PROGRESS REPORT

THE HOUSTON YACHT CLUB

1954 - 1956

By

Commodore Charles M. Smythe
STRATTON POND

PROGRESS REPORT

FOR THE HUACHT ELKS

1941 - 1946

By

Commodore Charley M. Smythe
It is to the men listed below, whose hard work and devotion to their duties with their club have made possible the improvements noted herein, that this progress report covering the years 1954 -- 1956 is dedicated.

Charles M. Smythe, Commodore

1954-55
Vice Commodore J. Fred Haworth, Jr. Louis F. Bonner
Rear Commodore Rufus G. Smith L. F. Van Stone
Fleet Captain C. D. Blanchard Earl C. Bradley
Treasurer Dean W. Osmun Charles M. Knipe
Measurer L. F. Bonner George H. Allen
Fleet Surgeon Dr. K. C. Von Pohle Dr. Ralph Bowen & Dr. Irving W. Moody
Chaplain Rev. Cabot Stein Rev. David McGirr
Trustees George H. Allen M. L. Anthony
M. L. Anthony Fred J. Drew
W. Berkeley Glass W. W. Fondren, Jr.
Dr. D. A. Hagerman W. Berkeley Glass
A. C. Felt Dr. D. A. Hagerman
W. P. Hamblen, Jr. Lowell Lammers
Capt. W. R. Parker Capt. W. R. Parker
Lowell Lammers Leon J. Settegast

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

House and Grounds Lowell Lammers Lowell Lammers
Harbor Capt. W. R. Parker George H. Allen
Entertainment Wm. D. Morse Wm. D. Morse
Membership Herbert G. Turner Fred J. Drew
Publicity Fred J. Drew Fred J. Drew
Yachting Willis K. Goodman Louis F. Bonner
Race & Regatta Ray K. Carter Earl C. Bradley
Special Assignments none Charles M. Knipe
Ladies Entertainment Current Chairman of Ladies Association
HOUSTON YACHT CLUB  
PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE YEARS 1954-56

Past Commodore Charles M. Knipe gave you a Progress Report for the years of his tenure, 1952-54 upon his retirement. That report indicated the beginning of more progress than had been evidenced at any time at the Club since construction of the present building in 1927.

The purpose of this report is to give individual members a full understanding of accomplishment and direction during the subsequent two years from October 1954 to October 1956. The program recommended by the retiring Officers and Trustees in 1954 and 1955 has to the best ability of the club been complied with.

Improvements approved by the Board of Trustees have been paid for partly from profits from the Club and partly from financing and the Club position with lending facilities remains sound in that we have established a substantial line of credit without guarantors or collateral necessary. There is available in the club office at all times a business statement of cash and other accounts for your inspection, at your request. In May of this year we repaid the final note on previous improvement programs, in amount of $6,450.00.

My report on October 11th of 1955, during the General Membership Meeting, recollected for you the many accomplishments that year and a supplemental report of these items is included to outline more completely continuing programs and past activity.

I have broken this report down into areas of Committee Activity that it might be more easily followed.

HOUSE AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE—Mr. Lowell Lammers, Chairman  
Lawn and Grounds—

The front lawn was terraced for proper drainage with the ridge removed and graded to allow viewing of the harbor and docks from the ground level at the clubhouse. A paved entrance drive was established as was a paved parking area, also drained properly to prohibit large areas of standing water. Adequate fencing both in Redwood and Chain Link was installed for beautification, privacy and protection. Additions to plantings were started with more to follow in the general improvement program as permanent plantings can be planned to tie-in with construction. The entrance drive of the Club was lighted with a series of decorative lamps leading to the parking lot and ships lanterns were installed at the entrance itself. The primary roadside sign on highway 146 was lighted to allow members a more accurate idea of the location of the Club. Pebbled concrete walks joined the parking area, terraces, patios and harbor of the Club with the main building to furnish all weather walks for members convenience, as well as for beauty. For the younger set a badminton and volley ball court was laid. To make the service of large outdoor parties more adequate, Stoves, Fish Fry Kettles and Broilers were installed in the Barbecue Pit.

SWIMMING POOL—

Decorative lighting was installed around the Swimming Pool and the pool itself was lighted. This lighting of the pool, combined with a newly designed or revised plumbing and filtration system, completed at a minimum cost and using existing equipment has added a spot of night-time beauty heretofore lost to the Club. New and additional patio furniture was placed on the pool apron. The pool was furnished with a new and attractive Chrome hardware, ladders and diving standard.

CLUBHOUSE AND BUILDINGS---

First Floor - The lobby was air-conditioned. We have a porte cochere on hand which will be installed shortly. The ladies locker room was redecorated and refurnished. Rubber stair treads were installed on the main stairs to add to their safety. Gutters were placed on both the front and rear of the building. A new and enlarged patio awning was installed over the Bar Terrace.

Second Floor—The main floor of the Club was air-conditioned with forced air heating combined into these units to increase the year round enjoyment of the clubhouse. New office furniture was procured. New draperies were put in the Dining
Room and new doors are being installed between the dining area and Kitchen. Additional card room furniture was added.

Third Floor--Guest Room redecorating was for all practical purposes completed with installation of new Wardrobe-Dresser-Desk Units, complete with new chairs and mirrors. Folding doors were installed in all bathrooms of our bedrooms and new policies complete with seasonal and monthly rates increased the use of these facilities. Air conditioning of all rooms was completed. Other membership conveniences such as shower caps, sanitary glass covers, overnight kits, packaged coffee service, bathing suit bags and an Ice storage bin with individual thermal containers for each room made these facilities much more convenient and appealing to members and their guests.

General--The employees quarters were re-roofed for weather protection. The Kitchen and Service areas were not overlooked in this program with addition of new and modern operating equipment such as a Charcoal Broiler, High Speed Fryer, High Compression Steamer, Dual Temperature Refrigerator, Glass Washing Pantry, New Power Circuits, Annunciator Panels and call system, new sinks, and drain boards beginning a complete overhaul of this area. Particular attention was given that the new and modern equipment added would be of size and type that would fit into any subsequent plan that might be evolved for club modernization and expansion.

HARBOR COMMITTEE--Capt. W. R. Parker and Mr. Geo. H. Allen

Repairs to the existing Jetties of the Club was a primary factor in these years as we attempted by additional shelling, clay and experimental groins to stabilize these Jetties. The roadway to the inshore crane was re-graded, leveled and shell topped with a new power winch added to the crane itself. The Big Mo was completely revamped with a new motor donated by Mr. Berkeley Glass, considerable work done to the hull and fittings and addition of a cabin top was donated by La Porte Yacht Basin. General improvement and repairs to the Docks of the Club were handled primarily by our own maintenance crews at the Club. Six new shed spaces were added to the Club facilities through efforts of their occupants and more are on order at such time as suitable contractors and bids are available. Other items of importance were the installation of bulkheading and the establishment of a drive and parking lot for North Shed Occupants. A separate and new power circuit was installed to the harbor in order that we would not be so dependent on the circuits through the Club main switchboards. New Pumps, slow signs, remodeling of the Judges Stand and the installation of an intercom-talk-back system to the harbor were also of note. Primary among engineering and administrative improvements to this area was the establishment of a permanent Harbor Plan for perpetuation through future Boards of Trustees. The primary phase of this program which is storm protection and decreased maintenance construction is now under way and will involve about $20,000.00 which sum has been secured through our banking facilities.

LADIES ASSOCIATION

The Ladies of our club during these past two years have given invaluable assistance in all departments; no wise would we have been able to accomplish our aims without their help and guidance. In particular I wish to thank them for being so patient when monthly Board Meetings ran into late hours as they quite often must.

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE--Mr. Fred J. Drew

The Newspaper and Television coverage along with "word around town" afforded by this committee and its fine membership in the "Fourth Estate" in Houston has continued to be outstanding.

ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE--Mr. Wm. D. Morse

Again this year, Dances, Parties and other functions particularly sponsored by this committee and the Ladies Entertainment Committee have been very interesting, well attended, and beautifully decorated by the ladies of the Houston Yacht Club. This committee is also to be highly commended for the fine cooperation they have given other committees for their various cruises, regattas and other functions.

YACHTING COMMITTEE--Willis K. Goodman and Louis F. Bonner

This was a great period for this brand new committee as several functions of note have been established as permanent functions of the Club. Of particular note were the San Jacinto Day Yacht Parade and the Red Fish Reef Boat and Barge Party. Principal in the success of the latter was the cooperation of Capt's Bill and Briscoe Parker who so graciously furnished us with use of the Barge, Dance Floor, Gang-Plank, Light Plant and lights as well as many other facilities. I understand that Commodore
Bonner is continuing this phase with plans for additional functions of this nature in the coming year.

RACE AND REGATTA COMMITTEE--J. Fred Haworth and Earl C. Bradley

We had several near catastrophes with wind, weather and fish of recent but with the hard work of this committee to put over their program, making our visitors welcome and comfortable, and soundly planning we observed two of our best and most active years. Special thanks are due to Mr. Ed Davis for the sacrifice of his time and his "always on deck" attitude. The New Years Day Revogmah Race was established. The Commodores Trophy and its Race or Series was established through the efforts of Past Commodores A. C. Felt, Charles M. Knife, W. Howard Lee and Duncan Weblett who joined with me. The Tommy Lee Trophy was presented for the Lee family by our own Mrs. Tommy Lee and was made a source of primary sailing activity over the Labor Day Weekend. Among numerous other functions but particularly of note were the many GBCA races we hosted at the Club, the Galveston - Corpus Christi Race, the 1956 Texas Mens Championships and the 1955 Texas Junior and Women Championships. The first HYC Mid-Winter Regatta was held as was the first series of Rag-Not Regattas which we hope will be intensified and continued. Not the least of the accomplishments of this committee was active Star Fleet racing, Active Handicap Fleet racing and the sponsorship of the HYC Flattie Fleet and their sailing series.

Plans for a General Clubhouse Expansion and Modernization have been initiated this past year and it is my sincere hope that this program, now that questions regarding land areas is nearing settlement, will be carried forward by subsequent Officers and Board. Initial work preliminary to drawing permanent plans has been done by Mr. Lowell Lamers as Architect and the services of assistant firms in their various specialties has been secured.

In general the record of the Houston Yacht Club the past two years is one of which I am immensely proud. The manner in which so many members and all of my Officers, Trustees and Committees have cooperated and given of their time and energy leaves me, upon retirement, happy in the knowledge that we have carried the club a large step forward and have arrived at this point in a most satisfactory condition. To all of you who have worked so hard to help make our Club successful---Good for all hands, safe and enjoyable passage, may I say sincerely, Thank you.

CHARLES M. SMYTHE, Commodore 1954-56