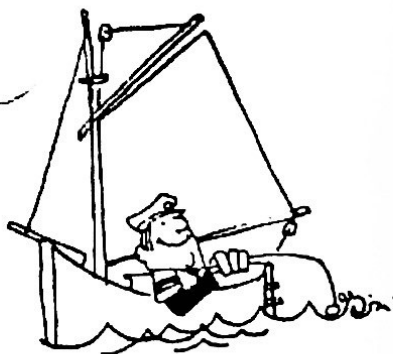


REMEMBRANCES OF EARLY DAYS  
ON DEEP CREEK LAKE

by

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I started sailing on Deep Creek Lake in the summer of 1926. My companion was Dick Holben, of Frostburg, Maryland, and our craft was a canoe equipped with a sailing rig. We kept our boat in a large barn near the present Will O' the Wisp and found the sport exciting, but dangerous because of partly submerged stumps and logs floating sometimes just below the surface of the newly-filled lake. There were a few motor boats and fishermen, but we did not see another sail in the area.

In 1934, John Mordock arrived in Cumberland from Chicago, where he had been a member of a Yacht Club and active in sailing on Lake Michigan. The first thing John asked me when we had lunch together was, "Where is the nearest lake which is suitable for sailing?" From that day on we became a sailing group! Mordock shipped in a Bell Class Swallow, a 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ -foot keel boat, and soon the group had a Snipe, Penguin, and Cape Cod Mercury. The old Will O' the Wisp became our Yacht Club, and we sailed off their dock every weekend. John Mordock was our leader, and the group consisted of Tau Rowe, of Westernport; Dick Holben, of Frostburg; and Susan Farris, Nancy James, Jock Murrie, and John Schaidt, of Cumberland.

One Sunday afternoon we were approached by a short man wearing leather boots and a wide-brimmed hat. He said his name was Harry Muma, and that he and a partner, Cy Bowers, had just bought a piece of land south of the Glendale Bridge. He called it Turkey Neck and said if we would bring our group and boats down and sail off his property that he would build us a Yacht Club. We looked at each other in amazement, and Mordock said, "Let's go—what have we got to lose!" I got in the car with Muma, and the fleet headed south under Glendale Bridge. After opening and closing several farm gates, Muma and I arrived at the crumbling foundation of a one-time farmhouse. Soon we saw our sailboats passing the Holy Cross point and heading for the Turkey Neck shore. We all gathered in the foundation; Muma cracked a bottle of Gilbey's gin and said, "This will be your Yacht Club." Mordock asked Muma how long it would take him to build the clubhouse; and upon hearing that it would take at least a year and maybe longer, he agreed to buy a lot and build a cabin, which would be the first building on Turkey Neck and serve as a temporary Yacht Club. The following weekend the log cabin arrived on a truck from Sears-Roebuck

and in two more weeks our gang had put it together, dug a well, put in a septic tank, cleared an entrance roadway, built a dock, and were ready for sailing.

Muma's Yacht Club was completed and dedicated in the spring of 1937 with our leader, John B. Mordock serving as the first Commodore.

From 1937 to 1942, the Club was operated by the Mumas. Bunk space in the two dormitories upstairs was available at a nominal fee, and Mrs. Muma (Elsie) ran the kitchen and served meals in the dining room. The sailing and social activities resulted in the sale of lots and building of summer homes and Turkey Neck became populated.

When we first arrived on Turkey Neck, there were no buildings. The only activity we saw was Major Mirick, who sailed a small dinghy with red sails from his home at "Briar Patch" across the lake; Camp Gary, a boy's camp on Thousand Acres; and, of course, Holy Cross. The Snipe Fleet grew in size and dominated the racing program, although other sailboats—Penguins, Sea Gulls, Cape Cod Mercury, Bell Class Swallow—joined in handicap races.

At the outbreak of World War II, the sailors went to war; the Club was shut down, and Muma and Bowers leased the property to the Sea Scouts who occupied it until the end of the war. In 1947, the Mumas sent Harold "Pee Wee", their son, to run the club, but they could not get it running smoothly again, so in 1948 a group from Cumberland formed the DCYC, Inc., and leased the club from the owners on an annual arrangement. Under this arrangement, the membership grew, sailing races were held every weekend, and an Invitational Regatta established. An active social program was highlighted with a formal (black tie) dinner-dance each year at the Mt. Lake Park Hotel. Earl Zepp moved from Ohio to Oakland where he engaged in the lumber business and built many homes on Turkey Neck. He also established a Thistle Fleet, which was very active until he brought Sandy Douglass to Oakland and the Flying Scot replaced the Thistles. Also, after the war, the first fiberglass sailboat, the Rebel, came to the lake and entered the racing programs. Jack McClintock, from Pittsburgh, introduced the Jet 14, and soon the Snipe Fleet disappeared from competition.

About 1963, the DCYC, Inc., started having trouble with the club owners. They attempted to buy the property, but could not come to terms with Muma and Bowers, so they started looking for a new location, and in 1965 they moved to Thousand Acres to a place called Deerhaven.

A group of Turkey Neck property owners formed the Deep Creek Lake Sailing Association, Inc., bought the Yacht Club property, and enlarged the building. Arthur Nicholson was their first Commodore.