

Crescent History

1941

The Commodore's Ball was again held at the Whittier in March under the direction of Chairman Tom Mason — and was again a huge success with 106 guests. The Galley, after Davenport's face lifting, was immensely improved in appearance and convenience and became the brightest corner of the Club. Harry Macfarlane proved an active House Chairman during the season. Due to his continued effort and energy, the Club acquired an adequate hot water system, showers for men and women, electric control of tower and range lights and new and better lights in the lounge.

Ken Coles, electrical wizard, installed an interlocking loudspeaker system that reached the big and small harbors and the judges stand on the roof and added a turntable that played recordings for dancing. These creative comforts added greatly to the enjoyment of Club facilities. New Members flocked into the Club with applications and the Directors upped the Membership fee to \$50.00, swelling the Club's Permanent Mooring Fund still further. During the previous season the Club launch was used for many rescues of capsized boats and sailors. During one line squall in mid-August eight unfortunates were dragged from Lake St. Clair's waters. To facilitate these emergency rescues, a special pump was added to the workboat for quickly bailing water-logged hulls. Ed Kemeny added many finishing touches to an already fine job on the workboat, including cabin windows and chrome moldings and fittings.

All during the 1941 season the threat of war had hung over America like the approach of a thunder squall. On a quiet Sunday, December 7th, the lightning struck with the Japanese bombardment of the Navy's Pearl Harbor base in Hawaii. Five days later, when Crescent Membership met in the Annual Meeting, the exodus to wartime service had already started. Don Lescohier had already won his ensign's commission and many other youngsters who had lent energy and enthusiasm to the Club activities were headed for a uniform and adventure on far-flung war fronts. At this Annual Meeting, Ed Kemeny, long time active in all the Club's constructive efforts, was elected Rear Commodore, Steve Takas and Ed Dunn were elected Directors. Ed Dunn had already taken over financial responsibilities from Dick Hill, with Steve taking over the Secretary's assignment.

Some river yachtsmen were already patrolling local waters in Coast Guard boats. In December, at the request of the District CGA officers, an auxiliary Coast Guard Flotilla was formed at Crescent under the command of Joe Vance, holding weekly instruction meetings throughout the winter. Membership in this new Club activity waxed and then waned. Crescent Members joined to do their bit at home, then even more left for active duty. Don Johnston, Eugene West, Tom Mason, Fred Sevald, Jimmie Perkins, Don Kememy and scores of others traded the uniform of the Auxiliary for the stripes and bars of the regular Army or Navy.

Under the tireless guidance of Harry Macfarlane, dozens of men stood regular 12-hour tricks on the river. The original Flotilla #76 was split into two units. Active Auxiliary members were given a new status, that of the Temporary Naval reserve. Commander Macfarlane became a

Lieutenant and Commander Huntington an Ensign in the new organizations.

At the Clubhouse, new faces replaced old. Close to fifty new Members were introduced at Crescent by Membership Chairman Fred Schelter and new boats appeared in the harbors.