



Industry 'voice' celebrates

IBI LOOKS AT HOW THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MARINE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS HAS GROWN FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS TO BECOME THE VOICE OF OUR INDUSTRY

WORDS: BARBARA FOUNTOUKOS



▲ Then and Now. ICOMIA Executive Committee, 1977. (Top L-R): O Felten, TA Webb, P Boomsma, G Caretti, AA Hauser, H Wauquiez, JH Linge, DGM Sanders, KA Wiese, JM Maso

ICOMIA Executive Committee, 2016. (Bottom L-R): U Kleinitz, J Huju, A Razeto, TJ Dammrich, S Anghel, F Pankhurst, YP Loke, P Scott, PJ Methven, S Cook (Absent: J Nasseh and D Ricard)

Seconds after raising their glasses in a final toast of the evening, attendees of the 2016 IFBSO/ICOMIA Congress gala dinner were treated to a fabulous surprise firework display celebrating an extraordinary achievement – ICOMIA’s 50th anniversary.

The gala dinner marked the end of the annual IFBSO/ICOMIA Congress, which was held in Trieste, Italy from June 6-10 and hosted by UCINA Confindustria Nautica, the Italian marine industry association. On Friday, June 10 at Duino Castle – a 14th Century fortification on the cliffs overlooking the Gulf of Trieste – the gala dinner had the perfect backdrop for an evening celebrating ICOMIA’s half-a-century role as the ‘voice of the recreational marine industry’.

Donned in black tie and national dress, delegates immersed themselves in various surprise activities to celebrate ICOMIA’s 50-year history, including gathering around a piano for a special nautical rendition of Gloria Gaynor’s classic, ‘[ICOMIA] Will Survive!’

Jouko Huju, ICOMIA president, said: “On behalf of ICOMIA, I would like to thank IBI, AkzoNobel and RAI Amsterdam for their kind generosity sponsoring

the fireworks display. The gala dinner was truly exceptional and it was such a pleasure to mark this momentous occasion with our industry colleagues in such a beautiful setting.”

Included in the week’s anniversary-focused festivities, ICOMIA’s longest-serving representative, Honorary Treasurer Paul Boomsma, fondly recounted highlights from his 41 years serving ICOMIA during a presentation to delegates. Starting right at the beginning, 50 years ago...

THE BEGINNING

It was in early November 1966, during the 5th Congress of the International Federation of Boat Show Organisers (IFBSO), that the ‘International Boating Trades Association’ was formed; led by

the following Steering Committee: AW Mackerer (USA); AR Moody (UK); JP Jouet (France); G de Vries Lentsch (Netherlands) and G Eriksen (Sweden) with Tom Webb (UK) providing secretarial services.

It was at the Steering Committee’s meeting, held a few days later on November 13 at Avenida Palace Hotel in Barcelona, that the International Council of Marine Industry Associations – ICOMIA – was

“International Boating, now known as International Boat Industry, was one of the first Sustaining Members to join ICOMIA”

formed. During the meeting and under leadership of the Steering Committee, the newly formed ICOMIA formed its first actions: To improve member communication and facilitate information sharing. In order to achieve these goals, as well as to liaise with governments and other agencies more officially, ICOMIA formed its five Working Committees:

- Standards and safety (later called Safety and Quality)
- Boat service
- Marina development
- Promotion and publicity
- Technical research coordination

To this day, these focus-points remain the foundation upon which a successful boat-friendly environment is built: Safety, Infrastructure and Awareness.

During the IFBSO/ICOMIA Congress, held in October 1967 in Stockholm, 32 delegates representing 16 countries (from Europe and the US) approved ICOMIA's organisational plan and mission statement: "To promote boating as a leading international recreational activity by establishing the medium for the exchange of information on all matters related to the common interest, such as safety, quality, and marinas, so as to stimulate the sale and usage of boats and their equipment."

With membership now open to any nationally recognised marine industry association and officers elected into the Executive Committee, ICOMIA was officially open for business.

EMTEC, IBI AND METSTRADE

In 1969, under the leadership of John Threlfall and Nick Hopkinson, the industry publication 'International Boating' (now known as *International Boat Industry*, or IBI) was one of the first Sustaining Members to join ICOMIA.

ICOMIA and IBI's relationship has always been close and constructive, with IBI reporting ICOMIA's activities and providing support for 48 years.

It was due to this close working relationship that in 1969 ICOMIA approved a feasibility study proposed by Threlfall to sponsor a new trade show in Europe. It was to be held in Hamburg and called the European Marine Trade Exhibition and Conference – or EMTEC.

By September 1969, ICOMIA now had 18 Full Members from 10 countries and 26 Sustaining Members. In 1970 the first Constitution was adopted, and the first EMTEC was held – with Threlfall appointed as exhibition director.

In 1988, Hamburg Messe integrated EMTEC into the Hamburg Boat Show. However, this development was not welcomed by the industry and ICOMIA began looking at alternative options for a trade show. EMTEC eventually disintegrated, and by 1990 it was no more.

ICOMIA tendered the concept of an international trade show to industry representatives in Geneva, Düsseldorf, Paris, London and Amsterdam; signing its landmark Marine Equipment Trade Show (METS) sponsorship contract in 1991 with the RAI and never looking back.

THE FORMATION OF IMEC

Meanwhile, in 1972 Tom Webb appointed Zurich-based Ted Blattner as ICOMIA's new General Administrator – just in time to respond to serious environmental concerns raised regarding Lake Constance, a 63km-long Central European



DECLARE YOUR INDEPENDENCE

ONLY A SAILOR KNOWS THIS FEELING. AS THE FIRST WAVES CRASH, MY BODY AND MIND GO BLANK. MY WORRIES ARE LEFT AT THE MARINA AND I CAN BRACE MYSELF FOR FREEDOM ONCE AGAIN.

Gert Jan Molenaar, sailing yacht owner and astrophysicist

The most advanced, powerful and reliable yacht electrical systems in the world.

MASTERVOLT

For more info go to www.mastervolt.com

WORLD | ICOMIA AT 50



▲ John Threlfall and Nick Hopkinson

lake bordering Germany, Austria and Switzerland. ICOMIA released the following statement:

“ICOMIA is seriously mindful of the urgent need to improve the environment of man. It will vigorously support, within its resources, all endeavours to reduce pollution of both air and water and to limit trespass on the quiet enjoyment of all people by whatever means are compatible with boating safety.”

ICOMIA then created the Environmental Protection Committee, under the chairmanship of Peter van Donkelaar, to address environmental issues. This became the ICOMIA Marine Environment Committee (IMEC) in 1973, which was partly financed by outboard engine manufacturers, with Blattner as secretary.

In 2001, the name was changed again to the ICOMIA Marine Engine Committee, and in 2008 IMEC became an independent, international non-profit organisation registered in the Netherlands, with an Administrative Services Agreement with ICOMIA.

ICOMIA'S SECRETARIAT

Joining Webb's dream team in 1972 were Jose Maria Maso from Spanish marine industry association ANEN and David Hough from the UK's Ship and Boat Builders Federation (SBBF). In 1975, ICOMIA president Warrington Smyth asked Paul Boomsma to become the association's honorary treasurer – a role made official at the 1976 Congress in Toronto. Following over 40 years serving ICOMIA



▲ METS contract signing, 2009

as honorary treasurer, Boomsma retired at this year's Congress.

THE 'SHED'

The year 1978 marked an important shift in ICOMIA's professional footprint. Firstly, Webb retired, Anthony Skinner took over as secretary general, and Blattner's Zurich office was closed.

When Skinner joined ICOMIA he initially worked out of the offices of the UK's Ship and Boat Builders National Federation (SBBNF) – now known as British Marine. Wanting to professionalise the Secretariat, Skinner moved it into its very own office – an outhouse affectionately nicknamed 'The Shed', which was located at the end of the SBBNF office's garden.

ICOMIA committees take shape

MARINAS

Formed in 1969 when two committees – Boat Service and Marina Development – merged, the Marina Committee (now ICOMIA Marinas Group, or IMG) had a powerful motto: “Without facilities, pleasure boating is not able to expand in Europe”. It is a statement today's IMG still agrees with; however, now on a global level.

ENVIRONMENT

In 1991, the ICOMIA Environment Committee was formed as a spinoff from IMEC and IMG. An initiative of HISWA, British Marine and NMMA, Chairman Bob Passet from the Netherlands focused the committee on the increasing environmental issues affecting the industry such as pollution, waste, antifouling, paint emissions etc. Initiatives included: Blue Flag (1995), Partnership with AkzoNobel (2005), Status stakeholder in several EU directives (2005), Solvent Emissions Directive calculation tool (2008), Technical Guideline on Minimum Acceptable Finish and Appearance for Superyacht Gloss Coatings (2011) and the ICOMIA Environment Guide (2013).

STATISTICS

In 1972, Peter Wilson the US concluded people are “Not willing to give, but like to receive data”. However, this did not discourage ICOMIA in its quest for industry data and in 1975 the ICOMIA Statistics Book was launched. Featuring figures obtained from across its global membership, the Statistics Book has been an invaluable tool for business planning for over 40 years. Order your copy at www.icomia.org

TECHNICAL

In 1967, the ICOMIA Safety Standard and Quality Committee produced the 'Rules for Building Small Craft', followed by the 1969 ICOMIA Boating Safety Conference in Gothenburg. With Albert Cork from the UK as ICOMIA Technical Consultant, the Committee began its first ISO work in 1971. Over the next three years ICOMIA became recognised by the EEC, UNEP, IMCO, PIANC, ISWO and IYRU, and the first Safety and Quality Standards Book was issued in 1976.

The tragic 1979 Fastnet Race disaster spurred on ICOMIA's work into safety. Led by ICOMIA Technical Consultant Fritz Hartz (Germany), ICOMIA's



▲ ICOMIA's Safety & Quality Standard book, 1976

WORLD | ICOMIA AT 50

THE ICOMIA TOP 5

1

SAFETY STANDARDS

ICOMIA's work on safety standards began as early as 1976. However, due to the Fastnet disaster its commitment to standards work intensified. ICOMIA published its first standard in 1983 and since then developed the Goal Based Approach (GBA) to Boat Safety; promoting it globally in emerging markets.

2

FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The ICOMIA Marinas Group is born out of ICOMIA's recognition that ensuring boat owners a safe and convenient place to berth, moor or launch their boat is vital to the future of the sport and industry. Join the ICOMIA World Marinas Conference from November 17-19 at RAI Amsterdam. Visit www.world-marinas-conference.com to register.

3

RCD

ICOMIA championed the development of the RCD in the 1990s, which was fundamental to opening the EU market and other markets to accept EU-certified boats, and it continues to advise on its development today.

4

PROMOTING A BOAT FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

Identifying barriers to trade, educating governments to the economic importance and environmental compatibility of recreational boating facilities, working with marinas to create an infrastructure supportive of boating and increasing positive perceptions of boating have always been ICOMIA priorities.

5

ENVIRONMENT

The ICOMIA Environment Committee addresses emerging environmental concerns of the industry, represents the industry in meeting the challenges of environmental legislation, and seeks to guide the industry on environmental compliance.

safety standards became officially recognised in 1983.

ICOMIA championed the development of the RCD in the 1990s, which was fundamental to harmonising the EU market and continues to advise on its development today.

In 2008 ICOMIA published its Global Conformity Guidelines, which help boatbuilders to export overseas by bridging the trans-Atlantic gap between ABYC and ISO Standards.

PROMOTION

In the beginning, ICOMIA's external communications were focused on EMTEC promotion. However, in 1977 Armand Hauser launched the "Boating Family of the Year" programme – the first official campaign dedicated to promoting boating. Today the ICOMIA Grow Boating Committee provides a forum for members to examine current campaigns dedicated to growing recreational boating globally. Many of ICOMIA's members have high-profile campaigns and initiatives committed to promoting and growing boating in their country.

From humble beginnings with grand ideas, ICOMIA has always been at the forefront of the

industry. Today 35 marine industry associations across the world are members of ICOMIA and its membership is estimated to represent more than 80% of the world's leisure boating business. After 50 years, its mission essentially remains the same: "To act internationally on behalf of all those concerned for the boating industry's continued success and the public's ability to enjoy boating at all levels in a clean environment".

LOOKING FORWARD

What are the next steps for ICOMIA? Secretary general Udo Kleinitz is optimistic. "We will continue to focus on eliminating restrictions on trade, to keep conditions in established markets as industry-friendly as possible, and to provide information on emerging markets for our members wishing to advance globally. The development of infrastructure, creation of technical guidance and promotion of boating is still very much on our agenda, as it was 50 years ago."

It is clear ICOMIA will continue to do what it does best – be the leading light of the recreational marine industry and continue to shine a safe path from which to navigate these choppy seas. **IBI**

SECRETARY GENERALS OF ICOMIA:
Memorable moments from their time in office



- 1966-1979 Tom Webb
- 1978-1992 Antony Skinner
- 1992-2002 Tim Donkin
- 2002-2015 Tony Rice
- 2015-Present Udo Kleinitz

◀ L-R: Tom Webb, Antony Skinner, Paul Boomsma (recently retired Honorary Treasurer at ICOMIA), Tim Donkin and Tony Rice

ANTONY SKINNER

"On 1 June 1978 I started my new career as secretary general of ICOMIA in Weybridge – and my office was a garden shed a few yards away from the SBBNF offices. After just two days in the office I was whisked off to Düsseldorf for 24 hours with Tom Webb and David Sanders. Back in the office for just three days and then I was off again – this time to Copenhagen to meet Armand Hauser, chairman designate of ICOMIA. Unfortunately during the trip Hauser lost his passport and I was tasked with organising a new passport for him; so we went off to the US Embassy to see what could be done. We then flew around Norway to visit boatyards, several of which were situated near an airfield. What a contrast

to my previous sedentary life in the Admiralty Arch! I was thrilled!"

TONY RICE

"My happiest memories of ICOMIA are our annual Congresses. All were different despite the common format that we follow. A gathering of colleagues from around the world, but who are friends too. The desire to learn from each other and a generosity of sharing pervades the meetings. And all united in a common purpose to further the interests of the global marine industry. The hosts ensure delegates leave the Congress much better informed about their national industry and with a taste of their country's culture too. I shall miss them!"