

## Beginnings: Living With Boats... The Rest of the Story

It was passed down through four generations, this love of all things nautical. In Bill Sill, the sailing traditions from Great-Grandpa Art, the marine interests of Grandfather Stewart, and the spirit of competitive sailboat racing from his Dad, Stew, come full circle. Bill Sill joined SBYC as a junior member when he was 13 years old, fixing up a decrepit Rhodes Bantam and placing fifth in the fleet standings that year. He built a new boat from a kit the following year, and was invited to represent the Club at Rhodes Bantam Regattas off the Bay. He became a senior member of SBYC at age 15, and in 1968 won the International Rhodes Bantam Junior Sailor of the Year. Other awards followed, including both Junior and Senior Central New York Championships. A winning product of SBJSA, Bill raced his Rhodes Bantam at an international level, and later gave his boat to the Junior Sailing Association, which held a special place in his heart for the skills learned during his early and formative years.



1967

Bill raced Luders 16's and other designs in Club sponsored events. While still in his teens he skippered the 8-Metre, *Thisbe* for Joe Long, often competing with his father's *Kathea*.

When J-24's appeared on the scene in the late 1970's Bill raced his *Screamin' Demon* to victory in the first Lake Ontario J-24 Regatta, and took the SBYC Dorothy Long Trophy for overall point standing.

As is the case so many times when talent and accolades are acknowledged, so too is there adversity. Bill faced health issues from his early years on, and as those problems became more severe, his racing activities became curtailed. He devoted his energy and knowledge to the Club and served as

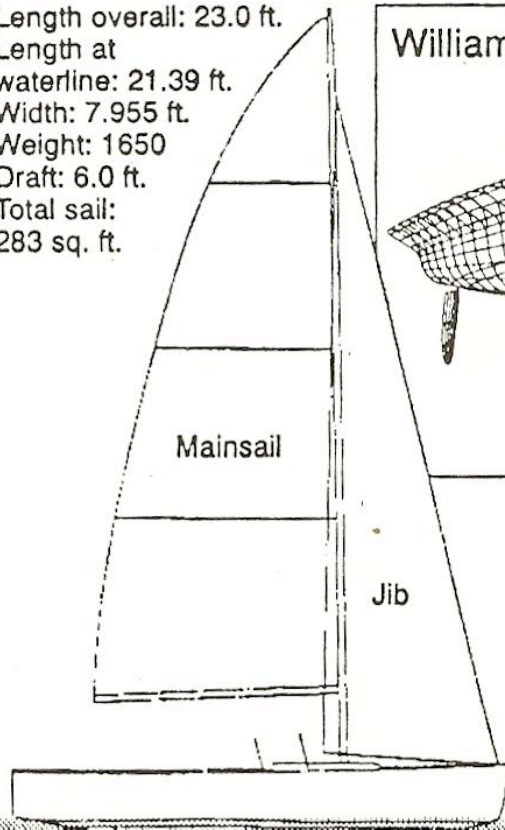
Fleet Captain in 1990. He began to design his own boats; particularly boats that could be enjoyed by physically challenged sailors. It was his desire to share his love of sailing and racing to the fullest, especially now with those less able, and he devoted much of his remaining years to that end.

To bring the Sill Family story full circle, Bill named one of his last racing boats, *Thelma*, in honor of his great-grandfather and the first "Thelma" of yore. He also believed that his spirit survived the trying times in his life only through the disciplines learned in sailing and racing.

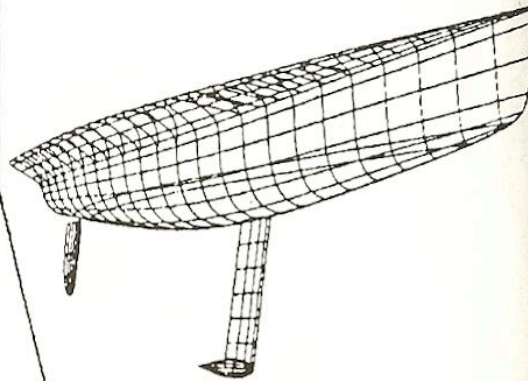
Bill Sill passed in March of 2008. Below is a sketch of one of his yacht designs. In the descriptive paragraph of *'Bird of Prey'* comes the part about a group of people (though fictional) who value honor and courage above all else.

## The 'Bird of Prey'

Length overall: 23.0 ft.  
Length at waterline: 21.39 ft.  
Width: 7.955 ft.  
Weight: 1650  
Draft: 6.0 ft.  
Total sail: 283 sq. ft.



William L. Sill yacht design



*The name 'Bird of Prey' comes from the 'Star Trek' TV series. It is the name of the Klingon class of attack fighter ships. The Klingon people value honor and courage above all else in this fictional series.*