

October 2001

THE OLD FOX CROSSES THE FINISH LINE

A Memorial Statement for

by:

James A.P. Ketchum, Jr.
Past Commodore, SLSC

Randall Rice
SLSC Historian

When Elly and I joined the Sailing Club in 1964, Jim Hart was Commodore. Jim quickly introduced us to his predecessor, Jim Ketchum and it was a good thing because Jim set the standards for the club at that time. He also set the pace!

Jim was with the founding group that formed the SLSC that we know today, in 1957. In 1960 he was elected Vice-Commodore and became our 3rd Commodore in 1961. When I say set the standards and the pace, he lived a credo that exists today, ie: (1) "Find out what has to be done" (2) Do it and energize others to do it also"!

And then there was racing! Jim, soft-spoken, never said too much, but when he was out on the lake in his Windmill, wind or no wind, he somehow came in first more often than not.

This ability to sniff out wind where there was no wind earned him the title "The Fox of Saratoga Lake"!

You would think that this ability would make him a "loner". Far from it! Jim was one of the most social beings that ever wore a seahorse patch.

His wife Betty was with him in many of these activities - when she wasn't managing The Yarn Shop. Jim supported this activity because it gave him a fine source of teltales for his rigging. Jim was also the father of two daughters: Barbara and Betsey.

Unfortunately Betty became very ill and could no longer keep up Jim's activity pace. Jim never stopped: his social life at the Club was in demand at most functions. After Betty's passing he became an expert dancer and for awhile was squiring a lady who taught belly-dancing. However, the ultimate tribute came when he brought three ladies to the Commodore Ball and outdanced all three!

Jim was a very handsome man and soon met an equally lovely lady, Gladys, whom he married and moved happily in retirement to Naples, Florida.

In the last ten years Jim became very active with the Salvation Army and the Army provided an Honor Guard at the funeral. Captain Robert Smith gave the Eulogy.

Born in 1914, Jim lived an outstanding and meaningful life for 87 years. His contribution to SLSC cannot be overstated. His spirit is still with the Club: we will always miss him.