result, Maryland DNR has focused their attention on this area and asked that any violations be reported to the Natural Resources Police at Smallwood State Park on Channel 16 or by toll-free telephone at 1-800/628-9944.

Potomac River Yacht Clubs Association Activities

By now you should have signed up for the PRYCA-sponsored End-of-Summer Party at Tantallon Yacht Club on 16 and 17 September 1995. This is a major PRYCA event so be sure that you don't miss it. Also check the PRYCA calendar with this news letter for events at our member clubs, as well as upcoming PRYCA events. The next delegates meeting is planned for 6 November at Capital Yacht Club (election of officers for 1996 and a speaker from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources). Also note the 1996

Change of Watch Dinner-Dance scheduled for 27 January 1996. And above all, have fun on (or near) the water!

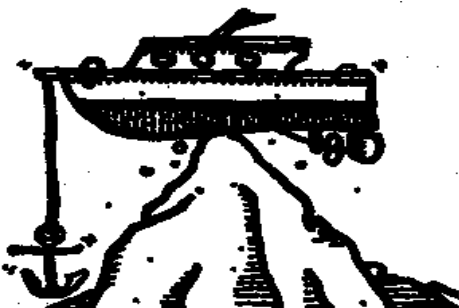
Is It Really Almost Over?

Steve Donock

As impossible as it sounds, as this issue goes to press the final plans are being made for the annual End of Summer Party at Tantallon Yacht Club. All indications are that this is going to be a terrific event. Reservations are in and people are excited about this fun weekend. I know of some folks who had never heard of this event before this year and scrambled to get their reservations in on time. In fact, a Mt. Vernon Yacht Club member went so far as to buy a new boat for the event! (We are assuming there are a few other reasons as well, but....)

This event will start winding down the official PRYCA activities for the year. 1995 has been quite a good one for the PRYCA. There was record attendance (and heat) for the Float-In at Ft. Washington. Representatives of attending clubs I was able to talk to at the Float-In expressed their thanks for such a job well done by Steve Wexler and his Float-In committee.

I know many clubs have activities scheduled well into the fall, so maybe it's not quite time to think the season is nearly over. For many of us the best boating of the year is just around the corner. See you all at Tantallon for the "Start of the Fall Season."



From the Editor

Ned W. Rhodes

As I put this newsletter together, the weatherman is predicting that our high will be in the seventies this weekend. That is 30-40 degrees cooler than the highs we had at the July Float-in and I can't wait! Fall is my favorite time to boat because of the cool nights and the warm days. Arleen, Jess and I are looking forward to extending the season as much as we can.

In this newsletter, we return to our traditional format which reports on the past Board meetings. In addition, I have included a few articles from member club newsletters describing their view of the Float-in. I am always amazed at the different slants of the articles and sometimes I feel that I must have attended a different Float-in.

As always, we are looking for contributions for this newsletter. Please send any news items, newsletters and articles to me at 2001 North Kenilworth Street, Arlington, VA 22205-3130. Or, if you are electronically inclined, we may be reached at rhodesn@aol.com.

See you at the End of Summer Party at Tantallon.



Potomac River Yacht Clubs Association Board Meeting Ft. Washington Marina Monday, 10 July 1995

Present:

Commodore:	John Hancock
Vice Comm.:	Penny DeMarco
Rear Comm:	Bud Clark
Secretary	Ineke Lavoie
Treasurer:	Harriet Douglas
Fleet Captain:	Darrell Edgar
IPC:	Ned Rhodes
MALs:	Mark Viehoever, Steve Donock and Steve Wexler
Guest:	Pinkney Little, Monica Lovell and Joe Orth

The meeting was called to order by Comm Hancock at 6:45 PM.

Old Business:

- Secretary's report was accepted as printed.
- Treasurer's report was accepted as printed and read. Colonial YC has paid its '95 dues.

New Business:

Most of the meeting concentrated on the July 15-17 Float-In at Ft. Washington, and MAL Wexler gave a detailed report on all the preparations. Raffle items, door prizes, PRYCA items for sale were discussed, and club slip assignments were handed out. Motion was passed to give MAL Wexler up to \$200 in discretionary funds for tips. The latest number of guests was 255 adults and 9 children, a record number! Invitations to Saturday's Commodore's Call will be enclosed in registration packages, and MAL Wexler mentioned he extended invitations to local fire stations. FC Edgar gave inventory detail, and Pinkney

Little said Ft. Washington Boating Association will have complimentary coffee and doughnuts for all Saturday AM.

Comm Hancock:

-will report at August meeting on PRYCA Incorporation status.

-will write letter to Aquia Harbour YC congratulating them on their platinum anniversary.

-urged people to give input to VC DeMarco for By-Laws Steering Committee ASAP, since Committee will issue review at August meeting.

RC Clark mentioned:

-the Sept. 16-17 End of Summer event at Tantallon YC, details of which will be published in the newsletter.

-January 27, 1996 Change of Watch will be held at Old Colony Inn in Alexandria; motion was passed to pay \$500 deposit.

IPC Rhodes, as head of Nominating Committee, will be talking with people, and submit Roster by October 10.

MAL Viehoever had spoken with Delegate Puglisi from Eastern YC who had noticed an increase in DNR activity at Spoils Cove.

The September 11 Board and Delegates Meeting will be held at Mt. Vernon YC.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM until the next Board Meeting Monday, August 7 aboard *Sea Lark* at the Alexandria Waterfront at 6:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ineke Lavoie, Secretary

**Potomac River Yacht Clubs
Association
Board Meeting
aboard *Sea Lark*, Alexandria
Waterfront
Monday, 7 August 1995**

Present:

Commodore: John Hancock
Vice Comm: Penny DeMarco
Rear Comm: Bud Clark
Secretary: Ineke Lavoie
Treasurer: Harriet Douglas
IPC: Ned Rhodes
MALs: Mark Viehoever and
Steve Donock
Guest: Joe Orth

The meeting was called to order by Comm Hancock at 6:45 PM.

Old Business:

Secretary's report was accepted with Comm Hancock mentioning that article regarding Aquia Harbour YC's platinum anniversary was printed in recent newsletter.

Treasurer's report was accepted as printed and read. The 1995 Float-In netted approximately \$3,000, and it was decided to have the Finance Committee look into how to disburse these funds, include in October budget, and present at November Delegate's Meeting at Capital YC.

Comm Hancock wrote letter to Marty Weiner, Comm CBYCA, formally appointing VC DeMarco as PRYCA liaison to CBYCA.

New Business:

Comm Hancock:

-reported that PRYCA's Incorporation status in D.C. has been revoked since 1992, due to failure to pay. It was decided to reinstate this procedure, at a total cost of \$165.00,

with Treasurer Douglas agreeing to serve as the registered agent.

-will try to get updated status of Wallop-Breaux bill in Congress at August 12 CBYCA meeting.

-reiterated achieved goals set for '95 Board: good CBYCA relationship, excellent MAL contacts with clubs, Boat Roster publication and new club membership.

VC DeMarco:

-handed out report with suggested changes to PRYCA's Constitution and By-laws to help modernize it. Board members are urged to review this and contact her no later than Labor Day weekend with suggested changes and/or corrections so they can be incorporated for presentation at the Sept. 11 Delegates Meeting at Mt. Vernon YC.

-mentioned that National Boating Federation will have its April 1996 meeting in D.C., possibly at Old Dominion Club.

RC Clark:

-discussed the End of Summer Party at Tantallon YC Sept. 16-17, and it was approved to donate up to \$300 by PRYCA to TYC for this particular event.

-will pay \$500 reservation deposit to Old Colony Inn for January 27, 1996 Change of Watch. 1996 will be the 25th anniversary, and as many Past Commodores and Officers as possible will be invited to this special event. PC Goodman will write PRYCA history, and MAL Viehoever will contact the Wright Band to provide the music.

-FC Edgar went over current inventory which consists mainly of burgees and visors; he reported that PRYCA pins will be available at Tantallon YC's End of Summer Party at \$5.00 each, and a motion was passed to approve up to \$800 in payment for ordering new shirts and 2 dozen hats.



IPC Rhodes was commended on a great Float-In Newsletter.

MAL Wexler wrote a letter to Bill Gooding, Comm Quantico YC, on July 6 inviting them to join PRYCA, and Comm Hancock followed up with another letter August 7, complete with membership package.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM until the next Board Meeting Monday, Sept. 11 at Mt. Vernon Yacht Club at 6:00 PM, followed by Delegates Meeting at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ineke Lavoie, Secretary



From the Occoquan Yacht Club

Sandy Leathers

On July 14th, PRYCA held their annual summer Float-In at Fort Washington Marina. This year Steve Wexler, PRYCA Member-at-Large, was the Chairman for the event and OYC acted as the host yacht club. Steve did an outstanding job organizing this event for PRYCA. John Hancock, Commodore of PRYCA, commented in the PRYCA newsletter that "Advanced registration and planning indicated this will be the best attended and organized Float-In in our decade-long history of fun and frolic." It was!! And hot, too! 118 boats from fifteen yacht clubs attended. OYC was very enthusiastic about winning the Aquia Cup again, however Aquia Harbour Yacht Club took 1st place. Pat Steele coordinated 100% of all items on the Scavenger Hunt, Mary Ann Coldwell, Roxana Grosson, Tom Egmore, and Ned Rhodes led the Shore Dexterity events, tying all the knots required, and Monica and Henry Lovell, Joe Grosson and Jillian Sorrenti rowed for 3rd place in the Dingy Race. I'm sure Steve will have additional comments and many "thank yous" to all the OYC helpers at the registration desk, dock captains, and radio communications. OYC is very proud of the job Steve did, and it is rumored that Steve Donock will be the Chairman next year.

From the Occoquan Yacht Club

Steve Wexler

I would like to personally thank all of the OYC members who assisted as the "host" club for the PRYCA Float-In. In particular, I couldn't have managed without the Hanky Panky crew...Monica and Henry really filled in for me when I wasn't feeling well.

Potomac River Yacht Clubs Association

Treasurer's Report

July 10, 1995

Beginning Balance		\$2,467.19
Deposits:		
6/7/95, Interest	\$8.64	
7/3/95, Colonial YC Dues	45.00	
7/3/95, Float-In	14,454.75	
7/7/95, Float-In	<u>993.25</u>	
Total Deposits		\$15,501.64
Deductions:		
6/5/95, Deposit (tent, etc.)	\$1,283.50	
6/5/95, Postage	12.80	
6/7/95, Service charge	16.84	
6/26/95, Burgees	<u>20.25</u>	
Total Deductions		<u>1,333.39</u>
Ending Balance		\$16,635.44

ALL CLUBS HAVE PAID THEIR 1995 DUES

Respectfully submitted,
Harriet Douglas, Treasurer

As usual, Commodore Sandy was always there to help...and Dave Moore, Al Hobson and Ray Steele capably assisted FC Darrel Edgar in docking over 115 boats. I would be remiss if I didn't mention Paula...who drove the boat, handled my responsibilities when I couldn't, and generally served as second-in-command when I went down. I personally want to express my gratitude for Penny DeMarco's unwavering energy, Joe Orth's capable leadership for the Aquia Cup competition, and all of the PRYCA board members for pitching in and putting together a great event.

PRYCA Float-In

Reprinted from National Potomac Yacht Club's The Skipper.

This weekend keeps getting better each year. Despite a record breaking HOT, HOT weekend, I think everyone in NPYC that attended the Float-In had a great time. Once again, NPYC had the highest number of boats—20. We had 50 adults and one infant (Matthew Shipley, age 6 weeks). All in all 115 boats, 10 clubs, and approximately 280 persons participated. This surely must be one of the largest gatherings of this kind ever.

In keeping with our traditions, we had a feast Friday night, with tenderloin steak and lots of corn on the cob. PC Dennis Voegler was the Chef Extraordinaire for the steaks, while Commodore Dotti Vallone cooked up the corn aboard Vallone Ranger. We enjoyed this meal under the PRYCA tent, which thankfully had several large fans to keep the temperature at least slightly bearable. Since it was so hot, most of us retired fairly early to our air conditioned boats.

Saturday brought the famous Aquia Cup Competition. This year the

Aquia Cup was organized by our own PC Joe Orth. No, I really didn't have any prior knowledge of Joe's Top Secret list for the Scavenger Hunt, but NPYC still did its usual great job and was able to get all of the items one way or another. This gave us a tie for first place in the Scavenger Hunt. Brook Davis once again took charge of collecting all the items and directing to production of a couple of "reasonable reproductions"—most notably the SEXTANT. For those of you who were not fortunate enough to have seen Brook's rendition of a sextant, ask her to reproduce it for you sometime—you will enjoy it.

The next part of the contest was the Shore Dexterity Events. Our able team was made up of PC Dennis Voegler, new members Bob Warnke and Kathy Leinen, and yours truly. We did very well in the knot tying, getting 15 out of a possible 16 points. We got only one point in the "Man Overboard" Frisbee toss, but got 3 points for lassoing the piling. We tied for second place in this event.

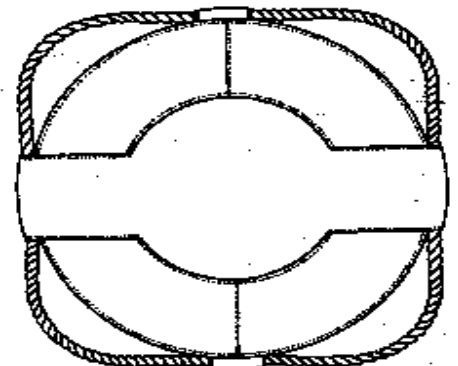
Next came our usual undoing, the Dinghy Race. Our two teams were Bob and Kathy and Vicki Peay and Faron Lamb. Since we were last in this event in 1994, we got first choice when we wanted to race. We chose last. Bob and Kathy got into some trouble bumping into the other team racing, but still made good time. Our real champion was Vicki—she paddled so fast that she appeared little more than a blur throughout the return trip of our dinghy. All this added up to a third place in the Dinghy Race—the best showing ever for NPYC. Overall we came in 2nd, with Aquia Harbour Yacht Club retaining the cup.

During all these events and the rest of the day on Saturday, the main idea was to keep cool, if possible. We started out on the Vallone Ranger for

breakfast; gathered in the PRYCA tent, trying to get close to a fan, if possible; doused ourselves with a hose; enjoyed the Ft. Washington swimming pool; escaped to our boats for a stint in air conditioning; shot at each other with squirt guns or spray bottles (I had one of each of these all day and no one complained when I hit them with water); etc., etc. Saturday night there was a great buffet dinner and we enjoyed the music of The Wright Touch band. Despite the heat, people really danced a lot!

All too soon, it was Sunday morning, time to enjoy the brunch and get ready to leave Ft. Washington. We really need to thank Steve Wexler of Occoquan Yacht Club for the great success of the Float-In this year. He actually volunteered to be the coordinator for PRYCA, and he really did a great job. It is quite an undertaking for an event like this to take place. I really congratulate all NPYC participants (as well as all others) for their cooperation with the PRYCA organizers. Despite the unbearable heat, we had just about no complaints and there were no problems created by any of the attendees.

I hope all of you had as much fun as I did! I continue to meet and make friends with more people in other clubs at these PRYCA parties. Mark your calendars for July 1996—it will be PRYCA's 25th anniversary, so the Float-In should be great.





PRYCA Float-In

Reprinted from Aquia Harbour Yacht Club's The Gull.

Aquia's Cup is still in our possession!!! Thanks in part to our Fleet Captain Iva Hippert and most certainly to the very energetic and enthusiastic Sandie Doucette. Sandie worried about who would do what, how to find scavenger hunt items, who could toss a Frisbee, who would teach how to do marlinespike (tie knots in strings as my first mate used to say) and would we have enough power and coordination in the eight arms it would take to row the dinghy from pier to pier. Congratulations and thanks to all of you!

A Record Float-In

MAL Steve Wexler

The 1995 Float-In registered records for attendance and heat. We had 115 boats and over 270 people attend this year's Float-In at Ft. Washington Marina on July 14th through 16th. In addition, the thermometers passed through 105 degrees on Saturday. Thank goodness RC Bud Clark (TYC) arranged for those fans under the big tent. And the continuing efforts of MAL Mark Viehoever (TYC) and FC Darrel Edgar (AHYC) were invaluable.

I would be remiss if I did not publicly thank VC Penny DeMarco (NPYC) for her non-stop energy and cooperation. Penny, all of the members of PRYCA appreciate your zeal, creativity and dogmatic persistence in achieving excellence. I could not have completed this undertaking without you.

Also a special note of appreciation to Joe Orth (NPYC) for organizing this

year's Aquia Cup competition—a lot of work in the heat of Saturday.

Some congratulatory notes:

Aquia Harbour Yacht Club successfully completed their defense of the Aquia Cup. For the rest of the member clubs: "Wait 'til next year." It's never too early to enroll your members in dinghy rowing and lassoing classes.

Sandra Hense aboard Ida-Ho (CYC) won this year's raffle for a free Float-In weekend.

Marv Storey aboard Orion (DYC) garnered the Garmin GPS 75.

Judy Voegler aboard My Harem Too (NPYC) took home PRYCA's check for \$150 toward her next fill-up of fuel.

Jane Sullivan (NPYC) held the winning ticket for the 50/50 raffle.

The contributing business sponsors donated 25 door prizes. The sponsors, once again, were:

- Alexandria Drafting Company
- Washington Marine
- West Marine
- Tyme 'n Tyde Marina
- Prince William Marine
- Chesapeake Bay Magazine
- Holy Acres RV and Marine
- Aquia Harbour Marina
- Swan Creek Associates
- (Tantallon Marina)

BOAT/U.S.

Overton's

A special thanks to West Marine for donating \$5.00 gift certificates to every boat in attendance. Also a warm thank-you to the staff of Ft. Washington Marina for their cooperation and assistance.

I personally want to thank my First Mate, Paula Messer, for jumping in and covering for me on Friday when I couldn't get out of my sick bed. She loaded our boat (including the Captain), drove the boat, and helped to

organize Friday's activities when I was otherwise involved (in sleeping and grumbling).

I truly appreciate the opportunity Commodore John Hancock afforded me by allowing me to work with a great group of people to bring the Potomac River boating community closer together. I am already looking forward to next year's event—I hope you are as well!!

Restored Piney Point Lighthouse near planned underwater park

Michael Humphries tries to put his finger on why people like lighthouses, even the squat, stubby one in southern Maryland he watches over like he has keeper's blood in him.

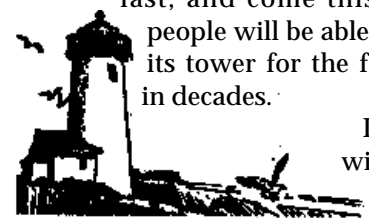
He floats a few theories: "The day you retire, you jump in the car and go visit a lighthouse." That's one. Another: "Things that are stationary act as an anchor" in this modern era of transition and people on the move. "It's a way of passing on the mantle from one generation to another."

"I don't know quite what it is," he admits, "but they do emit an aura of romance. There's a mystique about lighthouses."

Humphries is banking on that whatever-it-is to help make "his" lighthouse at Piney Point on the Potomac River a place people will want to visit and where they can mine some of the area's rich veins of history. The first lighthouse on the Potomac, Piney Point now stands as one of the mighty river's

last, and come this spring people will be able to climb its tower for the first time in decades.

It also will be the staging





area for the state's first underwater preserve, a submerged park a few hundred yards away where the so-called Black Panther, a German U-boat that was rubber-clad to avoid sonar detection, was sunk by the U.S. government after World War II.

When Humphries, director of St. Mary's County's museum division, took over the six-acre lighthouse site in 1990, he already knew his goal: bring the light back to life.

On Christmas Eve, 1835, the Sutter family sold to the federal government 2.5 acres on Piney Point, about 14 miles up the Potomac from Chesapeake Bay. Six months later, in June 1836, Piney Point lighthouse opened. Thirty-five feet tall, its tower contained 10 oil lamps and 10 reflectors that cast a beam 11 miles and helped ships navigate the river's shoaly waters as they made their way to Alexandria, Va., Washington, D.C., and other ports upriver.

One of 11 Potomac River lights, Piney Point switched to a fifth-order Fresnel lens in 1855, the same year officials built a breakwater to prevent erosion (the lighthouse now sits on about 6 acres of beach that has built up over the years). Officials built a neighboring wooden bell tower in 1880, which no longer exists.

Among the several keeps who tended the light, four were women, two of whom succeeded their husbands' tenure, and Humphries is pretty sure that Loch Humphries, who took over the light in 1912, is an ancestor.

Officials decommissioned Piney Point in 1964.

When Humphries started the restoration in 1990, "It was such a mess." The first job was hauling about four dump truck loads of garbage from the lighthouse, keeper's house and the

quartermaster's house, a smaller dwelling behind the keeper's house.

The county sheriff assigned Humphries two inmates who helped him for a year renovating the keeper's quarters, which essentially already had been gutted. They renovated the other house and turned what was a garage into a gift shop and indoor museum area, whose exhibits have not yet been completed.

Humphries built a deck walkway through the property leading to the lighthouse and then out to a pier, lined with imitation gas lamps and exhibit panels that explain the lighthouse's and river's history. (Humphries invites boaters to visit the lighthouse via water; the pier has deep water.)

Last fall, brick mason Ray Cannetti began restoring the tower's bricks and mortar, much of which had eroded from years of water insinuating its way down into the thick walls. As Cannetti worked, Humphries says, the lighthouse revealed a bit of its history. By looking at the type of stones he uncovered and the way the stones were cut, he could tell where they came from.

The foundation stones, for example, came from the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, which was being blasted and dredged out at the time. The stone on the "light deck"—the small room where the light and lens sat—came from the Aquia Creek Quarry and is the same stone used in the White House and Capitol.

And, Humphries says, Cannetti believes one man, who happened to be right-handed, laid all the brick himself during that winter of 1835-36.

The lighthouse's lens is at the Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Va., and a local resident owns the tower's bell; Humphries hopes to get both artifacts on loan.

So far, the site's restoration has cost about \$100,000, including a

\$41,000 grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; \$20,000 from the state; \$11,000 from Steuart Petroleum, which operates a tank farm and offshore loading facility at Piney Point; and \$11,000 from the Foundation of the Friends of St. Clements Island Museum, another museum further upstream which Humphries also oversees.

"The real key here is how the private sector has kicked in," he says.

Though it's a quiet community now, Piney Point has been a vacation hotbed for years; in 1820 President James Monroe frequented a cottage there called the Summer White House. Other former presidents who visited included Theodore Roosevelt and Franklin Pierce.

In the 1930s and 40s, when steamboats carried tourists and passengers up and down the bay, Piney Point was home to a hotel (now an empty property next to the light) that was one of the steamers' popular destination spots.

Humphries wants to meld all that history—along with that of the long-time military testing along the Potomac and the myriad shipwrecks in the area that are just now starting to be charted—into that of Piney Point Lighthouse.

During winter, the lighthouse and gift shop are open on weekends. Summer hours are dawn to dusk, with special nighttime tours planned for this summer. For information call 301-944-1471.

Reprinted from Soudings, January 1995



PRYCA Activities Calendar

September 1995 - January 1996

> This revised calendar for the late 1995 and early 1996 lists planned PRYCA and member club activities known to us as of the date of publication. Information on other marine events (e.g., boat shows) is included for planning.

> All member clubs are invited to provide highlights of their planned activities (opening days, major events, etc.) for incorporation into future editions of this calendar. Calendar information should be given to RC Bud Clark at 703/780-7135.

> Input deadlines for the PRYCA Newsletter also are shown. Send newsletter articles and notes to IPC Ned Rhodes at 703/534-2297.

• September 1995

- * Fri, 1st Input Deadline for September PRYCA Newsletter
- Sat, 9th Aquia Harbour YC - Marina Fest 703/659-0764

- Mon, 11th 6:00pm, PRYCA Board Meeting at Mt. Vernon Yacht Club
7:30pm, PRYCA Delegates Meeting at Mt. Vernon Yacht Club
>>Topics: - PRYCA Activities
- Revised PRYCA Constitution, By-Laws and Handbook

- Sat, 16th Aquia Harbour YC - Crab Feast 703/659-0764
- **Sat, 16th-Sun, 17th PRYCA Fall Event: End of Summer Party at Tantallon Yacht Club**
- Sat, 23rd-Sun, 24th Occoquan Yacht Club- Shrimp Feast & Bonfire at the Dunes, Mattawoman Creek
- Sat, 30th Seafarers Yacht Club - Dinner-Dance 301/292-9373

• October 1995

- Mon, 2nd 6:30pm, PRYCA Board Meeting at Eastern Power Boat Club
- Thu, 5th-Mon, 9th Annapolis Sailboat Show 410/268-8828
- Sat, 7th 1:00pm, National Potomac YC - OktoberFest, Columbia Island
- Thu, 12th-Sun, 15th Annapolis Power Boat Show 410/268-8828
- Sat, 14th District Yacht Club - OktoberFest & Flea Market 202/543-9788
- Sat, 21st Occoquan Yacht Club - Chili Cook-Off
- * Fri, 27th Input Deadline for November PRYCA Newsletter

• November 1995

- Sat, 4th 1:00pm, National Potomac Yacht Club - Oyster Roast

- Mon, 6th 6:00pm, PRYCA Board Meeting at Capital Yacht Club
7:30pm, PRYCA Delegates Meeting at Capital Yacht Club
>> Special Topic: Election of PRYCA Officers for 1996
>> Guest Speaker: Jack Arney, MD Dept. of Natural Resources

- Sat, 11th Aquia Harbour YC -Fall Ball & Change of Command 703/659-0764
- Sat, 11th Tantallon Yacht Club - Steak Night with Music 301/292-8226

• December 1995

- Sat, 2nd Tantallon Yacht Club - Holiday/Christmas Party 301/292-8226
- Sat, 2nd Occoquan Yacht Club - Ball 703/425-1994
- Sat, 2nd Aquia Harbour YC - Christmas Party 703/659-0764
- Mon, 6th 7:00pm, PRYCA Board Meeting at Seafarers Yacht Club
- Sat, 9th District Yacht Club - Christmas Party 202/543-9788
- **Sat, 9th 7:00pm, Waterfront Washington - Parade of Boats & Lights in Washington Channel; Party at Capital YC**
- Sat, 16th 7:00pm, National Potomac YC - Change of Watch Ball at TBD
- Sat, 16th-23rd Seafarers Yacht Club - Christmas Social 301/292-9373

• January 1996

- Sat, 27th 7:00pm, PRYCA Winter Event: Change of Watch Dinner-Dance at Old Colony Inn, Alexandria, VA

1995 PRYCA Delegates Meetings

<u>PRYCA Delegates Meeting / Location</u>	<u>Supporting Club</u>	<u>Topic</u>
✓ Special Meeting, PRYCA Bridge 28 Jan at Army-Navy CC	National Potomac YC	Install '95 Officers Induct Ft. Wash. Boating Assn.
✓ Winter Meeting 6 Feb at Capital YC	Capital YC	CBYCA - Penny DeMarco MD Legislation - Buzz Wilson (VA Legislation - Nicole Larsen)
✓ Spring Meeting 3 Apr at Tantallon	Tantallon YC	Commodore's Night Commodores Committee PRYCA Goals & Objectives
• Summer Meeting 11 Sept at Mt. Vernon Yacht Club 1800 - Board Meeting 1930 - Delegates Meeting	Mt. Vernon Yacht Club	- Review of PRYCA Activities - Revised PRYCA Constitution, By-Laws & Handbook
• Fall Meeting 6 Nov at Capital Yacht Club 1800 - Board Meeting 1930 - Delegates Meeting	Capital Yacht Club	- Elections for 1996 - Presentation: "Recreational Boating Outlook & Issues" by Jack Arney, Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources


2800 BRILLINGTON ROAD
 ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22208
 (703) 884-7121

3410 WILSON BOULEVARD
 ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22204
 (703) 424-2020

ALLEN PHOTO SERVICE, INC.



2001 North Randolph Road • Arlington, Virginia 22205 • (703) 524-1297
 FAX: 528-2127-8884

Ned W. Rhodes, CEO
 President

Software Systems Group


Upcoming Events

PRYCA Board Meeting @ Eastern Power 6:30 Deadline for November PRYCA Newsletter PRYCA Board Meeting @ Capital YC 6:00 PRYCA Delegates Meeting 7:30	Oct 2: Oct 27: Nov 6:
---	-----------------------------


Potomac River Yacht Clubs Association

1600 N. Oak Street, #1610
 Arlington, VA 22209

Address Correction Requested