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Feature

America's Cup Hall of Fame selects 2019 Inductees

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The Herreshoff Marine Museum / America's Cup Hall of Fame has selected Dyer Jones, Henry Racamier, and Bill Trenkle to the America's Cup Hall of Fame as the inductees for the Class of 2019.

The America's Cup Hall of Fame was founded in 1992, as an arm of the Herreshoff Marine Museum by Halsey Herreshoff, a four-time America's Cup defender and grandson of legendary yacht designer Nathanael G. Herreshoff. Over eighty legends of the Cup have been inducted into the Hall.

William T. "Bill" Trenkle (USA) (b. 1958)

Bill Trenkle is among the leaders who exemplifies what racing in the America's Cup symbolizes. He was part of both winning and losing campaigns and had an excellent reputation for his skills and integrity.

If one were to describe Trenkle in one word, it would be "loyal." He raced and worked with Dennis Conner in eight America's Cup campaigns over a 24-year stretch from 1979 through 2003, winning the America's Cup three times. During that period, Trenkle evolved from a "possible" crew as a Cadet at the State University of New York Maritime College (Class of 1980) to Conner's long time Director of Operations.



In his book, Comeback, Conner said, "Bill is a seaman in the finest sense of that term. He understands from both an academic and a practical standpoint what it takes to make a boat go. Give a job to Bill, any job, and you know that it will be done to perfection." That is high praise from a demanding skipper like Dennis Conner.



In the early days of his Cup career, Trenkle was a sail trimmer, first on the tune-up boat, and then on the varsity team for the 1986-87 series in Fremantle. As a port tailer aboard the victorious Stars & Stripes '87, Trenkle had an eye for fast-sail shapes, possessed lightning reflexes, and, most importantly, could consistently anticipate what Conner would do with the helm. Conner recalled, "I never once had to say a word about sail trim."

Using his degree in engineering from the Maritime College, Trenkle assisted in the project managing of the construction of the three 12-Metre yachts for the 1986-87 series, and the huge, innovative wing sail for the Stars & Stripes catamaran in 1988. Since 1996, Trenkle is President and Director of Operations of Dennis Conner Sports. No job was ever too big or too small for Trenkle, earning an excellent reputation in the America's Cup community.

Henry Racamier (France) (1912-2003)

Tall and elegant with a twinkle in his eye, French businessman Henry Racamier became part of America's Cup history in 1982 the moment he agreed to sponsor the official "Challenger Races for the America's Cup" organized by the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron (the Challenger of Record) in Newport. Later, in the summer of 1983, he presented the newly created Louis Vuitton Cup to the winners, John Bertrand and Alan Bond.

The decision to associate Louis Vuitton with the America's Cup was a logical and clever one: Founded in 1854, LV was a contemporary of the Cup (1851). Over the following decade, until he stopped holding the reins of Louis Vuitton, Racamier was passionately dedicated to the association between Louis Vuitton's culture and history and the America's Cup, and historical personalities such as Sir Thomas Lipton and Harold Vanderbilt were clients of the firm.

When the following America's Cup began in Fremantle (1986-87 series), the Louis Vuitton Cup was established as a major sporting and media event in its own right. With Bruno Troublé as Racamier's right-hand man, the Louis Vuitton Cup, supported by a strong team, became a full-fledged organization within one of sport's marquee events.



Racamier's previous professional life was not spent at Louis Vuitton but rather as Chairman and owner of a successful steel company. It was through his marriage to Odile Vuitton, great grand-daughter of the founder, Louis, that he became involved with the company.

Upon the death of his father-in-law, Georges-Louis Vuitton in 1976, Racamier joined Louis Vuitton as Executive Chairman at 65, an age when most decide to retire, bringing with him his dynamic and modern management style.

Soon after his arrival, Racamier transformed Louis Vuitton from a prestigious but quiet 132-year old artisanal family business with three shops into a leading global luxury brand listed on the Paris and New York stock exchanges in 1984. Under Racamier, revenue and profitability increased 25-fold in less than 10 years. In 1987, Racamier founded LVMH, merging the Louis Vuitton group (Louis Vuitton, Givenchy, Veuve Clicquot, et al) with Moët-Hennessy.

When Racamier left the chairmanship in 1992, the Louis Vuitton Cup was in full swing. Louis Vuitton continued to support the Challenger Races and the American's Cup until 2017, the longest association for any brand with any event in the world of sports.

William H. Dyer Jones (USA) (b. 1946)

Dyer Jones' contribution to the America's Cup stretched from 1967, during the 12 Metre era in Newport, through to the last appearance of the America's Cup Class in Valencia in 2007.

During that time, he played a pivotal role at several important turning points in the history of the America's Cup.

In 1967, Jones served as an occasional crew member aboard Columbia during the defender selection trials. Throughout the 1970s, he served on Auxiliary Committees of the New York Yacht Club's America's Cup Race Committee.

Jones achieved his first leadership role in the America's Cup in 1983, serving as Chairman of the NYYC's Race Committee during the famous Australia II v. Liberty match at a time when controversies swirled around the Cup, threatening to derail the competition over Australia II's winged keel.

After the controversy and legal proceedings surrounding the New Zealand "Big-Boat" challenge of 1988, Jones helped organize a Trustee's Committee to resolve future disputes without recourse to the New York courts. This committee has since become the America's Cup Arbitration Panel.



Given Jones' experience in race management and as former Commodore of the New York Yacht Club (1991-92), he was selected to lead the Challengers' Association for the 2000 match held in Auckland. For the following match there in 2003, Jones served as the Regatta Director for the Louis Vuitton Challenger Selection Series.

On the strength of his qualifications, Jones was appointed by the new Swiss Defender and the Challenger of Record to become the Regatta Director for the first America's Cup Regatta to be held in Europe, in Valencia, Spain, which included a new series of preliminary lead-up regattas held in four European venues.

Jones played a major part in the successes of the America's Cup regattas in Newport in 1983, in Auckland in 1999-2000 and 2002-2003, and in Valencia in 2007. He has served every America's Cup role he filled with distinction and a gentlemanly quiet but firm confidence that instilled trust and earned the respect of competitors and officials of many nationalities often in the heat of very tough competition.

Candidates eligible for consideration include members of the crew, designers, builders, syndicate leaders, supporters, chroniclers, and other individuals of merit. Each nominee is judged on the basis of outstanding ability, international recognition, character, performance, and contributions to the sport. The members of the Selection Committee are intimate with the history and traditions of America's Cup and committed to the integrity of the Hall of Fame.

America's Cup Hall of Fame Selection Committee

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The Herreshoff Marine Museum, located in Bristol, Rhode Island, USA, is a maritime museum dedicated to the history of the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company and the America's Cup. The Herreshoff Manufacturing Company (1878-1945) was most notable for producing fast sailing yachts, including eight America's Cup defenders, and steam-powered vessels. The museum, situated near Narragansett Bay on the grounds where the manufacturing company once stood, has a collection of over sixty boats including Nathanael Greene Herreshoff's Clara, built in 1887, Harold Vanderbilt's Trivia, and the 1992 ACC yacht, Defiant. www.herreshoff.org/achof

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