

I Like the Way "Scotty" Said It!

By PERC M. SCOTT, Com. B.Y.C. 1917-18

Here is a story written by a man who must have lived sailing all his life, even though he doesn't get around much any more, having retired to live in Marine City. His mind, however, and because these are cherished memories, has done a great job of covering that period of time from the beginning up to the opening of the new clubhouse. We are indebted to Perc Scott for some real history.

Perhaps one of the things that is different about BAYVIEW is that while other organizations I have known, had their beginnings in the minds of groups which shared the interest in an activity which their efforts were intended to promote, it was not so with BAYVIEW. No sailors produced BAYVIEW — because BAYVIEW made her own sailors or adopted them. It is not likely that as Nixon, Kurtzwarth, Dietrich and Williamson concluded the deal that gave them the old corrugated iron shack on Motor Boat Lane, adjoining Water Works Park, any one of them had the faintest suspicion that they were laying the foundation for a yacht club that is known and respected wherever yachts are sailed.

BAYVIEW came into being because of one of the most powerful of all reasons . . . Someone needed money! McKay for a project of his own; Nick because he wanted a place in which he could fry fish and Perc needed a well for his boat and all of them needed cash. So they gathered the group which later formed the incorporators of the club. As I remember it cost us each about fourteen dollars to buy the works. Of that group I was the only one who had any background (of yachting) or, in fact, of any sailing at all.

But they did pick it up in a hurry. Quite often when the *Wrinkle* set sail the entire club was aboard looking for trouble, which to them meant to sail with plenty, or perhaps too much wind.

However, in those early days sailing was not the only interest. We had fun, and fun at BAYVIEW was usually strenuous. The old timers will not forget the night Jim McNutt was taken to Belle Isle for a snipe hunt and left there when the old bridge swung open for the night at twelve o'clock. Or Al, the parrot that Hoy brought from New York that could not be taught to cuss in sailor talk. He would not even talk at all. Or the trip, en masse, to the Monroe regatta. The entire club went to that one. Some on the *Wrinkle*; some with Williamson on the speed boat and the rest on Lausche's old glass cabin launch along with the food, and tent. Some one stuffed Billy Wilson's shirt with a peck or so of fish flies as he slept (there were bushels of them available), and John Hoy made a Mulligan that was memorable. *Wrinkle* collected glory by winning against Toledo's best, and we discovered a dead man floating in the river on the way home.

Later Lausch bought a Grasser cat that had belonged to C. Harold Wills and Bayview had two sailboats. I brought in *Iseulo*, a Crowninshield design "Q", and then there were three.

Now local yachtsmen began to take notice that here was a real sailing club — run by and in the interest of sailors. Also about this time Dr. William A. Wilson became a member and Bayview began to take on stature in the world of yachting, for Dr. Wilson was of the old school and along with Com.

Harry Kendall, of D.Y.C. and myself had sailed and raced in yachts like Skipper Boston's *Surprise*; John Shaw's *Minx*; Colonel Beattie's *Alborak*, the *City of the Straits*, *Petrel*, *Sultana* and *Ethel*. These were all big boats with long bowsprits, staysail, jib and jib-topsail; clipper bows, long topmasts flyir) club topsails. These were the yachts which had sailed in Detroit's Mackinac Race in those early days.

Following Dr. Wilson's admission came Alger Sheldon with *Urchin*; Francis Sheey had bought *Neagha* from Com. Lockwood and brought her up from Sandusky; Russ Pouliot had *Bernida* and another, *Rascal*, was brought in by Dr. Alphonse Jennings.

In the meantime, Perc Williamson had sold the power boat and purchased *Charlyn* and John Lausch had become owner of *Avalon* to replace "*Victoria*"; Cheri Sloman brought in *Chewink* and with these additions to the fleet Bayview revived the long distance race around Lake St. Clair, and became a member of Interlake.

Next Commodore Wilson took a crew from Bayview down East, chartered the old fishing schooner *Lloyd W. Berry* and, with Herb Stone as navigator, won the Bermuda Race.

By this time Bayview was committed to long distance racing and her sailors could hold their own in any company. Perc Williamson had been winning most of the races he had entered and Kurtzwarth had developed into one of the cleverest racing skippers in the area and were looking for more worlds to conquer. The Mackinac Race seemed to be the answer. So, largely promoted by Commodore Wilson and Jerry Sheehan, and the other sailing men on the river, and the co-operation of the newly formed Port Huron Yacht Club the race was decided on.

Bayview, in preparation for the new venture, held a school on coastwise navigation which was attended by sailors from the other local clubs, recaulked their yachts, run new rigging, and were ready for the great adventure. And any sailor that saw the starters in that race would have tipped his hat to a fleet that had the impertinence to challenge Lake Huron in any weather. I quote from a press story on the start of the race. "In class C are represented the best and fastest sailing craft on the Great Lakes" which was possibly true, at least in this area, but as a matter of fact, most of the boats were years older than the men who sailed them.

Nevertheless they got to Mackinac and their success triggered a flood of interest that showed in the succeeding years with a different picture, with entries like *Barbette*, BYC; *Saulk* (later *Spindrift*), BYC; *Kittiwake*, BYC; *Seahorse*, BYC; *Nawanna*, DBC; *Viking*, BYC; *Grace*, Erie Yacht Club; *Suez II*, BYC; *Melodie*, BYC; *Silhouette*, BYC; all new and modern yachts, almost any one of which cost more than would have bought all of class C in the first race. And so it has gone. Each year has seen Bayview's Mackinac representation increase until it rivals the finest. And the thing that impresses me to a greater degree than size and quality of yachts or number of members is the fact that the sailors of Bayview are yachtsmen in the finest sense of the word and they have proven that there are none better anywhere.

Is it surprising that as I meet the newer generation that, rather proudly, I say to myself: "This is old Bayview unchanged — just grown up."