



# Friends of the Ogunquit Heritage Museum

## Fall 2023 Newsletter

Mission of the Friends:  
**To Support the Educational Goals and Programs  
of the Ogunquit Heritage Museum**

### **Saving Ogunquit's History; A profile. . .**

There is probably no one who has been more involved in guarding the history of this town than Gary Littlefield. He is younger than I am and I can't remember a time when he was not a member, or the president, or the chairman of first, Wells Ogunquit Historical Society, then the Captain James Winn House, and now the vice president of the Committee for the Ogunquit Heritage Museum. Having been here through all the years of work to capture Ogunquit's (first Wells') history and guard it for future generations, Gary was born in 1944.



*Gary & siblings: Shirley, Gary,  
Chris and Robert*

The son of Howard and Zana Littlefield, he and his sister Shirley watched in 1946 as the house his father had built out on Tatnic Road was taken apart and

replaced by the Maine Turnpike.

Gary was an important part of Howard Littlefield's crew of "Master Builders" responsible for some of Ogunquit's memorable buildings--the Sea Chambers barn that was the OAA's Barn Gallery, and the building on Shore Road that replaced it. The crew renovated the Perkins garage when it became the Ogunquit Square Theatre. Gary says, "Over the years, we worked on most every house in Ogunquit, and I probably have keys to two-thirds of them still --about a hundred pounds of keys, and I'm not sure what they go to anymore."



*Gary's high school picture  
with Zana and Howard*

Gary graduated from the Ogunquit Village School in 1956. Next year, when the town starts its renova-

*(Continued...p.4)*



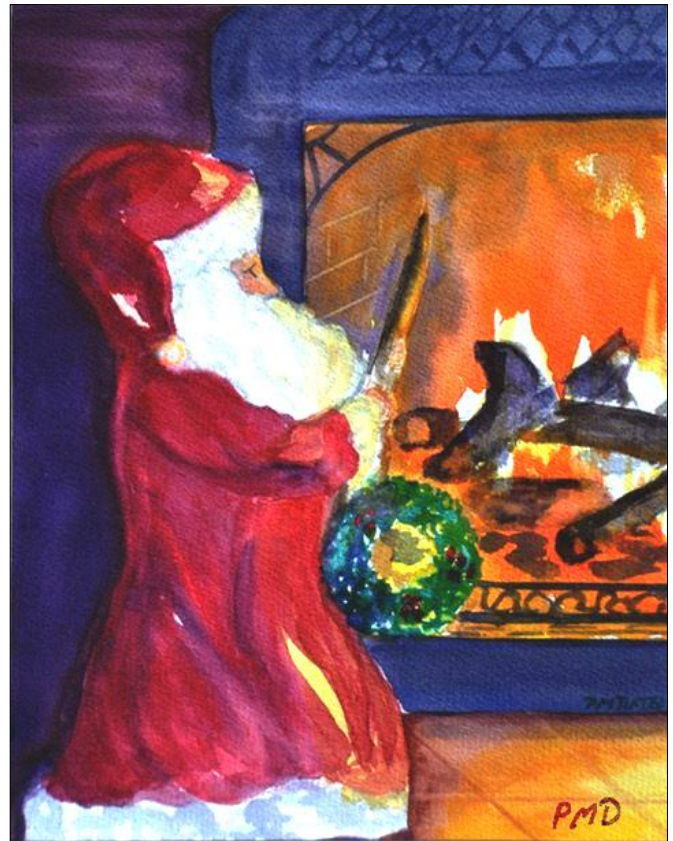
### **Christmas By The Sea**

### **Open House**

*Saturday, December 9*

*Sunday, December 10*

*1:00 - 4:00*



*Painting by Pat Dateo, Santa by the fire*

## FOHM President's Letter . . .

Dear Friends of the Ogunquit Heritage Museum, Fall is once again upon us and we are still going strong. The opening of the Don Gorvett exhibit in June was our big success of the season. Rain poured that day, but we did not cancel, and we had 90-plus people in attendance. When Don arrived in Ogunquit in 1968, long-time Ogunquit resident Annabelle Lewis offered him a one-room cabin on Berwick Road. Throughout the '70s and '80s, Don could be spotted painting on the Marginal Way, in the dunes and marshes, or traveling through town on his bicycle with a wet canvas mounted to the French easel carried on his back. He established his first printmaking studio on Chestnut Road. Don showed us his newest reduction woodcut and entertained the crowd for over an hour. "Picture-making is of little interest to me," Don remarked, "It is not my goal to remind people of what they already know, but rather to inform the viewer of a way of seeing that they are unaccustomed to, and to show them a world in a new light." The Ogunquit Heritage Museum also presented *Lobstering in Perkins Cove* and *The History of the Old Village Inn*. Museum attendance this year increased dramatically.

Summer was marked by exceedingly hot and rainy weather. The gardens ran away with themselves. The native *Lobelia Cardinalis* and Joe Pye Weed grew six feet tall and fell over each other in quite a display. The plants were labeled and a comprehensive list of the garden plants, with uses at the time of 1790, was completed and is now available for the public. The deer continue to enjoy nibbling and in 2024 we will thin and re-arrange.

Sometimes life gets in the way and due to unforeseen circumstances we reluctantly canceled Dinner and A Chance this past September. At present we have booked Dinner and A Chance at Jonathan's for September 15, 2024. Save the date.

We are looking forward to the 36th annual Christmas by the Sea on December 9 and 10.

It is always fun enjoying holiday decorations, refreshments, and the tree. Come and join us for holiday cheer.

Have a happy and healthy season. Here's to us!

*Pat Dateo*

## Welcome, New FOHM Members. . .



*Artist Don Gorvett shows two stages of his reduction woodcuts at the Winn House Opening, June 17, 2023.*

### Ogunquit Heritage Museum Committee

Sarah Lefferts, *Chair*  
 Gary Littlefield, *Vice Chairman*  
 Amy Brown, *Secretary*  
 Jay Smith, *Treasurer*  
 Charlotte Tragard, *Museum Administrator & Curator*

Susan Alexandre      Susan Meffert  
 Maureen Clayton      L.F. "Sonny" Perkins  
 Nora Clements      Pat Weare  
 Everett Leach      Pete Woodbury

### Friends of the Ogunquit Heritage Museum Board of Directors

Patricia Dateo, *President*  
 David Barton, *Vice President*  
 Marsha Northrop, *Secretary*  
 Robert Dateo, *Treasurer*  
 Benita Braggiotti, *Membership Co-Chair*  
 Gail Trust, *Membership Co-Chair*

Louise Hokans      Anne Rebello LOA  
 Diane Jandebour      Bobbie Treen  
 Susan Levenson      Lenny Wyman



*Friends of the  
 Ogunquit Heritage Museum  
 Spring 2023 Newsletter*

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## Letter from our Chair . . .



*Sarah Lefferts*

**D**ear Friends,  
Once again, it was an amazing year!

Charlotte Tragard out did herself with our three exhibits (*Ogunquit Fishermen, The Old Village Inn* and *Don Gorvett*). I would like to thank Don, his assistant Vivian and Pat Dateo for bringing his colorful paintings to the museum to share with our visitors. We had the charismatic and magnificent guest tour guide, Marcia Brazer, join us for the Cove Tours. We had our first tour bus group reach out to explore the history of the cove with The Ogunquit Heritage Museum.

This fall, OgunquitFest was ghoulish at the Museum with spooky stories, costumes and light refreshments. We had two phenomenal volunteers, Bill Farr and his wife Anne, aside from our committee members.

I am very thankful for everyone on our Committee, as well as all of our members. Without all of you we would not have been successful!

Sincerely,

*Sarah Lefferts*

### In Memoriam

*Jean Smith*  
2 November 2023

## Endowment Contributions. . .

In memory of **Blanche Staples**

From Robert & Marena Bragg

Endowment Contribution

From Isabel Drzewiecki

In Memory of **Henry Hokans**

From Louise Hokans

In Memory of **Mary & Terri Littlefield**

From Richard Littlefield

Endowment Contribution

From Roger Simpson

In Memory of **Emil C. Masi**

From John & Pam Wilson

In Memory of **Barbara Woodbury**

From Peter Woodbury & Family

## Accessions . . .

**Norman & Marcia Brazer**

*Bobby Brazer's memories as a Dory fisherman*

**Elizabeth Green**

11 x 8 oriental rug

**Historical Society of Wells & Ogunquit**

Ogunquit Village Corporation Annual Report, 1944

**Art "Nipper" Johnson**

3 binders of post cards

**Jay Smith**

Bette Davis' Autobiography, *The Lonely Life*; Article, *Synopsis of Perkins Cove Yacht Club (PCYC)*; 10 copies of book, *Ogunquit 1900-1971* by Charles Littlefield Seaman

**Pat Weare**

Peggy Ives clutch purse; *Ogunquit Breeze, Spring 1952*

## OgunquitFest Ghouls . . .



(Front row, l-r) Ann Farr, Pat Weare, Sarah Lefferts, Amy Perkins Brown. (Back row, l-r) Bill Farr, Sonny Perkins



*Ghoulish Amy Perkins Brown*

**Profile...** (from p.1)

tion of that building, Gary will surely be a big help in restoring memories of the classrooms; he spent 6 years in elementary school there. He remembers, "In those days, kids could go anywhere in town. When I was 7 and 8, I used to go down to the Marginal Way after school. We played on the rocks and in the tidal pools. It was great."

Gary started working for McDougall at the beach when he was 10. "McDougall had bought the beach property from Wally Perkins after it had burned. I went with my father around 7:30 a.m., swept out the bathhouse and rented beach umbrellas, chairs, and places to change. I was a good salesman because I was a little kid. They thought they had hired my brother but when I got there, they had to get a kitchen stool so I could see over the counter to pass out keys. I worked there for seven years, through my junior year in high school, seven days a week, nine hours a day from the first day school let out until the day before school started after Labor Day. In the 50s the beach changed quite a bit. When I started, the beach extended in front of McDougall's maybe 60 to 100 yards. Then there was a dip in the sand a good distance out and then a sandbar. The surf was way out beyond the sandbar. Carl Merrill, who bought the property from McDougall, put a steel bulkhead down deep in front of the motel units, and that changed the way the water moved so that it washed out in front of the motel and in front of Julie Stephopolis's restaurant."

After high school Gary tried his hand at manufacturing briefly, working at Davison Rubber Company in Dover. "It was a sweatshop," he says, and he wisely moved on. About his family, Gary says, "I am related to any Littlefield you know about in York County. There are four branches in Ogunquit, all related."

Gary was chairman of the board at Wells Ogunquit Historical for quite some time. When Mary Kennedy



*Gary, r, at work 1994*

went to town meeting in Ogunquit in 1996 to say if the town would buy Kennedy's property on Obed's Lane, Dorothea Grant had left in her will a codicil that would endow it. "I remember there was quite a fuss. Two little old ladies trying to convince the town to

buy the property. And two other ladies saying, "I know what you boys will do with it if we get it for you. You'll just turn it into a parking lot and pave it all



*Grace and Gary at Historical Society Annual dinner in 2004--before the lights went out and the candles were lighted*

over." In fact, the town tried to do that several times. Fortunately, townspeople voted that down and it was kept as a Commons in Dorothea Jacobs Grant's memory.

Gary was a bachelor for a long time, a condition he doesn't recommend to others. When he met Grace Conrad first in the 80s, she was married and working as secretary to the planning and appeals boards. Much later, a friend brought her to WOHS for a dinner. During dinner the power went out and they had a candle-lit dinner together. According to Gary, "Actually the thing that brought us together was that Hope Shelley had written a book called *My Name is Wells*, and she had printed 10,000 copies with no place to store them. They got moved to Grace's barn and some are still there."



*Grace's son Trevor, Grace, Calysta and Gary at Calysta's high school graduation*

Zana Littlefield, Gary's mother, was another remarkable contributor to Ogunquit's wellbeing. She baked for Virginia Carroll at the Barbara Dean for fifteen

*(Continued...p.5)*

**Profile...** (from p.4)



*Gary and Grace with Grace's granddaughter, Calysta Conrad in 2021*

years, and then worked for John Parella at the Whistling Oyster another 15 years. Working independently,

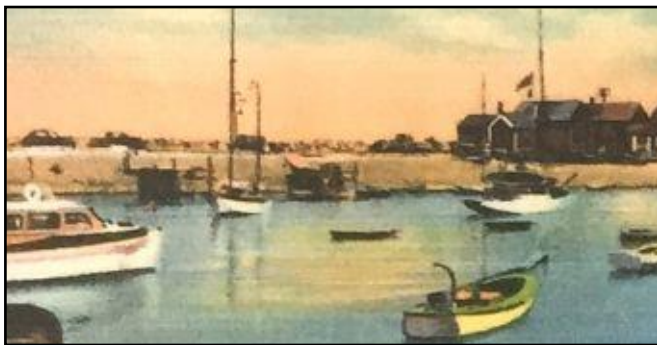
she produced pies for Jennie Boston's produce stand in Wells. But one of the saddest days for her happened when her tenant, Mark Barnard, came home around midnight one night and started to cook some dinner, lay down to rest and fell fast asleep. He never heard the smoke alarm go off and died of smoke inhalation. Zanna, on the first floor, didn't even know he was home until it was too late.

Gary continues these days helping to grow the Ogunquit Heritage Museum. He directed the building of the new ell, and later helped with the construction of our Ogunquit dory. Thinking about his life, I think he would say it's been a busy life, but a very rewarding one. And I think those of us who grew up with him in Ogunquit can certainly agree.

*Susan Day Meffert*

**The Bait Wharf – Then and Now**

Concurrent with the dredging of the Cove in 1940-1941, various structures were built on the embankment leading down to the water's edge of the new boat basin. Two Town wharves, shown in the post card image below, were erected on the embankment edge of the Cove near Mrs. Ireland's Brush & Needle shop (now Barnacle Billy's) but nothing else and certainly no bait wharf or parking lot.



*Town wharves at Perkins Cove 1940-1941*

Remnants of these Town wharves are still visible today with a mooring chain connected to one of them. Following the grand dedication of the new Cove on July 4, 1941 and over the years from 1942 to 1945, the Town was confronted with multiple Warrant Articles aimed at changing the topography of the Cove. These included: taking apart the former rigid span bridge and/or funding a new bridge over the channel, or installing rip rap on the easterly side of the channel, installing pilings, widening the road and building a bait wharf. Although the appropriated funds seemed to overlap, it was clear that a new bait wharf, a new drawbridge, stone rip rap and pilings should be built

where before there was nothing. According to Article 33 of the 1945 Town warrant, muck and gravel was to be dredged out of the channel and used as fill in back of the planking which led to the elevated appearance that now exists at the Cove.

The bait wharf was constructed across from Robert Laurent's School of Painting and Sculpture which formerly was the Ogunquit School of Graphic Arts--founded and built by artist and philanthropist Hamilton Easter Field--and passed on to Laurent upon the untimely death of Mr. Field in 1921. Years later Laurent would claim the bait wharf property as his, feeling justified based on how land was deeded and passed on in the years following the creation of the Fish Cove Harbor Company. (More on this later.) Close examination of the below photo will show: art school in the background, wharf in the midground, a plethora of old wooden barrels held together with metal hoops; a dory resting on a retaining wall made of pilings; the Brazer studio in blazing white (now red) and, in the foreground, the passing of a Friendship sloop, the "Sea Queen," captained by Evan Smith, a former dory-man and one of the first to charter sailing trips out of the Cove.



*Sea Queen, Captain Evan Smith's Friendship Sloop*

*(Continued...p.6)*

**Bait Wharf...** (from p.5)

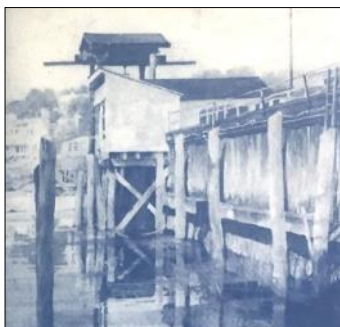
The users of the bait wharf added a swing boom hoist to raise and lower the barrels but this was replaced in the mid 1950s with a more robust hoist mechanism as shown in the below post card image taken by local resident and famed photographer Mr. Edward Hipple.

You can still see those original two town wharfs on



*Swing boom hoist added in the mid-1950s*

the embankment. The card also shows the addition of a flat roof on the bait wharf and hoist area which was approved by Town Warrant Article 39 at the April 1954 Town Meeting and cost a whopping \$150 thanks to volunteer labor. A few years later a larger enclosure was built with sloped roofs for both the bait wharf and



*Watercolor painting of bait wharf by Fran Scully*

its adjoining rail and hoist as shown here in Fran Scully's water color titled "Bait Wharf, Perkins Cove," a Christmas card she created from an original painting and sent to the author (and others I presume).

However, in the '66-'67 time period, disputes erupted over who owned the land along Oarweed Cove Road.

In August 1967 Robert Laurent sued the town for alleged unlawful acquisition of his land. Concurrently in 1968 the Town Warrant Article #42 asked the voters to approve \$11,000 for a new bait wharf but the money had to be held in escrow until the legal matter could be satisfactorily completed as to who owned the land where the new bait wharf would sit. This dispute lingered on until, in exchange for \$15,000, Robert Laurent



*Work begins on new bait cooler, roadway and bulkhead*

in 1972 conveyed via a Quit Claim deed to the OVC for all parking areas at the Cove including the area of land containing the bait wharf.

With legal

matters resolved, work began on the new bait cooler which included reinforcement of the roadway and the bulkhead beneath it and below the bait wharf itself.

Work was completed soon thereafter.

In 1976 the Town voted to do "substantial repairs" to the bulkhead beneath the bait wharf in order to check the continuous flow of fill into the Cove based on the ebb and flow of tides and aggravated by storm surges. But it took three years until the foundation was fixed and paving was completed. However, two years later there appeared to be a problem with the bait wharf slab, so in 1988 a consultant was hired to evaluate the problem. In 1988 the Town approved \$90,000 for repairs to the bait wharf and adjoining bulkhead. Completed in 1989, the Harbormaster, Roy "Bud" Perkins Jr., stated in his Annual Report that all the repairs should "alleviate fears that the wharf would slip into the Cove." In 1994 the Town approved \$3,500 for construction of a Harbormaster's office over the existing bait house.

In the 29 years since, there have been no significant changes to the bait wharf (except for a new rail in



*(Upper) Harbormaster's Office under construction  
(Lower) Completed building with bird houses*

2018) nor the Harbormaster's office (except for proliferation of bird houses). However, preliminary design changes have been shared with the Perkins Cove Harbor Committee and other stakeholders. These sketches reveal a proposed expansion of the bait house footprint and Harbormaster's office above it, which may be done in conjunction with a new footbridge within the next couple of years.

*Jay Smith*

## George Cooley, How Did You Get Here From There?



*At Little Beach*

**Lew-Ann:** So George, how did you get here from there?

**George:** My family was from Waltham, Mass. My grandfather used to come up to the Sparhawk. Later my mother came as a young woman to stay at the Sparhawk to ride horses on the beach with friends. Then she and my dad started coming together.

When we started coming as a family, I was a babe. We stayed at Kingfield Ave. My folks looked for a long time to buy and finally settled on the house on Thompson Lane. There was another guy trying to buy the smaller house and he kept nicking and diming poor Miss Thompson to death, she and her two sisters lived in the house where Thompson Green is now. Finally she sold him the small house for the price he wanted and sold my dad the bigger house and the whole field.

It was 5 hours from Boston back then. We would get out of school and head out on Route One. We would stop along the way in Topsfield at Dodgems for a what was called A Big Drink. Cars weren't what they are today and we didn't want the radiator to over heat or the tires to get too hot.

The 10-cent bridge was always a favorite landmark. We were almost there! It was dark by then and Route One from there on up had so many stars.

Riding up Thompson Lane, we would hear squeals as our tires smashed all of the frogs in the road. There were only the two summer cottages on the road as well as Miss Thompson's house and the field back then.

**L-A:** How did you meet Wayne Perkins?

**G:** Wayne lived across the street from the Thompson house, next to where the Perkins Parking Lot is now.

His father was Leon and his mother was Lillian.

Jay and I used to walk through the field and Miss Thompson would call our mother and say, "Tell the boys they are ruining the hay." So, we got Wayne's grandfather, Joel to come over and mow it for her. Dad bought Jay a BB gun, but 9 year old Wayne walked across the field with a 22.

We met!!!

Dad had to buy Jay a 22. I was about 7 by then.

One of our other favorite things to do was riding birches. The birch trees that were fairly young made for great riding.

We just loved the tuna fishermen. We wanted to be them. Another game we played was Keggin' Tinker Mackerel. Lillian used to sew a lot and she had wooden spools of thread. When she was done with a spool,



*Jay Cooley*

she would give it to us and we would tie fishing line and a hook to it and wait for the fish to bite and run. Then we would follow them around the cove in a punt.

It wasn't all play. We had a very important job to do. We used to go to Wayne's grandfather's place, a barn across from Pine Hill South and move the cows into the field across the road from Jacks Cove. It was pretty quiet back then and there wasn't a car in sight.

Some days, we would swim at the beach where Oarweed Cove is now.



*George (c) and friends at Little Beach*

There was no parking lot and there was a nice sandy beach out front. Many times our mother would take us to The Shack which was the only

place to eat in the Cove. It was run by John Maxwell.

Billy Tower had just bought the Brush and Needle and was planning to put in Barnacle Billy's.

Roby Littlefield built the Oarweed and asked John Maxwell to run it. It was an offer he couldn't refuse.

But, mostly we swam at the second little beach on the Marginal Way. We would meet



*George, Jay, Janet Sorenson, Phil Burke at Main Beach*

We would meet Wayne, the Burkes, Phil and Brian, the Brenners, Sally and Joanne, Emery Hutchins and Tina Hanson there. We learned to

swim at the left or Lobster Point.

On rainy days, my brother Jay would set up a make believe movie theater in the closet of our bedroom. We would cheer and stamp our feet just the way we did back home at the real movies.

**L-A:** Tell me about Shenanigans

**G:** Well, It was 1980 and my friend Ian MacKenzie said, "Georgie boy, lets open a bottle club!"

**L-A:** What was a bottle Club?

**G:** You get a great DJ and a great dance floor then you charge people \$7 to come in and drink their own booze.

Shenanigans was an instant hit. Every bar in town  
(Continued...p.8)

Cooley... (from p.7)



Front, l to r, Jane Muller, Tina Hanson, Cindy Bordan, Sally McGann. Back, l to r, George, Brian Burke, Emery Hutchins

would give last call and then scream out. "Go to Shenanigans!"

People traveled from all over. Members of the Boston Red Sox could be seen dancing next to the fishermen from Cape Porpoise.

It was the 80s and life was loose. Eventually,

we were told we had to serve food and then we finally got shut down. A complaint from a neighbor saying we were 'sinful sinful sinful,' landed us at Selectman's meeting. My lawyer just shook his head and said regrettably that, he had no defense for sin.



Shenanigans Crew: George, Daryl(?), Ian MacKenzie, Charlo(?), Angelo Valenguiles, Jackie MacDonald

**L-A: What do you do now, George?**

**G:** I live in a house next to the old summer cottage I grew up in with my wife and cat. I make apple cider from the apples in my field, travel to places I've read about and sail my boat. --Lew-Ann Cooley



Capt. George aboard Kestrel



George & Lew-Ann



## Perkins Cove Yacht Club

The origin and legitimacy of the Perkins Cove Yacht Club (PCYC) appears to evolve around the whims of its founder, Captain Bruce Robertson-Dick. Although Bruce resided in Ogunquit on Pine Hill Road South in the early 60s, he actually lived at the Cove from 1963 to around 1978 and even served briefly as its Harbormaster in 1975-1976. During his time at the Cove, he interfaced with the sailing and motor craft crowd which included the likes of Phil "Robin" Richards, LeCain Smith, Jim Houghton, Jack Gordon, Mike Horn, Steve Perkins, Ken Young Jr., Marcia Brazer and others including none other than George W. Bush. Bruce himself was the proud owner of a 27-foot Lancer and, in the course of his maritime "career," also taught sailing, restored boats and was even a yacht broker.

As a point of interest there were some founding members, Kenney Young in particular, who thought the Club name should be Josias River Yacht Club (JRYC) and that opinion was shared by others. The original burgee that was adopted had the initials JRYC on it along with a partial silhouette of the white foot bridge on a blue background. However, a revised burgee was made with a white background, and gold trim and the bridge silhouette was done in blue—all of which was designed by Commodore Bruce, who preferred to call it the Perkins Cove Yacht Club (PCYC). History does not record the method used to legitimize the name change. Members were charged \$25 dues which was collected and held in escrow by the Commodore. The only Commodore was Bruce Robertson-Dick and some questioned what the dues were used for. However, it is presumed that some was spent on the new burgee and some on the membership cards and some on official stationery and the rest on "social events" that would have been used to welcome visiting yachts. There is no record of meetings held or By-laws created and one early member described it as a "loose alliance."



One of the original members stated that the reason for the yacht club was to benefit itinerant boaters. Within the world of yachtsmen, sailors can become members of yacht clubs in various harbors that they frequent. In exchange certain courtesies are extended. These reciprocal agreements often meant that dockage or mooring fees were waived.

It is presumed the Yacht Club died a slow natural death as all of its members "sailed away" including its Commodore. Former members of the PCYC nee JRYC are encouraged to contact the Ogunquit Heritage Museum (OHM) and share their insights. We are also looking for a copy of the PCYC burgee.

Jay Smith,

Brother to LeCain Smith who was a member of JRYC aka PCYC.