



## Stories from the American Yacht Club

**American Yacht Club**  
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Founded in 1883, the American Yacht Club was originally a club entirely for steam yachts. In 1889 they held their first "sailing race", starting what would become a tradition of embracing sailors on Milton Point, including America's Cup defenders, Trans-Atlantic and Bermuda Race winners.

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### AMERICAN YACHT CLUB BECOMES NSHOF FOUNDING MEMBER

**From the Commodore:** AYC members believe in the importance of the mission of the NSHOF and its efforts to document and maintain the history of our sport and to recognize excellence in sailing. AYC is proud to become a Founding Member of the NSHOF. Your mission fully complement's AYC's own mission to further the sport of sailing.

Our Past Commodore William P. Ketcham spearheaded the fund-raising effort for our contribution by inviting 20 of our prominent sailing families to donate.

We look forward to seeing this important project move forward and working with the NSHOF in the future.

Sincerely,

Duncan P. Hennes, Commodore

**Contributors on behalf of AYC:**

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## **History**

"A New Steam Yacht Club. The First Of It's Kind In The World."

Much has changed in the 120 years since "robber baron", Jay Gould and a group of his friends founded the American Yacht Club in New York City. By 1887, clearly in need of a shore station, the club purchased "12 acres and some rocks known as Scotch Caps" from the Wainwright family at the tip of Milton Point in Rye, NY. The price was \$6000 for what has become one of the outstanding locations on Long Island Sound.



In the beginning, all the boats enrolled in the club were steam yachts. However in 1889, the first American Yacht Club sailing race was held. In a "blow", 6 yachts completed a 20 mile course and established a tradition for what was to become one of the preeminent sailing clubs in the world. In the club's fleet have been America's Cup Defenders, Trans-Atlantic and Bermuda Race winners. Its sailors have been Long Island Sound, North American and World Champions in a number of classes. They have captured Olympic medals - most recently in 1996 when Courtenay Becker Dey took a bronze in the Europe class. Four AYC skippers have won the US Women's Sailing Championship.

Through the years, the American Yacht Club Annual Invitational Cruise has been a test of sailing, boats and seamanship, as well as a family competition and plain old fun afloat.

One of the defining moments in American Yacht Club's history, however, didn't take place on the water. On July 27, 1951 an electrical fire burned AYC's landmark clubhouse to the ground. Galvanized by the event and the leadership of then Commodore William Crow, the membership rallied to support the construction - in little more than a year - of the comfortable building that

now commands the view of what has been called "that magical point".

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