



The Origin and History of UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS® and Cape Fear Sail & Power Squadron

United States Power Squadrons® History:

Recreational yachting in the early 1900's was largely confined to sailing craft and large steam yachts manned by professional crews. The gasoline-powered craft was coming into its own by 1909, but not with much enthusiasm on the part of the sailors. Yachting was still for the sailors and the new breed of powerboat men found scant fun on club cruises and almost none in racing. Roger Upton was a sailing member of the Boston Yacht club in 1909, but, unlike so many other sailors, he was captivated by the newfangled powerboats. He owned a 50' ketch named *Nirvana* and often cruised up the coast of Maine with his 35' gasoline-powered motor launch to serve as a tender for the ketch and tow her when she was becalmed. The reliability of power appealed to him and he grew to love power boating.

In the summer of 1911, Upton presented his idea for a club-within-a-club to embrace a select group of "gas-o-liners," who would develop such forms of cruising and racing as the new type of yacht demanded. Upton was elected Rear Commodore of the Boston Yacht Club in 1912 and was placed in charge of the "unofficial" Power Boat Division of the fleet.

There was a need for education at this time, for the U.S. laws governing navigation, applied only to steam vessels. Upton and other United States Power Squadrons® founders set out to protect the power yachts from the steamboat inspectors and to remove forever the stigma of ignorance and foolhardiness. On 14 October 1912, the Executive Committee of the Boston Yacht Club unanimously granted Upton's petition to establish his Power Boat Division officially. At the annual meeting in 1913, the name was changed to Power Squadron, with its officers – Roger Upton Commander; C. N. Burnell, Lt/C; Nathaniel L. Stebbins, Secretary – and rules printed in the 1913 Boston Yacht Club yearbook.

Assisted by a three-page photo story in *Yachting Magazine*, news of the Boston outfit's activities spread, and other clubs began to plan along the same lines. In June 1913 Charles F. Chapman associate editor of *Motor Boating Magazine*, gave the idea a full-page display, and additional interest was generated.

On 12 November 1913, the Boston Yacht Club called together 30 delegates, representing 70 clubs and associations of powerboat owners at the New York Yacht Club to consider the formation of Power Squadrons. Cdr Upton explained the reasons which led to his forming the Boston Yacht Club Power Squadron and told of what was being accomplished in instructing power yachtsmen on the rules of the road and handling of their boats. A second Conference Committee meeting was held on 2 February 1914 and the final work of organizing and launching United States Power Squadrons® was accomplished. Since announcing America's Boating Club® at the 2017 Annual Meeting in Orlando, there has been tremendous support and enthusiasm for the new marketing name and logo. The name is exactly what we are: a boating organization. It allows for explanation of all that we do, from education, to fun, to service.

Cape Fear Sail & Power Squadron History:

Cape Fear Power Squadron, chartered in 1951, is the oldest squadron in District 27. District 27 is comprised of 20 Squadrons in North Carolina and is part of the United States Power Squadrons®. The start of United States Power Squadrons® activities in North Carolina goes back to 1949 when the first Piloting class (our current public boating course) was formed through the efforts of the late J. Paddison (Pat) Pretlow in Wilmington, NC.

A program of instruction in boating skills and safe boating was needed with the deactivation of the Coast Guard Auxiliary unit in Wilmington. Mr. Pretlow, a veteran of WW II, in which he served as skipper of a USA Air Corps PT boat, learned of the United States Power Squadrons® program and obtained course material and instruction advice for holding the first free course offered to the public by the United States Power Squadrons®. Aiding in the promotion for this class was P/C Paul R. Jennewein, AP who skippered a boating column in the Sunday *StarNews* on a weekly basis. P/C Jennewein became the Cape Fear Power Squadron Commander in our Squadron's fifth year. P/C Jennewein was active in the Squadron serving as the *Corn Flakes* newsletter editor and assisting in public awareness of boating safety and education in his *StarNews* column. (Note: The *Corn Flakes* name was changed to the *Cape Fear Foghorn* in 2000. *Corn Flakes* was named because after buying a boat, they could only afford Corn Flakes!) The first public boating class, held at Wilmington College, attracted 19 people who attended first out of curiosity but later stayed on to complete the course and take the examination. The examination was conducted under the supervision of the Charleston Power Squadron.

A petition was submitted early in 1950 by the Charleston Power Squadron, with the charter issued to the Cape Fear Power Squadron in June of 1950. By the end of the next year, the Cape Fear Power Squadron had grown to 34 Members, most of whom were present or past members of the Frying Pan Shoals Boating Club, under the leadership of P/C B.A. Waldenmaier, SN.

In 1957, the Cape Fear Power Squadron began to expand as new United States Power Squadrons® organizations started being considered in the State. Prompting expansion was the discussion on revision of the *National Motor Boat Act of 1940* and state numbering acts. The Cape Fear Power Squadron was asked to supervise establishment of a free public class in boating safety in two places.

These classes led to the formation of the New River Power Squadron (Jacksonville, NC) and the Myrtle Beach Power Squadron. Helping in the formation of the Myrtle Beach unit was the Charleston Power Squadron, which sponsored its charter.

Cape Fear Power Squadron continues the fine tradition today with leadership from District 27. Cape Fear Sail & Power Squadron has always assisted in the committee and leadership positions for District 27 management. In the 2003 and in the 2012 Squadron Year, the Cape Fear Sail & Power Squadron co-hosted with the Fort Macon Sail & Power Squadron the District 27 Rendezvous in Wilmington. The District 27 Rendezvous was held during the inaugural Wilmington Nautical Festival event and had in attendance the entire United States Power Squadrons® National Bridge to escort the USCGC *Eagle* up the Cape Fear River into Downtown Wilmington. We continue the fine tradition of leadership within District 27. Cape Fear Sail & Power Squadron is currently the oldest and largest Squadron within District 27.

In 2008, the name of the Squadron was changed from Cape Fear Power Squadron to Cape Fear Sail & Power Squadron by a vote of the membership. You are a part of a group with rich nautical history, based in public education and civic service.

Cape Fear Sail & Power Squadron Burgee History:

All Squadrons in United States Power Squadrons® have heraldry for their burgee that is a story behind the design that helps to commemorate at least a portion of the history of the founding of the Squadron. When the Cape Fear Sail & Power Squadron was formed, many of its founders reportedly had been members of the former Frying Pan Shoals Boating Club, and that fact is reflected in the design of our burgee.

Following is the heraldry for the Cape Fear Sail & Power Squadron burgee:

The white field superimposed with the black frying pan represents the treacherous waters of Frying Pan Shoals, which are near the mouth of the Cape Fear River in the Atlantic Ocean just downstream from Wilmington, North Carolina. The blue field symbolizes the deep, safe water surrounding Frying Pan Shoals. The white stripes represent the white caps breaking over Frying Pan Shoals and the nine red strips commemorate the color of the now retired Frying Pan Shoals Lightship. The gold border recognizes the 50th anniversary of the Squadron in 2001. The Cape Fear Sail & Power Squadron Burgee can be purchased from the Squadron's Ship's Store Officer. It is flown from the bow rail of mastless and single-masted motorboats, at the foremost masthead of vessels with two or more masts, or the main masthead of ketches and yawls. The burgee may be flown while a member's vessel is underway, at anchor or docked.



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