

The Hartford Power Squadron Founding of the Hartford Power Squadron

The following is excerpted from the 50th anniversary Bilge Pump in April, 1981 (Kenneth Weeks, Jr., AP, Editor) as well as the 75th anniversary booklet of District 1.

The Hartford Power Squadron had its beginning in late 1930 when Kenneth B. Noble, JN of New Haven Power Squadron sent Piloting class placards to local yacht clubs. Walter Pittman of Wethersfield Cove Yacht Club wrote to Noble expressing interest in the course and offering full cooperation.

On 23 January 1931, Captain Noble, having received authority to give the class from then C/C Frederic W. Keator, N, of the New Haven Squadron, reports that he began the Hartford introductory course with 23 students. The course was held at the Morse Business College in Hartford. Attendance grew to 70 men from Springfield, Hartford, Wethersfield and Middletown.

On 27 March, 1931, it was reported that 23 Hartford men passed the exam, most with very high scores.

The original By-Laws of Hartford Power Squadron were voted on 9 April, 1931 and captain Noble was elected the first Commander.

On 28 November, 1931, the Hartford Squadron received its charter signed by C/C Frederick L. Reid. The names of the following twenty-seven charter members appear on the charter: C.D. Belanger, C.C. Bell, G. Benoit, A.W. Bevin, F.N. Deardon, R.P. Drew, M. Fishborn, R. Fox, H. Halliday, S.S. Hasbrouck, S.A. Hasbrouck, T. Holden, R.A. House, W.E. Morse, E.A. Moyer, K.B. Noble, W.T. Palmer, H.R. Philbrick, W.E. Pittman, K.B. Post, R. Robbins, J.H. Schwarz, Jr., H.A. Sorenson, E.G. Spencer, H.R. Stockder, W. Walther, H.B. Wilson.

The Hartford Power Squadron Historical Notes

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Hartford member Wesley E. Morse, N (one of the founding members) served as Chief Commander in 1937-38. It was during his tenure that the present "District" structure was formalized. It was apparently not coincidental that Hartford was placed in District 1.

In February, 1939, the Hartford Squadron published its first monthly newsletter, "The Bilge Pump".

In 1949, the Connecticut State Legislature created the requirement of numbering boats and required a license fee.

In 1961, the Weather Bureau initiated its practice of announcing "small craft warnings" whenever "moderately strong winds" were expected along the coast.

In 1962, the Executive Committee voted to allow the formation of a "Squadron Auxiliary". At that time women were not allowed as full members.

In 1973, as a result of the "Hinden Case" in New Jersey, the USPS was forced to reaffirm the USPS as a "private club". This drastically altered the methods of soliciting

candidates for classes and membership.

The following are excerpted from later issues of the Bilge Pump.

October, 1990- The Connecticut General Assembly passed public Act 89-388 that requires a Certificate of Boating Operation (CBO) to operate power boats with 25hp or above or sail boats above 19 ½ feet. The law finally took affect on October 1, 1992 and included all operation of any motor vessel. This act significantly increased the demand on our Basic Boating Course and for many years the Power Squadrons of District 1 provided the primary training for Connecticut's boaters.

The Hartford Power Squadron provided the following members who served as District Commanders of District 1.

Clifford R. Haskins, N, Halsey R. Philbrick, N, and Wesley F. Morse, N served as Rear Commanders (office now known as District Commander). Joseph C. Sonntag, N, William E. Andrew, N, Robert L. O'Brien, N, Hayden F. Loveland, N, and Patrick A. Pabouet, P.

The Hartford Power Squadron Hartford Firsts

The Hartford Power Squadron can be very proud of some of the accomplishments of its members through the years.

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In USPS history, the first two ladies to successfully complete the "N" course were HPS affiliates Mary Baker and Marion Bills on 2 April, 1944. There was apparently a disagreement with the Wilmington, DE Squadron, which had originally claimed that distinction, but our ladies carried the day.

In 1953, P/C Bob Gorton took the lead in developing a "Sail" course for USPS. In gratitude for his efforts, he was asked to give the first course and Hartford members H. Raymond Little, John W. Lessner, Dr. Benjamin B. Whitcomb, Caldwell S. Phillips, John A. McNamara, Paul Eddy, and Robert E. Gorton passed the first exam. Bob Gorton went on to become the Rear Commander of the Education Department for the USPS.

In 1954, Paul Eddy, having passed the Sail course, became the first USPS member to have all possible endorsements, including IT (instructor development). This is now called "Full Certificate" and entitles the member to the grade of SN (Senior Navigator).

In 1961, the Manchester Power Squadron was chartered as an off-shoot of the Hartford Squadron.

The following are excerpted from later issues of the Bilge Pump.

The October, 1982 Bilge Pump reported that as of 11 September, 1982, following a vote at a special USPS meeting, women are now allowed to join the USPS as "active" Members. Prior to this vote, women had only been allowed to be "auxiliary" members.

In 1986, P/C Kenneth Weeks, Jr., AP completed his long time tenure as Bilge Pump Editor by compiling and having bound all of the issues from 1939 to 1986. In 2005, Lt/C

Cliff McKibbin, AP, Secretary and Historian, completed the effort by obtaining bound copies of the issues from 1986 to 2004.

The March, 1995 Bilge Pump reported that P/C Christine Gwizd had completed the first Hartford Squadron Membership Manual.

In 2005, Lt/C Cliff McKibbin, AP, Secretary and Historian, brought the Hartford History forms up-to-date by completing 29 back histories and submitting them to the USPS. Hartford is now 100% for the first time since at least 1961.