**The Oakland County Boat Club**

The Oakland County Boat Club was started by seventeen men in 1912. They held monthly meetings at their homes until 1916 when the present clubhouse was built. Community meetings for the Sylvan Lake City Council and the Garden Club were frequently held at the Boat Club. The club was built on pilings and had boat wells under the structure. In the 1930’s the clubhouse was moved back seventy feet to the present location.

Power boats dominated the club until World War II when sailboats took over with the fuel restrictions. Every Sunday morning in the summer, a canon would fire signaling a sailing race. The boat club had 19 members in the armed services at this time. After the war the club returned to their annual power boat regatta and had one or two per year up to the present time. They also sponsor the annual fireworks display along with the city.

**Founders of the Oakland County Boat Club – Mary TePoorten Sax**

The original building was used as a social center. There was a piano, played by Frank Phillips, and a singer, Dr. Bernard TePoorten. Dr. TePoorten loved to dance and sang very well. Bernard and Frank became friends as they offered to the group the primary source of music. Men and women came here every Saturday night. Coffee and doughnuts were served while the couples square danced, waltzed and fox trotted, and did the two step. Upstairs were poker tables. When these tables were not in use, they held people’s coats. The small babies were placed on these coats. At midnight, everyone went home.

Along with Dr. TePoorten and Frank Phillips, there developed a core group: The Owens brothers, Bill Knudsen, Elmer Fezzey, Charles Schlack, Mr. Farlow, Don MacDonald and his brother. The Owens brothers had boats. Form this group emerged the Oakland County Boat Club. Prior to the action of the above listed men, this was primarily a dwelling which they used for social gatherings. They have been known for years as the founders of the Oakland County Boat Club.

Phillips and TePoorten were not hired performers but were a part of the social group who loved to sing and play the piano.

**The Beginning of the O. C. B. C.**

Listening to a couple of old-timers reminiscing the early days of Sylvan Lake, when the residences were few, located in the area now known as Pioneer Highlands – James K Boulevard, also a few cottages near the present Boat Club site. The old D. U. R. Railroad would clatter in from Detroit and Pontiac down Garland Avenue’s north end to Sylvan Aqua and Tower Beach where the Bath House, Band Stand and Dance Hall were located.

From a group of local commuting boat enthusiasts the Club was founded and the Club-house was built. There were 13 motor boats on the lake which called for an annual race regatta.

Over the years of diligent efforts of a dedicated membership, thru fellowship and sportsmanship, the Club has enjoyed success n social benevolence.

From the July 31, 1960           44th Annual Regatta Program.