

Published Articles
Of the
White Clubhouse
1914-1973
at
Ossining, NY

Ossining Daily Citizen
1.24.1914

Arrangements Made to Rebuild. The Shattemuc Yacht and Canoe Club held a meeting last night at the parlors of the Steamer Company and the very large attendance indicated that the recent fire, which destroyed the clubhouse, did not dishearten the members.

Commodore Harry M Carpenter occupied the chair and reports were made of the settlement of the losses on the building and contents.

There was a general discussion of the project to rebuild and the following committee was appointed to take up the various details of the building project: Commodore Harry M Carpenter, Charles G Washburne, J Herbert Carpenter, Lansing V Terwilliger, Joseph Royle, Rivers Genet, George Beisheim, John P Powers and Arthur J Goodwin. The committee will meet next week and sub-divide itself into smaller committees.

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2.07.1914

Yacht Club Meeting. The monthly meeting of the Shattemuc Yacht and Canoe Club held a regular monthly meeting last night at the parlors of the Steamer Company and there was a splendid attendance in spite of the storm.

After the routine business had been disposed of the Entertainment Committee reported that a fair profit had

been derived from the recent entertainment given at the Parthenon. On motion a unanimous vote of thanks was extended to the amateurs who took part in the entertainment.

The Committee on Temporary Quarters reported that their troubles were quickly wiped away by the Steamer Company, which tendered the use of their quarters to the Yacht Club for holding meetings until the club rebuilds. After the report had been filed the club extended a unanimous vote of thanks to the members of the Steamer Company for their kindness.

The Committee on Plain and Scope made a preliminary report and their recommendations were approved. The committee was authorized to have plans and specifications drawn for a new building, dock and cribbing.

After disposing of a number of other matters the meeting adjourned.

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Ossining Daily Citizen
3.18.1914

Purchased Boathouse for Shattemuc Club. The Shattemuc Yacht and Canoe Club has purchased from the New York Central Lines, the boathouse at Oscawana, formerly owned by Gillaume A Reusens.

They have entered into a contract with Richard Parrott, of Newburgh to float the house to this village and it will be raised to the dock after the latter is finished and become the permanent home of the club replacing the clubhouse burned a few months ago.

The house in its present state is a fine one and after the contemplated additions and changes are made it will be one of the finest houses along the river. Just as soon as the ice leaves the river the house will be brought to this village and the contract calls for the completion of the work in eight weeks so that the club will be into its new quarters by Decoration Day.

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4.16.1914

Clubhouse Work Begun. The work of rebuilding the burned home of the Shattemuc Yacht and Canoe Club has been started by Richard Parrott of Newburgh.

A pile driver arrived yesterday and operations will be gotten under way, it being intended to extend it and also to construct a breakwater. When this is all finished the house, purchased at Oscawana, will be floated down the river and after it shall have been placed in permanent position it will be enlarged.

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6.12.1914

Club House Place. The recently purchased club house of the Shattemuc Yacht and Canoe Club has reached its permanent foundation on the new dock. The process of transferring it from the float was performed rapidly and without mishap.

While the work of completing the building is in progress the breakwater, which will extend out from the dock, will be constructed.

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7.30.1914

Clubhouse Nears Completion. The pile driver has completed its work about the new home of the Shattemuc Yacht and Canoe Club and the finishing of the handsome three-story clubhouse will be carried on with all possible haste.

The clubhouse will be one of the finest of its sort on the river. A wide balcony extends around the second story¹ and the most valuable change over the old arrangements of things is the construction of a fine breakwater, where parties landing from small boats will be protected even in the heaviest gales.

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8.28.1914

Yacht Club House Nearing Completion. The finishing touches are being placed upon the new clubhouse of the Shattemuc Yacht and Canoe Club which replaces the one destroyed by fire last winter and it is confidently expected that it will be entirely completed, with the possible exception of the exterior paint, by the first day of September.

¹ Prior to raising the building one level.

The building is one which arouses a feeling of pride in every member of the club, being roomy, attractive and fitted with every feature which will contribute to the comfort of those who use it.

The building, which is 34 by 50 feet and is three stories high, rests on a rebuilt cribbing, which makes it absolutely solid and immune to future settling². It was formerly the property of the New York Central Lines from which it was purchased and stood at Oscawana, they having bought it from G. Rensen. The contract for moving it to this village, rebuilding the dock and setting the building on its new foundation as well as raising the first floor was given to Richard Parrott, of Newburgh, and he performed his work well.

As one crosses the railroad tracks and enters the house he sees first the registry desk and the telephone and to the left is the boiler room, which is absolutely fireproof. Just beyond are the thirty-eight large lockers, shower, bath, toilet and lavatories and the rest of the first floor is given up to space for the storage of canoes, paddles, cushions, etc. and there is also a work bench for those who wish to make any incidental repairs to their boats. On the west is the wide veranda from which one can go to the dock and breakwater, which is 50 feet long, with an ell 25 feet long. The latter is one of the most valuable features, which has been added to the club equipment and insures a safe landing from small boats, protected from the northwest winds. Alongside the dock which forms the breakwater is a smooth surface to which the larger boats can be tied.

After one has ascended the broad and easy stairway to the second floor he sees to his left a most attractive ladies dressing room. Passing along the wide hallway the kitchen, complete in every detail, is reached, and adjoining it is the janitor's bedroom. A dumbwaiter runs

from the first to the third floor and passes though the kitchen. Just across the hallway from the kitchen is the grill room, which will be finished in early English style.

At the southwest corner of the house on the second floor is the library finished in fumed oak, with fumed oak furniture having Spanish leather upholstery. At the northwest corner is the billiard and pool room, also finished in fumed oak and from each of these rooms is a doorway leading to the balcony which extends across the west side of the building. The furniture throughout the building will harmonize with the respective rooms.

The greater part of the third floor is given up to a magnificent room 28 by 32 feet, which can be used for dances, banquet and other forms of entertainments. The walls and ceiling are covered with ash applied in herringbone tile, and the flooring is of narrow sycamore. An open fireplace adds to the pretty effect. Just off the large room is a small serving room and there is a doorway over which is a marine view in stained glass which leads to an eight foot piazza which runs completely around the house and will make a most charming place from which to view the races or where the members and their families can spend many delightful leisure hours. Under the roof, which is covered with asbestos shingles manufactured by the Keasbey & Matheson company, is a spacious loft.

By means of a cribbing which has been placed between the house and the tracks the club will have a plaza 60 by 75 feet which will be used eventually for storing automobiles while the owner are on the water and also a yard where the boats can be drawn up during the winter.

The local men who were interested in the work upon the building were Michael Delfino, who had the interior finishing; I Terwilliger's Son, lockers; Philip H Fleck, plumbing and heating; W H Coleman, painting, and Yost & Yost, electric wiring

The club, which has about ninety members at the present time, will have a housewarming to mark the completion of the building and a number of entertainments are contemplated during the coming winter.

The Building Committee which has labored most diligently in carrying out the work of providing a new clubhouse consists of Commodore Harry M Carpenter, chairman; John P Powers, Joseph Royle, Charles G Washburne, J Herbert Carpenter, Lansing V Terwilliger, A Rivers Genet and Arthur J Goodwin.

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Citizen Register
8.12.1935

by Gerard Sullivan

Only a Ghost Fleet Left to Remind the Sportsman of Glories of Local Yachting

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Harry M Carpenter Recalls Days of Quarter Century Ago When 300 or More Racing Craft Made Ossining Shattemuc Club Their Rendezvous.

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.....1914 Fire. The morning of Jan 14, 1914 is a memorable morning in Shattemuc Club annals. That morning the clubhouse overlooking the Hudson burned down.

"Peter Clausen, the steward, was on the second floor and smelled smoke", the old Ossining Citizen said that day. He burst open the locker room door and there was an immediate flash of flame. Without a moment's delay he turned in an alarm and the firemen were on their way to the clubhouse a few minutes later.

"Pending their arrival, Mr. Clausen and a few others managed to save five canoes housed in the building for the Winter. The building was a famed structure and was in a most exposed position and the result was that it burned with great rapidity.

Lines of hose were stretched from nearby hydrants and carried under the railroad tracks. Streams were poured onto the building from every available

² Later events show the weight of the new clubhouse caused the soil beneath the cribbing to consolidate and settle, relative to its pilings, tilting the clubhouse.

point in the vain hope of saving a portion of the building.

“There was no gasoline in the large tank, but a can containing a small amount exploded with a loud report after the fire had been burning an hour, causing a great many of the spectators to move back in anticipation of another explosion.

“About 9:30 o’clock, the roof fell in, causing the sparks to shoot to a great height, and shortly after nothing remained of the cozy clubhouse but a heap of smoldering ruins.

“The cold was intense but the firemen did not flinch for a moment in the performance of their duty. They felt extremely grateful to Superintendent W C Yerks of the Broadway Mission and Mrs. Daubeney Brandreth for furnishing an abundance of steaming coffee while the fire was in progress.”

Fifteen canoes, tents, sleeping bags, fishing tackle, clothing in members’ lockers, silver cups, plaques, pennants and other trophies were lost in the flames in addition to all interior furnishings of the clubhouse.

Undaunted, the Shattemuc sailors began looking around for a new shore base. Gustav Rosen, a Belgian tobacco millionaire living at Oscawana, had a two story frame boathouse on the shore of his up-river estate. He made the Shattemuc a present of the building. Richard Parrot, veteran dockbuilder of Peekskill, undertook the dangerous house-moving job down nearly 10 miles of tricky currents.

Lashed atop two big barges that rode in tandem, the two-story 50-foot-square building began its downriver sail one morning, the barges broke loose only once. Pivoting crazily downstream, the barges slewed into the towboat, and the understructure of the building suffered a gaping hole torn in its clapboard rear side.

This crisis overcome, the “house on a raft” continued its spectacular marine parade, arriving safely off Ossining just before dusk. The next day the big house

was rolled off its two floats on wooded rollers, shuttled down long wooded tracks, and placed on its foundation near the foot of Shattemuc Pier.

H Lansing Quickford, Yonkers architect, redesigned the building. After a period of alterations, the new home of the Shattemuc was opened in time to offer open house to yachtsmen from Albany to the Battery at the next regatta of the Hudson River Yacht Racing Association.

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*Golden Jubilee Issue
Citizen Register
09.22.1951*

Costumes Have Changed, But Shattemuc Club Has Grown. The original members of Shattemuc Yacht Club must have appeared very natty when they took to the river in their canoes.

According to the bylaws of the club, organized June 28, 1884, under the name of “The Shattemuc Canoe Club” uniforms for members included: Brown corduroy knickerbockers, blue stockings, blue sack coat, blue flannel for dress, canvas shoes and blue cloth yachting cap with the club burgee or signal embroidered on the front in colors.

Emblem: A Crab. The bylaws also required that each member be a canoe owner. The club “totem” was a crab.

The Rev W E Phraner was the first³ commodore of the club, organized by a group of 24. The club’s name comes for an Indian word⁴ “Shattemuc”, said to mean “river that flows both ways”.

In 1896 a boathouse, 33 feet by 20 feet was built on the “Camilla Dock” located just south of the present clubhouse which is on the river front north of

³ William Carpenter, Treasurer of Shattemuc Yacht and Canoe Club, writes in 1905 that the first commodore was J. Herbert Carpenter. The Rev. Phraner is not identified in contemporary accounts as being a commodore.

⁴ The Indian word was spelled with one “t”, Shatemuc.

Broadway, and the boathouse was leased to the club at the annual rental of \$75

Shortly after Shattemuc’s canoes took to the water, another group organized the “Sing Sing Yacht Club” on Oct 25, 1887, with a membership⁵ of 60. This group was legally incorporated Dec 12, 1888 under an act of the State Legislature, “for the purpose of encouraging yacht building and naval architecture and the cultivation of naval science.”

Brandreth Named in 1902 Ralph Brandreth was the first commodore of this organization and he continued in that post through 1902.

In the printed constitution and bylaws, dated 1898, the names of several members of the Shattemuc Canoe Club appear as officers and members of sanding committees of the Sing Sing Yacht Club.⁶

The first printed appearance of the name “Shattemuc Yacht and Canoe Club” is on the printed constitution and bylaws dated 1901. In court records there is an order dated March 1 1902 authorizing the Sing Sing Yacht Club to assume the name of Shattemuc Yacht and Canoe Club of Ossining as of April 1, 1902.

Court Okays Name Change. It is apparent that members of the two organizations became associated toward the end of the nineteenth century and finally joined together in one clubhouse the name being officially changed by the order of the Supreme Court, club historians report.

The club owned its clubhouse and surrounding grounds, together with a grant of land under water from the State. Records further indicate that the first

⁵ Sing Sing Boat Club was organized in 1887. It became the Sing Sing Yacht Club when it incorporated.

⁶ By this time the Shattemuc Canoe Club had dissolved. It was reorganized in 1896.

addition⁷ to the original building was made in 1890 and that the building was rebuilt and enlarged in 1907.

Clubhouse Destroyed. Disaster struck the yachtsmen Jan 14, 1914 when the clubhouse was totally destroyed by fire. All of its contents⁸, about 30 canoes, was burned, in addition to personnel property of the members. A large collection of silver cups and trophies was also destroyed.

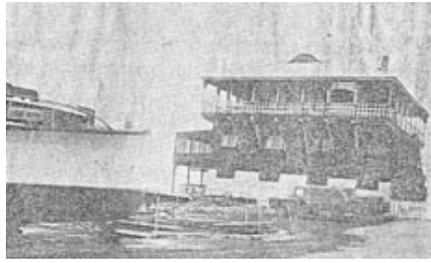
At that time the fleet of the club comprised about 50 boats, all types of craft being represented, records indicate. The club was the owner of a "Mower", one-design sloop "Shattemuc", whose winnings in many Hudson regattas were famous. Several members also owned one-design "Indian class sloops". The annual June regatta in those days was one of the outstanding social events of the year.

House "Floated" After the fire, the clubhouse was immediately replaced by the purchase of a two-story boathouse situated on the Hudson at Oscawana. The house was towed to its present location, being floated down the river on barges and tugboat. The ground floor was constructed under the original house.

Now the canoes have vanished completed but sailing continues popular and a regular schedule of sailing events is maintained during the summer season.

Many improvements have been made to the interior of the present building and additional waterfront has been acquired. Restaurant service is available for members and guests. Dr. Charles L Breiant heads the club as commodore.

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The Citizen Register
03.22.1961

Shattemuc Yacht Club: Donna Destroyed Dock. In 1868 20 men gathered along the banks of the Hudson on many pleasant summer weekends for canoeing and sailing and the common bond that existed among them soon ripened into friendship. The friends established no formal relationship but they were known as a band of fun-loving weekend sailors and their friendship was the basis for a club formed and incorporated in 1884. It was on June 28, 1884 that 24 men banded together to form the Shattemuc Canoe Club⁹.

The name "Shattemuc" was chosen from the Indian word for the Hudson River..."The river that flows both ways". Two years after the founding of the club, the members built a boat house which served as a congenial gathering place for the members until it burned¹⁰ down in 1914.

The first commodore of the Shattemuc Canoe Club was the Rev. Wilson S Phraner. The Rev. Mr. Phraner served as commodore until 1895 when the Shattemuc Canoe Club joined with the Sing Sing Yacht Club to form the Shattemuc Yacht and Canoe Club¹¹.

The Sing Sing Yacht Club was founded by 60 members on Oct. 25 1887, and was incorporated on Oct 18, 1888. The two clubs joined informally in 1895 and on April 1, 1902, the two clubs were incorporated as one¹².

⁹ This text was apparently taken from the 1951 Golden Jubilee article published by the same paper.

¹⁰ The Sing Sing Yacht Club house burned down in 1914.

¹¹ J Herbert Carpenter was first commodore. The club dissolved about 1889, but re-organized 1896

¹² These events did not happen

Rebuilt in 1907. The combined membership under the hand of Commodore J Herbert Carpenter, Capt. William M Carpenter and Purser Thomas J Hand¹³, pitched in to rebuild the exiting clubhouse in 1907 and leased Camellia Dock in Sing Sing for \$75 per year.

The craft that the early members commended were far from imposing. The canoes were made of canvas and paper stretched over rattan rigs. The first recorded race for Shattemuc was a three mile Class B sailing event that was won by a Mohican named Wackenhager in 40 minutes.

Soon after New Year's Day in 1914, the newly rebuilt clubhouse was totally destroyed by fire. The Shattemuc sailors were without a meeting place for a while but they soon purchased a two-story boathouse that would serve.

The boathouse, then located in Oscawana, was slipped from its mooring¹⁴, mounted on a barge and towed to its present site.

In 1937 another crisis faced the members of Shattemuc. The paid up membership had slipped from over 100 to 11. The club could not continue to exist with such a small membership and the small band of members started a drive for new blood.

Robert M Akin Jr. who spear-headed the drive for members, was successful in his quest and was held on as commodore of the club for the next nine years. Within those years the paid up membership reached 150 during the war.

Member servicemen, during both World War II and the Korean conflict, found Shattemuc ready to welcome them home with open arms. All servicemen on leave who were members

¹³ The founding fathers of the Shattemuc Canoe Club, 1884

¹⁴ If the clubhouse was afloat when purchased it would not need to be lifted on to barges. .

⁷ Contemporary newspaper article calls it an interior renovation. The first addition appears to have been made circa 1895

⁸ Newspaper articles say 5 canoes were saved.

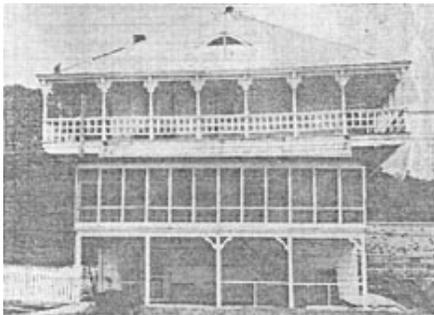
of the club could eat and drink at the club, free.

Name Changed. In 1945, the name of the club was changed from Shattemuc Yacht and Canoe Club to the Shattemuc Yacht Club. The dual burgee that Shattemuc sailors had been sailing under for years was changed, and a single blue¹⁵ flag used in its place.

The club has grown from 24 canoe owning members in 1884 to 150 members today, with 75 boats, sail and power. Last September, Hurricane Donna destroyed Shattemuc's dock, and sent many of the boats moored there down the Hudson. The boats were recovered, although some had capsized in the rough water, but the dock is not yet completely rebuilt.

As their ancestors did when a crisis arose, the present sailor of Shattemuc are taking action to repair their club and install a marina. The funds for such an operation are not readily available, but the clubhouse has no mortgage and the members expect to soon have enough money to begin work on another project that will keep Shattemuc going for the next 80 years.

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The Ossining Register
08.28.68

Shattemuc Club Leans Towards Charm. Like the Tower of Pisa, Ossining's Shattemuc Yacht Club leans, but it will not fall. Neither can anything be done to level it, if anyone would want to. It has become part of the charm of the place. The only time it becomes inconvenient is when you have things on your dinner table that tend to slide down toward the bottom.

¹⁵ The blue burgee belonged to the Canoe Club. The red burgee was kept.

The Shattemuc Yacht club has gone under two other names before becoming what it is today. It was founded¹⁶ in December 1888 under the name of Sing Sing Yacht Club with a charter membership of 35 and a fleet of three catboats. In 1889 the first clubhouse was erected on the present site, but during the Ossining fires¹⁷ of 1912, it burned to the ground. Largely through the efforts of Harry M Carpenter, the members bought the Oscawana clubhouse which had been condemned by the New York Central Railroad.

It was loaded on a barge to be towed downriver, but in the loading process, had been dropped eight feet. The fact that it survived the fall without damage is testimony to the strength of the building, says Albert Brieant, of 32 Ferris Place, Ossining, the oldest living member of the club.

When the clubhouse was relocated, once more it would be in a foreign element from the earth. First water, now air: the original building was raised one story to accommodate a storage place for the canoes. A few years later, the northeast piling¹⁸ sank into the mud and gave the clubhouse its renowned tilt.

The second name came about when Sing Sing was renamed Ossining. According to Mr. Brieant, the people of the town of Sing Sing became tired of being associated with the nearby prison. (Sing Sing is a corruption of the Indian tribal name Sint Sinc). The year that Sing Sing officially became Ossining, the Sing Sing Yacht Club became the Shattemuc Yacht and Canoe Club of Ossining. Shattemuc is Indian, again, for "the river that rises in the mountains and flows to the sea".

¹⁶ Incorporated. It was founded the year before as the Sing Sing Boat Club.

¹⁷ 1914. There were local arsons at that time, but the Shattemuc fire was reported to be accidental.

¹⁸ The clubhouse was supported on cribs, with one line of piles to the south. It was the cribs that settled

By this time the fleet had grown to an astonishing 16 sailboats and 20 "steam and power boats of various designs" according to a news clipping of the time. The membership had also risen to a roster of 60. The club had adopted an insignia: two crossed flags, one red triangle with a red five-pointed star on a white triangle background, for the yachting division; and a blue rectangle¹⁹ with a white boarder for the canoe division. Today the Shattemuc insignia is just the red triangular flag.

Mr. Brieant joined the club somewhere around 1906. He said that he had bought a canoe and was keeping it where Westerly Marina is today. One day he was leaving when he happened upon an argument between two boys and this prompted Mr. Brieant to apply for membership in the Shattemuc Yacht and Canoe Club. He said, "the young men were using such foul language that I thought what would happen if I wanted to bring a girl down here to go canoeing. So the next day I applied for membership in Shattemuc". From 1909 to 1939, Albert Brieant served the yacht club in the capacity of treasurer. When he resigned from that post he was elected to be an honorary life member.

During the first²⁰ year of World War I, 1914, resignations poured in until there were only eight paying members at \$25 per year. For four years this continued until the end of the war. In 1918, the victory dinner held was a huge success and once again membership mounted. Mr. Brieant made it very plain, however, that the only reason there is a Shattemuc today is because of the love and devotion of many of its early members; members who contributed land, money and time to keep the club going. The club was originally²¹ situated on only 75 feet of waterfront.

What about Shattemuc today? The name was officially change again about 1945 to the Shattemuc Yacht Club Inc.

¹⁹ triangle

²⁰ A substantial member roll existed even in 1915. Membership probably declined after America entered the war in 1917.

²¹ 50 feet originally, 75 feet later.

and today, the full membership roster includes some 75 names. The new facilities include a pool and an expanded marina with room for 20 dry sailing boats, 55 motor boats, and 35 sail boats. Barges which will be replaced in a few years have provided a quite shelter. Various rendezvous and entertainments are spotlighted through the year. Every Sunday races are held for the cruising class in a Nyack-Shattemuc meet. The plans for the future are basic beautification of the grounds.

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The Citizen Register
 11.30.1973
 by Rob Kelley

Shattemuc Club Razed. Ossining's Shattemuc Yacht Club was destroyed early today in a spectacular fire that was visible for miles.

Firemen expected to be at the site until mid-day, hosing down the smoldering remains. A two-story skeleton frame, all that remained after the intense blaze, was razed this morning by a bulldozer.

The building was engulfed in flames when firemen arrived, at about 4 am, according to Fire Chief Lloyd Davis. He estimated the flames were shooting some 50 feet above the roof and said the inferno was so hot his men couldn't get very close with their hoses. The intense heat melted one fire trucks taillight lenses.



Only beams remained before the bulldozer came Nov 20 '73

The frame was still smoking this morning as Penn Central commuters passed on their way to work. Firemen were directing streams of water at a flaring jet of flame on a small propane tank, midway between the Yacht Club and the railroad tracks.

The propane flame burned itself out shortly after 10:30 a.m. the chief said. Luckily, a safety valve on the tank reacted to the heat and allowed the gas to burn off slowly, instead of exploding all at once, he said.

Commuter trains were reported a half an hour late because power was temporarily cut off when the fire ignited a power line and parts of a utility pole and a power tower. Only the railroad was affected by the power cutoff. Davis said.



The Croton Fire Department alarm was sounded at about 4:15 am, when an observer's perspective made him believe the fuel storage area at Harmon Yards was ablaze. The error was discovered, however, before the Croton trucks rolled, according to Croton Police.

Cause of the fire has not been determined by the Fire Department. Chief Davis said he believed no one was inside the club during the blaze.

He also said no injuries were reported among the 175 to 200 firemen who responded, representing the department's nine companies. Two fire trucks stood at the ready at the fire scene in case another fire broke out at the same time.

Ironically, the club had no fire alarm system this week, according to Alan Hockman, a member. He reported the alarm system never had worked satisfactorily and was out for repairs. It was due to be reinstalled next week. He said.

The club's original house was destroyed by fire in January, 1914, 30 years after the club was founded.

This early structure was replaced soon after by a two-story boat house brought down the river by barge. The structure which was destroyed was three stories tall. The charred frame which the bulldozer razed this morning extended only two floors.

The third and second floors collapse during the blaze, leaving a pile of smoldering rubble which Chief Davis said would burn for days unless it were turned over and doused with water repeatedly, which is why he called the bulldozer.

Ossining village police first learned of the fire at about 3:45 a.m. from a telephone call.

The blaze was so well along when firemen arrived that they knew the structure could not be saved.

They strung 3000 to 4000 feet of hose, the fire chief said, a figure which he stressed was a "guess". The hoses ran from a fire hydrant near the bridge over the railroad.



Spotlights powered by generators plus the fire itself provided the light for the operation.

Coffee was provided during the cold early hours by the Red Cross

A corner of a nearby barge was sparked by the intense heat, but firemen hacked the burnt parts with a fire axe and knocked the sparks down into the Hudson River.

Much of the blaze was under control by about 5:30 a.m. with only a corner of the building still flaming, although much of the remains were smoldering thickly. Firemen focused hoses onto

areas where the flames tried to start up again, with the pressure of the water ripping off sections of wood which dropped into the rubble.

At its height, the fire was visible from much of the village, according to First Assistant Chief Gunnar Neilson.

Neilson and Second Assistant Chief George Losee stayed through to at least midmorning with the chief continuing to assist in the final aspects of the operation.

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The Citizen Register
11.30.1973
by Beth Smith

Buildings may topple but memories live on. The Shattemuc Yacht Club building is gone, but the memories of its people, its atmosphere and its history live on in the minds and hearts of its members.

“Shattemuc used to be the social center of Ossining” today recalled Mrs. Charles Brieant, whose father was a member before the turn of the century.

“It was a little snobbish, perhaps. They use to call it ‘Westchester’s Little White House’ and people would break their necks to try and become members.”

The club was probably a union of two clubs, the Shattemuc Canoe Club, founded in 1884, and the Sing Sing Yacht Club. In 1902 the club was officially named the Shattemuc Yacht and Canoe club.

Franklin Brandreth was the first commodore according to the club’s oldest living male member, Robert Akin, and Gilbert M Todd was vice commodore.

The original building, built in 1890²² was destroyed by fire in 1914.

A two-story boathouse was brought downriver shortly after by barge and tugboat; members are not sure exactly where the structure was originally located. Oscawana, the Vanderbilt

mansion, Cold Spring and Beacon are a few suggestions. Present Commodore Stephen Mishkin said he was pretty sure it was Newburgh²³.

The boathouse was jacked up and another floor was built underneath it; half was on dry land and the other half of the building was supported on pilings.²⁴

Club members use to joke affectionately about the “list” of the old building’s floors. Moving around the clubhouse interior gave people a nautical feel, and newcomers to the bar worried they had already had too much.

The bar was a point of pride with members; they had built it about 80 years ago. It was a handsome structure, made of mahogany and polished like a mirror. Trophies ranging from the traditional loving cup to a brightly polished cuspidor engraved with winners’ names, formed part of the interior decoration.

Alan Hockman, a member, said the building destroyed by fire early today contained sails and other boat equipment, “a tremendous amount of liquor” a TV, memorabilia and photographs that went back 75-80 years. The clubhouse -- which has been estimated at 75-100 years old -- had a history of fires. According to Akin, who has been a member since the early 1920’s and was commodore from 1938 to 1948, the dock used to catch fire once in a while from smoker’s carelessness.

In the late 1930’s lightning struck the building and burned a hole in the attic, Akin recalls.

“Sometime in the early 1950’s, he went on “the club got a new oil burner but didn’t insulate it enough from the pine beams on the ceiling of the floor underneath” Akin remembered someone coming over to him and his

friends while he was eating lunch and asking for a nickel for a phone call to the fire department.

“I don’t have a nickel “ said Akin. “Well, make it a quarter” said the other man. “Take a look outside”. Akin did so, and saw smoke pouring out of the building

“Those were all little fires” said Akin. “They were always put out right away”. “That club has a great history,” he continued. “Everyone got along with everyone else. No one ever got mad . If anyone got mad, we threw him out.”

“I’m sort of heartbroken it’s gone,” said Mrs. Brieant. Her husband and son were both past commodores. “I think it’s just deplorable”.

“It had so much tradition and charm,” said Commodore Mishkin, who watched the building burn this morning.

Will another building be built? “I have no idea”, said Mrs. Brieant, “I should hope so.”

Commodore Mishkin said an emergency club board meeting has been scheduled for Saturday, to decide about future plans. There had been talk of renovation or replacement before the building burned, he said, but “most members had a sentimental attachment to the club building “

Alan Hockman, when asked if the club would get a new structure up, said “Oh, yes.” He agreed there had been discussion at a membership meeting earlier this year about renovation of the old building or the construction of a new one.

“It’s always a tossup, though,” he mused. “What do you do with a landmark?”

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The Citizen Register
12.01.1973
by G S Thompson

What next for razed boat club? What’s next for Shattemuc? The historic yacht club in Ossining burned to the ground Friday when flames engulfed its good wooden walls and frame.

²² 1889

²³ It came from Oscawana

²⁴ Most was supported on stone filled timber cribs placed on the burned remains of the 1889 clubhouse. The remainder was supported on a line of piles along its south side.

Now the club must decide what to do. Alan Hockman of the club said today that it might be quite a while before a new clubhouse is built.

He said the Shattemuc Yacht Club board of directors was to meet today to discuss the situation, but it was extremely doubtful any decision toward building a new clubhouse would be made.

Hockman said that ironically the club had been considering whether or not to spend a substantial amount of money to renovate the old building or to build a new clubhouse. A decision was to be reached by June.

Now the question is whether or not the club can finance a new building, and if so, how soon.

Hockman declined to state how much insurance was covering the building, but he did say it seemed doubtful it would cover the cost of the building which was totally destroyed.

Besides, remarked Hockman, a building of historic value really cannot have a dollar value placed on it.

A great deal of sentimentality was felt toward the old building, he continued, and while some members had favored building a new clubhouse, many others had wanted the old clubhouse renovated. The building was between 75 and 100 years old.

Hockman noted that the alarm system in the building was not a fire alarm warning system, but a burglar alarm. He said it might have been triggered when the fire burned through its electrical system. But that the burglar alarm was being repaired at the time of the fire and was not operable.

Ossining firemen spent about nine hours losing down the rubble Friday. A bulldozer was called in by the department to turn the rubble over while firemen hosed it down. "If we hadn't done that we would have been there two days," commented chief Lloyd Davis. The chief said the cause of the fire

would probably never be known because of the extent of the damage.

Hockman noted that the decision to install the burglar alarm was made after the club had been broken into some months ago and an indication was found that a small fire had been started.

The last person in the building before the fire left at about 10:30 p.m. Thursday, more than five hours before the blaze was discovered, according to club members.

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The above clippings were transcribed from the original newspapers, which reside at the Ossining Historical Society in Ossining, New York