Spring Launch 2024

Ah, spring! What a wonderful time of year as temperatures begin to spike with the promise of boating weather soon to follow. Our collective “boating juices” rise mercurially, quite in concert with the rising temperatures.

Our Spring Launch meeting was a special event at a beautiful venue, the Farmstead Golf and Country Club in Lafayette, New Jersey. The team that arranged for this site is to be congratulated, notably, Barbara Edwards, Jackie Loughridge, and President, Ray Reynolds. It was our first time there, and by all comments from those in attendance, we can be sure to return. For many of us, it was the first time that we got together since the Annual Meeting last November. It was nice to see everyone.

Before Ray Reynolds began the formal meeting, he invited us to share “news” of significant events in our lives. We learned of an expectant mother soon to deliver a grandson, a new puppy, and a birthday. Ray then invited us to honor the recently passed Joe Fleming with a moment of silence. Joe’s history as a Founder of ACBS, coupled with all that he did as a wonderful ambassador for our hobby over many years will never be forgotten nor surpassed.

The meeting then turned to reports, beginning with Recording Secretary, Pat Cahill, reading the minutes from the 2023 Annual Meeting. Treasurer, John MacKenzie, then reported that our finances are healthy, a fact that was validated by the Audit Committee report. With Barbara Edwards as spokesperson, the team of Barbara and Sue Pesco reported that our financials are correctly reported and in good order.

President Reynolds then gave an overview of upcoming events in what promises to be a busy summer season. Our events begin with the Block Party on May 18th. Michael, henceforth to be known as, “Mickie”, Schillizzi, will have his Chris Craft utility on display. Be sure to stop by our booth at this huge lake-wide event at the State Park. Soon to follow on May 23rd is our first Cruise Night with Harry Gedicke as our Parade Leader. On June 1st, the Mid-Atlantic Chapter has invited us to join them for a cruise around the lake to be followed by lunch. All are invited to join them for their cruise and lunch to follow. Just before the Boat Show on June 12th will be our second Cruise Night…leader to be determined. The highlight of our calendar each year is our Boat Show, but this year something separate from the show and very special is going to take place (more on that later).The Boat Show Welcome Party takes place on June 14th at the Lake Hopatcong Yacht Club, arguably one of the most beautiful sites on the lake. Show day on June 15th will find us scurrying about attending to a myriad of varied show activities throughout the day with the Awards Dinner that evening, also at the Yacht Club. Several Cruise Nights will take place over the next few months, but the “other special event” about which Ray spoke will take place on September 14th at Hudson Farms in the Crow’s Nest.. It will be a celebration of the 50th Year Anniversary of the founding of the Lake Hopatcong Antique Boat Club…a founding that took place in the home of Drayton Mook on October 17, 1974 with notable participants being Tom Wiss III, Frank Scanlon, Joe Fleming, Wayne Mocksfield, Skip Shipman, and, of course, Drayton and Bucky Mook. We honor those visionaries for their foresight in forming an organization to thwart the trend of fiberglass boats replacing the wood ones with the latter falling into disrepair and neglect. Clearly, these men changed the course of things to the good, and the old wooden boats are now treasured and properly cared for. The committee to manage this celebration is chaired by Barbara Edwards and Mike Smith with committee members, Bob Kays, Tom Wiss, IV, and Pat Mueller. Participation and input from all members will be most welcome. The committee will be looking for all sorts of memorabilia and stories with the goal of creating a sponsored historama brochure. This will be the first of three celebrations, The second will take place in 2025 as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first boat show, and finally in 2026, we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of becoming the First Chapter of the Antique and Classic Boat Society.

Vice-President Mickie Schillizzi then gave an overview of the Boat Show. While it will be a non-judged show, there will be many fun awards….some traditional ones like People’s Choice, Farthest Traveled”, etc., plus many new awards, some of which may bring a smile to one’s face. Mike Smith and Jackie Loughridge will put their heads together to create some funny moments. There will be a “Best in Show Award” determined by the votes of boat skippers.

Prior to Ray Reynolds' closing comments, Brad Hoferkamp provided an update on the work of the Lake Hopatcong Commission in their continuing work to improve the lake. Notably on their figurative radar screen is a means to notify boaters when the lake level dictates a “no wake” status, an initiative to lower night speed to 5 mph, news that there will be a Police boat in Byram Bay, and finally, Brad noted that Police should be called for excessive exhaust noise.

Ray concluded the meeting overview of upcoming events by noting that a workshop and a movie night are in the planning stage.

Overall, we enjoyed a wonderful meeting and buffet in a delightful venue. Kudos to the organizers.

Be sure to view the photos of the Spring Launch in the “Gallery” section on our website lhacbs.org