

Windjammers of the Chesapeake History

The Windjammers of the Chesapeake have been a part of the Chesapeake Bay's sailing history for several decades. The club was formed to maintain and operate a sailing yacht association for recreational, educational and social purposes.

Below is a brief account of the Windjammers of the Chesapeake's history from club records and one of the founding members T. Marshall Duer whose personal notes are in quotes.

The idea of the Windjammers came about in **1962** when “two old Gibson Island buddies, Rolfe Pottberg and Henry Dupont Baldwin and I (Marshall Duer) were sitting in the cockpit sipping lemonade”. Soon Chuck Owens got involved, as did Tom Closs, Dick Randall, Ed Hanrahan, John Jenkins, Bill Hill, Laury Dinning, Fred Hecklinger and others. The stated purpose started out as a fun group of people “a small group of sometimes 30-50” as the audience at the Engineering Society on Mt. Vernon Place, where we had some lectures.

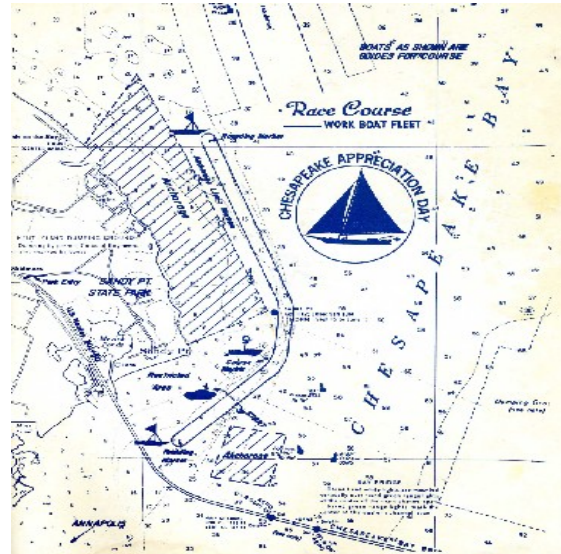
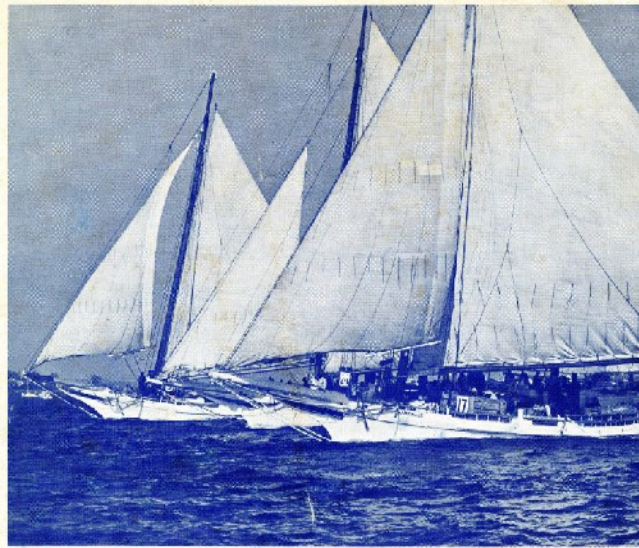


Founding Members Marshall Duer, Gordon Dalsemer, Rolfe Pottberg
Bottom Row Tom Closs, Chuck Owens, Richard Randall (left to right)

In early 1965, Chuck Owens and Rolfe Pottberg and Tom Closs and I (Marshall Duer), called on Governor Tawes about Crisfield and their many skipjacks, and about having skipjack races using Sandy Point. “We got his blessing”. On August 11, 1965 Chuck Owens, Rolfe Pottberg and Marshall Duer incorporated the Windjammers of the Chesapeake Inc., and started the Chesapeake Appreciation Days.

In 1965 a race committee was formed for a one-day race on October 30th. There were 24 skipjack entries out of nearly 40 in existence. There was also a start for the Alberg fleet. Many tents and vendors made being on shore at Sandy Point State park quite an experience where people came by the car load for \$2.00 each, and enjoyed all the food

and the sights. It could not have been accomplished without the help of many Windjammer and State of Maryland people. Some of the Windjammers on the steering committee were: Jack Carpenter, Tom Closs, Martin Alvey, Gordon Dalsemer, Bill Hill, Fred Hecklinger, Dawson Reeder, Tom Hiltabidle, Dave Hogendorp, Harvey Ledson, Chuck Owens, Rolfe Pottberg, Dick Randall, Bill Tyler, Stub Webster, Jim Wolfe, Marshall Bidner. By 1968 there were two thousand spectator and racing boats in the small area above the Bay Bridge and just as many on shore.



Of note is that in 1921 and for some years thereafter, The Sunpapers sponsored an annual race between the working sailboats of the Chesapeake off Solomon's Island. The inspiration was provided by their well remembered outdoor editor, Pete Chambliss. At the time Solomon's and the races were followed by a few 100 spectators since the only way to reach was by water or a two lane country road in a Bugeye. Chambliss would bring the race's stories and pictures to the public through the Sunpapers until his death.

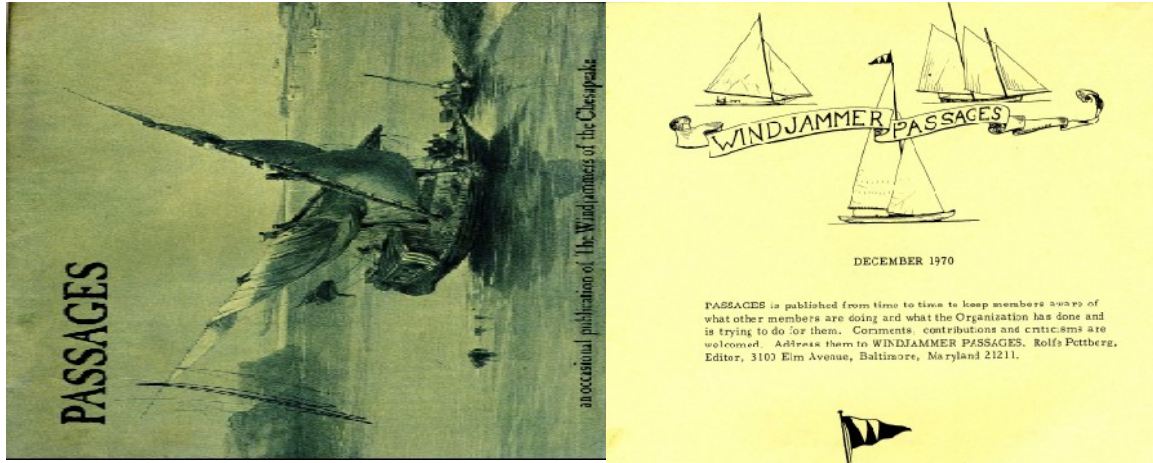
Benjamin Evans who wrote for the Sun Magazine column later revived the Skipjack races in 1959 off of Tangier Sound near Deal Island knowing there were only a handful of Skipjacks left versus the hundreds of earlier years. Although the Windjammers of the Chesapeake are known for creating the Chesapeake Appreciation Day event off Sandy Point, they also were associated with the Deal Island races for several years providing the trophy and a Commodore to help judge the races, which were held under the aegis of the Lions Club there.

The Chesapeake Bay Appreciation Day and Skipjack Races continued through the 1970s.

In 1968, The Chesapeake Bay Foundation was started, a "Windjammer Prodigy". A few years before a fellow Windjammer "Arthur Sherwood" led discussions with a small group of Windjammers at the Hamilton Street Club and explored the possibility of creating "a potent force of concerned, thoughtful citizens of the land of the Chesapeake". Many Windjammers including Marshall Duer, Arthur Sherwood, Dick Randall, Bill Hill,

Rolf Pottberg, were on the board and as directors. Jesse Malcolm; a Windjammer member, became the Executive Director.

In 1968, Rolf Pottberg started the occasional publication “The Passages”. There are some copies still around.



In 1970, the Windjammers started their Rendezvous the first gathering had 77 boats catering to 300 people. We have continued this tradition since the 70s with the Fall cruise and Commodore’s cocktail party.

In 1972 the Richard Randall Memorial race was started at the suggestion of former Commodore Jack Carpenter to remember a person without whom the Windjammer idea would probably never have been more than that. Dick’s son, Richard Jr. known to Baltimore as the Director/Curator of the Walters Art Gallery, looked through the family memorabilia and came up with the husky piece of silver his Father had won in 1936 in the course of his successful campaign to keep the 8-meter championship of the Bay in the Randall family for three years. Dick’s friend, Bernard Jackson, designed and supervised the equally handsome walnut base. The race’s first winner was Tom Closs, “a gentleman yachtsman”

During the years, the Windjammers have met at the Engineering Club in Baltimore, the Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies, and Severn School Price Auditorium. We have a strong maritime heritage on the Chesapeake Bay and will continue to have some of the best speakers presenting the latest topics on sailing and seamanship from the Bay and around the globe.

In 2010-2011, we strive to continue the works of our founding members to make a difference for the Chesapeake Bay and our community.

October 28, 1967 Third Annual Chesapeake Appreciation Day



Pride of the Chesapeake Commercial Sailing Fleet*

DIVISION I OVER 45 FEET		DIVISION II 46 FEET AND UNDER	
"ANNA MAY RICH" Size: 39'x14'4" Built: 1936 - Orléans, Md. Captain: Stephen Borwick Port: Cambridge	"LOTTIE BELL" Size: 37'x14'4" Built: 0 0 - Deal Island, Md. Captain: James R. Fithugh, Jr. Port: Cambridge	"ROBIE PARKS" Size: 40'x14'3" Built: 1931 - Wingate, Md. Captain: Cedric H. Parks Port: Cambridge	"AMERICA" Size: 38'x14'3" Built: 1931 - Crisfield, Md. Captain: Jerry White Port: Wicomico
"AMY HINCH" Size: 38'x14'3" Built: 1934 - Orléans, Md. Captain: Ralph Whelan Port: Chanco	"MAGGIE LEE" Size: 37'x14'3" Built: 1902 - Pocomoke City, Md. Captain: Helen R. Webster Port: Wicomico	"SALLIE L. BRANBLE" Size: 39'x14'3" Built: 1930 - White Haven, Md. Captain: Wilson Todd Port: Cambridge	"ANNIE LEE" Size: 43'x14'2" Built: 1922 - Trappe Creek, Va. Captain: Jack Taylor Port: Wicomico
"GEOFFREY" Size: 42'x14'2" Built: 1936 - Deal Island, Md. Captain: Nelson Parks Port: Tilgham	"MAMIE MYSTER" Size: 36'x14'2" Built: 1920 - Choptank, Md. Captain: Anne Thomas Port: Chanco	"SRA JEN" Size: 40'x14'1" Built: 1924 - Crisfield, Md. Captain: Chas. R. Toler Port: Smith Island (Ewell)	"BERNICE J" Size: 40'x14'1" Built: 1934 - Acorn, Va. Captain: Albert Alford Port: Wicomico
"E. C. COLLIER" Size: 39'x14'1" Built: 1935 - Deal Island, Md. Captain: John R. Larrison Port: Tilgham	"MARTHA LEVINS" Size: 41'x14'0" Built: 1935 - Wingate Captain: Dan Day Port: Tilgham	"STANLEY NORMAN" Size: 47'x14'0" Built: 1935 - Baltimore, Md. Captain: William Windsor Port: Wingate	"CALER JONES" Size: 41'x14'0" Built: 1923 - Snowville, Va. Captain: Richard Webster Port: Wicomico
"FLETCHER T. HESTER" Size: 38'x14'0" Built: 19 0 - Deal Island Md. Captain: Donald Burton Port: Cambridge	"NEELIE L. BYRD" Size: 43'x14'0" Built: 1931 - Oriskany, Md. Captain: "Nelson" Todd Port: Cambridge	"EDMAN MAY" Size: 40'x14'0" Built: 1931 - Pocomoke City, Md. Captain: Clyde Webster Port: Wicomico	"CEREDON" Size: 35'x14'0" Built: 1900 - Hogans Island, Md. Captain: George F. Jackson, Jr. Port: Cambridge
"GENEVA MAY" Size: 42'x14'0" Built: 1935 - Wicomico, Md. Captain: Paul Benson, Jr. Port: Wicomico	"RALPH T. WEISSER" Size: 40'x14'0" Built: 1935 - Oriskany, Md. Captain: Sam Murphy Port: Tilgham	"REBECCA T. QUARK" Size: 41'x14'0" Built: 1935 - Taxing Island, Md. Captain: "Nelson" Todd Port: Cambridge	"CLARENCE CEDRETT" Size: 40'x14'0" Built: 1928 - Deep Creek, Va. Captain: Leahy Jones Port: Wicomico
"JOY PARKS" Size: 40'x14'0" Built: 1935 - Pockoke, Va. Captain: Daniel Marlowe Port: Tilgham	"WILMA LEE" Size: 40'x14'0" Built: 1935 - Wingate, Md. Captain: Isabel L. Duck Port: Wingate	"CLAUD W. SOMERS" Size: 42'x14'0" Built: 1931 - Youngs Creek, Va. Captain: Jack Puckness Port: Chanco	"CITY OF CREEFIELD" Size: 47'x14'0" Built: 1929 - Snowville, Va. Captain: Arthur S. Donald, Jr. Port: Wicomico
"LEATHYNS" Size: 40'x14'0" Built: 1934 - Crisfield, Md. Captain: Michael Whelan Port: Cambridge	"THOMAS CLYDE" Size: 45'x14'0" Built: 1911 - Tilgham, Md. Captain: Charles Abbott Port: Wicomico	"HILDA M. WELLEN" Size: 40'x14'0" Built: 1932 - Oriskany, Md. Captain: Daniel Hartman Port: Smith Island (Ewell)	"HILDA M. WELLEN" Size: 40'x14'0" Built: 1932 - Oriskany, Md. Captain: Daniel Hartman Port: Smith Island (Ewell)
"MARY KATH" Size: 40'x14'0" Built: 1935 - Wingate, Md. Captain: Eugene Whelan Port: Wingate	"HELEN VIRGINIA" Size: 43'x14'0" Built: 1934 - Taxing Island, Md. Captain: Leonard Evans Port: Smith Island (Ewell)	"HILDA M. WELLEN" Size: 40'x14'0" Built: 1932 - Oriskany, Md. Captain: Daniel Hartman Port: Smith Island (Ewell)	"HILDA M. WELLEN" Size: 40'x14'0" Built: 1932 - Oriskany, Md. Captain: Daniel Hartman Port: Smith Island (Ewell)

*Based at State Park State Park Marina for instruction. **Not listed for division in 1964.