

Hilton Head Sail and Power Squadron History

Hilton Head did not become the growing community it now is until 1956 when a bridge was built to the mainland. Even as recently as 1974, there were no traffic lights on the island. In the mid 1980's, with the population passing 10,000, there was an obvious opportunity for educating the many boaters of the island and surrounding areas in seamanship and other boating skills.

Starting *Hilton Head Power Squadron*

Four long-time Power Squadron members, P/D/C Bob Gephart, former SEO (Dr) Bill Barclay, Bob Peters and Jack Purcell, all transplants from other parts of the country and members of Beaufort Power Squadron, took the lead and organized the first on-island boating courses. They also provided the instruction for these courses.

As the decade progressed, other USPS members moved to Hilton Head Island and joined in the efforts to provide boating education. Together with the first graduates of the boating course (many of whom had by now taken advanced courses both in the town and in Beaufort), the initial boating education was delivered. During this period, the district commander and Bob Peters, who had become the commander of Beaufort squadron, asked P/D/C Bob Gephart and P/C Lew Ward to organize a "division" of Beaufort Squadron, with the aim of securing a charter for a Hilton Squadron.

Hilton Head Sail and Power Squadron Charter

Hilton Head Sail and Power Squadron (HHSPS) was formally chartered in 1988 as *Hilton Head Power Squadron*. Bob Peters was its first Commander, followed by Lew Ward in 1989. Its membership was drawn from southern Beaufort County -- from Hilton Head Island to Sun City. There were 57 original members who started the organization. In 2000, it was renamed "... *Sail and Power Squadron*", in recognition that its membership included boat owners of both power and sailing vessels.



America's Boating Club™ of Hilton Head

In June 2017, the national USPS Board of Directors approved the new name *America's Boating Club™* for all local squadrons to use. This new name, new national logo, and the tagline, "For Boaters, By Boaters", better reflect our organization's focus. With "boating" and "club" now part of our name, we are more easily recognized by the boating community and begin a new chapter in our history. We will be celebrating our 30th anniversary in 2018!

