

Golden Dazy

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The End of an Era
&
The *Golden Dazy* Legacy
Cover: Racing on Lake Champlain

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The End of an Era: *Golden Dazy* Leaves Lake Champlain for Massachusetts Waters

by Bern Collins, LCYC Historian, November 2003



*At the Shelburne Shipyard, on September 10, 2003, **Golden Dazy** was loaded onto a truck headed for Massachusetts, leaving for the last time her homeport on Lake Champlain. The Hills, who had owned Dazy for almost a quarter of a century, were not at the Shipyard to take pictures or say goodbye. In a way, however, they had spent the summer saying goodbye, as they watched the new owners work on Dazy from their offices, which are adjacent to the Shipyard.*

As Bruce and Carol Hill reminisced later that day at the Lake Champlain Yacht Club, where Golden Dazy had graced the anchorage for so many years, they expressed surprise that she had sold soon after being listed on the Web. It is an unusual boat, with a distinctive history; they thought it might take several months. Fortunately, it was just the type of wooden boat that a young couple from Ipswich, Massachusetts was looking for.

Dazy's Fame

In 1978, when Bruce decided to sell his Pearson 28, *Synergy*, he at first thought of buying a one-ton. It was Steele Griswold, owner of the Shelburne Shipyard, who suggested that he take a look at *Golden Dazy*, a two-ton. Steele recalls seeing *Dazy* right after a Bermuda Race "powering by us, with blue smoke pouring out of the exhaust." At the time, he was racing his second *Mame*, a Hinckley 38, and had become friends with Dennis Connors' business manager, who also owned a Hinckley 38.

Golden Dazy was built by Gougeon Brothers of Bay City, Michigan. Designed by Ron Holland, she had won Canada's Cup in 1975. A few years later, when Steele saw her "power by," her name had been changed to *Tern* by her new owner. While Bruce was looking for a new boat, Steele got a call from Connors' business manager (who managed all of his America's Cup challenges) telling him that *Tern* was for sale. The owner had given the boat to a maritime academy in New York. Due to the "revolutionary" wood plus epoxy hull construction, Steele believes he may have had trouble selling her, which is how she ended up at the academy.

“Well, it’s plywood,” Steele notes, “and people were concerned—no large boats were built like that—they were small. And, of course, the small ones were dry sail; they didn’t sit in water all the time.”

In 1975, when *Golden Dazy* raced in the Canada’s Cup, she had the stiffest hull of any of the contenders; at 41’6” it is a combination of strips of Western Red Cedar, Okoume plywood, and teak, for a 1 1/8-inch total. Using these woods, Gougeon Brothers pioneered the Wood Epoxy Saturation Technique (W.E.S.T System). When she won, it was said that “the prettiest was the fastest.”

When Steele and Bruce became co-owners, Steele says, “Bruce didn’t have to be talked into getting *Golden Dazy*. Primarily, we got her to do just what we did—go to the Bermuda Race.” They changed her name from *Tern* back to *Golden Dazy* and prepared to enter the Bermuda Race in 1980.

The Bermuda Race

Of Bruce and Carol’s three children, Jeff has been the one most identified as *Dazy*’s skipper when Bruce was not at the helm. He had to work his way up the “ladder,” however, beginning as chief cook and bottle washer on the Bermuda Race.

In preparation for this race, Jeff recalls, “There was a whole series of *Mame/Dazy* sea trials that were done on Lake Champlain, where we’d go out and sail the boats for a day race—match racing—do ‘crew drills’ and then come back to the Shelburne Shipyard. At that time, both boats were tied up on a special dock just north of the work dock. Then, in preparation for the regatta, the boat was worked on diligently and new sails put on.”



Jeff, Steele, and Bill Freeman took *Dazy* down the Hudson. “I remember sailing the boat down with them, and anchoring off New York Harbor, amidst the current. It was really something with those two. We went up into Long Island Sound, and did the Onion Patch Series, which is like a ‘feeder’ race series where you end up in Newport. The rest of the crew came down for those, and then we set off for the Bermuda Race.”

This was just after Jeff’s graduation from the University of Vermont. Terry Griswold remembers that he was denied entrance at one of the Long Island yacht clubs until they found a jacket for him. “The sleeves were much too short.”

“Those were the old days,” Steele recalls, “some of them are still like that—jackets required for dinner.”

Those were also the days before GPS. Plus, racers were not allowed to use their radios except in emergencies. Terry remembers, “We had to have enough food for two weeks in case you missed the island.”

“That’s right, because the next stop was the Amazon River,” and Steele knows of one racer from Lake Champlain who did miss Bermuda and had to “come in the back side, from the south.” (Although he’s no longer with us, he’ll remain anonymous—except to those who remember that race.)

As Steele notes, “Now you can take anything. You get the weather maps constantly, you have computers to tell you where you are, what’s going on, and right where you want to go. You can get all the readouts of currents, current strengths, direction—all that. [When we did the Bermuda Race] we used a sextant—that was all. We figured out we were in the Gulf Stream by the temperature and we really didn’t know how fast we were going. I don’t think I would have gotten *Dazy* if Bruce hadn’t been the other partner. He was willing to be the navigator. He liked navigation.”

The 1980 Bermuda Race featured a lot of wind, rather rough conditions, with little need to fly a spinnaker. Bruce recalls that they “averaged 7.2 knots—a reach,” and thought they might win it. At the finish, however, an older boat, *Holger Danske*, won. For everyone, though, the highlight was meeting the wives and girlfriends in Bermuda after the race was over and sailing back.

Jeff’s future wife, Dorothy, was among those who flew to Bermuda. They had known each other since high school days at Champlain Valley Union, and had started dating at UVM. Dorothy had just started her summer job at Bostwick Estate as a gardener and after working only a week, asked for a month off so she could go to Bermuda and sail back. Fortunately, they granted her request. Dorothy has been part of *Golden Dazy*’s history from the beginning. A fierce competitor, she also skippered *Dazy* to several first place finishes on Lake Champlain.



***Dazy*’s Winning Ways**

Once *Dazy* was back in Vermont, she immediately started winning races. At Bruce and Carol’s home on the shores of Lake Champlain, one wall is covered with framed awards, a cabinet is filled with trophies, and the record books are filled with *Dazy* wins in races in which she participated from 1980 on.

In 1980, she won the first of four Ladies Cup Regattas. For Bruce, “the Lake Champlain Race [which started at Malletts Bay on a course that usually took at least two days] was most rigorous.” As noted earlier, these were the days before GPS, when skippers used to have to “deal with dead reckonings and unlighted marks.”

Since Steele had *Mame*, he sold his partnership to Michael Caine; but Bruce eventually became *Dazy*’s owner. He credits much of her success to a very loyal crew who remained with him through the years.

Bruce disliked the task of putting a crew together, so he usually left that to Jeff. For most of the races, the minimum crew number was five or six; often, there would be eight. For Wednesday Night Races at the Lake Champlain Yacht Club, “the word was that the first seventeen could crew.” There were over twenty life jackets onboard, and *Dazy* was always popular with young, energetic types who liked to be on a winning boat. One of the teen-agers who came aboard as crew was Gene Cloutier (his father had won a ride on *Dazy* in a raffle), who Bruce says “became a great sailor.” Two other young crew members who became regulars were Kere Baker, from Just Sports in Malletts Bay, and Sam Cutting, from Dakin Farm. They were among the core crew who would come to the Shipyard on Wednesdays and Sundays a month before the boat was launched to get it ready for the season. Jeff recalls how everyone would work religiously year after year to get this beautiful wooden boat in shape: sanding the bottom, varnishing, and cleaning.

Dazy’s winning ways included more than coming in first and collecting trophies. There are fond memories of the hard work, the camaraderie, good food, good drink, and great company in good weather and bad. Among those memories is the “beer ball,” a sphere-shaped mini-keg which “resided” for a while in the Y-shaped cockpit. During a lull on one of the long Lake Champlain Races, after a long spell at the helm, Bruce went below to get some rest. It was a light air night, rather cold, and the rest of the crew remained on deck. When Bruce came back up, saying, “I’m ready for my breakfast beer,” the ball was empty. He says, “They were wearing Cheshire Cat grins.” There is good-natured contention over how the ball lost its beer—Jeff and Dorothy insist there was a certain amount of “leakage that even soaked some of the sheets, giving the boat an ‘eau d’beer ball’ flavor. Spilled beer just seemed to add to the boat’s patina.”

Kere finally made a varnished drinks holder that could hold eight. Jeff says it was beautifully made, and saved crew members from having to wear leather cups around their necks—Bruce’s suggestion for solving the spilled beer problem that seemed to occur every time he said, “Ready about.” (The skipper got his own holder.)

As is true of most racing boats, the major chore of care and feeding of crew falls to the skipper's wife—in this case, Carol. One of her “staples was a ‘Mung’casserole,” her version of goulash. Another requirement was making at least sixteen sandwiches. *Dazy's* ice chest is so huge that Carol decided smaller coolers made more sense. Crew members contributed as well. For example, for the overnight races, Sam Cutting would bring breakfast.

Remarkably, over the many years of racing, there were no crew injuries. Although one guy almost fell over the side, he grabbed one of the stanchions at the last second. Carol says that several people were brave enough, or foolhardy enough, to dive from the spreaders. The record is a dive from the second spreader.

During one of the overnight Commodore Macdonough Races, they ran over a spinnaker, which got tangled around the keel and prop. Mark Shearer dove in and had to cut it away. And, of course, there's the time that Dorothy, according to Bruce, “left a blooper at Juniper Island during a Lady Skipper Race. She was in the lead and didn't want to stop to retrieve it.” (Dorothy's version appears later in this article.)

Sails, Sails, Sails and the Dazy Staysail

No one seems to know exactly how many sails were on *Dazy* in the beginning or how many went with her to Massachusetts. Maybe forty-five. One of its unique features is the “*Dazy Staysail*.” Jeff says that, “It is the type of sail that originated on *Golden Dazy* and is made by sail makers to this day. Made by North Sails, it is a lightweight staysail, but can be flown under the spinnaker very effectively, or on a broad reach. Also, when there is very, very light air, it is used as a ‘wind seeker’ with no other headsail. It's smaller than a genoa, but when there is no wind and you are trying to first get the boat moving, if you put that up, it will fill with wind and get the boat going. What was different about it was the high clew. Due to the boat's weight, once you got it moving, it would keep going. It would coast through a hole and get to the other side, and sort of build its own apparent wind as it goes faster.”

As other competitors know, *Dazy* always seemed to “find” the wind. Steele, however, comments that “after the Canada's Cup, the guy who bought her and changed her name to *Tern* reduced the rig by two feet. I don't think she ever performed the way she should have [because of that].” He believes that the rig was shortened for ocean racing, and had it been left alone, “she would have gone over the horizon!” In spite of the reduction in the rig, Dorothy remembers the crew would say, “C'mon *Dazy*, make some wind.” Bruce would say, “C'mon *Dazy*, make your special wind.” And, she did.

Jeff says there was a whole set of original sails that were made for the boat, all of Dacron. That inventory was outdated when the boat was purchased, but some of it in usable condition. “We would, as the years went by, get the ‘new/old number one’ out and as a certain sail became more worn out, another sail would look better.”

Dorothy said, “We had a lot of nicknames for the sails. The old one would become the practice chute. They would get new names. Dorothy recalls, “The older sails were definitely usable in lighter air, which we have a lot of around Lake Champlain. We didn’t have a lot of new sails with *Dazy*, so we were continually trying to make the most out of what we could with the sails we had.”

Jeff lost a new Kevlar main on a Mayor’s Cup Race in Plattsburgh a few years ago when the wind gusts reached fifty. Since one sail can cost thousands of dollars, he noted that it’s important to keep the sail inventory going as long as possible.

Then there was the time that Jeff and Sam Cutting were doing the Lake Champlain Race double-handed and lost a spinnaker. This race went into the Hill Family Book of Racing Lore.

Sam and Jeff’s Double-handed Adventure

Jeff begins: “One year Malletts Bay decided they were going to do a double-handed Lake Champlain Race. Sam Cutting and I entered. It was a different course from the normal long course they used to have. Basically, we started at Stave, sailed to Sloop Island, and came back up. We had put up the ounce and a half spinnaker [a big chute, with lots of sail area]. We sailed down to Four Brothers, took the spinnaker down, reached across with the number three around Juniper, and then set the spinnaker again to go to Stave. The course was to leave Stave to port, Jones Rock to starboard, round Crab Island, and return to finish off Stave. As we were approaching Stave, we were dead downwind and the boat was tending to oscillate, and only the two of us aboard at around 2:30 a.m.

“We had been struggling [having been awake for many hours] because it was windy and we had been pressing the boat hard. When we went into our maneuver to take the spinnaker down, there were only the two of us. I was at the helm, and Sam was trying to gather that large spinnaker in [under the boom], and it was very windy. We had the #3 [genoa] up under the spinnaker, the main up, and the boat was rolling back and forth.”



At this point Dorothy comments, “It makes me shudder to think of it, because I know what they were doing.”

Jeff resumes, “When we went to put the spinnaker down, a little bit of the foot got caught in the water and then scooped in under the bow, and the boat stopped and sort of. . . we were ‘shrimping’ or whatever. With the sails up, we rounded into the wind and we were pointing directly at Stave Island, and no way to stop the boat. We couldn’t get the sails down quickly enough to stop until we were on the rocks, on the east side of the island, right near Susie Hazelett’s summerhouse.”

(A bit of irony: Susie had been Jeff’s sailing instructor. Although she undoubtedly heard the noise and racket on the beach, she did not come out.)

Jeff says that, “We found ourselves there, dropped our sails, and the boat was taking a horrible beating—bang!bang!bang! It was very rocky. We tried to back the boat out with the engine and couldn’t move it. So, I ended up swimming the anchor out [although it was summer, the water temperature was not warm]. The conditions were very rough for swimming the anchor out. . . Sam was quite amazed that I could swim the anchor out.”

Dorothy comments again, “Sam said that Jeff performed a superhuman feat: he stripped off his clothes, grabbed the anchor and line and just jumped off the boat. There’s no way he could have carried all that and swum out there in those waves, but he did it!”

“So, anyway,” Jeff continues, “I was able to swim that anchor out, set it, take tension on the main winch, and with the tension and the bouncing of the boat, we worked our way off on the anchor line. We came off, stern to, with the anchor holding us and . . . obviously, we retired from the race. We motored her home and pulled her out at the Shipyard.”

Another amazing aspect of this incident is that many of Dazy’s core crew showed up the following night. They worked on just the keel, which had sustained quite a lot of fiberglass damage. Jeff recalls that, “We spent the night in the travel lift and repaired the keel ourselves. The next morning the Shipyard came in and launched her back. There was damage to the keel, and the sail, of course, was gone.”

(For some more vivid details of this memorable race see “In His Own Words” by crew member Sam Cutting at the end of this article.)

Dorothy Lost the Blooper—Who Won the Race?

Dorothy always wants to go on the Lady Skipper Race, and is amazed that more women don't take advantage of the opportunity to "drive the boat."

"I love to drive," she says, "I only feel like I win if I beat everybody on corrected, no matter what class."

Dorothy won the Lady Skipper Race before marrying Jeff, and again [several times] after marriage. So, both her maiden name and married name are on the trophy. One of her main competitors wanted to accomplish the same thing, and on the day of this particular race appeared close to realizing her goal.

"We were going downwind; we had the light half-ounce blooper up. *Dazy* had sets of half-ounce chute with matching blooper, a three-quarter-ounce chute with matching blooper, and so on. So, she had more than one blooper, to go with the spinnakers. What happened was we were going along and [the crew] had taken down the blooper. It was on deck [unsecured] and somehow slid off. It just fell off the boat. The next thing we know, we looked back and it was in the water and I still had the chute up. We're going downwind—doing at least four or five knots.

"I said, 'You guys, if we are going to go back and get it, we have to get the spinnaker down. I can't just turn the boat with all these sails up, going downwind. I can't do it! I'm on the wheel. . .you guys take the sail down and I'll turn the boat around'. . .and, nobody took the sails down.

"Bruce, even, was looking at me, sort of incredulous, but he wasn't saying, 'We have to go back.' He [the owner of the boat!] was onboard and saw what was happening, but he didn't say, 'Oh, we've got to go back' I don't know what we were all thinking, but when we thought about it afterwards, it's: What were we thinking!?"

So, did *Dazy* win?

"YES!"

(Note: See a picture of *Dazy* under full sail with blooper on page 18.)

Racing Over the Years

Everyone agrees that the racing scene on Lake Champlain has changed over the years. For Bruce there were a number of years when *Golden Dazy* “was top dog.” Even in later years, however, when lighter and faster boats were winning, *Dazy* “kept them honest.” At the Lake Champlain Yacht Club’s annual awards dinner in October, *Dazy* was among the recipients every year.



Dorothy notes that, “The nice thing is that when *Dazy* was here, we had, for the most part, an excellent racing program. There was a strong A Class in the 1980s and into the ‘90s. It made for some very exciting racing. There were so many more races: there was the Conference series, the Isle St. Michel, Valcour I & II. There used to be two races sponsored by each club around the lake—Valcour, Malletts Bay, and LCYC—two long distance races, two-day races, two weekend two-day races. It was neat! We were out there for all those races. Now it has all changed. The LCRC [Lake Champlain Racing Conference] is now inactive.”

Jeff remembers, “There were a lot of big boats of similar size and ratings to *Dazy* during those days. Frequently, there were ten boats in A Class. That was really good racing—exciting. For us sailing is also racing. We’d go out on the Wednesday Night Races right up to the end of 2002. The classes have been restructured for the 2003 season, taking scratch boats out of B and putting them in A Class, so the number is up slightly, to five or seven.

“It used to be the weekend races that were the important ones, whereas now it’s the Wednesday Night Series at LCYC when people really turn out. When *Dazy* was first on the lake, those [Wednesday races] were just to Proctor [Shoal, just beyond Shelburne Point] and back, and no spinnaker. It really has changed.”

As far as race preparation over the years, Jeff says, “It’s more about getting the boat set up with crew. We aren’t at the point around here where we’re changing the sail inventory due to weather conditions. That definitely happens in other places, but we pretty much would have the boat set up for all conditions. But, we would definitely go through the process of organizing eight to ten people, getting the sandwiches made and the food organized. My mom did that for years. She had a great system for doing that—you develop systems for race preparations over time.”

And, as Dorothy notes again, “We were very lucky from the beginning with *Dazy*. We had a core crew that stayed through twenty plus years. That’s huge.”

***Dazy* and Family**

As noted before, Jeff worked his way up from being cook on the Bermuda Race to being a skipper on Lake Champlain.

“I went through a whole range of roles, jobs, and obligations—from being a cook to becoming captain. My father hated organizing the crew, so that responsibility fell to me. Then he would step in and call the tactics and drive the boat. That didn’t always work for me, but in the end, looking back on it, it was great. He has a very subtle way of handling suggestions from the crew—all in all, being able to sail with my dad for so many years has been incredible.”

For Jeff, twenty-five years is a long time, “I was right out of college when we first got the boat. It was very difficult to get permission to use the boat in those days.”

Dorothy remembers that they used to play hooky on nice days in the spring and fall and go sailing. Some years ago, Bruce started letting Jeff take *Dazy* to the Mayor’s Cup Race in Plattsburgh.

“In those days, it was a smaller race. My father didn’t want to travel over. I would get a gang together. We would go spend the night at Valcour, and show up the next morning and have a great time doing that race. We had great success—it was just a blast. That race has grown and is a big event now.”

In addition to all the other jobs Jeff has had on *Dazy* he remembers doing a quick sewing job toward the end of one of the Lake Champlain Races: “During the final beat, with the number one up in heavy wind, it became so stressed that a clew pulled out. That sail was taken down and the number two went up.”

A J-35 was “crunching down” on *Dazy*, when Jeff went below. With needle and thread, plus some sail ties, he managed to sew and put the cringle back on the #1. It went back up and the spinnaker was set. *Dazy* won the race with a seven-second differential—thanks in part, or due to, Jeff’s handiwork.

Another example of Jeff’s handiwork involved “recycling” the tails of two dead raccoons to use as telltales on *Dazy*. These were “flown” only once—in very heavy weather.

Working as a team, Carol remembers that Bruce and Jeff got to the point where they could varnish one side of *Dazy* in twenty minutes. Jeff says, “Of course, varnish work is all in the preparation—putting the varnish on is really the fun part. Once you get to the point where the boat is ready to be varnished, you can lay it on. We had a great system where I would roll it out and my father would tip it off, or vice versa. It goes very fast, and we had good results in the end. Over time,

The challenge was dealing with the areas that were getting a little worse on the topsides so they looked good. Then, you'd put on the final coat and the whole boat looked good."

Bruce is quoted in a recent Wooden Boat article: "The topsides have lots of little dings from altercations through the years, so she's no longer pristine. But, my eyesight's going at about the same rate, so I don't see them. We've had a lot of fun. She's still pleasant down below, for cruising as well as for racing, although we don't cruise as much as we'd like to."

Grandchildren John, Catherine, and Silas have been on *Dazy* since they were infants. The car seat would be tied to the mast, and they were ready for cruising or racing.

Jeff says, "When they were infants, they would fall asleep down below and that would be pretty easy. After they got older, it was more complicated. When we had two kids, we could manage it, but when we had three, we used to say we didn't have enough hands. We've done cruising as a family—over to Willsboro, for various overnight trips. Also, down to Essex for a few trips. We were lucky in that they were comfortable on the boat. When it got windy, they would go below and hop into their bunks, be as happy as can be."

Dorothy did a Lady Skipper Race shortly after John, the oldest, was born. "My mother was a trooper. She took him and let me go on the race. I did the race every year, pregnant or not. I didn't miss it." All three were in LCYC's Junior Sailing program this past summer.

The Decision to Sell the Boat

Bruce recently realized that there were certain maintenance items that needed attention, plus old age—the sails, that is, which needed replacing. And, for Bruce and Carol, getting older also had a bit to do with the decision to sell. Carol says that when just the two of them wanted to go out for a short sail, putting the sails up was a chore. It is, after all, a big boat with heavy sails.

Jeff says that it was his father's decision that it was time. "We were given the opportunity to purchase the boat, and would have liked to. But, recognizing the work that the boat needed and with our schedule, we weren't ready to do it right now.

"[The decision to sell] was a difficult choice, but as time went on, I was sailing the boat more and my father was not as able to sail it, because it takes a certain physical skill to put the sails up and down. The boat is not set up with roller furling or to put the main up easily."

Dazy is not a “short-handed boat” to take out, particularly for racing. At one time, there were lots of people to crew. Over time, the people who had been the core crew for so many years were getting older as well, getting married, having families, finding their schedules busier as their lives progressed.

Looking back, Dorothy says, “During the time that *Dazy* was here, we had incredible racing—the program was at its peak as far as the competitive factors, the number of participants and the races that were scheduled. In the past, the question was when is there a free moment? We were racing all the time, and it was great. It was a great wave to ride.”

Jeff and Dorothy’s daughter, Catherine, put it this way: “I love you *Golden Dazy*, you will always be number one on my Christmas List.”

***Dazy’s* New Owners**

About a year ago, Carol looked out of her office window and saw a “slim young woman climbing up a ladder to get onto the boat.” She thought since Bruce and Jeff were showing *Dazy* to this young couple, she would wait to hear details when they came back into the office. When they returned and she asked what the potential buyers were like, Bruce’s only reply was, “He knows boats.”



In fact, both of the new owners “know boats.” Geoff Rand and Anne Grimes have a combined sixty-five years of sailing experience. They met at Dartmouth when they were sailing against one another on Lake Mascoma. Geoff sailed in the co-ed division and Anne in the women’s.

They grew up sailing: Anne in Maine’s waters off Southport, and Geoff on the Chesapeake Bay. At Dartmouth, Geoff majored in English, and Anne developed a special Maritime New England Studies major. She is currently Deputy Director at the USS Constitution Museum in Boston, and Geoff is Director of Cruising at the Boston Sailing Center.

They became interested in looking at *Golden Dazy* after seeing it listed on the Web. One of Geoff’s responsibilities at the Sailing Center is acquiring boats, so they had been looking at boats as they came on the market. When they saw that *Dazy* was for sale, and perhaps affordable, they were intrigued with the idea of getting a wooden boat, recognizing that it would need work.

Anne says that “Geoff likes to work on boats and has a lot of skills to bring to that. Certainly, the concept of wood is something that I love. And, *Golden Dazy* is a boat with lots of character.”

“Conveniently, Geoff’s dad lives in Brandon, Vermont, so we had a home base not too far away. It seems like there might be a note of fate when you have a babysitting set of grandparents just an hour away from where we could go up and look.”

The first time they saw *Dazy*, Anne says she was “excited and perhaps overwhelmed by the possibility. When you see this beautiful boat up on the stands and out of the water—certainly, it does look like a BIG boat.” One of the things that made an impression “was just seeing the pride of craftsmanship in everything. For instance, in mounting a winch—okay, you have to bolt it—but, they cut out interesting shapes of wood with contrasting colors of wood. We had it surveyed. . .it seemed sound.”

Although more of Geoff’s experience has been on fiberglass boats, one of his pet peeves is they usually have a headliner which makes working on them difficult. Looking at *Dazy*’s more or less “stripped-out space” means that they can think about creative ways to use the space that’s there. They will not race *Dazy*, but hope to do a lot of cruising with their daughter, Martha, who is almost three. (They plan to add netting to *Dazy*.)

Geoff has been at the Boston Sailing Center since 1990, maintaining its fleet, teaching courses, and in the past five years taking four to five students on five-day advanced cruising courses to Nantucket and around Cape Cod. At the Sailing Center, “the idea is instead of everyone owning a boat at a yacht club, people living in the city may sign up for day sailing or cruising memberships.”



Dazy is the first boat they have owned. After fifteen years of being able to sail a variety of Sailing Center boats out of Boston, anything that can be sailed within a week’s circuit they know pretty well. Anne says that they plan to keep *Dazy* at Salem Harbor this summer, but hope to eventually moor her in Portland, Maine, where “her nice deep seven-foot keel will be very happy in those waters.” With Portland an hour and a half away from their home in Ipswich, they are looking forward to exploring the Maine waters and are comfortable with the idea of sailing her by themselves. Anne says Geoff prefers sailing with one person who knows what’s going on to having four or five confused people onboard—shall we tack or jibe? Although they had hoped to sail *Dazy* on Lake Champlain and bring her down the Hudson, they weren’t able to get all the needed work done and take the time off. Anne says they hope to entice the Hills down for a sail next summer. She has friends who work at the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, whom she looks forward to seeing in Vermont. With her background in maritime history, she is also looking forward to learning more about local history and exploring the area.

In His Own Words: Sam Cutting's Crew Memories

In the Beginning: "Back in 1980, I experienced my first race on *Golden Dazy*. It was a very windy, wet day. It was blowing hard, raining and wild. I had a flimsy raincoat and no sailing gloves. I remember being soaked to the bone, freezing cold. I was trying hard not to let my teeth chatter, my hands were raw; I didn't know what I was doing, but I gave it my all. I had loved to sail all my life; however, I had never experienced sailing like this. I was completely hooked. I must have shown some promise as crew, because Bruce Hill later invited me to become part of the permanent crew.

"In those days, there was no wife, no kids, and work was pretty casual. Sailing on *Golden Dazy* (and other boats) became my first love. My typical schedule would be to sail on *Dazy* on the Wednesday Night Race [at LCYC], sail in Malletts Bay on Thursday night, race both days on the weekend and try to get another sail or two in on off days."

Memorable *Dazy* Stories:

The Lake Champlain Race. "In the beginning of my racing career, the Lake Champlain Race was a huge deal and was well-attended by the majority of the fleet. We typically would have a large crew and have enough people to have more than one watch. Later, interest in the race began to diminish. One year, in the late '80's, Jeff Hill and I found that we both wanted to do the race; however, we had no other crew. Therefore, we took on the Lake Champlain Race double-handed.

"We were very comfortable with the boat and everything started out fairly normal. Winds were moderate and we were comfortable flying the spinnaker when conditions were right. During the night the wind began to increase. We rounded Sloop Island and set the ounce and a half spinnaker. The wind and waves increased to the point where we had several broaches. At this point, we definitely were aware that we were way over our heads, and we began to think about how we could get the chute down in all this wind with only the two of us. The decision was made to carry the chute past Colchester Reef—then go for a douse. Earlier in the evening, Jeff had been able to lock the helm and help me with sail changes. At this point, locking the helm was out of the question. My task would be to release the halyard, then gather the chute all by myself in 30 knots of wind. I coiled the halyard and laid it neatly on the deck. I began the release and played it down a way, and then I had to go to the rail and gather like crazy. The chute came down quick and I simply could not keep up with the gather. The chute went under the boat and stuck in the rudder.

“At this point, the helm was useless, so Jeff began to help me lower the main and try to work on the spinnaker which was caught in the rudder. No matter what we did, we could not loosen the chute from its position wedged in the rudder. The next thing we knew, Stave Island was looming in the darkness a short distance ahead.

“I remember telling Jeff in a panic, ‘We’re going to hit the Island, you have to steer away.’ He calmly reminded me that there was no steering the boat and that we should not panic. Eventually, the inevitable happened and we grounded on Stave at 3:00 a.m. with the winds blowing 20-30 knots. When we hit, it was one of the most sickening feelings I had ever experienced in my life. After a few minutes, however, there was a feeling of calm and almost relief. I realized that we were not going to die, that the boat was not going to break up and that we were going to get out of this situation one way or another.

“After we had settled down, Jeff announced that he would swim an anchor out 30 yards or so, and we would attempt to kedge off the shoal. Before I knew it, he had stripped naked and jumped over the side with a big Danforth anchor. He swam into the waves and dropped the anchor. Minutes later he was hoisting himself up the side of *Dazy* and over the lifeline. On the way back, he had also released the spinnaker from the rudder. To this day, I don’t know how he could have swum into those waves with the big anchor. He was just a great natural athlete and had plenty of adrenaline to keep him going!

“Once the anchor was set, we put the lead on a primary winch. I winched like crazy while Jeff started the motor and tried to back off the reef. Again, our efforts were futile and again, Jeff told me to just settle down and relax for a few minutes. As we set there with tension on the anchor line, Jeff suddenly said, ‘I feel the boat has freed itself due to the tension and the wave action.’ We were able to pull the anchor up and begin the depressing motor back to Shelburne.

“Around 6:00 a.m., Jeff called his dad and told him what had happened—that we were not taking on any water and that we would meet him at the Shipyard around 7:30 a.m. When the boat was later pulled, there was no structural damage to be found. The Hills and the crew went to work with fiberglass and began to fill the nasty gouges in the keel. This process went as quickly as possible so that we could have the boat back in the water and ready for the Wednesday Night Race that week.”

Mayor's Cup. "Another time in the late '80's, Jeff had taken the boat to Plattsburgh to do the Mayor's Cup. I was recently married and had decided to spend the weekend with my wife. When I awoke on Saturday morning, I could



see it was sunny and warm and that the wind was blowing. I regretted not joining Jeff and company on the race. As I lay in bed, I began to hatch an idea.

"At the time, my father had a Lake Amphibian Airplane. I first convinced my wife I needed to go sailing, then convinced my father that I needed to hitch a ride to Plattsburgh. We promptly took off from our grass strip, and were soon flying over Plattsburgh

Harbor. We located *Dazy* and realized they were already in the starting sequence. We quickly picked a landing path and brought the plane down onto the water. Jeff had the crew drop the jib and slow the boat down. We taxied over to within 20-30 yards of *Dazy*, I flung open the hatch of the plane, walked out on the wing, and tossed a plastic bag of clothing toward the boat. I dove in, swam to the boat and climbed aboard with my dry clothes in the plastic bag. My father taxied away and took off. We raised the jib on *Dazy* and started the race moments later. We quickly gained the lead and kept it the entire race."

"It's been fun reliving these memories". . .

Sincerely,

Sam Cutting IV, President, Dakin Farm

November 24, 2003

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*Written by Bern Collins, Past Commodore & Club Historian, Lake Champlain Yacht Club, Shelburne, Vermont, in February 2004, based on interviews with Bruce & Carol Hill, September 10, 2003; Jeff & Dorothy Hill, October 2, 2003; Anne Grimes at her Boston office, October 13, 2003; Steele & Terry Griswold, November 20, 2003; and Sam Cutting's e-mail response to my request for crew memories. Additional sources: **The Gougeon Brothers on Boat Construction (1979); and Wooden Boat.***

In response to a renewed interest in the Golden Dazy "legacy," this article is being republished in 2015, with additional pictures from Jeff Hill.

The *Golden Dazy* Legacy Picture Scrapbook

Carol & Bruce Hill and Their Loyal Crew Wednesday Night Race



Dave Terwilliger, Kere Baker, Pam Baker, Carol and Bruce Hill, Glenn Parker, Jeff Hill (with one unidentified)



Running with Full Sail and Blooper
Circa 1990



Dazy, in the lead under spinnaker, ahead of *Intrepid*,* LCYC Ladies Cup Regatta. At the helm: (Former Vermont Supreme Court Justice) Fred Allen with Skipper Bruce Hill, standing.

Left to right: Jeff Hill, Dorothy Hill, Bruce Hill, Fred Allen, Pam Baker (seated), Bill Cimonetti, P. Corbett, Kere Baker, Gene Cloutier.

**Intrepid*, three-time America's Cup winner, later purchased and raced by LCYC member Judson Babcock. Jeff recalls that they had just "rounded Quaker Smith well ahead of *Intrepid*, the 12-meter. Dad turned over the helm to Fred with instructions to hold off the 12 for as long as possible." *Intrepid* went on to win the Ladies Cup in 1987 and again in 1988. (*Golden Dazy* won the Ladies Cup four times: 1980, 1981, 1983, and 1998.)