

**Canadian Wayfarer Association
Annual General Meeting**

Saturday 20 January 2024, 6:00 pm

Toronto Sailing and Canoe Club

Minutes

In attendance:

- In person – Mike Codd, Scott Ramsay, Les Sherratt, Rob Wierdsma, Anne and David Pugh, Mark Bennett, Julie Seraphinoff, John Koetsier, Alastair and Sharon Ryder-Turner, George Waller, Al and Julia Schonborn, Kit and Patsy Wallace, Peter Frost, Annelies Groen, Stewart Adams, Bob Stephenson, Leo and Joanne Van Kampen, Phoebe Wang, John and Jane Cawthorne, David Ross, Hans Gottschling
- Online via Teams – Dave Hansman, Steph Romaniuk, Sue Pilling

1. Call to Order and Chair's Welcome

- Rob called the meeting to order at 6:13, noting this was the first AGM at TS&CC since 2019

2. Minutes of the 2023 AGM

- Approval (moved by S Ramsay, seconded by Anne Pugh); carried

3. Treasurer's Report

- Mike Codd presented the 2023 financial statement, including a review of revenues and expenses;
 - The Association reported net income of \$842.19 in 2023, based on income of \$2502.26 and expenses of \$1660.07;
- The total of equity of the association, as of the end of 2023 was \$10234.24 based primarily on assets of cash held in in the main bank account, as well as a separate donation account of just over \$13000 and accounts payable of just over \$2800.
- Motion to approve the financial report (moved by Mike Codd, seconded by Al Schonborn); carried

4. Membership Report

- Kit Wallace reported that the 2024 membership year has started off strongly with 41 total members, including 13 honorary members, and 3 supporting members; there are also 4 advertisers;
- Kit noted that the CWA membership totalled 68 by the end of 2023

5. WIC Business

- Al reported that the SWA is planning to bring forward a motion changing Rule 35.5 to allow carriage of two spinnakers on board a boat during racing, with a limit that only one may be used during any given race, similar to the current CWA dispensation;
- Steph Romaniuk reported that the 2025 Worlds are scheduled for 2 – 8 August at [Skive Sailing Club](#) in Jutland, Denmark.

6. Other Business

- Honorary Commodore, Dave Hansman, offered a tribute to David and Anne Pugh on their involvement with the CWA as competitors, organizers, and supporters of the class since their arrival in Canada, and thanking them for their involvement as they move on to travel adventures over the next few years. In recognition of their service and efforts in support of Wayfarer sailing in Canada, David and Anne have been made honorary lifetime members of the CWA.
- Dave Hansman reflected on the state of the Wayfarer class in Canada, noting the increasing age of most of the active members, and the slow recruitment of new members to the class; we face a challenge of figuring out ways to reinvigorate the active membership over the next few years; *(Dave's full remarks are appended to the end of the minutes)*
 - There was some discussion of ideas to consider, including taking some lessons from the apparent success of the SWA and other sailing classes, using some of our financial resources to support young sailors to sail at the Worlds, and find ways to pair new sailors with boats, connecting with new sailors coming out of sailing schools, using social media in ways that resonate with youth, etc.

7. Election of the 2024 Executive

Rob Wierdsma noted the current executive membership:

- Honorary Commodore, Dave Hansman
- Chair, Rob Wierdsma
- Past Chair, Anne Pugh (departing)
- Vice-chair, Jan d'Ailly
- Trophy Secretary, John Koestier (new to the executive in 2024)
- Treasurer, Mike Codd
- Secretary, Scott Ramsay
- Membership Secretary, Kit Wallace
- Racing Secretary, Class Coach, Webmaster, WIC Rep, Al Schonborn
- Cruising Secretary, Alan Asselstine
- Chief Measurer, Leo Van Kampen
- Members-at-large: Steph Romaniuk, Sue Pilling, Alastair Ryder-Turner

Rob called for called for nominations from the floor; none came forward.

Motion to approve continuation of the current slate of executive members (moved by Les Sherratt, seconded by John Cawthorne); carried

8. Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 6:52 pm (moved by Anne Pugh; seconded by Annelies Groen); carried



Honorary Commodore's Comments

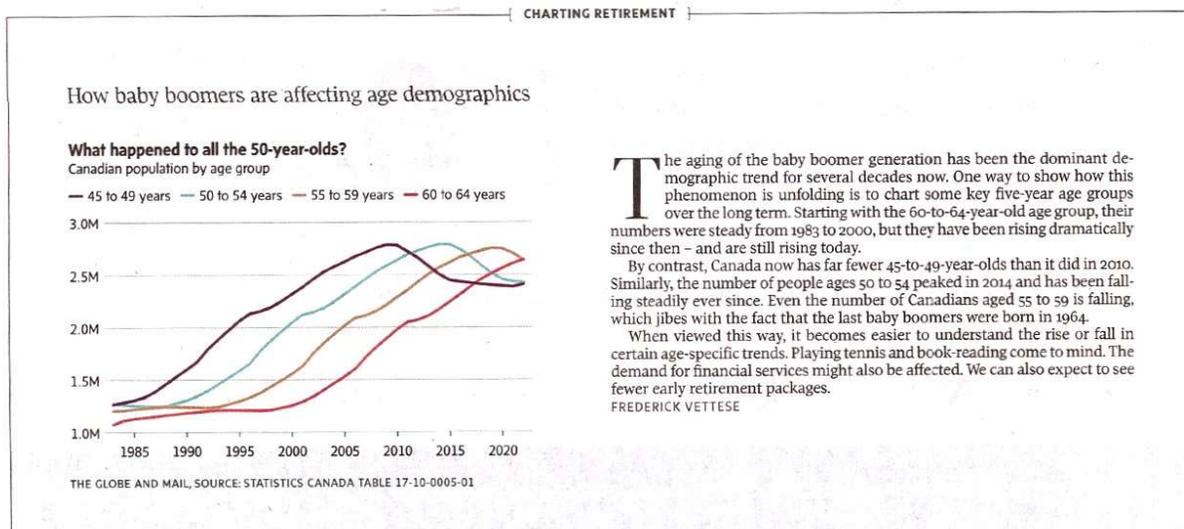
January 2024

Looking back at 2023 and the work done by our Association and that of the USWA, I can recall the excitement we had going into the season – one of the fullest slates of events that we had seen since before Covid descended upon us in 2020. We even had a resurrection of sorts with LDSC and Ottawa hosting an event in grand fashion. As always, we are completely beholden to the volunteers who willingly give their time and energy to organizing and pulling off the lovely regattas that we get to enjoy. The same, of course, applies to the cruising opportunities that our members participate in; the myriad of details that go into our events can be mind-boggling at times, but it gets done.

So, from my perspective, a big THANK YOU and WELL DONE is due to our Executive team, all of our organizers as well as the participants making it all worthwhile! I personally would have liked to be more involved in the action, but time & distance makes that hard for us. Looking ahead, the 2024 lineup of activities is shaping up nicely, so it should be a busy spring, summer and fall for everyone who can get to events in any capacity.

Of course, looking back is great, but what do we see then we look even further into the future, beyond 2024?

There was an interesting chart published in the Globe and Mail this past week. Although it was in an article about business employee retirement, it also can be easily applied to discretionary sports such sailing, alpine skiing and other outdoor sports.



Across many industries and organizations, there is a leadership gap in the 50-year-old category. There just are not enough of them to spread around! The generation behind them, while many are keen and willing to work and apply themselves to their job and other

endeavors, are also faced with less time on their hands and higher costs in everything from housing to groceries. Discretionary time and spending on things like sailing, or volunteering for anything in general, seems to be a thing of the past – volunteerism now seems to be almost the exclusive domain of Seniors. The younger folks are simply choosing NOT to get involved – there is not enough time, they say.

My home club (North Bay Yacht Club), is one such example. The average age of the membership has risen dramatically. When I joined that club 20 years ago, there was a strong cohort of 40 and 50 something aged people. We aged together and there has been some attrition, but many of the same people, now much older, are still running the club. Along with that, there has been a gradual but progressive shift away from sailing, more power craft are in the harbour and racing programs have floundered. Power boating is simpler and more predictable, is the thinking.

When I think about our Association, we have some similar issues. With few exceptions, the people on the executive now are the same people who were here 10, 15 or even 20 years or more ago. We have, as a group, aged together but have had few new people come in. Thank goodness for the likes of Ross and Eric appearing on the scene!

What is happening to us is not unique. The situation is the same in many sailing organizations across North America, Europe and the UK. Where exceptions exist, it is because of strong programs for young people to get access to sailing. Unfortunately, even in those situations, they are finding that young people move away from sailing after their teens – cost being a major issue. Many sailing clubs are not promoting dinghy sailing at all, a 25-footer now considered a “starter” boat. Thankfully, we still have clubs like Conestoga that have a strong junior sailing program. I wish there were many more!

The conclusion from these observations is that we need to find ways to bring in young blood to sailing and to Wayfaring. The decline in sailing interest and participation is a trend that really started in the early ‘90s; it has manifested itself clearly in the last 10 to 15 years. Countering the decline may not be easy or, perhaps, impossible. The issue has been the subject of online chat groups for years. However, from the perspective of our Association, we really must find new, younger talent to get involved in all aspects – Executive, Cruising, Racing, Class promotion – or we face extinction.

Looking back is great; there are so many memories and a great Class history to share, not just in 2023 but over the nearly 65 years since Wayfarers came to Canada. Those are the “Glory Days” as Uncle Al puts it. What will the future look like? What will be our legacy? That is where our real challenges lie! I table these thoughts for consideration and serious conversation throughout the course of 2024. It is our “elephant in the room”, a challenge that hangs over all of us as individuals, as a Class and as an Association.

David Hansman

Honorary Commodore