

# KNOTTY NEWS

May 2025



## Message from the Executive Team

May was a big month and a great kick off to the 2025 season! Thanks to all who helped with our spring work parties and participated in our budget meeting. It was also fun to see many of you at the opening party on May 17<sup>th</sup> - much pizza and ice cream was consumed, with happy faces all around! There are many more great events coming up this summer, that we hope you'll join us for. Here are a few that are coming up quick!

- Race nights start on Wednesday, June 4. There's a new 'follow the fleet' option to help new racers ease in.
- Sunday, June 15 is a big day. The Lady Bligh race starts at 11:30 am. Eggs Bennie Fathers' Day Breakfast will be served from 9:30 to 10:30 am for \$15/person - RSVP to Diane at lesakdiane@hotmail.com by June 13th.
- July 3-5 is the 60<sup>th</sup> annual Child's Cup and LEIR weekend! Race from Port Stanley to Ashtabula on July 3, and return home with our American friends on July 5.
- We need volunteers for sailing school July 21-25. If you have any availability that week to help with the following roles, contact Kerby. We will take any days that you have free!
  - People to help rig the boats (on Sunday) and pack up the boats (on Friday)
  - Extra hands during the week to help with registration, lesson support, and safety dingy personnel.
  - People to take out interested participants in the 'JAM Championship' on July 25.

Be mindful, as this spring brought low water levels (though May's rainfall boosted water levels by 5 inches.) This spring, there was a new land-bridge between the berm and breakwater (now slightly beneath the surface.) The municipality has also been dredging the harbour mouth.



New land bridge



Harbour mouth dredging  
(though the barge is actually  
stuck in this picture!)



Ever have any questions? Feel free to reach out to the commodore, Kerby: [kerbywaud@gmail.com](mailto:kerbywaud@gmail.com) or text 226-268-9823.



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## Sailing 'Favourite 5'

Let's make this newsletter our own and use it to get to know each other better! We encourage any member to share their 'favourite 5' in a future edition of Knotty News. The concept is simple. The writer chooses any 5 categories of 'sailing favourites' they'd like. For example: Favourite sailing destination? Favourite boat? Favourite dinner on the deck meal? Favourite place in Port Stanley? Favourite Port Stanley wind? Favourite sailing joke? Favourite boat snack or drink?... you get the idea!

Send your 'favourite 5' to Chelsea at [chelsea@creatingme.ca](mailto:chelsea@creatingme.ca), along with a picture of yourself. She will include it in the next Knotty News. Here's a examples to get us started!

### Kerby's Waud's Favourite 5



- Favourite Port Stanley Wind - A moderate SW summer breeze starting around 6 knots and building to 10 knots in the late afternoon. I also like the rare E or SE breeze as it tends to be consistent.
- Favourite Destination - I have a smaller boat so I am limited to Port Bruce or the beach at Port Talbot. I also like what our family calls 'mud island' about 200 metres East of the water intake. If I go further afield, I love the area around Little Current or Killarney, Ontario.
- Favourite PSSS Social Time - A casual drink and a snack on the side deck with others after a nice sail.
- Favourite Sailing Movie - 'Wind' (1992) is cheesy but fun. I still use the term 'whomper' to refer to an oversized sail.
- Favourite Sailing Dream - There are lots of destinations that I would like to sail - like parts of the East Coast and more spots in the Caribbean - but I will take this question literally. I have a recurring dream of sailing around a group of just-discovered islands about a mile or two offshore and South or East of Port Stanley. There are often little bays or sandy coves within these islands.

### Note from the editor

Hi everyone! For those I haven't met, I'm Chelsea Hicks-Webster. Dick and Ruth handed down their baby, Grace C. to my family last summer. We are so happy to be part of the PSSS and it's my honour to carry on the Knotty News tradition that Jill so wonderfully ran for many years. (In fact, if you have a copy of one of Jill's newsletters, I'd love to see it!)

We will aim for monthly newsletters during the sailing season. This will be a place where you can each share your stories. If you have any content you'd like to share or suggestions on how to improve Knotty News, email it to me anytime at [chelsea@creatingme.ca](mailto:chelsea@creatingme.ca).



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## Docks in, clubhouse cleaned - and yummy food!

We had a good turnout to put the docks in due to the good weather and FOA (fear of Alex). We served a pizza lunch on Saturday that only failed in the lack of quantity. Sunday saw 15 people who enjoyed a lunch of chicken soup and grilled cheese sandwiches. Sweets offered both days, otherwise why come out? Oh yeah, FOA.

Barbecue cleaned, flashing installed on the side deck roof, chairs pressure washed and many other clean up jobs to spruce up the property. Spring cleaning inside the clubhouse was spearheaded by Maxine, from what I hear.

Bigly thanks to the Friday Night Ladies who helped with the food, saving the work crew from starving. ~ Diane Lesak

## Race Season Prep

As race season approaches, just a reminder to check the rule book. We aren't sure, but we think this is an unapproved racing accessory. This may up your phrf rating. :)  
~ Diane Schlegel



## Dinners on the Deck Resume!



14 people were present for our first dinner on the deck- which was held indoors due to cooling temperatures. We all enjoyed 3 different appetizers as well as 2 delicious desserts. 😊

PSSS is without a doubt the best restaurant in town! ~ Lynn Chantler

Our family enjoyed our first dinner on the deck with the PSSS community on Friday, May 9. We were blown away by the culinary skills and kindness. There were lamb chops from New Zealand and homemade marinades galore. Gil even shared his delicious homemade pesto pasta with everyone. (We were the only ones with microwaved macaroni and cheese, hehe.) We felt very welcome - Diane even had little gifts for the kids and I (Chelsea) to make us feel welcome. We look forward to continuing to get to know you all!

~Warren, Chelsea, Cadence, Mason, and Lincoln



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## Launch Day!

We had hard working, and wet!, boat launchers last Saturday, who enjoyed a hot lunch of baked ham, baked beans and mashed potatoes. Just the ticket to warm up those cold hands.

~Diane Lesak

After weeks of polishing, engine checks and undercoats

It was a rainy day when we launched the boats

All hands were on decks, with many chores around

Attaching even towing lines, for some who ran around

Busy in the kitchen, to bring you fine cuisine

A nice hot lunch was waiting, cooked with ham and beans

Because of our love of sailing, and camaraderie t's the reason

That our P.S.S.S. is in its 60th season

May a gentle breeze forever fill your sails and

God bless you and keep you safe.

~Diane Schlegel





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## Remembering Heinz Koch

Our community recently lost a long-time member, Heinz Koch. Heinz was commodore of PSSS for at least one year in the 70's. His daughter, Michelle, recounts some of his sailing story:

Dad co-owned "Dragon Lady" with Peter Gruel (27ft) then bought a 30ft C&C "Temporal". He then had Manfred Kanter build him a 50ft steel hull "Altair IV" which he sailed from Port in '86 to his final destination of Trinidad where he lived for at least 20 yrs at the Trinidad and Tobago Yacht Club. Dad was best friends with Dave Fowler "Windspeed" until Dave's untimely passing in 2016. Our family had lots of good memories at the club. Dad lived for the Sunday races. I myself was young but remember helping fold sails, the BBQ,s and great camaraderie of all the sailors.

~Michelle Koch



## See you soon, Nice Butt!

Nice Butt suffered a mast accident during haul-out last fall and both the boat and mast require some rest & repair. She made her voyage to Lake Ontario to be repaired this spring. To get her away for refitting, she first had to be lifted, cradle and all, over the clubhouse to line up with the laneway. The transport trailer backed into position a couple days later and hydraulically lifted the boat and cradle. Luckily ice around the clubhouse had melted enough that the trailer rolled in and out without issues. We hope to see Wayne, Maxine, and Nice Butt back soon! ~ Shawn Buchanan



## Sailors in training!

The Webster family are slowly learning how to sail and maintain a boat. Featured here - Cadence pulling up the anchor after the kids repainted the chain.

~Chelsea, Warren, Cadence, Mason and Lincoln

## PSSS was home to 2.4m boats!

This winter, Cook and his friend John were lucky enough to launch their 2.4 metre boats at PSSS. They sailed in Kettle Creek right up until December 28th.

Great sailing in Port Stanley!

~Keri Kanter





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## **Take advantage of your membership with Inter Lake Yachting Association!**

Did you know we are members of the Inter-Lake Yachting Association, which entitles us to preferred docking at member yacht clubs around the Great Lakes? Members have been welcomed at the Royal Canadian Yacht Club on Toronto Island and enjoyed drinks in the lounge of the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club. A full list of members is found on the organization's website. If you'd like to visit one of these clubs, hail the club by VHF or by phone, identify yourself, and request guest dockage. In most cases, dockage is not free, but ILYA gives you a preferential pass to get in!

Our membership also obliges us to provide reciprocal dockage to members of all those clubs – an obligation we discharge with pleasure and honour. Our guest book has been signed not only by skippers from almost all ports along the south shore of Lake Erie, but other notables such as Snow Queen from Newport harbour, Footloose from Parry Sound, Mandalay from Montreal, Annual Hope from Lion's Head, to name but a few.

We also enjoy a special relationship with the Ashtabula Ohio Yacht Club resulting from our participation in the LEIR, The Lake Erie International Race, which recently celebrated its 60-year anniversary.

~Wayne Kentner



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## Blast from the Past!

### How we did pilings back in the day

I have been a member of the sailing squadron for 40 years and putting in the docks back when I joined was a lot different than it is today. We had our own pile driver contraction, which was mounted on old heating oil drums. It had a tower, like our current pile driver, but the motor was from an old Mini Cooper. Water was added to the radiator directly from the creek. Once the barge was roughly in position, anchors were thrown out at three corners and the poles were floated out to the barge. Measurements were taken very carefully because once the pile was driven in there was no way to get it back out until winter. Men had to climb the tower to put the safety bar in for the hammer and to take it out once the pounding was to start. There were many motor issues. Everyone on board was close to the action, because the rig was only 15 x 15, if that. Once the piling was in, the rig had to be moved to the next spot and the anchors repositioned. The drum was operated by a man standing at the back deck with two chest high control bards - one was a clutch, the other the brake. Many times the drum overspooled, causing a delay. The dock sections were slid out over each other, much like today. I wish I had a picture!

Taking the docks out was madness. Picture this: An ice-covered creek. A set of snow skis with a gas motor mounted on a frame. The skis went on either side of the pile to be removed. A chain was wrapped around the piling and a hydraulic ram, run by the motor, was ready. But wait! First someone took a chainsaw and cut a square in the ice around the pile. Then, the jacking began. Of course, the ice went down and the water flooded the ice. The chain had to be repositioned and more jacking was necessary. It was wet, cold, muddy madness, but something funny always happened to lighten the job. The pile was pulled across the ice, to the seawall, where it had to be lifted up so someone's pick could drag it up on shore. Of course, this could only happen once the ice was thick enough and on a couple of occasions we lost dock sections because there wasn't enough ice to do the job!

I wish I had pictures! I am sure there were some injuries along the way, but I don't recall anything very serious. This whole operation has to be somewhat unique in the history of sailing clubs. It was born out of necessity because the reality is that the ice pressure snaps off pilings left in the water over the winter. Just a part of our history that makes our club unique!

~Bob Chantler



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## Blast from the Past! (Continued)

### Henderson Singlehanded Sailboat Race 1995-2015

In the late 1980's, the beacon for single-handed sailing on the Great Lakes was the Mackinac Solo Race on Lake Huron. The race was gaining in fame and popularity, but to get to Lake Huron was a 5 day sail from Port Stanley. So, I organized a 100 mile sailboat race on Lake Erie for solo sailors. 1995 heralded the start of a 20-year series of solo races, the first being from Port Stanley, across Lake Erie to Ashtabula, Ohio, and back to Port Stanley. For 24 hours after the starting horn, the seventeen solo sailors trimmed for non-existent winds to reach Ashtabula and back. Their encounter in the wee hours with the Canadian Coastguard, in misty conditions, is recounted often.

Participants in the first race included Peter Boshart on Spellbound, Jim Rowen on Cheeseburger, Bob Henderson on Windswept, Steve Donker on Creole III, Geoff Richards on Dawn Flight, Blair Tully on Hurricane, Jeff Helsdingen on Anonymous, Bruce Johnson on Ariel I, Steve Thomas on Mystique, JD Docker on Contessa, Abe Mycroft on Whippoorwill, Bob Clarke and Hans Reimer on Elusive, to name a few. The 1995 winner was Steve Donker. Winners in other years included Steve Thomas, Jeff Helsdingen, Bruce Johnson, Bob Henderson, Jim Rowen and Blair Tully. The race was held annually until 2015, with the course being shortened over the years for safety considerations. (Of note: Jeff Helsdingen won on all three of his boats - Anonymous, 4 Seconds Left and Clockwork Orange. Also, in the history of the Henderson Singlehanded, there was one female entrant, Karen Schroeder, on her boat Solo.)

As much as this race encouraged those without crews to make their mark with their singlehanded skills, it also provided camaraderie and fodder for deck banter and chiding for many years. The "reward" at the finish line was the "Henderson Singlehanded" hat. (I would like to alert Jeff that his 1997 hat is still waiting for him. Rumour has it that he is only missing one hat from 1995 to 2015.)

Something to add? Forward to: [windsweptsail@gmail.com](mailto:windsweptsail@gmail.com)

~Bob Henderson



### Slapshot 1.0 (formerly known as Cookie's Monster)

I came across this old photo, probably from early 2000s.  
Thought it would be fun to share!

~Lisa Freeman





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## Blast from the Past! (Continued)

### Dr. Waud Walks Around

A few years ago, we discovered some slides in my parents' basement. Some were ruined by moisture, but luckily, about half survived. I digitized the slides, which were originally taken by my grandfather, Dr. Russell Waud, around 1959 or 1960. He liked to go for walks around town to document what he saw. Luckily, a couple photos show where the PSSS Clubhouse now stands. I'm sharing half of Dr. Waud's photos in this Knotty News, and will share the rest in a future edition. I hope you enjoy them. I also hope that other members can share Kettle Creek photos from different time periods in future editions of the Knotty News. ~ Kerby Waud



← This is the Rhea. I believe it was a WWII Minesweeper that was docked just south of the bridge from the late 40's to the late 80's. A well-known Port Stanley landmark at the time.

→ This is Stan's Marina. It looks a little more rustic but the general shape is still the same. Water levels seemed low at the time of the photo.



← These photos are of the Rose Marie, which docked just north of our club, at what is now the Scarff property. Many locals received generous offers to go out on the Rose Marie from its owner: Joe McManus. Notice the waterfront just north of the bridge looked quite different at that time. There was also no park by the bridge, although the bridge looks very similar to today. Old Main Street landmarks can be seen in the background of one of the photos.

