

AUCHMAR ADVOCATE

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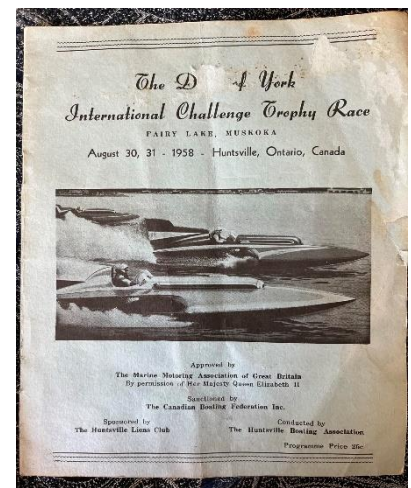
BEYOND THE FRONT DOOR

Inside the Auchmar Manor House: Tragedy

Vernon Island, Lake Muskoka. Good weather graced the summer of '58. Family, guests and friends had visited over the summer months. Now, with the Labour Day Weekend approaching, the lakes were much busier. Edith and Francis Farwell and Gladys and Harry Greening planned to be in Huntsville for the race during the weekend.

There was a touch of autumn in the air with the occasional cool evening and a sense of excitement and anticipation. Alan "Pete" and Edna Young had invited the Greenings and Farwells and many of the Southam family over for a Friday afternoon of boating, a late lunch and maybe a little "shop talk" over drinks before the weekend races commenced.

It was busy in Beaumaris and on Tondern Island. Traffic moved slowly on the streets of Port Carling and the stores and shops were full. There was a steady flow of boats to the marinas to pick up weekend supplies.



This Friday afternoon, there was a gentle breeze on the lake. Throughout the summer the R.M.S Segwun and Sagamo kept on schedule, departing from the Dock at Gravenhurst, turning around at Port Carling, and heading back through the channel between Squirrel Island and Tondern Island. The sunshine this day had all the passengers up on deck.



This was the sunset summer for both ships. At the end of the season, both ships would be retired.

Over drinks, the conversation flew. How quickly things had changed in a little more than a decade. For the Youngs, Alan and Edna, Auchmar was in the near past. They sold the estate after the war ended. On one table sits a photograph of Edna and Gwyn, riding their favourite horses, Larkspur and Gypsy.

August 31st, Fairy Lake, Huntsville. The crowds arrived early at Memorial Park to get the best vantage points for Day 2 of Duke of York International Challenge Trophy Race. The day broke with an overcast sky, yet the race would continue. Among the crowd were Bill Braden's wife, Joan, and his children. Cameras clicked away capturing images at the start of the race.

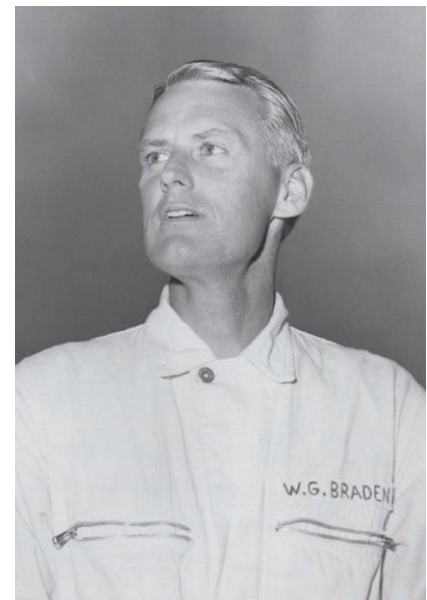
The crowd sensed that something was wrong. Concern spread quickly when Art Asbury raced directly to the Judges Official Barge, killed the engine of his boat and hurriedly spoke with the Commodore.

The race was stopped by the Commodore. All boating events for the day were cancelled.

Word spread like wildfire around the lakes. An accident happened. Two boats had collided- Bill Braden's Ariel V and Joe Albee's Sir-Ron II. No other details.

Art Asbury saw it first. Ariel V lay still in the water. Asbury who was trailing both Braden and Albee in Miss Muskoka, slowed down, stopped, and jumped in to help his friend. Bill was gone.

As the other boats came in and Sir-Ron II docked in the pit (the area where the boats are taken out), there was still no sign of Ariel V. Apprehension and shock was the undercurrent beneath the conversations and talk.



Bill Braden

Vernon Island, Lake Muskoka. Edna and Alan sat down. Disbelief was in their eyes. Their nephew, Bill, his boat. Was it true? Was the information right?

Their first phone calls tried to reach Joan and the children, saying they would leave for Huntsville immediately. Edna's next calls were to her sisters, Mabel and Hattie. Had they heard yet? Alan tried to reach his brother and sisters.

Fairy Lake, Huntsville. The crowd was quiet, solemn and reverent as officials interviewed the racers. Joan and the children were taken across the lake to a strange house. It was there, the children were told of their father's death. Later that day, they all climbed into the family station wagon and drove back to the cottage on Lake Muskoka. The next day, they returned home to Waterdown.

The race was in the 5th lap and the boats were rounding a buoy when the accident occurred. At first, when Ariel V didn't appear, many assumed that the engine failed or something mechanical occurred. It seemed like Day 1 of the race, when the Canadian racers, Bill Braden included, experienced engine problems.

It was suggested by the American racers that Bill be awarded the trophy.

The 1958 Duke of York International Challenge Race Trophy was awarded to Bill Braden posthumously.



The world of hydroplanes is a small circle. From Florida to Detroit to Lake Muskoka to London and beyond. They know each other or know of them.

More than six decades passed by until Bill Braden's eldest and youngest sons, Bill and Mike found Ariel V. The family wasn't actively searching for it but often wondered about it.

In June 2022, Ariel V came home to Waterdown with Mike at the wheel. Bill and Mike, working together, began the restoration of their father's boat.

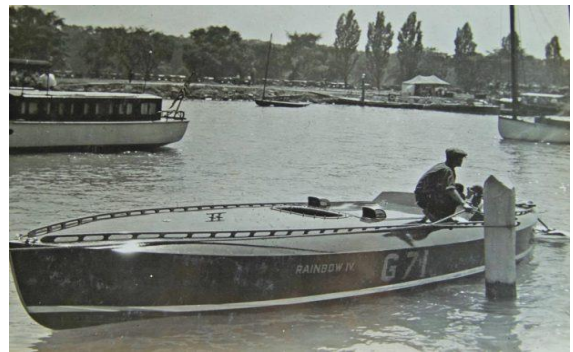
In January 2023, Bill Braden Jr. passed away.

THE PHOTO GALLERY

This edition of the Photo Gallery provides a fleeting glimpse into the boating interests of both Harry Greening and Bill Braden, and some of their contemporaries and colleagues.



(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)



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(6)

CONTACT US

LOOKING TO REACH the Friends of Auchmar and not sure how? Do you want to attend our public meeting? Would you like a little bit of information? Do you have a comment? Would you like to become involved? Do you have a memory or story about Auchmar that you wish to share?

Here are the ways:

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General Information Email: info@friendsofauchmar.ca

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OR

Just come up and speak with us.



PHOTO CREDITS

Page 1. Staircase (Graham Crawford (public domain). Auchmar Manor House (photo credit: unknown). Doorway (Graham Crawford (public domain). Duke of York Trophy Program (Canadian Boating Federation 1958).

Page 2. R.M.S. Segwun (Toronto Public Library Digital Archives). William G. Braden (original photograph courtesy of Mike Braden) (Cottage Life August 2023 Naomi Buck).

Page 3 Duke of York Trophy (Fast on Water 2021, (originally published in Embassy Grand Prix Programme 1977).

Page 4. (1) Harry B. Greening (Parkwood Estate). (2) Rainbow IV (Parkwood Estate). (3) Bill Braden in Ariel V (Art Asbury Collection). (4) Miss Supertest III (Bob Hayward (photo credit unknown). (5) Bill Braden in Miss Supertest II, Picton Ontario (Hydroplane & Raceboat Museum). (6) Miss Supertest II, Picton Ontario (left to right. Jim Thompson, owner Miss Supertest II, Harry B. Greening, Bill Braden, Gar Wood (Canadian Motorsport Hall of Fame).

REFERENCES

1. Bill Braden motorsportmemorial.org
2. Buck, Naomi, [The Last Flight of the Ariel V](#), Cottage Life August 2023.
3. Asbury, Art, The Forester, September 4, 1958.
4. The Picton Gazette, September 3, 1958.
5. [Asbury Dares Death](#); geocities.org



