

THE MASTHEAD

NEWSLETTER OF THE GATINEAU RIVER YACHT CLUB SPRING 1996

COMMODORE'S HOIST

AHOY all members!!!

A welcoming greeting from the Commodore; (no, it's not John Pomeroy).

One frosty night in January last, the Club held its annual general meeting and guess what, someone other than John was "elected" Commodore. Someone had to be the unfortunate soul who would follow behind John and it was one of those cases where, when volunteers were requested, everyone took a step to the rear faster than I. So, here I am wondering what it will be like this Summer trying to occupy John's Teva's and backwards baseball cap.

As I stated at the AGM, many of us newer members do not know the Club without John as either Commodore or Manager and it is bound to be a different experience for us this Summer. We won't be able to rely on John to be ever present and ever able to offer the "traditional" advice on the proper way of handling each and every situation. The Club membership is very appreciative for all of John's efforts over the past several years. His obvious dedication to and high energy for all aspects of the Club's functioning has been amazing to observe. Do you think John might actually have time to sail his Laser this Summer?

As John may not always be around with his ever ready wisdom, it will be even more important this year for each and every member to pitch in and volunteer. If everything is to remain shipshape the various crews will have to function more

effectively than ever. I throw out the challenge to all of you. I have accepted, with some trepidation, the task of Commodore and I will do my best to see that the Club continues to provide the maximum enjoyment and benefit to the maximum number of members. Please, all of you, accept your responsibility and willingly provide the Club with the benefit of your minimum two volunteer days. There are lots of tasks that need doing so don't be shy about asking any member of the Board or Ed Hanrahan, our manager, how you can help. Also, don't forget that Spring opening and Fall clean up is everyone's responsibility and that these two days cannot qualify as volunteer days.

As those who attended the annual meeting know, the MRC held, in February and March, consultation meetings regarding the development and future use of the Gatineau River. The Club presented an excellent paper (duplicated elsewhere in this Mast Head) and I would like to thank the people who took part in the preparation and presentation of this position paper. Particularly Richard Garlick who wrote the paper and Paul Fydenchuk who verbally presented a condensed version, on behalf of the Club, to the MRC. Thanks is also owing to Malcolm McHattie, John Pomeroy and Jos Woods who met, along with Richard and Paul, one evening at my house, sampled two bottles of Scotch and discussed and formulated the Club's position with respect to this crucial issue. I understand that, once the MRC has reviewed all of the submissions, there will be further public meetings for the

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purpose of reviewing points of general agreement and discussing remaining points of contention. The Board will follow developments and report accordingly.



As the sunny days grow longer and longer, Alley Cat and I are itching for the River to open and the warm Spring winds to blow. Look for the dates of Bridge Down and Spring clean up days here in the Mast Head (the full tentative schedule is here somewhere), get the rubbing compound and wax ready, locate your sailing gloves and life jacket and prepare to shove off. Another season of sailing the glorious Gatineau River is just around the corner. See you all on the water.

Paul Hanvey
Commodore ???!!!

JUDY WHITE

Sadly, Judy White, one of the Club's long standing members, passed away in February. Judy had made great contributions to the Club, serving as Rear Commodore, helping to found the Giggling Rascals, being an active participant in the Gardening Angels,

sitting on the Youth Program Crew as well as tackling many other tasks and activities. Anyone who knew Judy knows how much she loved the Islands and how much she enjoyed spending time there, sometimes visiting or partying and other times absorbed in quiet contemplation and solitary enjoyment. She will surely be missed this Summer.

In order to keep thoughts of Judy nearer, the Board would like to recognize, in some permanent fashion, Judy and her contributions to the Yacht Club. Some ideas that occurred to the Board included planting a tree or a grouping of plants marked by a commemorative plaque, or naming the ladies' river cruise day after her. Judy was very involved with the Canadian Coast Guard, so another thought is that she may like the idea of having the Club safety boat named for her. Before Spring and Club opening day arrives, the members of the Board would like to hear from Judy's friends with respect to these or any other ideas that may come to mind.

A BRIEF NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY.

The transition from Treasurer to Secretary has been a slow process, but is now complete. Who would have guessed how much paper and how many files have accumulated over the years!

As was reported at the Annual General

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Meeting, current membership stands at 241, excluding retaining members. Since the maximum membership has been set at 250, we are close to capacity. New members will only be accepted after reviewing the status of membership renewals, including retaining members. If you know of any prospective members, please have them contact me for an information package and application form.

I now have the new data base on my computer. Many thanks to Warren and Daniel Major for a job well done! The data base uses Microsoft Access software and is very powerful. However, because of my limited knowledge of database systems, I would need some assistance in learning how to update reports and in creating new ones. Anyone willing to volunteer, please give me a call.

This year, with your 1996 invoices, you will find space to adjust your membership and facility fees according to the attached schedule of fees. You will also find a printout of the information we have on record regarding your membership type, spouse, crew assignments, address, children and boats. Please review the information and make the appropriate corrections and return the printout to me with your payment. Thanks for your assistance in keeping our records as up to date as possible.

The Secretary
Michel Gravel

TREASURER'S REPORT

As mentioned in the 1994-1995 Treasurer's report, tabled at the AGM, we will be starting this year in a healthy financial position. Unfortunately, we will have to continue charging GST and PST. The good news is that the "youth program" will continue to be exempt from these lovely taxes.

Membership fees, with the exception of retaining memberships, will remain at the same level as the last two years.

1995-1996 rates are as follows:

-family membership	\$365
-adult membership	\$225
-retaining membership	\$ 70
-intermediate membership	\$150
-initiation fees	\$450
	(\$500 over two years)
- intermediate initiation fee	\$100

Facility fees:

-laser rack	\$35
-canoe rack	\$30
-kayak	\$30
-sailboard	\$30
-other	\$30
-locker	\$10
-half dock-includes one sticker	\$55
-catwalk	\$30
- winter storage	\$30

GST AND PST ARE ALL EXTRA

Mike Tobalt

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REPORT FROM THE GRYC YOUTH PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The Youth Program Committee is happy to report, after several very productive meetings, that our work for this year is well under way. Enclosed in this mailing, you will find the "Information Sheet" and the "Registration Form" for our 1996 summer program. As in past years, we are starting the season with a one week program for members children only, followed by four two week sessions. The regular summer program consists of the newly named "Junior Skippers", aged 6 to 8 (by September 30) which continues to be for members only and the "Core Program" which includes sailing and swimming instruction for children aged 9 to 16 and is available to non-members as well as members. Please note the slight fee increase this year and see the enclosed material for additional information.

We are also busy working on the staffing for the summer program. Two new positions are being created in response to our end-of-year discussions in 1995. One is a Youth Program Manager who will be responsible for the registration, the day-to-day supervision of the program and the staff as well as some instruction of participants. The second is the Junior Skipper Instructor, who will be well qualified to offer a full program including swimming instruction and other water safety skills to our younger participants. As well we are looking for individuals with the ability to teach swimming and sailing. If you know of qualified and interested people, please encourage them to send their resume to I. Wellmeier, Box 251,

Chelsea, JOX 1N0 and to call 827-1749 for more information.

We look forward to another fun-filled summer for children on the island.

Ingrid Wellmeier.



WORDS FROM THE EDITOR

I was out visiting with *HORATIO*, that noble, fearless vessel, the pride of the fleet. Sitting on its trailer, wrapped in a tarp, surrounded by snow, looking forlorn, it told me "Enough of this cold and damp, lets get on with spring." I whole heartedly concurred. Hopefully, the ice will be off the river by July, and we can get a few days of sailing in.

I'm looking forward to a great season, and looking forward to getting **THE MASTHEAD** underway. Do you have an article, story, book review, sailing adventure, picture, or drawing you would like to contribute? Give me a call at 827-4237.

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Speaking of books, one that I recommend to kids and adults is *Swallows and Amazons* by Arthur Ransome. This book, published in the '30s, is the first in a series of twelve books about the adventures of kids on holiday in the lake district of England. The title comes from the names of the two sailing dingys used in adventures. Readers will come away with a better knowledge of sailing, and a renewed feeling of just how great adventures in a small boat and a big imagination can be.

My second recommendation is *The Compleat Cruiser* by L. Francis Herreshoff. This book was first published in 1956, and was written along the lines of Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler*. Through the adventures of the crews of three small cruising sailboats, the reader learns of the simple pleasures of messing about in boats.



A word from the Fleet Captain

"There is nothing - absolutely nothing - half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats." - Kenneth Grahame

This quote pretty well sums up the responsibilities that you have entrusted me with one evening last January, and since then I have begun to work diligently to ensure that we will have a nice sailing season this year (if only this winter would end...).

First, I would like to thank the previous Fleet Captain, Jos Woods. My job this year is a lot easier due in large part to the efforts that he made during the last two years. If ever you have a chance to see him, please thank him for the work he's done, he deserves it!

Second, I would like to inform you that this year we will be using the 1996 Experimental Right-of-Way Rules and Definitions during all of the races held during this season. I have ordered 50 copies of them from the Canadian Yachting Association, and more will come if needed. Since they will probably come into force next year, we might as well get a head start and know them thoroughly. Not that it's hard, mind you; they all fit very nicely in one little flyer, and each rule is very clearly illustrated. I hope this change will help everyone, especially the younger sailors, since they now won't need a lawyer to go through a mountain of rules in case they have a protest to lodge or lodged against them.

Third, I will hold a meeting of the sailing committee sometime in April to

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start organizing the various activities that will be held this year, especially the Invitational Y-flyer and Junior Regatta. Because we will only hold one major regatta, this one will include a lot of fleets: Y-flyer, Laser, Albacore, and Open, with prizes for the best juniors. I hope you will help us all in making this event a grand success.

And finally, I will begin looking at several options to renew the Laser fleet that is available to the members. The green Laser is in good shape, but I'm afraid we can't say as much for the blue and the Yellow Lasers, and they need to be taken out of commission in the near future. One boat that has come to my attention is the Byte, and it does seem to present some interesting advantages (for one, they cost about \$3500-4000, compared to a new \$7000 Laser). Anyway, it is still too early to say what we will do, and I look forward to your comments regarding this matter. Your input is greatly needed and appreciated.

Well, that's all for now. Have a nice sailing season.

Yours truly,

Michael Vasseur
Fleet Captain

(e-mail: mvasseur@magi.com)

SPRING CLEAN UP

Everyone is reminded that spring cleanup is on Saturday, May 11 rain or shine, at 10:00 am. There will be something for everyone, from moving boats, to cleaning the toilets, to picking up sticks and debris. Lunch is provided, but bring a can of soup. All soup goes into the pot to make the world famous glop, a perennial crowd pleaser. This does promise to be the highlight of many a social calendar, so don't miss it!





“Believe me, my young friend, there is nothing — absolutely nothing — half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats. Simply messing.”

— Kenneth Grahame, from *Wind in the Willows*, 1907.

GRYC SCHEDULE OF EVENTS 1996

Sat 4 May	Bridge Down - Harbour Crew's first event of the year
Sat 11 May	Clean - Up The more the merrier (especially if everyone brings his can of soup)
Sun 19 May	Commodore's Opener - At last the beginning of the sailing season
Sun 26 May	Spring Warm - Up Series 1 - 3
Sun 2 June	Spring Warm - Up Series 4 - 6
Sat 8 June	New Members' Bar - B - Que - Let's give a warm welcome to our new members
Sun 9 June	Spring Warm - Up Series 7 - 9
Fri 14 June to Sun 16 June	Midland Walwyn Regatta - Nepean Sailing Club
Sun 16 June	Up - River Race / Cruise - A fun race to Banana Island on the beautiful Gatineau River
Sun 23 June	Sailpast and Open House - Help the Commodore bless the fleet
Sun 30 June	Doldrums Series 1 - 3
Wed 3 July	Starting this evening every Wednesday night is " Club Night " when adult members are free to learn to sail in a relaxed non - competitive atmosphere.
Sun 7 July	Doldrums Series 4 - 6
Wed 10 July	" Club Night "
Sat 13 July	Nepean Open Regatta - Nepean Sailing Club
Sun 14 July	Doldrums Series 7 - 9
Wed 17 July	" Club Night "
Sat 13 July to Sun 14 July	National Capital Regatta - Britannia Yacht Club
Sun 21 July	Morriset Cup - Test your skills at single-handling a normally crewed boat!
Wed 24 July	" Club Night "
Sat 27 July	Moonlight Madness and Corn - Roast bring your night-vision goggles and your flashlights. May the winner buy next year's corn !
Sun 28 July	Midsummer Series 1 - 3
Wed 31 July	" Club Night "
Sun 4 Aug	Midsummer Series 4 - 6
Wed 7 Aug	" Club Night "
Sat 10 Aug to Sun 11 Aug	GRYC Invitational, Y Flyer and Junior Regattas

Wed 14 Aug	" Club Night"
Sat 17 Aug to Sun 18 Aug	Don Rantz Regatta - Sail RA
Sun 18 Aug	Midsummer Series 7 - 9
Wed 21 Aug	" Club Night "
Fri 23 Aug to Sun 25 Aug	OYSTR - Nepean Sailing Club
Sun 24 Aug	Ladies' Annual Cruise
Sun 25 Aug	Sailboard Regatta Jackson Series 1 - 3
Wed 28 Aug	Last " Club Night " of the season
Sat 31 Aug	Jackson Series 4 - 6
Sun 1 Sept	Jackson Series 7 - 9 Fleet Captain's Choice
Mon 2 Sept	Sail-O-Rama - Silly sailing carries the day Final registration date for Fall Colours Canoe Trip on 6 Oct
Sun 8 Sept	Frostbite I
Sun 15 Sept	Frostbite II - Wear your ear-muffs
Sat 21 Sept	Annual Banquet and Awards Dinner - the highlight of the social calendar
Sun 22 Sept	Frostbite III
Sun 29 Sept	Commodore's Cup - the official end of the racing season
Sun 6 Oct	Fall Colours Canoe Trip - paddle downstream from Wakefield to the GRYC. Deadline for registration 2 Sept
Sat 19 Oct	Fall Clean-Up - Glop makes the hard work all worthwhile
Sat 26 Oct	Bridge Up - Its over until next spring
Wed 22 Jan 1997	GRYC Annual Meeting - Come and see the new Board members

Gatineau River Yacht Club

Presentation on the use of the Gatineau River to the MRC des Collines-de-l'Outaouais

March 21, 1996

Introduction

The Gatineau River Yacht Club was formed in 1962 by a group of local sailing enthusiasts, and has occupied its island site on the river since 1965. The Club now has about 250 members, more than 70% of whom are taxpayers in Chelsea and surrounding municipalities. Club members participate in the following activities:

- Sail racing; training of sailors (Youth Program)
- Swimming (a necessary part of sailing); swimming instruction (Youth Program)
- Canoeing, kayaking, sailboarding

Club members have always felt a deep regard for the natural beauty and tranquillity of the Gatineau, a feeling they share with other property owners along the river. By its mere existence--that is, apart from its recreational utility--the river adds immeasurably to the quality of life in our region. As future uses of the river are considered, we should bear in mind that it already serves us in a multitude of ways. Placing greater and greater demands on this fragile ecosystem may make economic sense, but can only spell degradation for the river itself. Any development of the river must respect the river's ability to handle that development.

The GRYC recognizes that its vision of the river may differ from that of other users, or potential users, and that not everyone is happy just sailing, canoeing or swimming. The end of the log drive has created an opportunity for an influx of motorized traffic on the river. Indeed, power boats are becoming a more common sight, and their arrival has meant

an end to at least one of the pleasures Club members and other residents have enjoyed for many years; that is, swimming from the islands to the Cantley shore. Once a regular feature of the Club's youth program, long-distance swimming is now considered dangerous because of the increase in motorboat traffic. Even swimmers who confine themselves to the waters around the island's north point occasionally find themselves in the path of an oncoming power boat. A boat or jet ski travelling at high speed can very quickly overtake a swimmer. Other activities such as canoeing, kayaking, sailboarding, and even sailing, are seriously compromised by heavy power boat traffic. In its present state, the river is clean and quiet and this makes it a great place to swim as well as sail. This is a feature unique to our region when compared with the Ottawa and Rideau Rivers. We would like to see the water quality of the Gatineau kept at this enviable level.

Power boating

With the exception of jet skis, the GRYC is not adamantly opposed to powerboats on the river. We had no problem with the tugboats that used to haul logs down the river. In fact, we had become quite enamoured of these now historic boats as they slowly maneuvered up and down the river. Motorboats are a necessity for safety purposes. The Club maintains two boats for such purposes and over the years has assumed the role of "coast guard", lending assistance to the occasional river enthusiast who runs into trouble on the water. Several of our larger sailing boats also have small engines (7.5 hp maximum) to assist with maneuvering or to return to the Club once the wind has died. Used appropriately and in small numbers, motors have their place on the river, but without restrictions on speed and/or horsepower, their presence will make most other uses of the river prohibitive.

The issue of safety is of paramount importance, but it is only one of several concerns raised by the increase in power boat traffic. Engine noise on the river is greatly amplified by the natural amphitheatre effect of the high river banks and is a nuisance to everyone living near the river. In addition, gasoline, oil and smoke foul the water and can turn an enjoyable swim into an experience akin to immersion in an industrial waste lagoon.

Sections of shoreline are eroding at an alarming rate since log booms were removed, and

the wave action of high-powered boats can only accelerate the process. Power boat traffic on the river must not be permitted to grow in an uncontrolled manner. Power boaters apparently have the option of using the section of the river north of Wakefield where this activity has been approved by residents. It makes sense, then, to devote the southern end of the river largely to non-motorized uses.

The Club members recognize that they are not in a position to dictate the nature of development on the Gatineau River. If power boating is to develop, however, we would like to see some guidelines placed around how this is to happen. We train people to sail and insist that unqualified people not be out in sail boats without close supervision. We believe that a similar approach should be applied to motorboats and jet skis. We need a system of operator certification. There should also be speed limits for power boats. We would like to have the river from a point above the Club (Kirk's Ferry Road) to the point of land below (Bushnell Point) designated as a slow speed zone. This is to protect our swimmers and Youth Program sailors in particular. The rest of the river should, in our opinion, also have restrictions of some kind on speed. Policing of the river may be difficult, but we believe that the mere act of setting speed limits will have a positive impact on keeping boat speeds down. A similar effect could be achieved by restricting the size of motor allowed on the river to less than 10 hp. We also think it would be appropriate to place time restrictions on the use of motorboats in order to control the noise level for those within earshot of the river.

Economic development and access

We understand the desire of some people to make a place for the river within an economic vision for the region that includes some form of commercial development along its shores. There are probably any number of interesting business opportunities that could involve use of the river. However, we strongly urge the municipalities to resist any temptation to allow commercial exploitation of the river because we believe it cannot be done without seriously compromising the quality of life on and around the river. Even eco-tourism, although vastly preferable to, let's say, jet ski racing on the Gatineau, is, nonetheless, a

business that typically brings large numbers of people through ecologically sensitive areas. Wherever human beings wander, human waste is sure to be found, and it looks pretty much the same whether produced by an eco-tourist or traditional tourist. The idea that the river must contribute to economic development--other than through the collection of taxes on riverfront properties--is unfortunate. It is not unlike the belief that a tree has no value until it has been cut down and turned into lumber or wood pulp.

Access to the river is perhaps the most important issue the committee will have to grapple with, although for most of the length of the river it is a moot point since land is privately controlled and zoned residential. However, there are places where the public can use the river (the beach at the end of Summerlea Road for example) and other areas controlled by the municipalities where zoning is not necessarily residential. These areas may be attractive to commercial developers. On the subject of access, the Club believes the committee should be guided by three important principles. The first is that the residents (and taxpayers) of the three municipalities should be given first priority for the privilege of using and enjoying the river. So, for example, if there truly is to be a beach at the end of Summerlea Road, we would like to see it and the road down to it properly maintained and improved. The second guiding principle is that boat launching access to the river should be controlled. The Club has installed a gate at the end of the road to exercise its legal right to forbid use of GRYC property as a boat launch, thereby restricting power boat access to the bay which is always well occupied by swimmers from the Club and from the beach. However, prior arrangements may be made with the Club for use of the ramp. We would like to see similar restrictions placed on other access points. The third principle regarding access is referred to above, but can't be emphasized too many times; that is, access to the river should be open to non-commercial interests only.

Addressing existing problems

While these hearings are concerned primarily with future uses and potential development of the river, we must not neglect already serious risks posed by pollution, erosion and other processes, both natural and unnatural. The Club carefully monitors the water quality

around the islands and has found unacceptably high levels of pollution on only one occasion within recent memory. The Club would welcome a request from the committee to extend the range of its testing--within the limits of its budget--to ensure that water quality is maintained everywhere. The Club is also willing to share in implementing any strategies that might be devised to protect shore lines from erosion. The suggestion has been made that particularly vulnerable areas could be protected by reinstalling booms. While the Club is not in a position to purchase these booms, Club members would certainly be ready to help to put them in place.

The GYRC is acutely aware of its good fortune in occupying the beautiful place it has on the river. It has always tried to share its largesse with other members of the community by, for example, opening up its summer program to non-members. However, there is a finite limit to the human traffic the islands will bear. The GRYC is in a unique position to understand the fragile nature of the river and to monitor its health. We offer the committee our experience, our sense of stewardship and responsibility toward the river, and our physical labour, if required, to guarantee that future generations will enjoy the same quality of life that the river has meant for us.

The Club would like to participate in a cooperative way in helping to shape the future development of the Gatineau River. We would like to see specific thought given and plans made with respect to the rights of existing waterfront property owners. We would like safety and environmental concerns to be foremost in the minds of the policy makers. In terms of future uses of the river, we would like to see water activities that respect the river's capacity to handle them.

Summary

1. The focus of activity on the river should be non-motorized. Restrictions should be placed on access by power boats, and particularly by jet skis.

2. If motorboating is to develop on the river, there should be a system of operator certification in place, as well as restrictions on speed and/or horsepower.

3. Development of the river should be non-commercial. Eco-tourism, although preferable to many potential uses, is not without risks.

4. Access to the river should be strictly controlled, non-commercial and for the most part non-motorized. Local residents deserve first priority.

5. Existing concerns such as pollution and erosion need to be addressed within any proposed plan for the river.

6. The GRYC takes its responsibility to the river very seriously and is willing to help the municipalities in any way it can to act on that responsibility. The Club would like to share in shaping future development of the river.