

# SOUNDINGS®

## LONG ISLAND

### From the ground up: 40 years of NCYC

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As North Cove Yacht Club celebrates its 40th year, the Old Saybrook, Conn., club has grown to 130 family and individual members.



The North Cove Yacht Club, based in Old Saybrook, Conn., recently celebrated its 40th anniversary. Pictured (left to right) are Les Bowman, rear commodore; Pete Fredrickson, founding member; Hugh R. Hunsinger, commodore; and Jack Cunningham, vice commodore.

In honor of the anniversary, Pete Fredrickson — with help from Don Beaulieu, Dean Fuller and “most of the former NCYC Commodores” — offers this remembrance of the club’s early years

It can be said without a doubt that it was the determination of local North Cove character Jim Jones and the vision of Everett A. Cooper, a member of the prestigious New York Yacht Club, that gave life to what we now know as North Cove Yacht Club. Starting in the 1930s, Jim, a North Cove boat- and mast builder, led a determined effort to have the North Cove designated as a “harbor of refuge” and dredged. Former Connecticut governor and then U.S. Senator Abe Ribicoff aided in the effort to allocate \$2 million for the project.

It all paid off in 1966 when Old Saybrook’s North Cove was first dredged, creating an anchorage area of about 29 acres. Today, as you look out at the club’s mooring field, it is hard to imagine the Cove prior to the dredging with a slender, 2-foot natural channel at the entrance that accommodated a few outboards and cat boats.

It was then that a man by the name of Everett Cooper, who was an ardent and experienced yachtsman, became the driving force behind the founding of our club.

He envisioned a yacht club and broached the idea with sailing friends, next-door neighbor Ed Hildreth, Bob Wright and Whit Anderson. The four men met at Ev’s house, where he described his vision: The best, the prettiest, the most protected anchorage in the lower Connecticut Valley and the closest to the Sound as the perfect place for a small, affordable, no-frills yacht club to serve the nautical needs of convivial local mariners and their families.

Eventually, word went out to the yachting community and a meeting was held March 15, 1969 at the Old Saybrook Town Hall. Sixty-six prospective members showed. Everett was voted Commodore, I was voted Vice, and Whit Anderson Rear. Dues were set at \$10 a year.

In the early years, our main events were hosting two ECYRA regattas, the Inner Light Classic and the Outer Light Classic. Our objective was to put our name on the map as a bona fide yacht club, promoting good, fun sailing and boating.

Our social activities were mostly at members’ houses. The club cruise was to Napatree; the annual meeting was at the Saybrook Town Hall.

The next major development was the construction of the clubhouse in 1975. This followed the “do-it-yourself” tradition that had been a feature of the club since its inception.

Nearly every member was actively involved in some aspect of the planning, building, painting, supplying refreshments, re-upholstering furniture, or making curtains. To provide seating, every member donated a deck chair inscribed with his boat name. The first potluck supper was held in the fall of 1975. This established a tradition that has become a key element in the club’s social calendar today.

With the recent dredging of the harbor, Old Saybrook's North Cove remains one of the most attractive deep-water locations on the Connecticut River for boating enthusiasts looking for convenient access to the river, and a premiere location for yachtsman cruising the Long Island Sound and points beyond.

This year, the North Cove Yacht Club is sponsoring the Leukemia Cup Challenge Aug. 29 as part of its growing support of offshore yachting. See Page 13 of the Home Waters section for more on the event, and a Q&A with Gary Jobson, national chairman.

For information about North Cove Yacht Club, visit [www.northcoveyc.com](http://www.northcoveyc.com).

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