



# CLIPPER

*Queen City Yacht Club*

*August 2007*



Len Canham. 1925-2007. Past Commodore 1967-70-71. Fondly remembered by QCYC members. See page 3.

## Commodore

*Tony Pitts*

It is with much sadness that we learned of Len Canham passing away on June 30, 2007 after a brief illness at the age of 81 years. Len served as our Honourary Commodore with dignity and grace. He is survived by his wife, June, his daughters Janis Leigh Richards and Stephanie Robinson and his grandson, Evan Robinson.



Besides being an avid sailor for over fifty years, Len's other passions included boat building, golf and woodworking. Len started his sailing at the Frenchman's Bay Yacht Club in the 1950's. Even in those early years, he exercised his leadership by eventually becoming Commodore there.

Len joined QCYC in 1962. The next 45 years were remarkable. In 1963, he built a Thunderbird in his back yard and was to successfully race it for 13 years winning many flags. He served on the QCYC Board of Directors and as Commodore from 1969 to 1971.

Len then bought a yellow C & C 30 named SASSY. June Canham and daughters Janis and Stephanie enjoyed many cruises to all parts of the lake over the years. Most recently, Len served as our Honourary Commodore. This position has traditionally been filled by the oldest surviving Past Commodore.

We will remember Len for his sense of humour, his leadership over the years, his passion for sailing, his friendliness, his commitment and his wisdom. Len is a permanent part of QCYC's history and we thank him, will miss him and will remember him for his great personal contribution to the club.

This Clipper is dedicated to Len.

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## Communications

The Clipper is published monthly from May to October. Contributions may be submitted to the publisher via e-mail, fax or letter. While an effort will be made to publish submissions, the publisher reserves the right to edit material for length and suitability.

The QCYC FLASH e-mails are sent out on a regular basis, detailing upcoming events, last minute changes and items of interest.

To receive and to place notices in QCYC FLASH contact theflash@qcy.ca

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## Advertising

Rates for Business Card size (3.5 x 2")	Annual (6 issues)	1x
Member	\$ 110	\$25
Non-member	\$ 220	\$50

The Clipper offers members and non-members of QCYC a cost-effective way to reach an audience of avid sailors. Classified Ads of 20 words or less are free for QCYC members. Ads should be submitted as digital files: Mac quark, eps, pdf, tiff, jpg (for tiff/jpg ensure 300 dpi if type, 200 dpi pictures). For information on placing ads for *The Clipper*, please contact Glen Newbury at any of the numbers listed.



**Len Canham**

by Barry Hardy (edited by ...)

I knew Len for 40 years and when I started to think way back about all the memorable times we had, I thought what a wonderful life he had. Len told me when he became sick that if he had to live his life all over again, he wouldn't do anything different.

Len was a wonderful friend. Kind, caring, funny and wise. He loved his beer and good food. He loved his red, 1964-and-a-half Mustang convertible, and he looked just right driving it, wearing his "old guy's hat" as we used to call it, with his lovely June beside him. Len loved driving and drove to Florida each year for the winter. One year, Len, June and Wendy and I even drove it to Maine, just for fresh lobster, as Len put it.

A great part of Len's life revolved around Queen City Yacht Club and he contributed a tremendous amount to the club over the years. He was commodore from 1969 to 1971 and was always one of the regulars you could count on to get a job done. Like his friends, he gave countless hours to the club. The Australians have a term, "mateship." I always thought it applied to Len, through and through.

Friday lunches became a tradition for Len and friends. The meetings of fellow sailors who met every Friday in downtown Toronto became, in 1979, a tongue-in-cheek club, The Rosedale Yacht Club, formed at a Christmas luncheon. Len was one of the original 12 members.

We had some memorable times sailing as a group, and weekend travels of the Rosedale Club became a tradition. We'd rise at 5 a.m. on Saturday and start out; by the time the sun was up we'd be well on our way. A typical weekend was spent at Tom Oldham's place in Olcott with a barbecue, croquet and badminton.

Not many people know this about Len, but he was a music lover. He always loved ragtime and Dixieland jazz. He was given a banjo on his 50th birthday, but somehow never did get the hang of

playing it. He was much better playing the piano – the table version, which involved sitting at a table with hands and feet going to the beat, entertaining all who were near him.

I recall a weekend when a group of us were staying at the Marriott Hotel in Amherst, New York. We were front and centre watching a Dixieland band playing for Sunday brunch. Len, as usual, was playing the table to the beat of the band and having a ball. The band leader, a trumpet player had a habit of pointing to a member of the band, who would play a solo – trombone, then sax, then trumpet. Then, suddenly, he pointed to Len. Of course, there was complete silence. Then the entire room broke up.

Len's enjoyment of things could be infectious. He introduced Wendy and I to his love of ragtime music, for instance. He particularly followed the career of one musician, Bob Darch. Len's knowledge of ragtime was encyclopedic. Len and June were members of the Grand International Ragtime Foundation. We also joined, and the four of us went

to Alexandria Bay every year for a weekend of jazz and ragtime. It was marvelous.

Our memories of travels far and wide spring to mind frequently. We had some laughs. That's for sure. I remember the time while in Pisa, Italy, when after an hour-long bus ride, we were all desperate for a washroom, which can be hard to find in Italy. Len and I decided to go into a cemetery and find a bush. The others laughed hysterically when we were caught in the act. They heard a racket and the custodian yelling, "Aus, aus." He must have thought we were German. He actually hit Len on the shoulder. The others say we looked as if we had been shot out of the cemetery gate. Who could have known that Michelangelo's grave was in that cemetery?

There is so much of Len in our lives and our home. I can see him now, fondly adjusting the pendulum on the clock he made for us. His woodworking projects are everywhere in our house and used every day.

Above all, Len was a family man. He and June were married 56 years. What a love affair! At first June's parents weren't sure about Len who used to tease her mother terribly. When she called their home and asked for June, Len would say, "June who?" It got her every time.

Len and June raised two wonderful daughters, Stephanie and Janis Leigh. Len was very proud of both of them. He was also proud of his grandson Evan.

Remembering Len, so many enjoyable and funny moments and times come flooding back. After he retired, he and Tom Hood, an old QCYC sailing friend of ours, decided to go into business painting houses to stay busy. Looking at each other, they decided that Silver Top Painting was the perfect name. The business didn't last long, though. They were so good at it they were soon in more demand than either of them wanted to be. But for Len, the best payment was always having another story to tell.

Most at Queen City will also recall Len as the MC at the AGM. It became a tradition under him that while votes were being counted, he would regale the audience with special jokes that he collected and saved for the occasion. It's but one of the traditions that has continued.

I'm sure Len's many friends will remember him with a smile. As will so many whose path he crossed over the years. I'm sure Len would be happy with that legacy as he sits to play table piano.



## The View from the Lagoon

by Lynn Kaak and Ken Goodings

*Inna and Audrey getting some sailing time in on Silverheels III during the WSR*

Pat Whetung had the very first all-women's crew in the Lake Ontario 300 Challenge, and I was in the first all-female crew in the 300 on the spinnaker course. Everybody was so supportive and happy about these accomplishments, but why? Why shouldn't women do this, and what difference does it really make if there are no men on board? Boating is one activity that enables men and women to compete and participate equally. I am mystified as to why there is still such an attitude in some ways to women and boats. It is an accomplishment to complete this race regardless of one's sex or crew make-up.

If you look around the Club, how many boats are actually owned by women? By comparison, how many boats are owned by men? It is not like there aren't women with the disposable income to buy their own boats. Why haven't they?

There are a number of women at this club who very capably control and sail their boats, but there looks to be a large number who seem content to let "the man" do it all. What seems to be one common denominator of those women who are quite comfortable at the helm? Experience. Most of these sailors have raced or

cruised quite a bit and have basically been forced to learn or let their dreams of racing or long-distance cruising fade away. They had to start somewhere, and they took those first steps to self-sufficiency, whether by their own volition, or with the encouragement of their mates.

Gentlemen. Think about your attitude towards women on "your" boat. Now be honest. Do you see them as "fender girls" and hostesses; ready to hand a bow line to someone on the dock as you come in? Or do you really encourage her and even gently push her to take a more active part in the operation of the boat. Have you encouraged her to get her Radio Operator's Card and her PCOC, or are you the only one on board who "needs to have it"? I've assisted many boaters in docking situations and more often than not, male skippers seem to assume that because I'm female, I don't know what I'm doing. I haven't seen Ken's abilities questioned in the same situation. I saw one lady who left the cleating of a line to her husband – not a difficult job here, and one of the most basic things that one can do on a boat!

Now ladies, how about your approach to the boat? Are you afraid to take control of the helm in case you ding the gelcoat? I'd bet you would

forgive him pretty quickly if he did it, so why not yourself? Are there gadgets on board you don't know how to use? Learn how, or take a course. Ken and I teach courses for the Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons, and we often see men and couples, but not too many women on their own. Many times, the woman achieves a higher grade than her spouse in the course. It's your boat too. Would you insist on having your partner drive you everywhere with the family car, or do you take the wheel, too? If something happens "out there", you need to know enough to at least stop the boat from moving forward, and there are women out there who don't.

If you are a man who can't cut her slack on the boat, try to lighten up a little. If you are one of those women who doesn't even know how to turn the engine on or off, please take the initiative to learn how. Learn to Sail has a great program, and the Women's Skippers Race is a fun way to get out on the water and use your skills. These are both great opportunities, but you can start now by getting to know your own boat. Men don't have to be the "Captain" and women the "Admiral or First Mate" – whoever is at the helm can make good decisions.

