

## **BLSC Life Members' Celebration 19<sup>th</sup> July 2009**

First I'd like to thank the executive for agreeing to hold this celebration, and to the organisers for putting it on – Tony Wright for the planning, photos, and being the MC, Sue Wright for the wonderful meal we've had and the terrific decorations, and Reg and Amy Domaratski for the cake we are about to see cut. Also helping were Dave Hull and Sandy Jacob as barbecue cooks and Samantha Robinson and Ann Wright as kitchen helpers.

Belwood Lake Sailing club has been blessed by the dedicated service our life members have given to the club over the years. I am going to give you some idea of what they have accomplished. If you look through the archives, these names keep popping up, on committees, at work parties, doing work behind the scenes, etc.

Our first Life Member was the late Len Hull, my father-in-law, whose life member plaque is up in the display cabinet.

We are lucky that all our other Life Members except for one are with us here today, and I'll introduce them now in the order they joined the club.

George and Joan Bowman joined in 1975, when the club was in its second year and at that time known as the Guelph Sailing and Canoe Club. George and Joan were the life blood of the club in the early years. Joan, who did a tremendous amount for the club, has sadly passed away. George was a machinist in his working life, and his skills were used on many projects the club undertook. He became Commodore in 1980 for a two year term, and during his second year, the annual Cruise to Belwood was instituted. George was the one to oversee the building of the garage in 1986. He is actually the baby of the group, as he isn't yet 80. His beloved boat Bluebell, a GP 14, was well known as a really heavy craft. The members found this out the hard way when we had to haul it out of the lake once! George and Joan were made Life Members in 1991 after they had moved up north.

Joe and Betty Davis also joined in 1975, and Joe has been involved in almost all aspects of the club ever since, joining the executive in 1977 as Member At Large, serving as VC Fleet in 82 and 83, and VC Facilities in 97 and 98, and becoming Commodore in 1984 for a two year term. His legacy will live on in our Bylaws which he wrote in 1977, and he subsequently steered the club through the incorporation process. For many years he supervised the dock haul out and spring launch, always took the boat motors home at the end of the season to overhaul them, and for years undertook the water system winterizing. He even became Commodore again in 2000 at a time when it was difficult to find anyone

with the necessary background to lead the club. Joe was made a Life Member in 2000.

Audrey and Derek Street joined in 1978 and immediately plunged into helping run things. I remember the Spring General Meeting in that year when there was a call for volunteers for the meals at the Mirror Nationals we were holding – Audrey was a newcomer but nevertheless put up her hand saying 'I can help with that' – and so she did, and that was just the beginning. She has been on the committee several times. I remember she used to run raffles every year at Fun Day to bring in a little extra for the club. She and Derek still camp at the club frequently and use their time to keep an eye on the club after hours, putting things to rights and alerting the club when things need attending to. Derek was Race Captain for four years in a row – from 1992 to 1996 – and during that time he and Audrey ran all the races. Imagine that – a permanent race committee! Then he was Commodore in 1998 and 1999, and again in 2001 and 2002. Derek and Audrey were made Life Members in 2004.

Al and Olwen Morgan are the newcomers to the club, as they joined as recently as 1989. They followed the same pattern as the others of immediately jumping in, as they were both on the committee in their second year - in 1990 and again in 91, Al as VC Facilities and Olwen as Social Captain. Then Olwen did Publicity and Al became Commodore for 1992 and 1993. Since then neither has stopped to rest – this year Al is back on the committee as Race Captain, and Olwen is there at each race to help calculate the scores. They liked it so much here they 'retired' less than 10 minutes away and as a result, Al in particular is always around and turns his hand (when he's not stabbing it) to anything and everything that needs doing. He and Olwen were made Life Members in 2002.

Well, there you are, a very short history of the contributions our life members have made to the club. I hope you get the picture that the club wouldn't be where it is today without the tireless efforts of these people to whom we'll be eternally grateful.

Margaret Hull