

# Beginning of ASOA - Early History

by Joe French  
#101 "Destiny"

I've been trying to come up with dates on the beginning of SBOA. I think that 1990 or 1991, Gene might have called me to ask if I knew of any organized group. When I replied in the negative, he asked if I thought that owners might be interested. Anyway, we discussed how to go about it and the notices to the boat magazines were sent out by Gene. The first meeting of any sort was at the Atlantic City Sailboat Show in I believe 1993. About 12 owners showed up. There the SBOA was chosen for a name and Mel Converse pushed for something called e-mail for communications. Gene didn't want anything to do with e-mail and stayed with snail mail. After I got e-mail, he would sometimes asked me to send something for him or I would take a printout to him.

The first rendezvous was in Block Island in 1995. After that Gene usually hosted one at the Shelter Island Yacht Club every year. The first Maine Rendezvous was in Pulpit Harbor 1996 and then in succeeding years at Bucks Harbor, Frenchboro, Tennants Harbor, Castine, and repeating at Frenchboro and Tennants Harbor. "Destiny" made most of them.

We went down to Atlantic City at least four winters. The Boat Show would give us a meeting room for free. We also had gatherings in the winter at Essex, Mystic, Portland, Easton, and Miami. The Chesapeake Rendezvous scenes were in Solomons, Rappahannock and just south of Annapolis.