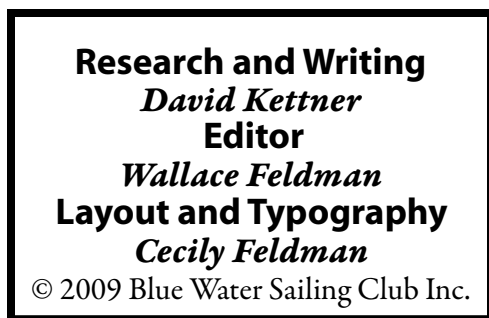


*Blue Water Sailing
Club*

*50th
Anniversary*

1959 – 2009



Acknowledgements

This booklet is a condensed version of an intensively researched document prepared by David Kettner, our BWSC Log editor. The full-scale version, which runs over 40 full-sized pages with footnotes and appendices, was developed by Dave from many sources, including a large box of physical archives dating back to 1960. It is truly a labor of love which took him several months.

The original version will eventually end up on the BWSC Web Site, and also as a CD in the physical archive collection. It may possibly be published in book form as well.

The layout, typography and printer-ready version of this booklet are the result of Cecily Feldman's skill with page layout programs.

I am grateful to both of them for their hours of devoted labor. Any errors in the book are to be attributed to me.

Wallace Feldman, Editor



The Beginning

In 1968, the following summary of the Blue Water Sailing Club's early history and activities was written by Roger Williams, Jr., and inserted into the club Year Book:

“On a Saturday in September 1959 following the finish of an auxiliary race, a group of four ardent auxiliary sailors gather to bat the breeze. During the course of the gab it was lamented that there were so few auxiliary day races and organized cruises. Why couldn't an organization be formed modeled after the very successful twenty-two year old Off Soundings Club? That was just what was needed in eastern New England waters. Enthusiasm mounted and as the group broke up it was agreed that they would all get busy on the telephone contacting sailing friends for their reactions and would keep in touch with each other on developments. The results of the telephone calls were exciting and in October a dinner meeting for an expanded group was held in the Commodore's Lounge at the Marblehead station of the Boston Yacht Club.”

“At the Marblehead Dinner Meeting it was decided to form an organization along the lines of the Off Soundings Club, the new club to be known as the Blue Water Sailing Club, -- its purpose being to promote weekend sailing, family cruising, and racing. Committees were appointed and activities planned. To promote further interest in the BWSC a dinner meeting was held on Thursday, December 2, 1959 at the Smith House, 50 Memorial Drive, Cambridge, Mass.”

“The Smith House meeting was a tremendous success, plans having been made for an attendance of forty with a turnout of seventy-nine interested boat owners. Simmie LeBlanc acted as the chairman until after the election of officers. The purpose of the Club was outlined in detail. A Constitution and By-Laws were adopted. The following officers were elected:

Commodore, Roger W. Kent
Vice Commodore, Jack E. Willson
Rear Commodore, George G. Crocker
Secretary, Dr. Paul F. McBride
Treasurer, Charles W. Turner

A burgee was adopted.”

“On February 27, 1960 the paid membership was seventy-four regular and seven associate members. The first annual meeting was held April 21st at the Colony Hotel in Swampscott with an attendance of over two hundred people.”

“At the June Regatta at Scituate there were sixty-five boats and three hundred and seventy-five people ashore for dinner. An informal cruise to Provincetown in August drew ten boats with fifty people ashore for dinner. The Fall Regatta at Marblehead had forty-five boats and two hundred for dinner.”

Thus was the Blue Water Sailing Club launched.

In 1962, the earliest year for which we have information, the shortest boat length was 18 feet, while the longest was 54.2 feet. The average boat length was 33.7 feet, and the median boat length was 34 feet. There were 93 boats listed in the club. The first constitution limited membership to 100. In those days, the membership was listed by the men’s names. Women (spouses) were noted parenthetically in the yearbook, a practice that was likely consistent with other yacht clubs at the time. The membership lived primarily in the greater Boston area e.g., Hingham, Marblehead, Belmont, etc, but there also were three members in Maine and one in New Jersey.

By 1968, the membership limit in the BWSC constitution had increased to 125. In subsequent years, the membership limit was increased, and by 1979, 20 years after the founding, the Club had grown to 218 memberships.

The Club was established originally to focus primarily on sailboat racing and socializing. Prospective members were required to participate in at least one Club race, and to fly a candidate’s pennant while doing so. The founders of the club were evidently very ardent sailors, for the membership requirements clearly state, “Any member purchasing a motorboat or motor sailer (sic) will be automatically dropped from the rolls.”



Across the Years

1959 - 1979

The early Year Books provide a glimpse of the Club's activities across the years. The earliest issue in hand, 1962, shows the emphasis on racing, but otherwise lists no other special committees. There is a description of the rules for applying time penalties (sort of a reverse handicap) to winning racers, and a list of penalties across 26 winning boats. Six years later, in 1968, the Board of Governors had created several special committees – Spring Meeting, Spring Regatta, Summer Cruise, Fall Regatta, and Annual Meeting. The list of boats and penalties was no longer included in the Year Book. In 1970 Mini Cruise and October Cruise committees had been added. A special Bicentennial Cruising Race committee was added for one year in 1976. It is interesting to note that, although the Blue Water Sailing Club helped organize and participated in the Marion – Bermuda race, there is no mention of it in the Year Books for 1978 and 1979.

The Blue Water Sailing Club wrestled over the years with the question of how to rate club boats. The Club first used the rules that had been adopted by the Off Soundings Club. Members were required to have their boats measured -- including being weighed for an accurate displacement value. This was the basis for Blue Water Sailing Club certification. The list of Club officers includes the position "Measurer." Boats were expected to have either Blue Water Sailing Club certification or Cruising Club of America (CCA) certification in order to participate in Club races. The Club Measurer was expected to issue certificates, or obtain verification of CCA certification by the members.

After several years of operating under these rules, the Board of Governors commissioned a review in 1966. Halsey Herreshoff was asked to review the state of racing rules then in use, and to recommend what the Club should do.

A point-assignment system was adopted in which all boats and skippers were assigned points depending on their final position in the race. The intent of the system was the same as before -- to equalize a boat and skipper's probability of winning.

In 1970, the North America Yacht Racing Union accepted the International Offshore Racing Rule (IOR), but this was not adopted for Blue water races. In the fall of 1970, the Yacht Racing Union of Massachusetts Bay (YRUMB) proposed a new rating rule named the YRUMB Rule for Cruising Yachts. It was not until the spring of 1980 that the Club adopted the Performance Handicap Racing Fleet formulation for rating boats. This rating system became very popular nation-wide, and provided many more racing venues for Club members.

1980 - 1989

In 1980, the Special Committees listed in the Year Book consisted of the Mountain Top Ski Weekend, Spring Meeting, Spring Regatta, Misery Island Raft-In, Summer Cruise (Maine), Summer Cruise (Cape), Bras D'Or Lake Cruise, Fall Regatta, Oktoberfest, and Annual Meeting. The Maine Cruise was in July, and the Cape Cruise in August. The calendar was occupied from March through November that year. Although not listed in the Year Book, there was also a charter cruise in the Caribbean planned. In the 1981 Year Book, the Caribbean Cruise is listed as another committee. In 1982, a committee to plan a Mid-Winter Social event was established, but this was a one-time event. In 1983, the Marion-Bermuda Race finally achieved the status of a committee and a place on the published calendar.

In 1984, there was a committee to plan a 25th Anniversary Ball. In 1985, the first of the seminars was established, with First Aid/CPR Training, and a Racing Rules Workshop. The First Aid/CPR became a regular yearly seminar for five more years. The terminology "Cape Cruise" was replaced by "Southern Cruise," presumably to indicate the activity had a wider geographic scope. In 1986, a Cruise to the Gaspé Peninsula was planned. In 1988 a Scituate - Campobello race was planned. The Maine Cruise had moved to August, after the Southern Cruise. It is clear from all these activities that the focus in the club had shifted to more family social activities, with less emphasis on racing. By 1989, the list of Club activities listed in the Year Book had grown from 10 to 14 events.

1990 - 1999

In 1990, the Board of Governors refined the definition of “members” to include spouses. “Regular Members” meant individuals or couples. The Club calendar was filled with 16 events from January through November. There were six seminars, the two Club meetings, two Regattas, a race, a ski weekend, two cruises, and two other on-water events. The race went to Campobello and the St John River. Membership in 1990 was 192. In 1991, there were 19 events on the calendar, including three related to the Marion – Bermuda race and a cruise to Newfoundland. In the 1991 Year Book (women) spouses were no longer listed parenthetically. The Club Constitution was amended that year to add a clause under membership stating that membership “...shall not be restricted on the grounds of sex, race, religion, ancestry, or national origin.” In 1992, a Campobello / Passamaquoddy Cruise was planned. A Blue Water Sailing Club “Sail Boston 1992” committee was formed to participate in the event and helped coordinate hospitality for the tall ship SOREN LARSEN.

The highlights in 1993 were the Marion – Bermuda race and a Chesapeake Cruise. The 1993 Maine cruise spent its first 5 days in solid fog, giving rise to the famous (infamous?) calypso ditty “Radar Rendezvous”, sung by the whole cruise contingent on the deck at the Deckhouse Restaurant in Southwest harbor. Cruises were emphasized in 1994; there were eight, in addition to the Spring and Fall Regattas. There were two July 4th events (Boston and Cape Cod), a Southern Cruise, a trip on the St John River, the Maine Cruise, and a Labor Day Weekend Cruise. There were 25 boats participating in the Southern Cruise, 12 boats in the St John River Cruise, and 16 in the Maine Cruise.

In 1995, in addition to the regular Marion – Bermuda Race, there were three July 4th events (North, South, and Maine), three Labor Day events, Southern and Maine Cruises, and a group charter to Turkey. The Maine Cruise attracted 22 boats, but ended early due to a hurricane warning. Twenty Club members and two guests chartered five boats for 2½ weeks in Turkey in October. The 1995 Year Book is the first to include a synopsis of each of the events from April 1994 to April 1995. In 1996, there was an increased emphasis in seminars – seven were planned. The Spring Regatta was moved from mid-June, where it had been previously, to Memorial Day. A cruise to Nova Scotia was also planned. Nine boats assembled at Baddeck, NS in July, traveling in “...some of worst July weather in Nova Scotia memory...” Apparently, the return trip was no better, with wind on the nose, rain and fog.

In 1997, there were two events for women – the first a “...special No Cooking – No Shouting...” seminar in a group discussion format, and the second an on-the-water event. There were eight BWSC boats in the Marion – Bermuda Race, yielding three third place finishes and one fourth-place finish. The year 1997 was the 200th birthday for Old Ironsides. BWSC members were able to sail along with her during her trip to Marblehead Harbor and return the next day. The Maine Cruise attracted 22 boats and went down east to Roque Island.

The BWSC fortieth anniversary year, 1999, had 18 events. The theme of women-only events continued, with a classroom workshop and a weeklong Women’s Cruise in June. A seminar on celestial navigation, held at the Museum of Science Hayden Planetarium, showed that the use of GPS still had not become ubiquitous. A charter cruise to Tonga was planned. The southern cruise traveled from Conanicut Marina in Jamestown, Rhode Island, to New York City. Ten boats flying the Blue Water Sailing Club burgee were accompanied by six US Navy vessels on their way down the East River. The 40th anniversary gala was at the Harvard Club in Boston; Ted Hood gave the keynote address.

2000 – 2008

After forty years of practice, Club operations were running very smoothly. Sixteen events were planned for 2000, including a St. John River Cruise in July. The Blue Water Sailing Club Commodore and Vice Commodore were appointed to the Executive Committee for the Marion – Bermuda race by the Marion Bermuda Yacht Racing Association. The club website was started. A cruise to the French Riviera was planned. There were 30 boats in the Maine cruise. The first stage of the cruise was an overnight to Southwest Harbor. Thirty boats participated in the July 4th event at Sippican Harbor. The (more or less) annual ski trip took members to Utah – Alta, Snowbird, Solitude, Park City, the Canyons, and Deer Valley.

In 2001, there were again 16 Club events. In 2003, a cruise to Croatia was planned. The Blue Water Sailing Club and the Corinthian Yacht Club co-sponsored a new transatlantic race title The Liberty Cup. It originated in Marblehead, and was to end at Lorient, on the Brittany coast of France. The hope was to create a biennial race. Unfortunately, there were too few participants to make the event economically viable, and it was cancelled. In 2004,

the Board of Governors created the Russ Kingman Award. It commemorated Russell Kingman, the Club Commodore in 1995, who was particularly concerned with the spirit of member volunteerism that helped the club operate. The Maine Cruise had 29 boats participating, The Southern Cruise boasted 50 participants at a pig roast in Padanaram.

In 2005, a cruise to Greece was planned. In 2006, the Blue Water Sailing Club added the term “Rendezvous” to its lexicon. There were 17 locations from Tiverton, Rhode Island to Bucks Harbor, Maine with hosts willing to organize informal gatherings with other Club members. The annual meeting that year was held at the New Bedford Whaling Museum. The Southern Cruise returned to New York City; the last such trip had been six years earlier. Nine boats started to Mystic Seaport. Highlights of the trip included an encounter with a nuclear submarine, wine tasting on Long Island, lunch at the New York Yacht Club, and visits to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. Four boats made a two-week trip to Passamaquoddy Bay, visiting several harbors including Campobello, St. Andrews, Digdeguash, Federal Harbor and Roque Island.

In 2007, the Offshore 200 event was conceived. This was a 200 nautical mile overnight and offshore sailing adventure, designed for novices to increase their comfort level with this challenge. Four club boats participated in the 2007 Marion-Bermuda Race, capturing a first in celestial class, the Blue Water Sailing Club Commodore’s Cup, the Ancient Mariner (for oldest competitor), and two cook’s trophies (for the last boat in a class). 2008 saw 21 events, including five seminars, 3 cultural events (two tours of the map exhibition at the Boston Public Library and a special tour of nautical paintings at the MFA in Boston) plus the regular holiday weekends from Memorial Day through Columbus Day. Cruises included the 10th annual women’s cruise and successful Southern and Maine cruises.





Significant Long Races

The Marion Bermuda Race beginning 1977

History records that the Marion–Bermuda Race was initially conceived by W. David Kingery, a Blue Water Sailing Club member and member of the Beverly Yacht Club, during a single-handed (!) passage to Bermuda. He was motivated by the observation that in the 60-plus year history of the Newport – Bermuda race the field was dominated by specialists in yacht design striving to create a winning boat. This, coupled with the evolution in International Offshore Rules (IOR), had all but driven out the “ordinary” cruiser. He talked with Geoffrey “Dickie” Bird, a member of the Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club and a participant in the Onion Patch racing series, who had similar views. Kingery also talked with Leo Fallon, also a member of BWSC. Thus was born the association involving the Blue Water Sailing Club, the Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club, and the Beverly Yacht Club in Marion. W. David Kingery and Geoffrey Bird were the co-founders of the Marion–Bermuda racing series, and Kingery was the first race chair. There were ten people on the first Race Committee, four of whom were BWSC members – Kingery, Russell Goldsmith, Herbert D. Marcus, and G. Earle Michaud .

The Blue Water Sailing Club has been involved from the very first through the present day, both in organizing and playing a major role in supporting the event, and of course, in participation. We have run the required pre-race seminar for many years. Many of our members past and present have run in the event, and more than a few have taken silver. Perhaps the most notable is Herb Marcus who sailed the race many times short-handed (4 aboard) and won trophies in both the short-handed and family crew categories simultaneously a number of times. The race this coming summer will be the 17th running.

Race to Saint John, New Brunswick 1976

Seen as an opportunity to “test the waters” for such an overnight race and to provide the opportunity for offshore experience in preparation for a cruising race to Bermuda, the Saint. John race was an innovation at that time for the Blue Water Sailing Club. After the start of the biennial cruising race to Bermuda, the race to New Brunswick was not repeated for several years. However, in 1988, Past Commodore Duane Marshall revived the race in a slightly altered format with a successful race to Campobello Island.

Race to Saint John, New Brunswick 1990

In 1990, another group went again to Saint John. Conceived again as another opportunity for manageable offshore experience and as a way to get a fleet up to that area of fantastic cruising, too far away for most cruisers to reach without an offshore passage, the Saint John race interested a wide range of sailors. The Saint John Cruise Chairman, Jerry Margolin, assembled a fleet of nine boats that set sail to Saint John from Scituate Harbor on a beautiful Sunday noon, July 15th, 1990. Five additional boats, not participating in the race but only in the cruise, departed their homeports and met the fleet at Saint John. Two trawlers left Scituate with the fleet and cruised the river with the group.

After traversing the Reversing Falls at the first bend in the Saint John River, the fleet gathered at the Royal Kennebecassis Yacht Club (RKYC) for a lobster dinner and the opportunity to share war stories of the passage. Two boats failed to complete the race. One collided in the fog with a 103’ powerboat off Matinicus Rock buoy and went into Southwest Harbor for repairs. Another returned to Scituate for mechanical repairs. Most of the fleet made the RKYC rendezvous and spent the next week with glorious sailing in the Saint John River. A final banquet was held in the Steamboat Inn at Gagetown, New Brunswick before returning to the Reversing Falls and the trip west.

Campobello Race/Cruise 1992

This year, for the fourth time in its history, the Club organized an offshore passage to New Brunswick. Initially conceived as an off-year alternative to the

biannual Marion-Bermuda Cruising Race, in past years it had become an exciting opportunity to make a less demanding, multi-overnight cruising boat race. In addition to the chance to go offshore overnight in the company of other boats, it provided relatively quick access to the remote and beautiful cruising grounds farther “Down East.”

Three additional boats joined the group at St. Andrews where the crews commandeered the entire L’Europe restaurant for cocktails and dinner. The fleet spent four days in beautiful Passamaquoddy Bay, which met the requirements of variety, tranquility, and excitement. One highlight was the traversing of Cobscook reversing falls in high-powered dinghies. The de rigueur visit to the Roosevelt “cottage” on Campobello on a beautiful sunlit day, with the fleet anchored off the beach for lunch, made it all seem perfect.

Campobello Race/Cruise 1998

We found no report about this cruise, other than an announcement in the May 1998 Log. The float plan called for a race from Scituate to Campobello (240 miles) via one mark at Mantinicus Rock. After the race, the fleet was to travel to St. Andrews for a kick-off shore party and dinner. The list of harbors to be visited included Digdeguash in Passamaquoddy Bay, Federal Harbor in Cobscook Bay, Harbor de Lute on Campobello Island, and North Head Harbor on Grand Manan Island. The entry to the United States was at Cutler, and the fleet proceeded to the Mt. Desert Island region with stops at Roque Island, Cows Yard, and Trafton along the way.



Marion-Bermuda



Bermuda Gathering 1979

En Route to Bermuda



Cruises

Southern Cruise to New York



Bras D'Or 1980



Labor Day Weekend, Gloucester



French Riviera Cruise



Cocktail Party at Anchor



The Party Continues Down Below¹⁵

Other Activities



Fun in the surf



Fall Meeting



Trophy 2008



BWSC Ski Weekend



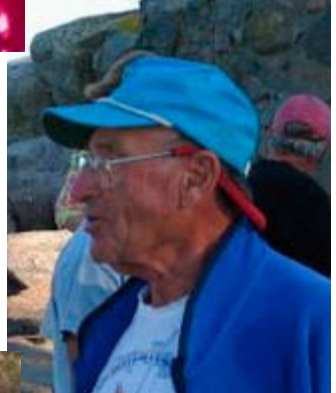
Women's Cruise



Greek Cruise Happy Hour



Some Commodores





Bermuda, 1981



Bermuda 2007

Pot Trophy Winners

2008



2005





Regattas, Cruises, and Raft-Ins

Regattas have been a major feature of Blue Water Sailing Club life since the beginning. The earliest Year Book, 1962, lists two – Spring and Fall. The Spring Regattas were usually held in Scituate, starting on a Friday evening. The main events were races on Saturday and Sunday.. The Spring Regatta has continued to this day, usually on Memorial Day weekend. Scituate is a favorite location, but Gloucester has been the locale as well.

The Fall Regatta has usually been in mid-September. The earliest race results available were in the same October 1968 Log. Today, the Fall Regatta is usually held over Labor Day weekend. The most recent venues have been in Gloucester, to coincide with Gloucester's Schooner Days and the Parade of Lights.

The first cruise committee was known simply as the "Summer Cruise." The first itinerary we have (June, 1968) shows the fleet went to Maine. The trip began on July 20 with an overnight race from Rockport, Massachusetts to Boothbay Harbor, Maine. The group visited Tenants Harbor, Seal Bay, Blue Hill Harbor, Northeast Harbor, Somesville, Swan's Island, Bucks Harbor, Camden and Christmas Cove. In keeping with the spirit of the Club, every other day was a race day. As many as twenty boats and 100 people participated in stages of the cruise.. In 1970, the cruise went down east to Sorrento before turning toward home. Some of the fleet went further east. In 1978, the cruise boasted up to 62 boats and 350 people participating.

In the spring of 1979, 75 people gathered in Hynes Auditorium to discuss the cruise plan for southern New England. This meeting showed that perhaps as many as 30 boats would be interested in the trip, and that almost everyone wanted to visit Mystic, Connecticut. The Fall 1979 Log reports the cruise had nearly 50 boats. There were four races held during the trip. An important feature were activities organized for youngsters and teenagers, keeping them to busy to be bored. This event was clearly very successful and in 1980, the Board

of Governors split the “Summer Cruise” Committee into two – “Summer Cruise (Maine)” and “Summer Cruise (Cape).” These two cruises have been major events in Club life since.

“Summer Cruise (Cape Cod)” gradually became the “Southern Cruise. Itineraries have varied, but are always west of the Cape Cod Canal. Some trips focus on the Cape Cod region, with visits to Nantucket and Martha’s Vineyard, as well as harbors along the southern shore of the Cape. The 1981 trip boasted 44 boats and 176 people on a trip as far west as Coecles Harbor, Long Island. Some trips have ventured to New York City.

In 1978, a group of sailors organized the Misery Island Raft-In. The goal of Great Misery Island Raft-In was to include young and old alike in shore side activities and games. In 1981, the Club added the Misery Island Raft-In to the calendar of regular events and this activity continued to 1987.

Misery Island Raft-In





Education

For many years the Club had an emphasis on education. The Rear Commodore is responsible for organizing these events in the spring, and they cover a wide variety of boating topics of interest. Of course, one can imagine that, for many years, there were many informal “education seminars” conducted after races (racing tactics, sail trim, crew member training, etc.), and during cruises (navigation, boat repairs, provisioning for cruises, etc.) during the social hours of these activities. The early Logs show, from time to time, a concern for proper flag etiquette. Even the cruise descriptions submitted by individuals to the early Log are a form of education. It seems likely, however, that the first formal education seminar was the Marion-Bermuda Race Symposium; it continues to this day.

The emphasis on more regular educational seminars started in the 1980’s. The first evidence of formal recognition of this aspect of the Club’s activities is in the 1983 Year Book. In the 1985 Year Book a First Aid / Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) Seminar appears. From that point on in the Year Book, there is at least one Chair of an educational seminar or workshop. The First Aid / CPR Seminar continues for several years as the only listed seminar. In 1985, three are listed – First Aid / CPR Training, Sail to Ireland, and Racing Rules Workshop. In 1986 only the First Aid / CPR Training is listed. In 1987, there are again three -- First Aid / CPR Training, Marion – Bermuda Symposium, and Survival Equipment. For the next two years there is only the First Aid / CPR Training. In 1990, there are six seminars -- First Aid / CPR Training, Radar, Ham Radio, Offshore Survival, Boat Maintenance, and Celestial Navigation. In 1991, there were seven seminars, including the Marion – Bermuda Symposium, and in 1992, there were again six seminars. In 1995, 1996, and 1997, there were seven seminars each year.

For the years 1983 to 2008, there are approximately 96 seminars total. The Marion–Bermuda Symposium and related seminars account for 15 of this

total. The next most active topic is First Aid/Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) Training (11), topics in boat electronics (10), offshore safety (eight), navigation – celestial to computer (seven), diesel maintenance and sails (six each), and weather (five). The remaining seminars were devoted to women's sailing workshops, racing, cruising-related topics, rigging, and legal matters – e.g., salvage and towing. Over the course of about 25 years, there has been an average of three to four seminars a year, showing a very good commitment to education for Club members.

In 1997, the Club began organizing seminars for women only. The first was devoted to sailing; it appeared again in 1998. In 1999, the women's seminar covered navigation. In 2000, the first all-women's cruise was organized; this event continues to this day. In the past decade there have been other on-shore classes for women, too. It should be noted that these seminars were devoted to boat handling and similar skills, including maintenance. Clearly, these classes address a real need and interest of Club members.



Well Attended Seminar



Other Special Club Activities

Members of the Blue Water Sailing Club have always exhibited an adventurous outlook. There are reports of sailing trips by individuals in such locales as British Columbia, across the Atlantic, above the Arctic Circle, down the Inland Waterway, the Bahamas, the Chesapeake, California to Africa (westbound!), and the Pacific Islands – e.g, Tonga. Many Club members have made the New England – Bahamas trip by boat. The annual cruises to Maine have been used by some sailors to jump-start their own extended cruise to Nova Scotia and beyond. There have been several longer trips, organized by club members and open to the entire club, to ports in the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, and Canada. The first trip for which information is available was to the Virgin Islands in 1980.

Virgin Islands 1980

Under the leadership of Joe and Harriet Goldman, the Blue Water fleet, 54 people strong, descended on St. Thomas in the American Virgin Islands and the St. Tropez Charter fleet in January. The flight to San Juan went smoothly and all travelers got to St. Tropez, where the charter company was waiting for us with their fleet ready -- for the junk heap. The sailors effected jury-rig repairs with duct tape, and 10 of the 11 boats were away by sunset.

However, no more than a mile from the docks, as they rounded the first (and last) buoy in the Charlotte Amalie harbor, the pleasure of being at sea again in the blue water of the Virgins, temperature 75-80°, sunshine and warm water, overcame the sour taste of the St. Tropez start. It was a casual cruise with only two scheduled stops for shore functions.

Gaspe Expedition 1986

The trip to the Gaspe Peninsula was, according to records, the longest expedition undertaken to date. Organized by Wally and Cecily Feldman, seven boats started the journey in Massachusetts. The first port of call for this small fleet was Dominion Cove in St. Peter's Inlet on the southwest shore of Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. Making this first leg from Massachusetts was no small feat, because the distance is nearly 500 nmi. from Scituate. The group spent three or four days exploring the Bras D'Or region, and held a party in Baddeck to say goodbye to those who could not continue on. Five boats headed out the Great Bras D'Or passage to the Cabot Strait between Cape Breton Island and Newfoundland. The first stop was Ingonish, on Cape Breton, and the second at Dingwall. From there, they traveled on around Cape North, the northeast end of Cape Breton, to the Isles de la Madeleine. This small and remote island group was home to 14,000 people in 1986. Another 24-hour trip brought the group to Gaspe', Quebec, where they spent three days touring, enjoying French restaurants, and relaxing. The trip to Gaspe had taken 14 days from Massachusetts.

The fleet traveled from the city of Gaspe' to Miscou Harbor nearby on the first leg of their return trip. Subsequent nights brought them to Summerside on Prince Edward Island, Pictou in Nova Scotia, through the Straits of Canso and Chedebucto Bay to Canso Harbor on the eastern tip of the main island of Nova Scotia. The fleet then traveled to Liscomb Mills, and thence to the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron in Halifax for two nights before the fleet split up for trip home to Massachusetts or to Maine for that cruise. All together, the trip covered the entire month of July.

In 1986, this was a relatively remote area, and the sailors had to be very self-sufficient. Services were few, and several legs of the trip were overnight passages, not always in good weather. A well-functioning autopilot was a real asset on the longer trip legs. At the conclusion of the trip, the group agreed that Cape Breton, Prince Edward Island, and the southern coast of Nova Scotia were the best cruising areas. They all liked the Gaspe' Peninsula, but did not feel it worth a second trip.

Newfoundland 1991

The Gaspé trip was sufficiently successful that the Feldmans planned another in 1991, to travel to Newfoundland. Again, the leg from Scituate to Newfoundland was on the order of 750 nmi. Stops were planned in Nova Scotia, the Bras D'Or lakes, and Ile de St Pierre on the way to Newfoundland. The itinerary at Newfoundland covered two weeks along the southern shore. Four boats made that trip.

Turkey 1995

The Blue Water Sailing Club Turkey cruise took place in October. Club members chartered five Beneteau sailboats through Sunsail for two weeks; 22 members traveled on this cruise. The group flew from Boston to Zurich, Switzerland, and then on to Izmir, a well-protected port city on the west coast of Turkey. The next day included a tour of Ephesus, as the group traveled by bus to Marmaris, on the southern western coast, to pick up the boats and a guide. After provisioning the boats, the fleet traveled about 6 nmi to Kumlu Buku for the first overnight stop. The next day took them to Ekincik Limani (Madeb Iskele) on the eastern end of a peninsula near the Dodecanese island group on the Aegean Sea. The fleet then traveled eastward to Daylan, and took a local boat trip on the Daylan River to see the ruins at Kaunos. The following day, the fleet sailed east to Skopea Liman.

There was a race across Fethiya Lorfezi to Ruin Bay. The trip went on to Kekova Sound at Ucagaz Village. The group went ashore to visit ancient Xera, and made a bus trip to Myra and Demre. After that, the group turned west again, and anchored at Karaloz for a night, and then went on to Kaz, a village that was formerly Greek until 1922. The final sail was to Kalkan. The group traveled to Istanbul as part of the Sunsail cruise, where they spent three more days sightseeing. Most of the group returned home, but a few traveled on to Ankara and Cappadocia for several more days.

Nova Scotia 1996

This cruise organizers began this event in Frenchboro – a trip from Cape Cod in rain and fog. They then traveled 156 miles overnight to Shelbourne, Nova Scotia, to pass through Canada Customs. It was approximately 350 miles

up the southern coast of Nova Scotia to Baddeck, on the Bras D'Or Lakes – a trip of about seven days. Seven more boats joined the fleet there. The cruisers spent several days in the area, visiting the Alexander Graham Bell Museum and Fort Louisbourg near Sydney. The fleet returned to Northeast Harbor and considerably better weather.

The French Riviera, March 2000

In the spring of 2000, 28 Blue Water Sailing Club members chartered six boats for two weeks along the southern coast of France. John Dieselman was the trip organizer. The group enjoyed light winds and lots of sun, touring the ports of Cannes, Nice, San Tropez, Monaco, Eze, and Marseille, and small cities such as Aix-en-Provence and Grimaud. The group easily fell into an idyllic routine – buying fresh bread, visiting the local market, and leisurely meals cooked to perfection. From the description available, the principle attraction was Provence. In Grimaud, the group traveled by train to visit the castle ruins at Grimaud.

The Adriatic, Fall 2002

In September 2002, 18 Blue Water Sailing Club members met in Split, Croatia for two weeks in the Adriatic Sea along the Dalmatian coast. The group had chartered four Beneteaus, and enjoyed sailing on long reaches in 12 to 15 kt winds. The itinerary took them first to Skradin, a spot well inland but accessible by sea, to see the Krka National Park. Krka is a river in Dalmatia, that springs out at the western foot of Dinara Mountain and flows into the sea near Sibenik. The group then sailed northwestward to Vodice, and then to Kornati Island. The Kornatski Otoci (Kornati Islands), archipelago is the most indented island group in the Mediterranean, situated in North Dalmatia, not far from Sibenik. It includes 140 uninhabited islands, islets and reefs with the area of only 70 square kilometers. The Kornati islands are noted for their varied unusual forms and extraordinary relief structure, and especially the high cliffs. The fleet then sailed to Primosten on the mainland, and then further southeast to Milna and Hvar. The trip finished at Palmizana and Stari Grad.

Greece, Fall 2005

The Greek cruise embarked from Vounaki on September 12 with 17 members, three guests, and five boats. The group had begun to gather the preceding

Thursday and Friday, meeting in Athens and taking tours of the Parthenon, the Acropolis, and the National Archeology Museum of Athens. On the weekend, the group traveled overland by bus to Delphi – an excursion that proved somewhat nerve-wracking due to the narrow, winding roads through the mountains west of Athens. The next morning the bus traveled further west to Lefkada Island, where the group found their Sunsail charter base in Vounaki.

The group set off to Nidri, on Lefkada Island, to provision, and to learn the Mediterranean mooring technique. Provisioning the boats proved to be its own adventure, as most of the packaging was labeled in Greek. The group anchored for lunch off Skorpios island, originally owned by Aristotle Onassis. The group enjoyed good sailing days. The wind came up in the late morning, so there was no rush for breakfast. Sailing trip were nominally about 20 miles, sometimes less. Dinner was taken ashore; meals were not served until after dark, according to Greek fashion. The trip stayed in the Ionian Islands on the western shore of Greece, on the Ionian Sea between Greece and Italy. They visited the islands of Kefalonia, Ithaki, and Kalamos, staying in several harbors at each island. The scenery is very beautiful, with mountainous islands rising to 3,000 ft. elevation. The villages were similar, with tiled roofs, and rows of tavernas and small stores along the waterfront. The water was, of course, warm and clear. Land excursions included a trip to two unusual caves on Kefalonia Island. Mellisani Cave was a subterranean sea-water lake, illuminated by sunlight coming through an opening in the roof of the cave. The second, Drogati Cave had stalactites. Ithaki is the reputed home of Ulysses.



Ithaki Island, Greece



Keeping it all going...

We can see a broad evolution in the Club in the re-telling of these events. From the original interest primarily in racing cruiser-type boats and a secondary interest in cruising, the Club's focus has expanded to embrace cruising in a major way, and to promote boating education – with a clear emphasis on safety -- among the membership. Women's presence, which began in a parenthetical way in the early Year Books, has increased significantly. Now there are women-specific activities devoted to the (previously 1960's male-dominated) functions of boat handling, navigation, and maintenance. Women have active roles in the operation of the Club, including as Commodore. The Club has developed and promoted some large-scale events – the largest being the Marion – Bermuda Race – and worked with other organizations to bring them about and keep them going.

Ask a past Commodore what it is in their opinion that has kept the Club going all these years, and he or she is likely to answer, "The members!" In a real sense, this is a true observation. There is a strong common interest among Club members in all aspects of the sailing (whether sailboat or trawler) life. Beyond this simple picture, however, there is more. Club members have clearly demonstrated an adventuresome spirit by organizing some "extreme" cruises – extreme for people who are not live-aboards, anyway. The cruises to more distant ports involve significant planning and preparation; conducting them involves being prepared for the inevitable bad weather and mechanical problems.

To participate in such events does require great flexibility, and a tolerance for things that can go wrong. Sometimes cruise or race preparation is not all it could be; sometimes the weather conspires to go beyond that anticipated. The more local cruises must also be similarly organized, and cruise chairs work to plan an interesting and varied trip for the membership. Sometimes, the planning involves travel to various ports to be visited, to see what activities are

available ashore, and to make suitable arrangements. This planning effort is a significant commitment.

The commitment to boating education was, in some ways, another venture-some step. Clearly, there has been a need, and surveys conducted by the Long Range Planning Committee show the desire of new members to join an organization where they can learn and have fun at the same time. A strength of the Club members is their willingness to work and organize an interesting seminar of several hours duration that will draw 20 to 30 people, often more, on a Saturday morning. The topics are pertinent to the membership; the interest is high.

Finally, friendship is at the heart of Blue Water Sailing Club. Members are friends with one another, sometimes before they become club members. As members become more involved in the Club, their circle of friend enlarges. These circles have been the sources of the committee chairs, Commodores, Governors, and all the other people who make the Club a success.



BWSC Commodores

1960	Roger Kent	1985	Duane Marshall
1961	Charles W. Turner	1986	Wallace C. Archer
1962	George G. Crocker	1987	W. Dennis Moran
1963	Paul F. McBride,D.M.D.	1988	L. Gerald Marcus
1964	Francis S. LeBlanc	1989	James E. Hayes
1965	Roger Williams, Jr.	1990	Peter Van Roekens
1966	Joseph B. Merrill	1991	Louis S. Sebok
1967	James F. Baker	1992	Jules J. Siegel
1968	Charles W. Turner	1993	Harvey Goldfarb
1969	Robert H. Pierce	1994	John Dieselman
1970	Fred R. Nichols	1995	Russell Kingman
1971	Todd Poole	1996	Marion D. Cullen
1972	J. Raymond Gaffey, Jr.	1997	Paul T. Hodess
1973	Robert Meyer	1998	Carl M. Kramer
1974	Russell Goldsmith	1999	William Hammer
1975	Leo T. Fallon	2000	Merrill I. Feldman,M.D.
1976	Herbert F. Koelsch	2001	Susan LaVoie
1977	F. Sherburne Carter	2002	Thomas Devins
1978	G. Earle Michaud	2003	John R. Quarles
1979	Herbert D. Marcus	2004	Eric T. Pierce, M.D.
1980	Joseph Goldman, M.D.	2005	Michael J. Gardner
1981	William J. Sheehan	2006	Paul M. Goldberg
1982	John H. Westerbeke, Jr.	2007	George Burnell
1983	Daniel P. Johnson	2008	Susan Patton
1984	William Montalto	2009	Patricia Dieselman