

MUELLER LIGHTNING FAMILY OHIO DISTRICT

By Scott W. Rudge

I was asked by the family to compose a short essay on this fine band of rogues, whose nucleus consists of three generations of sailing enthusiasm. I am Grandson, Nephew, and Cousin, respectively, to these generations and hope you will accept these qualifications as my resume for this piece.

In 1949 my Grandfather, John Williams Mueller, was involved in a search for an automobile, which seemed to be hard to come by around that time. As fortune and fame would have it he was offered a car by a dealer if he also purchased the dealer's boat. The deal was made and Papa John stood eye to boom with his family's destiny. Lightning 1269 *Ho Me* (sister to Penguin *He Yu*), complete with fishing tackle and outboard rig, had joined the family. The fire of competition burned within the boat and it was not long before it was in taut struggle with the other Lightnings at Leatherlips Yacht Club.

Around this time son Jack (J.W.M. Jr.) was developing into one of those hot shot kids, and a move to Cleveland in 1952 proved to be a good one. The Cleveland Yachting Club provided a large fleet and the Lightning became the boat of choice for this group. It was in this atmosphere that the legendary *Tickled Pink* (6493) was begat. Along with being a great boat *Pink* also proved to be a productive sire; the stock, Jack's *Pickled Tink* (8675) and Son-in-Law Bill Rudge's *Pink-in-Law* (11511) as well as it's own clone (7685). Herein lies the greatest contribution of the Mueller family; the infectious enthusiasm for the Class and the ancient sport of sailing. Among the smitten were almost all family members, a large host of friends and a partridge in a pear tree. Many of these people became strong competitors, but always remained good friends.

The years rolled like the seas. With each passing season the Class was becoming stronger, and the Mueller community, which by this time had spread all over the country, met the increasing challenge. In 1971 the competition peaked in the European and World Championships in Helsinki, Finland. Skipper Jack and crew, wife Nancy and Papa John, placed second in each event. They took advantage of the "Mueller Lull", high seas and low wind, a condition that is only surpassed by sea monsters as a sailing man's number

one dread. That will always last as one of the family's fondest memories.

In between national and international events they have setup and run the Mueller Boat Company and participated actively in the ILCA. Somewhere in there a few of us were born, too.

And now there is another one... Jay (J.W.M. III), who at this writing is 13 going on 30. It did not occur to anyone that Jay would develop the same way Jack had (ha ha). Jay already has an impressive string of victories at district regattas and is on his way up.

I have had the great pleasure of sailing with both Jack and Papa John and have learned a great deal from both of them. I also had a great time. I'm not sure if I will ever get the chance to sail with Jay; I hear he is a tyrant and he always gets the girls at the cocktail parties.

A telling conclusion to the tale of a boat and its family is nestled in the name of Papa John's and Jay's latest boat, *Game*; it boils down to Grandpa and me.



From Left: Jay, Jack and Papa John Mueller.

NICKELS LIGHTNING FAMILY MICHIGAN DISTRICT

By Herman Nickels

This is my history of the Lightning Class and of my family. Lightning sailing has always been a part of us and it seems that the history of the Class and my family are intertwined throughout forty-four years of Lightning sailing.

It started on Lake Fenton where I sailed a 15 foot Sun Ray from 1936 to 1940 and changed to a 16 foot catamaran in 1941 and 1942. It was interesting racing in those days under a handicap system in a mixed fleet as you never knew how you did until two days later when someone finally calculated the handicap results.

In 1940, Lake Fenton formed Lightning Fleet 53. Because I wanted to race in a boat to boat system without handicaps, I decided to join the Lightning Fleet in 1943. You had to be a boat owner to join the Fleet so I made a great deal with Stuart Greenley to purchase a one dollar interest in number 597. Another part of the deal was that I had to teach Stuart's daughter how to sail. I always skippered and never lost a race in 597.

My wife Margaret used to crew in the 1940's. She crewed with me a lot but it seemed that she crewed even more with

Clarence Holman Sr. She did give me great crew in sons Dave and George and daughter Madeline. Son Louie, born in the 1950's came along to replace the boys as crew, as they had grown up and started skippering their own Lightnings.

Dave at age six and Madeline at age four started sailing when they were still very small. I can remember some races where they would be playing under the foredeck all during the race and I had to single handle the boat. Usually I had at least one of the children sailing with me at all times but it was better if I had that experienced middleman to help me out occasionally.

After the war, three of us, Bill Furey, Harvey Foote and I decided to build Lightnings for ourselves. Our little company didn't even have a name; we just made Lightnings for ourselves but these boats turned out so well that we dominated the racing at Lake Fenton. The main reason for the success of these boats was their weight of 700 lbs. The Lightning Class had the 700 lb. specification but all the boats built before this time weighed 800-900 lbs. By producing a mahogany double planked bottom and cedar single planked sides, we were able to produce a 700 lb. Lightning. We also designed the boat so that the mast step and center-board trunk were all one piece thus the hull was very fair.

Now was the time to get our feet wet on the regatta circuit. In the early years, we sailed in the Lake Michigan District which included Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. This enabled us to make many friends. Just to name a few...Walt Swindeman, Dick Krauss, Barney Crittenden, Walt Vogel and many, many others. Also being Fleet Champion, I sailed in all the Internationals in the late '40's doing quite well but always knocking on the door and never winning.

I had built about 10-12 Lightnings by 1950 when Dick Krauss won the North Americans in one of my boats. Now it seemed that everybody wanted one of my Lightnings. At this time, I started building boats as a part time hobby forming Nickels and Holman in 1950 with Clarence Holman Sr. Dave started working there when he was just 13 years old and continued working there until 1967. George started a little later and both boys built their own Lightnings and started skippering for themselves. I had taught the boys to skipper in my boat by letting them skipper every other race starting when they were about 15 years old. I can remember the first time George tipped the Lightning over as a skipper Bob Furey and I were crewing for George and we refused to let the sails out when the big puff hit. We had expected George to steer into the puff and were surprised when we went swimming. George still blames us for that one.

In the '50's we kept knocking at that door and finally won both the Mid-Winters and the North Americans in 1959. By this time my family had grown up and were my crew for most of the regattas. We travelled all over the country and made crazy sacrifices just to sail Lightning regattas. I can remember coming from the 1957 N.A.'s in Milford, CT. We went through Brooklyn and the trailer broke down. We all had to be back to work the next day so we slid the Lightning off the trailer onto a wooden barrel and left it to search for a place where the trailer could be repaired (on a Sunday?).

I can even remember going over in Miami in 1949 and the Coast Guard was there to give us a hand with rescue. Just like the Coast Guard, they tossed us a rope that was at least two inches in diameter and we had trouble finding a place on the Lightning to tie it. After we finally got the boat secured, they started the tow with a quick start and naturally the line



Patriarch of the Nickels Family: Herman Nickels.

broke. We had to start all over again.

In 1962, Dave's wife started crewing but has decided that running races and serving on the Race Committee is more to her liking...Dave's son Kevin starting crewing with his father when he was 11 years old and was a regular crew until he left for the Navy at age 18. Now the US Navy dictates just how much sailing Kevin can get in but Kevin plans his Navy leaves around "Lightning sailing." In 1987, Kevin was able to get home for the Team Lightning Race, stayed to sail the Michigan Districts and went back to the Navy two days later. For the 50th year, Kevin has planned to be home to sail for Dave at the 1988 N.A.'s. Dave's son Keith is not a racing sailor but is more interested in the management aspects of the family business. Graduating from high school in 1986, Keith works full time at the shop.

In 1967, I sold my interest in Nickels and Holman Boat Co. Son Dave wanted to build new molds and go back into the business. David knew there was a demand for a good quality fast Lightning but he didn't want to start without brother George.

George had gone to work for General Motors and was not interested in restarting the Lightning boat building business. He had skippered and crewed Lightnings for many years, but now decided to move into a larger 30' Islander. George's wife, Eloise, had spent many of those years crewing for George and she liked the larger boat for a change. Son Brian was just eight then and learned his basics on the larger boat. When George sold the Islander in 1980, he borrowed my

Lightning for the season and had son Brian, age 12 and brother Louie crewing for him in races. By the end of that summer, Brian wanted his father to buy a used Lightning and Louie had met Bonnie Callahan, later Bonnie Nickels, who was crewing for Clarence Holman Jr. on the regatta circuit.

With the motivation and lots of pressure from Brian, George joined brother Dave and Louis, along with Paul Cavanaugh and Morris Gushen, to build Lightning molds in Dave's backyard. After the five had each received a Lightning, George and Dave went on to form the Nickels Boat Works Inc. in 1981. George still works for GM but as an owner, is still deeply involved in the business. You can find Dave there ever working to improve and build even better Lightnings. His dedication to the Company goes beyond that of an owner. He has committed most of his life to building his dream of a quality fast Lightning. Brian, now age 20, has been working full time at the shop for the past two years and is now the foreman in the rigging department.

Coming full circle, in December of 1986, Nickels Boat Works bought out the old Nickels and Holman that Clarence Holman Sr. and I originally started in 1950. Now my sons Dave and George own the company and two of my grandsons, Brian and Keith continue the family's contribution to the Lightning Class. Phyllis Callahan, Bonnie's sister, runs the office for the Nickels.

George's daughter Tracy, age seven is a little young for regular crewing but she had already gotten her "feet wet" in the Lightning. Daughter Madeline still crews for me occa-

sionally but leaves the skippering to my sons and grandsons.

I only sail locally now. Forty-four years is a long time to campaign a Lightning. I leave the international competition to my family to carry on the Nickels tradition. With six Lightnings in the family — 'ol Dad's, sons David, George and Louis, Daughter-In-Law Bonnie, and Grandson Brian, the Nickels Family name will live on with the Lightning Class. If you all multiply this much, the Lightning Class will go on forever.



The Nickels Skippers: (L to R) Brian, Bonnie, Louie, David, George and Herm.

PRATT-SHORE LIGHTNING FAMILY NEW ENGLAND DISTRICT

By Bonnie Pratt Shore

My Dad, Len Pratt became interested in the Lightning Class in the 1940's. In 1945, Mom (Florence) and Dad journeyed to Riverside, CT to see George Barnes win the Lightning Nationals and thus the decision was made. The first of the four *Bon Joys* was delivered in the spring of '46. That summer, Leonard and Florence trailered the boat to Skaneateles for the Nationals with a borrowed suit of "the state of the art — cotton" Rotsey Sails to finish 11th in a 55 boat fleet. The *Bon Joy* (named after the first two daughters) was moved to Spofford Yacht Club, Fleet 145, where she actively raced in Spofford Lake and in New England winning the first New England District Championship held at Centerboard Yacht Club in Maine. That same summer, *Bon Joy* weighed in at 960 lbs. at the Buffalo Canoe Club for the Nationals.

With Dad actively competing in the Lightning Class, it was time to move to a more competitive boat and in 1956, the second *Bon Joy*, Lightning 6888 was purchased. What a beauty she was, but as time went on, competition in the New England District was getting tougher and we needed a new Lightning to beat the "Etchells" design....enter one of the first Tom Allen wooden Lightnings, *Bon Joy* number 3, 8308. Dad was excited and a proud new owner of this new Lightning racing machine which won its very first race on

the Niagara River with Tom Allen crewing with my Mom. Being an active, competitive Lightning sailor meant hav-



Front Row — Leonard, Julian, Rob, Vickie Brennam (Rob's Wife), and Amelia Pratt.

Standing: Joy P. Blanton, Randy Shore, Bonnie Shore, Heather Blanton, Craig Pratt, Debby Pratt, Florence Pratt.

ing a good crew on hand.....enter the "KIDS". My sister Joy and I were sent to a sailing camp in the summers where we both became proficient in the sport and went on to teach sailing in our summer college years. Sister Joy sailed in the Adams Cup and won the State of Massachusetts Division skippering the *Bon Joy* and also crewed with Mom and Dad to help in winning many New England Sailing Championships.

As time went on, Mom put in for retirement and my two brothers, Robert and Craig participated in the races. Of course, we were all becoming experts in the racing game and Dad at times, had to relinquish the helm to the kids. We all managed to get our names on some sailing trophy. Boat number 4 was a big change for us from the wooden boats. 11288 was not only fiberglass but had flotation in it! That boat went on to the Dixie District with my brother Rob. My youngest brother Craig, built and races Lightnings in Maine and still owns and sails his Lightning with wife, Debbie and daughters Amelia and the baby. Joy still crews Lightnings and her daughters are just learning with the Sunfish. I, of course married a Lightning sailor and continued racing with husband Bill Shore. Our son, Randy, extended our family's tradition for Lightning competition by crewing with his father for the last two years. He also crewed this summer at

age 15 in his first Junior N.A.'s at the Buffalo Canoe Club. Dad and my brother Rob presently co-own Lightning 13888.

I can certainly speak for all of us in my family when I say we've had many happy memories and many, many wonderful and special friends in the Lightning Class. Lightning sailing has become a tradition for our family.



1987 N.A.'s at Buffalo: Third place Bill Shore with crew, Son Randy and Betsy Alison. L to R: Bill, ILCA President David Sprague, Betsy and Randy.

ROCK-SCHERRER LIGHTNING FAMILY INDIANA DISTRICT

The story of the Rock-Scherrer love affair with the Lightning began, you might say, at the beginning. The beginning in this case being in 1938 when Robert D. Rock first read about plans being available for a new Sparkman and Stephens design sailboat called the Lightning. The information he saw encouraged him to seek out any owners of the new boat that he could find around Indianapolis where he lived and to drive out to look at their handiwork. He became convinced that this was the sailboat that he wanted and soon was the owner of a set of plans for Lightning 214. Bob Rock was a chemical manufacturing engineer with Indianapolis-based Eli Lilly and Company, pharmaceutical manufacturers. He was also an excellent woodworker and he was soon spending all of his spare time, evenings and weekends turning the plans into a Lightning sailboat. This boat was built from Phillipine mahogany, oak and Sitka spruce for the spars. Full length clear spruce was available only from the west coast and had to be shipped east by railcar. The first order came through badly broken and after a great deal of discussion with the shipper as to why many short pieces of wood just wouldn't do the job that a continuous thirty foot piece would do, the shipment was again made and this time arrived in good condition. The boat was completed in about a year and was a real beauty although quite heavy by today's standards. Since there was no suitable body of water close to Indianapolis at that time, the Tock family, which included oldest son Richard, teenaged Virgene and wife Nettie drove 150 miles west to sail on Decatur Lake in Decatur, Il. almost every summer weekend. Lightning Fleet 74 was later estab-

lished on Decatur Lake. A frequent crew on the Rock boat in those days was Bob Buckles, Father of champion Lightning sailor, Bill Buckles, before he too became a Lightning owner.



L-R: Steve, Ron & Virgene Scherrer, and Dick Rock.

By now World War II had started and gasoline rationing put an end to the trips to Decatur. For this reason, Bob sold 214. As soon as the war ended however, Bob was again in the boat building business. This time, he and son Dick, who was now back from Burma, built Lightning 1754. She still had lots of mahogany but this time no oak and weighed considerably less. Bob and family again began the trips to Decatur Lake and sailed both there and also on Kentucky Lake where Bob had bought some land and built a cottage. However there were big happenings back in Indianapolis. The good news was that the Indianapolis Water company had built a dam and created a reservoir on the north side of Indianapolis which would be ideal for sailing. The bad news was that there were to be no boats allowed on the reservoir! This boating restriction was to be in effect for many long agonizing years. However through the patient, persuasive efforts of many local sailors, including Bob, the Water Company eventually changed their policy and allowed boating. And they even threw in a bonus, it was to be sailboats only! In 1955 this group of sailors leased about a dozen acres from the Water Company and began to build the Indianapolis Sailing Club. The ISC was formed for the sole purpose of racing small, one-design sailboats on Geist Reservoir. Bob was active in helping to start Lightning Fleet 270 on Geist.

Daughter Virgene had married Ron Scherrer in 1950. By the early 60's when Bob's interest in sailing was waning, the Scherrer's and their four growing children were looking for a good source of family recreation and consequently took over Bob's membership in the ISC and began a decade and a half of very active participation in both the Lightning Fleet and the sailing club. Ron was Fleet Captain twice and Virgene taught Ladies Training and Junior Training for many years. Ron was elected commodore of the club in 1976. Both skippered old 1754, after a substantial weight reduction program, and have quite a few trophies on the shelf. This certainly proved the wisdom of the Lightning Class' slow and careful approach to change which allowed the older Lightnings to remain surprisingly competitive. The Scherrers succumbed to the lure of a fiberglass boat with the purchase of Lightning 11860 in 1972 and retired the wood boat to Kentucky Lake with her now retired creator, Bob Rock. In 1977 Ron and Virgene purchased Mariners Marina in Sebastian, Florida and moved there to run the business. All of the children were now grown and for the most part married and on their own. It would appear that with the sale of 11860



"A Freak Accident". What happens when an airplane runs into a Lightning!

before the move to Florida the Lightning would no longer be such an important part of their lives.

However in 1975 on a trip to Kentucky Lake to visit retired Bob Rock, Ron and Virgene's son Steve took a long look at old 1754, still in good condition but totally unused for three years and decided her retirement was over. Steve took the boat back to Indianapolis where he sailed her for the next four years on Geist Reservoir. Steve then came to Florida to spend a two week vacation with parents Ron and Virgene and liked what he saw. He decided to make Sebastian his new home and moved down a short time later complete with Lightning 1754, at that time a respectable thirty-three years old. Steve completely refurbished her and we have been sailing her for a number of years on the Indian River Lagoon. She recently suffered an unusual bit of abuse while sitting on her trailer at the marina. We had a storm with lots of wind and an ultralite aircraft parked nearby was picked up by the wind, flipped over another boat and slammed against the Lightning, breaking the wood mast beyond repair. He would like to replace it with another wood mast but so far has not found one. As soon as the replacement mast is found however, the old girl will be sailing the warm waters of the Indian River once again. The Lightning's very versatile design makes her every bit as enjoyable as a day sailer as she was exciting as a racer.

ROSEBERRY LIGHTNING FAMILY LAKE ERIE DISTRICT

By Edwin Roseberry, Jr.

A Skaneateles Lightning purchased in 1941 by the late Ed Roseberry Sr. was the first Lightning in the Roseberry Family. Lightning 469 was appropriately named *Judith* after one of Ed's daughters and was one of ten Skaneateles Lightnings ordered to replace the Knockabout Fleet which was destroyed in the spring of 1941 in the Buffalo Canoe Club boathouse fire. The Lightning thus remained the dominant BCC boat throughout the '40's.

Ed Roseberry Sr., a good friend of Karl Smither, raced the *Judith* at the fleet level. In those days, the racing was less intensive and Fleet 12 members also enjoyed pleasure sailing as well as racing. Ed. and his wife, Gertrude, often mentioned the beautiful moonlight sails they enjoyed on clear nights with light north winds and flat seas on Abino Bay. Ed and Gertrude had five children. Diane and Judy both sailed Lightnings during their teenage years whereas Mary and



All the Berrys

(L to R) Steve, Wife Barbara, Ned, Allison and Eddie "The Berry".

Anne preferred the BCC Junior Sailor Program. Ed Jr. (called "The Berry") took a more serious view toward active Lightning racing.

Ed Sr. was very active at the BCC serving as Race Chairman for the Lightning International Championship in 1948 and BCC Commodore in 1951. In the following years, Ed Sr. served as Race Chairman and *Burgee* Skipper for both Lightning Club Races as well as World and National Championships hosted by the Canoe Club and was still serving as the *Burgee* Skipper regularly until the time he passed away in 1985 at the age of 79.

The Roseberry Family sailing tradition continued with Ed Jr. who began sailing in the BCC Junior Sailing Program. By 1954, at age 14 Ed was regularly crewing Lightnings and at age 16 refitted and lightened *Judith* to skipper her during the summer of '56. Ed crewed for Tom Fallon from 1957 through 1959 including the N.A.'s at the Crescent Sail Club and at Tawas Bay. The interaction with senior Lightning skippers was a rewarding experience for Ed as a teenager. In addition to his father, Ed was to be positively influenced by BCC top Lightning skippers, Tom Fallon and Ralph Franclemont.

In 1961, while in college, Eddie designed 7815, a wooden hulled Lightning, and sailed this boat at the District level in the early '60's. In 1966 he purchased the first of his four fiberglass Lightnings and placed third that year in the Governors' Cup at the BCC. In 1969, in addition to serving as the General Chairman for the N.A.'s, he started a string of 11 straight years attendance at the N.A.'s, usually finishing mid Blue Fleet. Ed always enjoys renewing old friendships during the N.A. Week as well as the good times and exciting racing. Ed has won five BCC Club Championships, been District Runner-Up, and has won most of the LED Lightning regattas at one time or another. He has trained many BCC junior sailors in the Lightning, many of which are currently active in the Class today. Ed had the pleasure of serving the Class as a Vice President and later as Secretary and the Lake Erie District as Commodore in 1972. Ed's wife, Barbara, a pleasure sailing enthusiast, will race on occasion when conscripted by her husband or son. Barbara is also active as a BCC Scorekeeper.

Eddie became a second generation Buffalo Canoe Club Commodore in 1982 when the BCC hosted the Lightning North Americans. He purchased a new Lightning in 1984 when his oldest son, Edwin Roseberry III (Ned), the third generation Lightning sailor, became interested in one-design racing. Ned began crewing on 13945 at age 12 that summer and has crewed for this father since then. Ned attributes his sailing knowledge and enthusiasm to his Father's support and the BCC Junior Sailing Program. In 1987, at age 15, Ned won the Lake Erie District Junior Championship and finished fourth at the Junior North Americans, hosted by the BCC on the same waters his grandfather sailed back in 1941. He also won the 1987 Sears Cup Area E semi-finals and skippered in the US Junior Sears Cup Finals at Pleon Yacht Club in Marblehead, MA.

Eddie's daughter Allison, now 15, is like her mother, and occasionally crews for her Dad or brother. Eddie's son Stephen's summer sport has been tennis and soccer, although he may be on board for a few club races.

As the current BCC Fleet 12 Captain, Eddie is still promoting Lightning sailing. His efforts have been rewarded by the view of more Lightnings on the starting line. His efforts for the Class will be evident for years to come.



The Berrys in 13945 at the 1986 N.A.'s in Kingston.

THREE GENERATION SMITHER-ALLEN LIGHTNING FAMILY

LAKE ERIE-MIDWEST DISTRICTS

By All the Family

Karl got his first introduction to Abino Bay at the tender age of 11 and his first experience sailing on the Bay in an old sailing canoe. The Buffalo Canoe Club was already established on the Bay and was beginning to grow and establish itself as a sailing center. Karl joined the BCC in 1921 and soon was paddling war canoes, racing a BCC Knockabout and crewing on the Buffalo Canoe Clubs many racing sailboats.

Ida came to Abino Bay in 1904 when her father built a small cottage on top of a high sand dome halfway between Crystal Beach and the Canoe Club. At that time, it was on the edge of civilization and reachable only by boat or horseback. Her father looked on it as a camp in the wilderness. Thus the charm of Abino Bay brought Karl and Ida together and set the stage for a three generation Lightning family.

Karl's first serious racing in small boats came when he began racing and skippering a BCC Knockabout called *Thermis*. This lasted for some ten years until the boat shed burned down in the spring of '41 and took with it the Knockabout Fleet. At this time, there were three brand new Lightnings at the BCC (the Class had only been in existence for two years). Fortunately, they were not stored in the boat shed and thus survived the fire. The sailors at the BCC now had two obvious choices; they could rebuild the Knockabout Fleet and continue to be a one-of-a-kind forever or buy Lightnings and join the "new wave". Karl joined the group that chose the "new wave" with a little help from super salesman, John Barnes, the head of the Skaneateles Boat Yard. He showed them what they were missing; the Lightning was both a daysailor with seats for the ladies and a good racer with enough action to keep the men interested. Thus Karl began his Lightning career in the summer of '41, in his new Lightning, *Thermis Twice* 588.

Karl got caught up in the excitement and fun of racing this new boat and soon was making his own waves at the National level, winning the Nationals at Barnegat Bay in '43. He went on to take second place for the unprecedented four times in '44, '45, '46 and '47 and yet again for a fifth time in



Karl and Ida christen Thermis 11000.

'53. His record of being the bridesmaid five times in the Nationals has yet to be equalled by any other Lightning sailor. One of his secrets to success was his Championship Crew of Bob Crane, Mainman and Co-Owner and Reg Pegrum, Jibman and Windshift Expert.

When the International Championships started at Milford, CT in '61, Karl was there, as he was for the next three Worlds, not winning (Tom Allen was doing that) but still competitive and placing in the top ten. At the same time Karl was racing, he was deeply involved with the development of this new Class, serving as Treasurer in '47 and as President in '49. All in all, Karl has been sailing Lightnings for 47 years and has co-owned six in all. He feels that "if each partner will do 60% of the work, the partnership will work out fine".

Karl donated the Thermis Trophy to the Lightning Class in honor of his crew Bob Crane and Reg Pegrum. This trophy is presented annually at the N.A.'s with three equal keepers to the skipper and crew who does the best sailing in the Championship Flight (Blue Fleet) for the first time. This emphasises the team efforts necessary for championship sailing.



Ida with Thermis Thrice in early 50's.

The Second Generation — June, Bob and Anne Smither

The three Smither children, June, Bob and Anne came to the shores of Abino Bay at a very early age, 3, 2, and 0 years respectively and thus the second generation spent the first 20 summers of their lives on the shores of Abino Bay. That they should all become involved with sailing was almost inevitable. All three children took part in the Junior Sailing Program that had just started at the BCC and made use of the boats in the new Lightning Fleet. It speaks well for the sailors in this new Lightning Fleet, that they would let the Juniors bang-around in their new boats. It did however, make for good crew which was in short supply at the time. The Smither children had a problem in that Dad was always racing his boat with his Championship Crew, so except for the junior races, it was not available. This meant they either found a crew job with another Skipper or, if possible, persuaded another Lightning owner to let them skip the boat.

Bob got his first crack at the "Big Time" when in 1949, Karl had just sold his first Lightning, *Thermis Twice* to a sailor in Central New York District. The new owner invited Bob to skipper the boat in the National Championships in Miami that year to learn what made *Thermis* go fast. They did not win but had a good time finishing in the middle of the fleet and getting a taste of what it was like in top flight competition. In 1949, Bob joined forces with Jack Sharp and Ken Warren to campaign Jack's new Saybrook Lightning. With Bob as skipper, for the next three years, the trio campaigned this new very light boat (720 lbs.) in club races and local regattas. Bob was studying to be a Physicist and had a natural bent for experimentation and invention. The Smither-Sharp-Warren team were the first on the Bay to use the new technique of setting the spinnaker from the leeward side. Most of the Lightnings of that day set the spinnaker to weather with a man on deck playing it out as other crew members hoisted the chute, often with the spinnaker in stops. This invention of a new way to set the spinnaker was one of necessity. The crew was so light that they needed all of their weight on the rail in any kind of blow and could not afford to have someone standing on the foredeck during a spinnaker set.

Anne joined her father on the Lightning as crew when she was in college and crewed for him at the first N.A.'s in Miami. Bob went on to join Anne as crew for a short time before going off to Graduate School at Yale.

About this time, all three Smither children were married. Bob to a French major at Yale and both June and Anne to Lightning sailors. June first met her husband, Malcolm Bourne, when he came to the BCC as part of an interclub team competition where four crews from Lake Chautauqua team raced four crews from the BCC. The Bourne family now live in the midwest (Lake Forest, IL) but spend their summers on Abino Bay. Anne married Tom Allen, already a World Champion and spends her summers in the Allen cottage down the Bay. Thus both Smither girls have returned to Abino Bay (Anne never left) to raise their families and enjoy the sailing that comes naturally to this beautiful location.

After graduation, Bob moved to Chicago and began crewing for members of Fleet 5 at the Chicago Corinthian Yacht Club. He still joined his Father for an occasional big regatta and crewed for Karl in the World Championships in Lima,

Peru ('63) and again in Naples ('65). In Chicago he met Bruce Goldsmith and became part of Bruce's crew winning the North Americans at Cleveland in '67. Bob purchased his own Lightning, 10930, *Fission* in the summer of '68. As he was still a member of the BCC, he raced in their Districts and on to the N.A.'s in Chicago where he finished second in the Governors' Cup.



As a skipper Bob participated in regattas in the Midwest District, and often went home with the silver. (L to R) Bob, Bruce Goldsmith and Tom Bierman.

During the next few years, Bob became more and more involved with the Lightning Class, first as the Vice President from the Midwest District in '71, then as Assistant Measurer for '72 and Chief Measurer for three years, '73-'75 and finally President in '76. His first official act as Assistant Measurer was to convince the Class to pass a rule to require all Lightnings be equipped with a centerboard preventer. The need for this piece of equipment was forcefully made apparent to Bob during his first year of crewing on Lake Michigan when they capsized in early June in very cold water. What may have been a fun experience on Abino Bay soon became a life threatening one in a very cold Lake Michigan.

The major problem facing the Class when Bob became Assistant Measurer was the shortage of good sitka spruce for masts. The Class had begun using a tapered aluminum mast that has the same outer dimensions as the old wood mast and came equipped with jumpers. Experiments were underway to develop an untapered aluminum mast using the same cross section as the lower part of the wooden mast.



Bob (R) being decorated by Arthur Stocker following the 24th European Championship held at Lake Neuchatel, Switzerland. VP Hess is in center.

Both of these masts suffered from the same problem in that they were square and the flat sides were too easily deformed inward. Failures, particularly on close spinnaker reaches were common and the life expectancy for these masts was one to three years for a competitive sailor. This became Bob's main task during his three years as Chief Measurer and with the help of his two assistant measurers, Fred Hamlet and Bill Buckley, the oval aluminum mast that we use today was born. The whole process of design, testing and acceptance by the Class took less than three years, which is something of a record for the normally conservative Lightning Class.

During his term of Presidency, Bob promoted the idea that the time had come for the expansion of the number of Vice Presidents in South America and that each Country should have its own Vice President. This was eventually approved by the Class, increasing the number of Vice Presidents in S.A. to six.

Bob became active in the national yachting scene at the time when the NAYRU was reorganizing as the USYRU. He was one of the early members of ODCC (One Design Council) and together with Helen Limbaugh, represented the Class for many years in this organization both as a member of its Executive Committee and as Chairman of its Technical Committee, a position he still holds today. In '83, Bob served as Lightning Measurer at the Pan American Games in Michigan City. This time he was assisted by his sister Anne (present ILCA President). Bob continues to race his Lightning, *Fission* in the Midwest District and continues to assist in the development of the Class as a member of the Advisory Board and as a member of a group of Lightning sailors testing the new mylar sails. He had written a number of articles for *Flashes* the most famous of which were the two articles entitled "Hot Sailors Sail in Hot Water" and the sequel "Hot Sailors Sail in Dirty Water."

The Third Generation — Jane, Tom Jr., Brenda and Jimmy Allen

Anne Allen married Tom Allen and became part of his Championship Crew, racing in many North Americans, World Championships and Pan American Games. The Allen children grew up in much the same atmosphere as the Smither children spending their summers on and in Abino Bay. All went through the BCC Junior Sailing Program starting at about ten years of age. Both Parents and Grandparents were there to encourage their sailing. They also had to compete with a Lightning World famous Father. This is a little hard on the younger generation in that they are always being compared with their Father. Tom never pushed sailing on the Children, but he always asked if they wanted to crew or not. If no response, he found crew elsewhere. They soon made their own decisions as they found that crewing was the way to go if they didn't want to be left out of family activities. Together as a family, they traveled the US and Canada in the Allen Bus to attend the major regattas.

Jane, the oldest, prefers crewing to skippering and still comes back to Buffalo or wherever to sail for the family in important regattas. She often crews for Tommy along with her Mother or David Adams. Crewing with Mom in '82, they captured the Women's N.A.'s Trophy.

Brenda, married another World famous Lightning Sailor, Jim Crane and now has a son, Robert, "Robby" age two who has already gotten his feet wet on the Lightning. Brenda is also a skipper but had to persuade Dad to let her borrow the boat to prove she could skipper as well as crew. Her first experience with skippering was when Dad finally let her take the boat to the Champagne Regatta. She found her own crew and surprised the family when she announced finishing near the top of a highly competitive fleet. The rest of the family wasn't even there to witness her winning performance. Together with Mom and Jane as crew, Brenda won the Women's N.A.'s in San Diego in '80 and again in '87 but this time without family as crew and as Brenda Crane not



Allen Family, San Diego 1980 with Allen Bus.

Brenda Allen.

After Junior sailing, Tommy crewed several years with Doug Oak at the BCC. He sailed his first N.A.'s with Judy Walker at Hilton Head in '75. From there he went on to regular crewing with Dad, helping him along with Brenda, capture another World Championship in Switzerland in '77. He crewed with Tom and Mother Anne in the '79 Pan American Games held in Puerto Rico. Graduating to skippering, Tommy sailed in Sears Cups and Junior N.A.'s and finally in the N.A.'s at San Diego in '80. He won the Lightning Mid-Winters in St. Pete in '86 and finished fifth in the N.A.'s that year. Sailing is a way of life for Tommy and he graduated from the University of Michigan with degrees in Marine Engineering and Naval Architecture. While working at the Allen Boat Company which he has done for a number of years, he also teaches the BCC Junior Sailing Program. Tommy has been able to instill the racing bug into the hearts of many of the young sailors by taking them to Lake Erie District Junior Championships and supervising their participation and giving them their knowledge and experience.

Jimmy, the youngest became the main crew for his Dad after Tommy started skippering his own boat although Jimmy was probably the youngest of the Allens to have his own boat to skipper. He won the Junior N.A.'s in '86 at age 19 and was fourth in the Junior World's. He has been skippering local regattas, District Championships and N.A.'s for the past few years.

The temptations of Abino Bay are hard to resist, so all four of the Allen children got into sailing in a big way. They were also exposed early in their sailing career to the "Big Time" crewing for their Father in many National and World Championships. Lightning sailing has become a "way of life" in that the whole Allen family has crewed and skippered with each other over the years. Mom has crewed for Tom,

both Sons, and for Brenda. She keeps thinking it is time to retire but always seems to be available when they need a last minute crew. All have crewed for Tom at one time or another and with each other. When you go to a regatta, you never know which Allen will be skippering and with which family member if not all, crewing.

Karl and Ida Smither have done much for the Lightning Class. They have given it three ILCA Presidents in Karl, Bob and Anne and a source of new Lightning sailors to support the Class. The Lightning Class in return has given them friends and memories to last many lifetimes.



Allens at home, Christmas 1987. L-R Tom Sr., Jane, Jimmy, Ann and Tom Jr.

STARCK LIGHTNING FAMILY LAKE ERIE DISTRICT

By Robert Starck

When Bernie Starck decided it was time to get back into sailing in 1954, the Lightning seemed the logical choice for a boat. Bernie had been Club Champion at Niagara Sailing Club in the late 30's and early 40's in a mixed fleet. Now that sons Bob and Joe were old enough to pull strings (provided they were double-blocked), but still young enough to shoulder the usual abuse a skipper father is sure to heap on his crewing sons, the Lightning was the only choice. By then, the Lightning had become the dominant class on the Niagara Frontier.

Armed with \$450 in cash, Bernie purchased Lightning 748, a double-planked 820 lb. Skaneateles beauty, complete with Rotsey cotton sails, from Al Sergeant down the river. Both boys were convinced the boat had no equal even though they spent many frustrating hours trying to get close enough to read the names *Glockenspiel* and *Three Winds* on the transoms of Stu Anderson and Jack Swanson, the "club hotshots". Bernie had the kids convinced that "wing and winging" the jib on old *Alert III* was every bit as effective as a spinnaker. It wasn't until they had been passed downwind

forty or fifty times over the course of those first few seasons that they began to suspect that the old man might be telling less than the truth.

As the boys mastered the spinnaker and became more competitive, Bernie began taking them to area regattas at Pt. Abino and Toronto to race against the likes of the great Karl Smither, Tom Fallon, Bob Bleasby and rising stars like Tom and Don Allen. There they first became acquainted with the young crews of those stalwarts, Ed Roseberry, Billy Bergantz, Tom Ward, Curt Montgomery and little Jay Hansen — all of whom continue to be active sailors today.

In 1961, Bernie resolved that it was time to travel to New Jersey to pick up *Alert IV* from the Lippincott Boat Works. The new Lightning 7948 provided many happy hours and a Club Championship over the next few years until Bernie decided it was time to move on to a bigger boat and consign the Lightning to his teenaged sons.

Bob and Joe campaigned *Alert IV* through the mid 60's managing to pick up a number of trophies at both the Fleet

and District levels. College, courtin', and lack of cash, however, provided formidable obstacles to keeping the boat in fighting trim. Both boys decided it might be a good idea to get out of the boat repair business and concentrate on "other things" for a while.

Joe concentrated on Carol Whistler, a fine sailor in her own right at the Buffalo Canoe Club. Seven kids (and seven new sailors) later, both Joe and Carol continue to support the Lightning Class. Julie, Joe Jr., Dave, Karen, Chris, Jim and Tom all provide excellent Lightning crews at the BCC — and on those occasions when they are able to borrow a boat to skipper, each has proven very capable. This past summer, for example, Dave borrowed Larry MacDonald's boat and proceeded to win the Junior N.A.'s quite handily with brothers Jim and Tom as crew. Both Joe Jr. and Dave are members of the U.S. Maritime Academy Sailing Team.

Bob and his wife Jane remain active members of Niagara Sailing Club where Bob has crewed for Calvin Schmiede for over fifteen years. Their two oldest children, Brian and Ellen, both excellent Sunfish sailors, have begun sailing an Albacore together. When the opportunity presents itself, they prefer to crew for Cal on the Lightning. Cal has kicked Bob off the boat more than once to make room for Brian or Ellen.

All in all, the Lightning Class has been good to the Starcks. It has, in a real sense, provided the glue which bonds together three generations of sailors.



The Younger 2nd generation Starck Boys win Niagara River Championship in 1966 shown with crew Jim Biddlecombe (L).

WASKOM LIGHTNING FAMILY TEXAS DISTRICT

By John B. Waskom, III



*Waskom Family — All three generations.
(L to R) Back row: Hal Felty, Anne Waskom Felty, John Waskom III, Milly Waskom, John Waskom IV. Front row: Lisa and Lee Waskom.*

The summer of 1988 marks 30 years that I have been an active member of Lightning Fleet 35 as well as a devoted advocate and supporter of the Lightning Class. It also marks the fifth consecutive year as Commodore of the Texas District.

To go back to the beginning, we belonged to the Old Dallas Sailing Club. There were not many Lightnings around then but when the club started to talk about replacing the fleet of club owned boats, an opportunity presented itself to make the Lightning our main boat. There were just three or four of us who recognized the potential of the Lightning initially but with an informal campaign, we were able to convince the other club members and officers that this was "THE BOAT". This was in the late 1940's and by the time they had six of the Lightnings built, it helped to establish the Class in the area.

We sailed club owned boats and it was not until we bought 3909 in 1957 that we heard about the ILCA. We joined a year later and this small incident at the time led to a relationship with other Lightning sailors that we are still enjoying today.

Wife Milly started sailing with me while we were still in SMU and dating. She finally said, after many years, "I have

raised you a crew, so now it is all up to you two".

Daughter Anne Waskom Felty crewed for us until she went away to college. She and husband Hal live in Colorado and sail a smaller boat as they have to trail to the lakes.

John IV, literally started sailing while he was still wearing three cornered britches (diapers). I started giving him the tiller when he was five (it came about to his chin) and it still amazes me that he is still sailing with all the instructions he got. Being younger and more aggressive, he took over as the racing skipper years ago. You notice, I say we a lot. It is hard to separate some of our sailing in the past. John has the usual collection of trophies. I remember his being third in the 1971 Districts. He has been Fleet Captain and Fleet Champion several times in the past few years and is currently Vice Commodore of the Corinthian Sailing Club.

John's wife Judy enjoys the regattas but does not sail too much. I guess the Family got her a little too late to instill the sailing enthusiasm of the Waskom Family.

Lisa, John IV's daughter, has crewed for her father but prefers to skipper on her own, whereas John's other daughter crews for her father on a regular basis except when serious school activities interfere.

Since 1958, with the ups and downs of both the water in White Rock, Texas and fleet membership caused by the

mass exodus of Lightning sailors to form Fleet 435 at Rush Creek, John Waskom III has steadfastly refused to let Fleet 35 die out at Corinthian Sailing Club. He has repeatedly revitalized the fleet to its current level of 16 boats.



John III and John IV.

Photo Credit Richard Means

YOUNG LIGHTNING FAMILY

OHIO DISTRICT

380 to 13719

By William D. Young

Truman P. Young started sailing in the mid 1930's. For several years he sailed Suicides on the Ohio River before the Lightning was designed. In 1939 Truman bought Lightning number 380, and was the first person in Cincinnati to own a Lightning. In 1940 he met Dorothy Dittmar and their first date was a picnic lunch and a sail. In 1941 they were married and Lightning 380 followed them on their honeymoon to Lake Wawasee in Indiana. For several years Dot and Truman sailed at Henry's Harbour on the Ohio River. As the war approached Truman was called back for active duty. It was not until 1946 that the second generation of Lightning sailors was started. Jim, Tom, and Bill were born with three years each between them. Truman often remarked "If those boys don't grow up to be sailors, it won't be our fault. We brought them sailing in baskets when they were babies.

After the war, and with his family started, Fleet 57 was formed on the Ohio River at Henry's Harbour. This was the home of the Cincinnati Sailing club. In 1949 Truman bought 1925, his second Lightning. The club grew in membership to a total of about ten Lightnings. In 1957 the Cincinnati Sailing club moved to Cowan Lake, a new flood control project north of Cincinnati in Warren County.

In 1960, Truman with his three sons in tow, bought Lightning 5575 so he could be more competitive when racing at Cowan. By now the Lightning bug had been caught by at least two out of three of his children. Middle son Tom preferred water skiing and power boating to light air days at Cowan. Oldest son, Jim, was now learning to skipper the boat and youngest son, Bill, along with Dad was crewing. Once again the need for a more competitive boat arose in



1941: Truman Young at the helm of Lightning 380.



1950: Young Family race Lightning 1925 on the Ohio River.

1967, and Truman and Jim traveled to Michigan to buy 10013. This was a big step toward a modern designed Lightning (fiberglass constructed) which is still competitive and is being sailed today on Cowan Lake by oldest son, Jim and wife, Phyllis and his three children, Charlie, Danny and Rebecca.

All through the seventies Jim and Bill sailed 10013 at Cowan and other regattas located in the tri-state area. Bill did a lot of crewing with other Lightning sailors such as Bruce Gerkins, Dick Pugh and John Lay, traveling to local regattas as well as district and national competitions. In 1987 youngest son Bill bought Lightning 13719 and is now sailing on Cowan Lake with his wife Debbie and two sons David and Doug.

Jim's two sons and daughter, and Bill's two sons love to sail and usually race against each other at club races. All of the children love to skipper. So, as to make the circle complete in this third generation, there is the strong possibility that the Lightning Class will have to put up with five more Youngs in the future. I'm not sure if that's good news or bad for the Lightning Class.

While writing this article, I've had some time to think what the Lightning Class has meant to me. It has provided our family with a common interest, a sport where everybody could participate, an opportunity to have met lifelong friends and above all the joy of sailing one of the most



Second Generation: Bill and Debbie Young.

beautiful boats ever designed.

Truman P. Young died on December 31, 1975 at the age of 76. He actively sailed Lightnings up to the year of his death. Dad left behind for his family a tradition he started nearly forty years earlier on the Ohio River, hopefully to be carried on for generations to come.



Third Generation: David & Doug Young of the Bill Young Family.

ZAISER-RAIN FAMILY INDIANA DISTRICT

Another Indy sailor, Bo Zaiser, was a great swimmer for Indiana U. In the early 50's, he visited a college roommate in Larchmont, NY, Bob Bolyard, who introduced Bo to the Lightning. Upon his return to Indy, Bo became a Charter Member of the Indianapolis Sailing Club. After trying all of the Classes there, he still wanted a Lightning and found out about Nickels & Holman. A one year waiting list prompted him to buy a "kit" and 6231 was built. Bo sailed 6231 until

the early 80's.

Bo's daughter, Helene Zaiser Rian, first crewed with her Dad and introduced her husband to the Lightning, and in turn to their two children Mike and Vickie. Bo is now deceased and Helene inactive, but Mike continues as a very active sailor. In addition to Lightnings, Mike is DN Ice Boat Fleet Captain and placed 10th in the Nationals last winter. He also sails E scows and Lasers.