

## **Crescent's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – The First Years**

2013 is an exciting year for Crescent as we are celebrating the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our club. We want to spend some time sharing with you the history of the first formidable years of Crescent.

In 1933 just a few years after the Great Depression, a lot was going on in Detroit and the United States. Construction of the 1<sup>st</sup> US Aircraft Carrier and the Golden Gate Bridge was started. The Lone Ranger debuted on Detroit radio and soon broadcasted nationwide. Packard came out with a V-12 Rumble Seat Roadster. A new Bob-Lo boat was cruising the river. Most importantly in 1933 Prohibition was repealed, the Gangster underworld and Detroit River night traffic changed forever.

Sailing was growing with the large clubs being Detroit Boat Club & Detroit Yacht Club. Membership there was out of the reach for young sailors, most of whom built their own sailboats in their friend's back yards. In the winter of 1932, one group of young sailors who were friends as Sea Scouts, wanted to start a yacht club. They got help from Chalmers Burn who was a 60 year old avid sailor, involved with the established clubs and very willing to help these young sailors get a start.

They were a group of 27 sailors and wanted to name their club the Corinthian Yacht Club and had an idea to buy an old three masted schooner and make it their floating club house. Chalmers Burn helped them write up a constitution, regulations and elect officers. Then, in early 1933 they discovered another Corinthian Yacht Club already existed on Lake Erie – “Oh what do we do now?” Well, eventually they agreed and submitted the new name - - Crescent Sail Yacht Club to the State for its Charter. The State Charter was given on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 1933. A copy of the State Charter is hanging proudly on our wall still today. Also, they elected Chalmers Burn as their 1<sup>st</sup> Commodore.

The Club was located on the Detroit River behind what is now the Naval Armory on Jefferson across from Belle Isle. The membership fee was \$25 and annual dues were \$15. Well, all looked good for a first year; they even sponsored a regatta as part of DRYA and had 61 entries.

Then in the early summer of 1934 they were notified by the Book family, who owned the property that it had been sold and they had 30 days to find somewhere else to moor their boats.

After desperately searching, they were able to get Mr. Henry B. Joy, the President of Packard Motor Car Co. to offer mooring at his peninsula located in GP Farms at Kerby and Jefferson, where Crescent still resides to this day. Mr. Joy agreed to a one year trial period and after that year signed a 5 year Lease for a total of \$50 for all five years.

Also, in 1934 Commodore Chalmers Burn passed away unexpectedly, leaving a large void in the leadership of a newly formed club. Fortunately, the club got thru that year and even ended with a membership count that rose to 55 sailors.

Crescent has two original objectives and to this day those still exist. First to be a club for sailors of moderate means, and secondly, to be a club that provides a school of instruction to promote the sport of sailing. In 2012 we completed the new Sailing Center and named it the Henry B Joy in honor of his memory and generosity to Crescent.

Many members feel that if the original 27 Charter members were here to see Crescent today they would be proud and glad that we are living the dream they had envisioned our club would someday become.

Breeze Editor – PC Nick Geisz