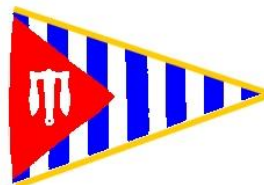


United States
Power
Squadron



Members Handbook



Meriden Power Squadron

dedicated to
making boating
safer and more fun

Table of Contents

USPS	Page 1
Welcome to MPS!	Page 2
Objectives of the Squadron Pledge	Page 3
Squadron Structure Rank/Grade	Page 4
Squadron Organizational Chart	Page 5
Squadron Communication Dress Code	Page 6
Merit Marks Member Benefits	Page 7
Membership description	Page 8
Advanced Grade Courses	Page 9
Elective Courses	Page 10
Squadron Civic Service	Page 11
Squadron Flag Etiquette	Page 12

The United States Power Squadrons

The USPS was founded in 1912 at the Boston Yacht Club in Marblehead, Mass. and is the world's largest private boating fraternity. Today over 50,000 members participate in more than 446 squadrons, assigned to 33 districts throughout the United States and its territories, and in several over seas locations.

USPS is an organization of people who share a common love for boating and support the prime USPS objective of "Safe Boating through Education". It includes power boaters, sailors, and those who do not own boats. There are no barriers to membership such as race, religion, sex or ethnic background. The USPS is not affiliated with any governmental organization and is qualified and operated as a non-profit corporation.

History

The USPS was founded 1912 and incorporated in 1914 at the New York Yacht club in New York City. In 1912 a Rear Commodore of that club, Roger Upton, was the sole force behind its origin. From the beginning, boating education was high on the USPS list of objectives. Over the years it has grown to be the largest National, private, non-profit, boating education organization in the world. USPS has expanded its scope to include sail boating as well as power boating.

The National Office of the USPS is presently located in Raleigh, North Carolina. This office governs all the 33 Districts and 440 Squadrons and regulates the management and policies of USPS. Meriden Power Squadron is currently in District 1 of the USPS.

Organization

The National Organization of the USPS is in Raleigh, N.C. and sets guidelines, provides educational courses and materials that enable the squadrons to meet their primary objective of offering a boating education to the public. In addition the USPS provides a fine educational program to its members who are encouraged to participate in civic activities and to enjoy the company of their fellow members. All three levels of USPS, national, district and squadron are led by officers known as Commander, Executive Officer, Administrative Officers, Secretary, and Treasurer (Commonly referred to as the Bridge). There are also elected and appointed committees who report to these officers.

Welcome to the Meriden Power Squadron!

More than 50 years ago, five members from the Harbor Brook Yacht Club decided to start the Meriden Power Squadron. On February 2, 1954 the charter was signed with a grand total of 13 members. Today we have over 90 members from Meriden, Southington, Cheshire, Wallingford, Bristol and many other towns. Meriden is one of 13 squadrons that make up District 1 covering most of Connecticut and a portion of Rhode Island.

Squadron members are dedicated to the advancement of Boating education, safety and the camaraderie of recreational boating. Our members meet on the fourth Wednesday of the month (except July and August). Meetings are brief on the business side. The majority of the meeting time is devoted to a technical talk by a local expert (tug captain, battery expert, etc.) or maybe a member will show slides and explain a trip they took. They are very informative.

The squadron also enjoys many social events, dinners and boating rendezvous throughout the year. Our events are usually held in the Connecticut River at places like Pataconk Yacht Club and Hamburg Cove, and cruises on Long Island Sound that can be to Block Island, Montauk, Greenport and other places as well.

Educational classes are usually held in the Meriden and Southington area. MPS is a fun organization of members with the same interests and concerns about our waterways. The Meriden Power Squadron serves members from all over Connecticut but most boats are located in the area between New Haven and up the Connecticut River to Chester. Our home base for member meetings is Yankee Gas Building, 56 Cooper Street, Meriden CT.

“Boating is fun, we’ll show you how!”

Squadron Objectives

Objectives

The objectives of the USPS are as follows:

- To associate selectively, as a boating fraternity, congenial persons of good character having a common love and appreciation of yachting.
- To encourage and promote yachting, power and sail, and to provide a practical means to foster fraternal and social relationships among its members interested in yachting.
- To encourage and promote a high amateur standard of skill in the handling and navigation of yachts, power and sail; to encourage and promote the study of the science and art of navigation, seamanship and small boat handling; to develop and promote instructional programs for the benefit of members; and to stimulate members to increase their knowledge of and skill in yachting, through instruction, self educational and participation in marine sports, activities and competitions.
- To encourage its members to abide by recognized yachting traditions, customs and etiquette and;
- To render, and to encourage its members to render, such altruistic, patriotic and other civic service as it may from time to time determine or elect.

The USPS Pledge

“I do solemnly pledge to:

- Abide by the Bylaws of the United States Power Squadrons
- Promote high standards of Navigation and Seamanship
- Maintain my boat and operate it legally
- Render assistance whenever possible
- And conduct myself in a manner that will add prestige, honor and respect to the United States Power Squadrons.



**Self Education
Civic Service
Fraternal Boating Club**

Squadron Structure

To assist you in becoming better acquainted with Meriden Power Squadron we will present a short summary of the squadron's organizational wing and how it operates.

The "Bridge"

All Squadrons are managed by a "Bridge of Officers" (referred to as the Bridge) under the command of the Squadron Commander who is responsible to the membership for all areas of operation. The Squadron Commander reports to the District Commander who in turn reports to the National Commander. The Meriden "Bridge" consists of the following Officers:

Commander
Executive Officer
Administrative Officer
Squadron Educational Officer
Treasurer
Secretary

Each of the Bridge Officers has a primary responsibility for certain activities, most of which are accomplished through a committee system. Each committee has a chairman that is responsible to a Bridge Officer. Bridge meetings are generally held monthly and members are always invited to attend. In addition to the elected Bridge of Officers, several appointed officers and committees are also directly responsible to the Commander such as Flag Lieutenant, Chaplain, Legal Officer and Parliamentarian. The Bridge are advised and assisted by an elected Executive Committee and by the members and chairmen of committees who carry out the programs and activities of the Squadron.

The Executive Committee

The Executive Committee meets the first Wednesday of the month when necessary, or when called upon by the Commander. The Executive Committee consists of The Bridge, the Immediate Past Commander, plus three Members at Large that represent the general membership. Most business is taken care of at the Executive Committee meetings, leaving regular general membership meetings for programs of interest.

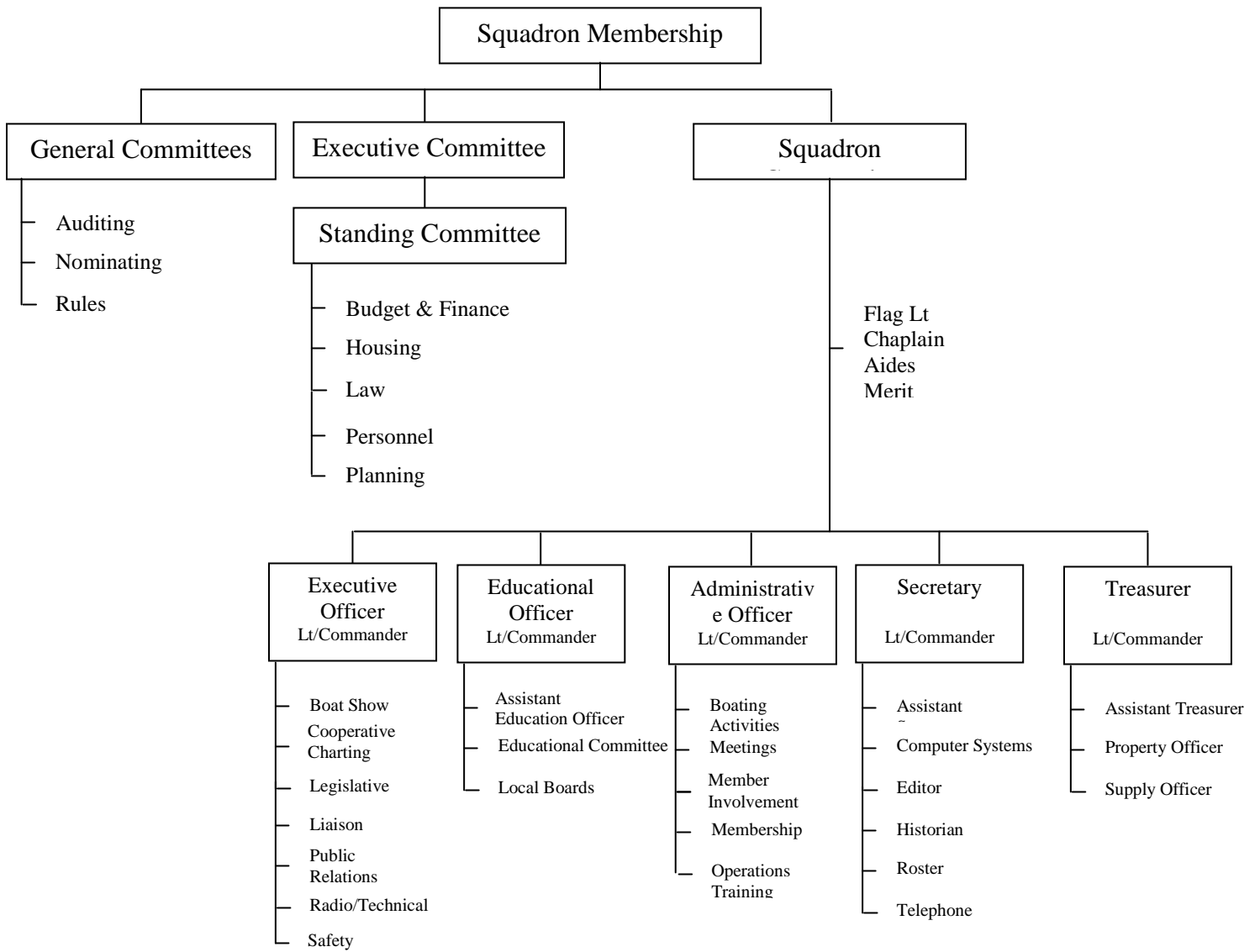
Rank

Rank is the title for an office held. It is signified at the squadron level by Cdr. for Commander, Lt/C (Lieutenant Commander) for the other bridge officers, 1st/Lt. (First Lieutenant) for the assistant officers and Lt. (Lieutenant) for committee chairs.

Grade

Grade is a designation shown after a members name and indicates their educational achievements: "S" for Seaman, "P" for Pilot, "AP" for Advanced Pilot, "JN" for Junior Navigator and "N" for Navigator. "SN" for Senior Navigator signifies that the wearer has earned the **USPS Educational Achievement Award** for having successfully completed all USPS courses currently offered. Members who have successfully completed Seamanship, Piloting, and Advanced Piloting plus any three current elective courses may earn the **USPS Educational Proficiency Award**.

Typical Squadron Organizational Chart



Squadron Communication

Communication

Other than the monthly meetings and occasional email notices, Meriden Squadron will notify all members regarding events, schedules, changes, etc. through ***“The Masthead”*** which is the squadron newsletter published and distributed to members once a month (except July and August).

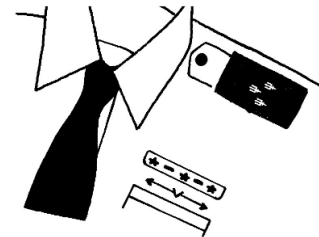
Our website is continuously updated and contains all the information you may need including forms, contacts, the latest calendar, photos and links to many other boating or educational websites. Go to www.usps.org/meriden for just about anything you need to know.

Members will receive ***“The Sounds of One”***, which is the District 1 newsletter. It is published three times a year and contains all of the District information and functions.

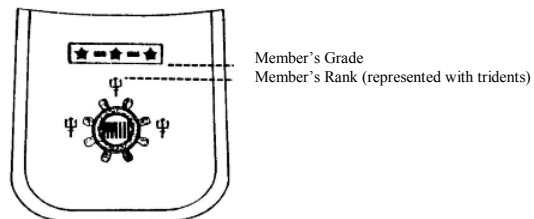
All members also get a copy of ***“The Ensign”*** which is a Nationally Published USPS magazine. This magazine will permit the members to become aware of all the changes and the progress of other districts and squadrons across the country.

Dress Code

At some functions officers and members will be seen wearing uniforms. This is a personal option, as USPS members are not required to wear uniforms. However, they do bring a tradition and formality to the organization.



Frequently you will see USPS members wearing a blue blazer with a special pocket emblem. The blazer is not a uniform, but it may be worn in lieu of a uniform except at formal (bow tie) functions. The pocket emblem contains the USPS insignia, the members rank and grade.



We encourage all members to wear a squadron nametag. Squadron nametags have the squadron burgee and name as well as the squadron name. See any bridge member for details on how to order one. It's a nice, inexpensive way to show your squadron pride and help us communicate with one another!

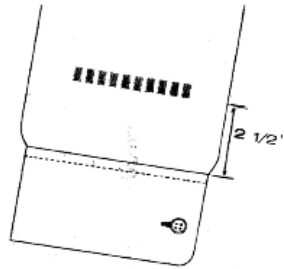


Merit Marks

Merit Marks

The “**Merit Mark**” is the way that both USPS and Meriden Power Squadron offer a “thank you” to those members who have contributed their time to the squadron on a yearly basis. On the recommendation from the Squadron Commander, the squadron awards a merit mark certificate to those members who make a substantial contribution to the Squadron for that year. The names of those members are submitted to the Squadron Commander on a yearly basis and thereafter are reported formally to the National Commander who issues the certificate.

Life Membership is awarded with honor and gratitude to any member who earns 25 merit marks after contributing 25 years of service to the USPS. All life members are exempt from paying all dues. Merit Marks can be worn on the left arm of the uniform jacket and shirt as seen below.



Fringe Benefits

- Save up to 26% discount on your Boat Insurance. 23% saving is based on the courses you've completed and another 3% is based on having a Vessel Safety Check (Discuss with St. Paul Insurance)
- Enjoy special organizational discounts on services such as:
 - Sea/Tow Membership
 - Vessel Assist Membership
 - Boat/US Membership
- Utilize the Port Captains Program, which provides members with travel tips and local information when traveling in unfamiliar areas
- Members discount on Dell computers (10%)
- Members discount on *Maptech* software and charts
- Members discount on *Nobeltec* software, charts, tides and currents (25%)
- Receive a complimentary subscription to “The Ensign” a national magazine loaded with current information on inland and off shore boating
- Federal Tax deductions for selected USPS expenses for Squadron, District, and National participation

Squadron Membership

USPS Membership

To qualify for membership in the USPS, prospective members must be willing to accept the **USPS Pledge** and be able to contribute energy and skill to the objectives of the USPS and the local squadron. They must pass the USPS Boating Course, the Coast Guard Aux. Course, the State of Ct. Boating Course or any authorized equivalent. They must be at least 18 years of age and be accepted by the squadron.

Certificate Numbers (generally referred to as E-Numbers) are assigned to all members to identify them throughout the USPS organization. This 7 character designation appears on both the Certificate of Membership and the Membership Card which is issued to each new member by the National Secretary upon joining the USPS. All progress through Educational Courses is retained for each member who is identified to the National Headquarters by their E-Number.

There are three basic types of membership in the USPS; Active Members, Family Members and Squadron Apprentices.

Active Members have full membership privileges that include voting, holding elective or appointed office, serving on committees, earning a Merit Mark, attending meetings and social activities, taking educational courses, receiving the USPS publication “The Ensign”, wearing the uniform and flying the USPS Ensign.

Family Members are members of the family of an Active Member. Family members may not hold office, wear the uniform, or fly the Ensign. They may attend all meetings and social activities but not vote. Family members may be recommended for merit marks but merit marks earned do not count toward senior, life, or emeritus status. They may take all educational courses offered by the squadron, after completing required prerequisites. Persons less than 18 years of age, who are dependents of an Active Member and reside in the same household, may hold Junior Family Memberships.

Squadron Apprentices are persons 12 years of age and not yet 18 who are not otherwise eligible for membership. A Squadron Apprentice may attend classes and take examinations in all courses, but has none of the other rights of membership.

The duty of processing new members through the Squadron Level and then through the District and National Level is the responsibility of the **Squadron Membership Chairperson**. All requests for membership and recommendations for membership should be processed through the Chairperson. He/She will submit the recommendation to the Squadron Bridge of Officers for a vote and membership approval, and then, if accepted, process the paperwork through the proper channels. After accumulating 5 years of service to USPS the member will be awarded the grade of **Senior Member**.

Squadron Educational Advancement Opportunities

Advanced Grade Courses

Seamanship

Seamanship is the skill used in the management of a ship or boat, power and sail. The Seamanship Course examines many new areas of boating knowledge. It expands on most of the material introduced in the USPS Boating Course or the boating course given by the Coast Guard Aux.

On passing this course with a grade of 80% or more the student/ member will be awarded the Educational Grade of "S" for Seaman.

Piloting

Piloting is the first of a two-part program that teaches inland and coastal navigation. The focus is on fundamentals of basic piloting - keeping track of a boat's movements on the water, determining where you are at any given moment, and laying out a course to a planned destination. GPS is used as part of the navigational tools.

On passing this course with a grade of 80% or more the student/ member will be awarded the Educational Grade of "P" for Pilot.

*Seamanship and Piloting can be taken in any order. However, the grade of 'P' or 'AP' cannot be used with your name until Seamanship has been completed.

Advanced Piloting

The second part of the inland and coastal navigation series, with strong emphasis on the latter, is the Advanced Piloting course. The student learns more advanced techniques of finding position, and is introduced to the phenomena of tides and currents, and their effects on piloting a boat. GPS and Radar are used as part of the navigational tools.

On passing this course with a grade of 80% or more the student/ member will be awarded the Educational Grade of "AP" for Advanced Pilot.

Junior Navigation

Junior Navigation is the first in a two-part program of teaching offshore (open ocean) navigation. It is designed as a practical "how to" course, leaving theoretical and more advanced techniques to the Navigation course.

On passing this course with a grade of 80% or more the student/ member will be awarded the Educational Grade of "JN" for Junior Navigator.

Navigation

Navigation is the second part of the study of offshore navigation. It further develops the student's understanding of celestial navigation theory.

On passing this course with a grade of 80% or more the student/ member will be awarded the Educational Grade of "N" for Navigator.

Elective Courses

Cruise Planning

Designed for mariners who plan to cruise for just a day or for a year—in either a sail or powerboat—this course covers the following topics: cruise preparation and planning, boat and equipment, anchors and anchoring, security, chartering, cruising outside the United States, crew and provisioning, voyage management, communications, navigation, weather, and emergencies.

Weather

The safety and comfort of those who venture out-on-the water have always been weather dependent. The course focuses on how weather systems form, behave, move, and interact with one another and reflects the availability of all sorts of weather reports and forecasts on the Internet. It is a general weather course benefiting those sitting in their living rooms, as much as those standing behind the helm.

Sail

Sail 2009 is a complete sail course beginning with basic boat designs, rigging and sail processes for the non-sailor. The course proceeds into the physical aspects of sailing, sail applications, marlinespike, helmsmanship, and handling of more difficult sailing conditions, navigation rules, and an introduction to heavy weather sailing.

Engine Maintenance

The complete Engine Maintenance course consists of two modular sections. EM 101, Basic Engine Maintenance, provides information about marine propulsion systems, basic engine principles, engine components, controls, instruments and alarms, marine engine maintenance, and steering systems.

EM 102, Advanced Engine Maintenance, delves into cooling and exhaust systems, lubrication, fuel and air induction systems, ignition systems, electrical and starting systems, power trains, and troubleshooting.

Marine Electronics

The new series of Marine Electronics courses is being structured into three new manuals: Marine Electrical Systems, Marine Communication Systems, and Marine Navigation Systems.

Marine Electrical Systems (MES) covers the practice of wiring your boat, including boat electrical wiring practices and diagrams, direct and alternating current power, galvanic and stray current corrosion, and lightning protection.

Marine Communication Systems (MCS) is an in-depth review of communications systems available to the recreational boater. Radio history and spectrum definitions are presented along with definitions of radio circuits that the student should learn.

Marine Navigation Systems (MNS) covers all aspects of electronic navigation using GMDSS as the foundation for modern marine communications. GPS is taught as the primary method of position fixing, and LORAN will be covered only as a historic sidebar topic.

Instructor Development

This course deals with effective communication for speakers and teachers—a quality that benefits the individual in all walks of life. It offers practical instruction in: preparing for teaching assignments, preparing for meeting presentations, effective teaching techniques, conducting efficient meetings, and selecting and using audiovisual aids.

Squadron Civic Service

Public Boating Class

One of the main goals of the United States Power Squadrons is “*boating safety through education*” We believe that an educated boater is a safer boater. USPS provides many skill-building opportunities to the general public through a variety of courses and seminars. Many of our members assist in teaching the **America’s Boating Course**, the boating class taught annually to the public for the purpose of obtaining their Connecticut Boating Certificate. The course manual is divided into five chapters. The first four cover the required topics that all recreational boaters must know. In addition to the rules of the road, the four chapters cover the various types of boats, required safety equipment, navigation aids, lights and sounds, anchoring, communications afloat, adverse conditions, water sports safety, trailering, personal water craft safety, and knots and lines. The fifth chapter provides an introduction to digital charts and GPS waypoint navigation, a key skill for boating on larger lakes and rivers and coastal waters. This optional fifth chapter provides the background for more advanced piloting courses.

Vessel Safety Check (VSC) Program

Vessel Safety Check is also a large part of the civic service that USPS provides. Thousands of public boats are inspected by teams from local squadrons every year. These inspections are very thorough, and a window decal is awarded to boats that pass the inspection. There is no penalty for not passing, and the inspectors help correct discrepancies on the spot. The emphasis is on helping the boater maintain a safe vessel. Any squadron member can become a Vessel Examiner (VE) by taking an online class, passing the exam and performing 5 VSC’s with a certified VE.



Cooperative Charting

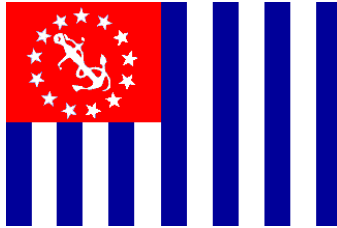
Cooperative Charting is the name of the program of civic service performed by the United States Power Squadrons (USPS) in cooperation with the National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce. The Program is conducted and administered cooperatively by the National USPS Cooperative Charting Committee and the Marine Chart Division of the National Ocean Service (NOS).

This Program is a major public service of USPS. Under it, USPS members supply information to the NOS Marine Chart Division leading to the production "of accurate, up-to-date nautical and aeronautical charts" and related publications; and the preservation of geodetic control stations in the National Geodetic Reference System.

Squadron Flag Etiquette

The USPS Ensign

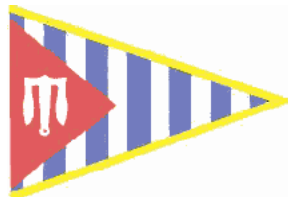
Our National USPS Ensign was designed by P/C/C Roger Upton (the founding father of USPS) and P/C/C Charles F. Chapman (of *Piloting, Seamanship and Boat Handling* fame). Flown only by USPS members, it may be placed on the stern flagstaff of a vessel in place of the United States Ensign. Sail boaters usually fly the USPS Ensign from the lowest starboard spreader of the foremost mast, reserving the stern flagstaff for one of the national flags.



The Meriden Power Squadron Burgee

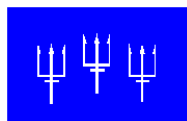
Generally triangular in shape although sometimes swallow-tailed the club burgee may be flown by day and night as determined by the individual club. It is flown from the bow staff of mastless and single-masted motorboats, at the foremost masthead of vessels with two or more masts, and the main masthead of ketches and yawls. The burgee may be flown while underway (but not racing) and at anchor.

Dave Rosebough designed the Meriden Burgee. The upside down anchor was to represent an 'M' for Meriden. The gold perimeter was added in 2004 when the squadron had its 50th anniversary.



Officer's Flags

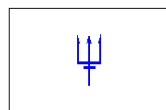
On sail boats, the officer's flag is flown at the masthead in place of the club burgee. On motor boats without a signal mast, an officer flag may be flown from a radio antenna, preferably on the starboard side.



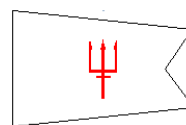
CDR



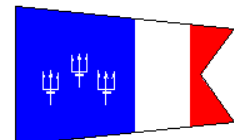
Lt./Cdr



1st/Lt.



Lt.



Past CDR