

Our Legacy Yachts



The Originals

In celebration of our 50th anniversary, **Classic Times** will feature our founding yachts that are still in the So Cal Fleet
~ COLNETT, CONQUEST, RANGER, VERA LEE II ~

◆ Colnett ◆

CYA Vessel No. 13 and one of the Southern California Fleet's original 13 charter yachts, COLNETT, owned by Bunker & Kathy Hill & Family, is moored at the Newport Harbor Yacht Club. This 1924 42' vessel was designed by Edson R. Schock in Wilmington, California.



Owner Bunker Hill believes that COLNETT is the **OLDEST STILL ACTIVE SPORT FISHING BOAT ON THE WEST COAST** and probably in the country. "She was designed with that spirit and intent." Bunker has the original line drawings which he acquired in Mystic. "In the build they put the aft mast on the boat, added a square window in the side of the cabin and changed the position of portholes. And it had an early version of a tuna tower."

The Tuna Club ◆ A Kinship With RANGER

COLNETT shares many similarities with RANGER, another of our Legacy Yachts. Both were members of Catalina Island's infamous Tuna Club. In fact, owner Bunker Hill believes that COLNETT was built as a similar vessel because of the successes of the 1917 RANGER. Not only were they successful sport fishers to the delight of their award winning fishermen, but they are among the rare vessels that – with good stewardship - have withstood the test of time. Both RANGER and COLNETT returned to the Avalon Harbor and were present for the 100th anniversary of the Tuna Club in 1998.

In 1938, COLNETT was sold to Captain Frank Bivens who intended to catch broadbill swordfish on Tuna Club regulation tackle. However, following World War II Mr. Bivens decided to travel and sold the boat to friend and fishing companion Ken Neptune. Both Captains Neptune and Bivens served as presidents of the Tuna Club so she served as Flag Ship multiple times.

Awards

COLNETT has a long legacy of Opening Day Awards and is spoken about significantly at the Newport Harbor Yacht Club. She won the "Mayor's Choice for Best Powerboat" at the Newport Beach Wooden Boat Show in 2014. Bunker Hill says "We're not trophy collectors. It's not necessary. We haven't done much in campaigning other than the Wooden Boat Festival. We support that event the best we



can. We enjoy taking someone on board who doesn't usually get to touch something like that - the strangers that are not able to experience [the vintage boating lifestyle] – I enjoy that." Bunker, a marine surveyor by trade, cares more that a vessel is seaworthy and organized for safety than about pedigree and shiny condition. In 2014 COLNETT won NHYC's sought-after Shirley Meserve Award which is given to the yacht that is best prepared to go to sea. That is a more important award to the Hill Family.

Generations ◆ Inspired to Stewardship

"When I was a young guy, well, I knew about the boat most of my life. I had been doing a lot of sport fishing since I was 14 and we would see her fishing off Catalina. At the time she was owned by Ken Neptune, an original member of CYA and he had owned her for about 60 years!" Bunker had his eye on her even then.

"Today we mostly use COLNETT for cruising to Catalina as a family but we still do some fishing from it. When we bought her, the first 12 years were with a partner. But when children were in college and weren't there to use it, we discussed selling."

"Then *my* kids came and said, 'we don't want to sell the boat'. 'I understand. I don't want to put on any more weight and I don't want to go to work tomorrow. I think that, unfortunately, the time has come and we should be grateful for the time we had with this old girl.' But they were *serious*. The 4 kids were willing to buy the partner out and pay for half the slip rent." So when the owners of COLNETT are listed as Bunker & Kathy Hill & Family – that is exactly accurate. ◆ Bunker would like to participate more actively and get to know the CYA members more.