Incorporation and First Float, 1941-1943

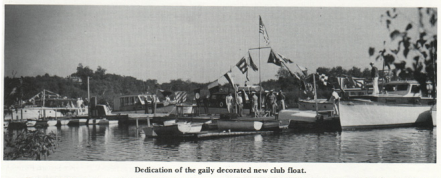
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burgees were ordered. They sold for a dollar each for cotton and two dollars for wool with a 15 cent surcharge levied on each burgee to pay for the Club's large burgee.

As we read further through early minutes of meetings, we see evidence of the Club beginning to take root as we find anecdotal references to proposed purchases. The membership at that time briefly considered purchasing a 38' x 15' houseboat (for $400.00) to be used as a club house.

Also as further evidence of their serious intent, the members began investigating the possibilities and methods of incorporating the Club and registering it with the Town of Watertown. The Club had already grown to 70 members and many felt that there was no time to lose in becoming "legal".

With no physical facility to speak off, the rapid early growth caused overcrowding. Situations had arisen where as many as seven boats rafted together on a single mooring. The next upgrade was to obtain a large float from East Boston which had been towed at no charge to the Lower Basin. Five Club boats shared the task of towing the float upriver. References to reimbursements for damaged boats and transmission repairs speak to the difficulties encountered.



Dedication of the gaily decorated new club float.

The "new" Club Float, decorated with flags and pennants, was officially dedicated on September 6, 1942, and put to full use midst melodic strains of the Commodore's bugle and flag raising by the Rear Commodore. This was followed by a parade of 18 boats down to the Lower Basin and back to the public fireplaces (in what used to be the cleared and maintained park land upriver of our present facility) for a cook-out and social. One-hundred and thirty-seven members, family, friends and guests participated in the event. The Vice-Commodore was thrown into the water from an overturned tender near the Anderson Bridge. He was assisted by others in the party who also went overboard. They got him aboard another boat, took him to a Harvard float, and transferred to yet another boat for some dry clothes and a good rest. Clearly our founders had good parties.

In October it was announced that the club incorporating papers had been filed but approval was being held up for further investigation by the Police. At that time the lawyer handling the incorporation papers was named an Honorary Member of the Club. The members also voted at that time to form an Auxiliary of wives, mothers, sisters, or other friends of members.

A big day came on November 5, 1942. The Commodore announced that the Club had become a Massachusetts Corporation with a registration date of September 7, 1942.

That year closed with the first annual meeting on December 17, 1942 at the Hotel Lenox in Boston preceded by a dinner. The Treasurer reported a balance of $ 133.03 with all bills paid. The Commodore and Secretary were presented fine Navy type yachting caps with two tops, white and blue, and a drawing was held for War Bonds consisting of one $50.00, one $25.00, and $10.00 in War Stamps.

The next year at the Club brought with it new growth but also some new problems. Rationing of gas for the War effort meant that the number of meetings would be reduced; one business and one social meeting per month.

It is important to mention the profound effect that World War II had on the development of the Club. The year before, at their very first business meeting, the Membership was presented with a notice from the MDC saying, "In view of the War Emergency, Charles River Yachtsmen are not allowed to run beyond the Boston and Maine drawbridge". Shortly thereafter, similar notices came from Washington and continued throughout the War years. Many boats did not see Boston Harbor for years unless they were being moved to another permanent anchorage.

Of course as fuel was being rationed for automobiles, so it was for motorcraft. A government notice came that said "THE AMOUNT OF RATIONED GASOLINE FOR BOATS WOULD BE TWICE THE HORSEPOWER IN GALLONS" [per year?..per war?..per week?] We presently have members with engines so large, and that use them so infrequently, that this system could certainly maintain them between major conflicts.

In July of 1943, a Committee that had been selected to