



The Masthead – July 2004

GRYC – 42 Years Old!

The GRYC enters the summer of 2004 in a spirit of rejuvenation and optimism. Last year, in addition to celebrating forty years of sailing on the Gatineau River, we

- acquired a new dock system,
- repaired and refurbished the bathrooms,
- installed a security gate,
- bought a Sandpiper keelboat for members' use,
- re-surfaced the road, and
- coordinated many other necessary activities.

In 2004, we are enjoying the benefits of these capital investments. Thanks to improved space and equipment, we are seeing more club members getting actively engaged in sailing, socializing and sharing the necessary tasks that make the GRYC an attractive place to spend our leisure summer hours.

The evidence of renewal and re-engagement is all around. Already this year we have:

- a growing number of members who are learning seamanship skills and racing techniques, and successfully practicing their new abilities in the Sunday races;
- a summer youth program, led and staffed by qualified young people;
- a fresh enthusiasm among members who are volunteering to help out with the many tasks necessary to make our club successful;
- an improved configuration of the sailing docks to match the success of the “pool” that was last year’s innovation; and
- a new deck on which to amuse ourselves without fear of sudden descent onto the pre-cambrian rock beneath.

And we’re not forgetting our past. We celebrated Allan and Joyce Richens’ charter member contributions to the club by conferring their name on the point where they have spent so many happy hours.

As last year, The Masthead appears only on the GRYC web site in a printable “pdf” format. This approach means that each edition is both accessible and permanently archived – it also saves printing costs.

Enjoy a summer of sailing and good times at the Club. Welcome back.

Richard Yeo
Commodore



GRYC Members at this year's Icebreaker



Award to Allan and Joyce Richens Recognizes 42 Years with GRYC

At this spring's Icebreaker, Commodore Richard Yeo presented a special award to Joyce and Allan Richens in recognition of their involvement in creating the GRYC, 42 years ago.

Joyce and Allan are one of the five founding families of the GRYC, and because of their long and ongoing involvement with the Club, the Board has renamed the North Island's northeast rocky point, Richens' Point in their honour.

Allan has watched GRYC history unfold. Interviewed on Richens' Point, he was modest about his own contribution, but had much to remember about the names and exploits of other founding and early members of the club.

Allan recalls how many of the original and early members were, like him, connected with the RCN. All these men and their wives shared not only the service connection, but also the enthusiasm for small boat sailing that the Navy fosters.

After serving in Canada's frigates in the Navy during the 1950's, Allan moved to surveying and mapping. He spent many long summers up North, both in the air with Spartan Air Services, and on the ground with Canadian Aero Services setting up the baselines and fixed points for the air surveys of what was then unmapped territory. Later, he went to the National Research Council as a photogrammetry specialist, a job he held until his retirement.

Among Allan's reminiscences are stories about the people who helped the club acquire the Islands from Air Commodore Bennet, the second owner of the property. The first families of GRYC worked through the good offices of Frank MacIntyre, who at the time was the only Realtor in the Gatineau, as they struggled to purchase the property, which came on the market very suddenly. Tony Wright, another early member, who had been an Admiral in the RCN, was an official in Royal Trust at the time. He arranged the mortgage for the Island, provided the founding members were able to raise a down payment of \$6,000 on the purchase price of \$12,000 -- a large sum at the time.

Allan also remembers that after several summers meeting in the small cottage which was originally on the island, Dave Strutt, a member who was an architect at Carleton University ("College" as it was then), designed the modular-concept clubhouse we all now enjoy. Strutt went on to use the same modular design for CIDA projects in South America.

Allan particularly recalls Commodore Fraser-Harris as one of the more colourful club members. Like Allan, Fraser-Harris was in the RCN in the Fleet Air Arm. When he retired from the Navy, he took a position as a civilian in procurement – buying goods and services for the Navy. His legacy can still be seen in the little brass plaques on the transoms of some of the GRYC pram dinghies. Fraser-Harris encouraged contractors to present the Club dinghies that are still in use today, more than forty years later. (More of Fraser-Harris' connections with the GRYC can be found in the current edition of *Up the Gatineau*.)

In presenting the award to the Richens, Richard Yeo promised that this summer a plaque will appear on the point there to mark it permanently. He spoke for us all when he said, "The Club's appreciation and best wishes go out to Joyce and Allan."

On Canada Day, Allan Richens celebrated his seventy-third birthday among his friends and fellow club-members. Congratulations, Allan!



Allan Richens on Richens' Point

Some of the First GRYC Members

This historic photo from the first years of the GRYC includes Ivan Herbert, Allan Richens and Pat Evans, who were all founding members.



Pictured L to R include: Ivan Herbert, Allan Richens, George and Irene Cochrane, Ernie Bushnell, Doug Fricker Herb Stanland, Anne Treleaven, Pat Evans, among others.

George Cochrane was the first Commodore, Doug Fricker was famous for having sailed from Portugal across the Atlantic to the Bahamas. Ernie Bushnell was the founder of CTV. Doug Fricker holds the CJOH trophy.

More Awards at the Icebreaker

2003 Hansum Transom Award for Outstanding service to the Club was awarded to **Sylvie Delisle** in recognition of her dedicated behind the scenes Youth Committee work as registrar of the Youth Program for the past several years. She has worked diligently to ensure that the summer schedules of parents and kids are harmonized as much as possible.

2003 Virgin Sturgeon Award for a remarkable feat of some kind: Awarded to **Casey Cerson** for the longest new member's speech at last year's Icebreaker BBQ. (Please! No repeat performances!)



Casey and the Fish – and Manager Mike

Returning the Sturgeon

Last year, the Virgin Sturgeon adorned Wendy Pritchard's wall. So it was with a sorrowful heart that she bade farewell to her companion of twelve months, and read her Ode to the Virgin Sturgeon to this year's Icebreaker.



Wendy Reads Her Poem

Ode to the Virgin Sturgeon

God knows I am no poet, though –
So sad to see my Sturgeon go
I've been inspired to quickly pen
Some words about my fishy friend.

Tall tales were told to make him mine.
The tales got taller still with time.
A conversation piece, and more –
He fit so well with our décor.

Our living room was made more warm
When he our mantel did adorn.
Our children looked on him with pride,
My husband took it all in stride.

I've change. I'll no more play the fool.
I release you, fish, back to your school.
But we will talk, some future day
About the one who got away!

Wendy Pritchard

GRYC Lore: The Hansum Transum and the Virgin Sturgeon

The **Hansum Transom** was invented as a prize for the "most spectacular performance," which could be either funny or hard work, depending on the situation. Bill Stranks and Blair Erskine won it for leading the building of the clubhouse in 1978. John Pomeroy won it for breaking his ribs after hitting a log while driving the crash boat. Over the years, recipients have ranged from one club member who painted the bay red by spilling paint, to another who stuck his mast in the mud by sailing upside down after turtling in the bay.

The **Virgin Sturgeon** was introduced after Warren Major came across the great beast while wind surfing just up-river from the club. It was on its last fins when Warren somehow hauled it on board and brought it ashore. It sat in someone's freezer for a time, until Warren decided to donate it as a prize for the funniest happening of the season.

The invention of the Virgin Sturgeon for unexpected comedy reserves the Hansum Transom for more serious contributions to the club.

John Pomeroy

Editor's Note: As with all other aspects of the GRYC, *The Masthead* relies on your contribution of ideas and energy. If you know some aspect of GRYC history and legend, or if know someone who has such recollections and tales, contact The Masthead through communications@gryc.ca. We need to share and record these memories before they fade or are lost. Your contribution or photos will appear in future editions of The Masthead as "GRYC LORE".

Photo credits: Paul Johannsen took the photographs in this edition of The Masthead, with the exception of the photos of Allan Richens and the early members,