



# SANTA BARBARA

YACHT CLUB

## **Alex Funke, Jr., 1951**

1905-1972

At the age of ten, Alex spent his spare time cleaning up the Whitehall rowing boats that Captain George Gourley kept for hire. His first sailing experience was at the age of twelve on the island schooner *Santa Cruz*, captained by Julio Valdez. Alex learned to sail with the irrepressible Ed Gourley and crewed on the *Caprice*, the Yacht Club's schooner. Alex then became the youngest person to join the SBYC – after the members made a special vote to allow him to join at the age of 16! He crewed for the *Diablo* in its winning Honolulu Race – the only time the boats raced back to San Francisco after racing over. (Furthermore, the *Diablo* had a crew of only four plus the skipper!) During the following years, he raced in several types of boats, including R-class, 6 meters, and 8 meters, and he regularly crewed for the *Wimitch*. Alex, his wife, Fran, and two friends brought a Bear Boat (23-foot wood, fractional rig, sloop) down from San Francisco to the regatta in 1947. Later, he became the owner of the sloop *Apache*. The son of a German immigrant, Alex Jr. was associated with his father in the interior design business and became a painting contractor. He was elected vice-president of the Painting and Decorating Contractors of California. As commodore, his contribution of labor and material to the old Yacht Club building was substantial. Two years after he was commodore of the club, he was named vice-commodore of the SCYA.