

AN INTERNATIONAL-14 IN THE '40s A HARBOR 25 AT 84

December 10, 2009



In late October, Tom and Jane Schock delivered a brand new Harbor 25 to an old friend by the name of Bob Savage. He lives in Lynden, Washington, a small town very close to the Canadian border, and just a few minutes from Drayton Harbor on beautiful Semiahmoo Bay. His love of sailing goes back to 1935 when he learned to sail in Newport Beach, California, at the age of nine. Bob will be 84 years old soon; and this is the story of his early sailing years and why he chose the Harbor 25 to continue his love for boats and the sea.

“When I was about 9 years old, I met Jim W through our family. Jim was an accountant who loved sailing. He was an active racer and teacher of sailing. Jim needed a crew on his Skimmer while racing at Alamitos Bay, so I became his crew. Jim also had a Skimmerette, with mainsail only, which I borrowed and learned to sail on my own. Jim was getting ready to retire and wanted to have a boat that he could just go down in the

afternoon and sail and race at the Balboa Yacht Club. His desire was to find a boat he felt stable on and that he could sail by himself so he wouldn't have to find a crew. He bought a Viking that had a club-footed jib, and he was very happy to race it and sail it all by himself.

After two years in the U S Navy during WW2 as a signalman, I returned to Newport Beach and the Balboa Yacht Club. I wanted very much to have a sailboat of my own and I soon found an International14 named *Chili Pepper* that was for sale from the new owner of Lido Shipyard. He said that there was a great class of racers in Newport Harbor and that I should get involved. This I did. And it was through this experience that I made many lifetime friends. Among them were Bill and Betty Schock. Bill was buying cold-molded wooden I-14s hulls from Douglas & McLeod and finishing them in the garage of his parent's beach house. My boat wasn't one that Bill built, but *Chili Pepper* spent a little time in Bill's shop over the years. The I-14 was a strictly controlled one-design class at that time, and we had a wonderful time racing against racing greats including Bill Ficker, Bill Lapworth, and Carl Eichenlaub.

By the time I was 40, I found myself busy working as an architect and raising a family. I have always kept my I-14, hoping to get back into sailing. Now that I am pushing 84, I do not feel stable enough to step or sit on the rail of the I-14. I remember, though, that someone told me that Uffa Fox, who designed the original I-14 dinghy, sailed his 14 around the Isle of Wight when he was 80 years old. I really desired to do something like that here in the San Juan Islands, but knew better, for I have great respect for how powerful God has made his sea.

So, I remembered Bill Schock and his building great boats and went to the internet and found a boat much like my friend Jim W had. A boat with a club-footed jib and much more. It was the Harbor 25. The stock market and the federal government were gradually taking our savings away, so my wife Joan and I decided to spend it before they could. I called Tom Schock and ordered a Harbor 25, which now sits proudly in its slip at Semiahmoo Marina, waiting for fair weather this spring. Tom and Jane, who have relatives in northern Washington, brought the boat up on its own trailer and we launched it during a cold and rainy day in late October. With the help of the great guys at the boat yard, we slipped *Lady Joan* into the water, stood her mast, and powered over to the marina.

The next day was a sterling day with sunshine and a gentle breeze – a perfect day for a maiden voyage. Tom spent a good hour or more showing me every detail, inside and out, and then Jane and Tom and I went for a short sail. I can't tell you how thrilled I was to be on the water again. The weather has been very wet and cold ever since, so I haven't taken her out of the slip yet. But the more I get to know her, the more excited I am about going sailing. And as soon as we see the first hints of spring, you will see me out on the bay in my beautiful Harbor 25."

- Bob Savage, Harbor 25 #28



