

A G.R.V.C. CHRONICLE - THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

(Contributed by Patrick M.O. Evans -Founding Member and Club Archivist)

September 2, 1962 A small group met to discuss plans for mooring their boats the following season, as wharfage arrangements currently in use would no longer be valid. Present at this meeting were Patrick M.O. Evans, Gerald V. Byers, Ivan W. Herbert, J. Allan Richens and John Winfield. After some discussion, Pat, who had tried three years previously to get a club going without success, suggested the formation of a boat club and the procuring of timbers for a floating dock.

This idea was looked on with favour and the Gatineau Boat Club came into being, with only one officer being elected, as temporary Secretary-Treasurer, he being Ivan Herbert. The chosen club colours were white and navy blue. The club pennant was to be a white triangle with a navy blue border, with suitable crest centred, and to incorporate the club's initials.

September 16, 1962 The club members went foraging for timbers, obtaining a good supply from a C.P.R. railway bridge which was in the process of being replaced.

September 19, 1962 Second meeting of the Club. Three new members were welcomed, George Cochrane, Alex Wylie and Ken Scott. Officers elected were: President - Ivan Herbert; Secretary - Pat Evans; Treasurer - Alex Wylie. Gerry Byers was appointed engineer-in-chief of mooring. A small committee of Pat Evans, Alex Wylie, Al Richens and George Cochrane was appointed to look after membership recruitment and to set up a scale of fees.

September 30, 1962 Second forage for timbers.

October 3, 1962 Third meeting of Club. Alex Topolski joined. Name changed to Gatineau Yacht Club.

November 15, 1962 A general and public meeting called, with 24 present. Several new members accepted. Fees agreed upon.

November 28, 1962 The first set-back; the President resigned for personal reasons. George Cochrane elected. The term "Commodore" substituted for President.

December 10, 1962 Officers of the Club met with Arnold D. Wilson to draft by-laws.

December 13, 1962 Membership taken in the Canadian Yachting Association.

During the winter months plans for the mooring proceeded; other committees were hard at work and Arn Wilson was appointed as Vice-Commodore.

February 28, 1963 Second general meeting, with 29 present. Membership grew to 38 adults and 16 juniors. By-laws accepted. The Snave trophy presented. Al Richens appointed Fleet Captain.
Name changed to Gatineau River Yacht Club, because of possible confusion with the Town of Gatineau.

March 5, 1963 Membership now 45 Seniors and 21 Juniors.

The arrival of spring touched off a flurry of activity. With the help of the Gatineau Boom Company the jetty timbers were launched and anchored, arrangements were completed to rent Rita Mitchell's cottage for a clubhouse - all this at the foot of the hill.

Parties of members were busy with the new wharfage and putting into shape the rented "clubhouse". The first boat on the new jetty was "Spray" of Pat Evans. Membership grew to 52 and 26. Application papers for incorporation arrived from Quebec City.

June 16, 1963 First race: 1st. Frazer-Harris; 2nd. Richens; 3rd. Ireland.

During June and July racing and work parties alternated. The Edelweiss and Wakefield Inn trophies were presented for competition. Junior sailing, swimming and canoe classes got under way. A Bingo Night was held. A Club Cruise and Picnic was conducted. The Club was represented for the first time at an "away" regatta, at Britannia Yacht Club. A Treasure Hunt was organized for boat crews.

August 10 and August 11, 1963 First Invitational Regatta. 1st. John Davies (GRVC); 2nd. John Agnew (RCNSA); 3rd. Frazer Frazer-Harris (GRVC).

August 24, 1963 First Junior Regatta.

The balance of the season saw racing continue 'midst much enthusiasm. On September 2, our birthday was observed. Prize-giving Dinner was held at the Wakefield Inn. The search continued for a clubhouse site. Terrific news! Frank Macintyre phoned Pat Evans about the island being up for sale.

November 27, 1963 First Annual Meeting. Officers elected for 1964 were:
Commodore - George Cochrane; Vice-Commodore - Arnold Wilson;
Rear-Commodore - A.B.F. Frazer-Harris; Secretary - Patrick Evans; Treasurer - Alex Wylie; Fleet Captain - Al Richens. Membership was 106 Seniors and 75 Juniors, for a total of 181. But the big news was the "island proposition".

The winter months were very much "on again - off again" with respect to the island dream. The Executive, although receiving a mandate from the membership to procure the island, was bedevilled by the question "how?" Plans for financing the scheme were discussed, amended, abandoned and retrieved. Visits were made to the island over the ice to assess and discuss. The \$100 Loan Scheme was adopted and arrangements completed to

purchase. Then came that Red Letter Day:-----

April 8, 1964

The Club's offer to purchase accepted - we own our "tight little island!"

To continue down through the years:

1964

The Club's boom jetty swung towards the island and extended to meet it.

C.J.O.H. Regatta and weekly racing. The Macintyre Shield presented and competed for.

Eight "Otter" prams were arranged for by Frazer-Harris.

The island club and the prams were put into service on "Commissioning Day", July 4. The members "sailed past".

Juniors at Dow's Lake secured first place for GRVC.

Second Invitational Regatta.

First NATIONAL 420 REGATTA held at GRVC.

First Theme Party - Hawaiian Luau.

First Night Race, in the dark.

GRVC's 2nd birthday.

Jackson, CJOH, Evans and Commodore's trophies presented.

G.P.14 Regatta organized by Barry Jeffery.

Fall Frostbite run, for the new O'Keefe Trophy.

Prize-Giving at the Wakefield Inn.

Second Annual Meeting. Arn Wilson - Commodore; Dick Medland - Vice-Commodore; Arthur Brown - Rear-Commodore.

Two more trophies presented to the Club -- Molson, for Spring Frostbite and Carling, for Fleet Captain's Choice -- nice Christmas presents.

December 26: River frozen solid and people skating everywhere on the glare ice.

1965

Sample of the Club's new pennant received from Cheong Lee of Hong Kong. Excellent; we'll order a small stock to be sold to members.

Early in March, John Young presented a beautiful silver tray for V-Flyer competition.

Private little party to say farewell to the Wylies who are going back to British Guiana.

The pennants arrived from Hong Kong - prompt delivery, eh?

Ed Quipp and Pat Evans start construction of the lighthouse in Ed's basement.

Early spring and a party starts on changes in the clubhouse - tearing out the walls to make one large room, re-equipping the kitchen and opening out a new front door, with ramp approach.

The Club acquired a second-hand pontoon barge, soon to be equipped with a motor.

The ladies held a coffee-sherry party in the spring to which were invited guests of the area yacht clubs and Larrimac Golf Club. About 60 attended.

1965 (cont'd)

May 15 - the first Frostbite.

The two-week work stint on the clubhouse produced wonderful results. Ed Quipp congratulated for master-minding the nautical transformation. The ship's mast gives just the right touch.

The concessionaire came early to assess the situation with respect to the canteen. Don Bell, the Watch Officer, also came to prepare for his summer's job, which amounts to "managing affairs" for the Directors, in their absence.

Victoria Day (May 24) a fun race was organized.

Adjustments and furnishing in the clubhouse. Pat Evans presented a ship's wheel for the mantelpiece.

A system of second races, after the usual competition first race, was instituted. They were called Pennant Races because the winner of each race received a prize of a club pennant.

The completed lighthouse arrived. What fun and games to exchange the old race shack at the "point" for the new lighthouse. The barge nearly sank during the operation. The lighthouse looks great and plans are discussed about putting in electricity. The old shack was moved to a new spot and is to become the Pram Shack.

The Clubhouse door got painted yellow on one side and red on the other. The fireplace bricks were painted blue and Harold Reid did the floor yellow.

The Frostbite series ended and the regular series commenced.

The C.J.O.H. Regatta was held June 19 and 20. Arn Wilson won the Frostbite, son Michael won the C.J.O.H.

The Club's piano turned purple overnight.

July 1, 1965

Sailpast, with 13 boats and four prams. Vice-Commodore Dick Medland took the salute in the absence of Arnold Wilson. George Beers and Len Jarrett used the day to construct a new bridge between the islands.

July 11 and
July 12, 1965

The Invitational Regatta. 1st. Don Fraser (RCNSA); 2nd. Jim Brown (GRYC); 3rd. Peter Williams (RAYC).

July 21 - first of the Evening Series. National Capital Regatta at Britannia, with GRYC well represented. Jim Brown was 1st in 420's and Bob Lewis and Pat Evans, 3rd and 5th in the Day Sailer class.

July 24 - Macintyre Shield won by Gord and Marg Grant. Gordon Grant's newly designed race marker used for the first time.

August, 1965

Civic Holiday (August 2) Crewmen's Race for Medland Shield, won by John Jeffery. Ladies' Race Day (August 7): "Danny" Fell won, in Prams, and fell out of her Pram after crossing the finish line. C.J.O.H. Regatta won by Jim Brown. Theme Party (August 14) in Western Costime - about 85 people. Parking lot deal progressing but can't say the same for our

1965 (cont'd) incorporation -- our lazy lawyer, or what?
Cold and heavy winds (August 29) but some brave souls decided to race. Some excitement as a ten-year old boy got himself "lost" but was later found along the tracks. Believe it or not, a few snow flakes were seen! Going-away party for the Fells at the Wilsons.

September, 1965 Junior Championship Races (September 2) won by Jim Brown in the 13 - 18 age group. Bill Frazer-Harris won the Under 13 class.
Labour Day: the last of the Regular Series, won by Jim Brown. The footwalk on the boom is finished (September 17).
Our Junior Squadron at Dow's Lake (September 25). The RCNSA took the Evans and Kert Trophy by a "squeak" over GRYC. The two Jeffery boys did well.
September 26: a most peculiar day for the Frostbite. The winds blew and the boats flew - what an eerie sensation to belt through the waves and not see your opponents except for the top half of their sails above the drifting mists - and later it snowed.

October, 1965 Thanksgiving Day - a good crowd for clean-up. The ladies serve us hot turkey for lunch, with all the trimmings. Yum! Presentation Dinner (October 22) at St. Louis Hotel in Hull. About 90 present.
October 30: the drawbridge raised for the winter.
New Planning Committee organized with Dick Medland as Chairman.

November 24, 1965 3rd. Annual Meeting. Nothing controversial. Application for incorporation still being delayed at the lawyer's.

1966 Rod Daugherty applied for position of 1966 Watch Officer. Planning Commission started its work in February. Parking lot deal concluded. Incorporation application withdrawn from lawyer and will be handed to another. Early spring, and parties over to the island to tidy up and burn brush.
What a shock - the C.V.A. fees up to \$105, from \$10 !!
Usual plans to prepare for '66 season: concessionaire - committee chairmen - instructors, etc. Planning Commission continues its work.
First boats launched (April 30). Two weeks later the first of the Frostbites.

June, 1966 Early June, the C.B.C. arrive to film activities at GRYC. Planning Commission continues review "on site" - question of a new clubhouse being a possibility.
June 17 - GRYC on TV this evening - a good show !
C.J.O.H. Regatta won by Dick Medland.
Bang, bang!! hammering at the clubhouse (June 24) - the kitchen is being expanded and a window added. Esther Gachnang is the '66 concessionaire and appreciates extended space.

- July 1, 1966 Sail-past, Club Commodore Arn Wilson. 16 boats.
Dave Ellerton starts as Sailing Instructor (July 4).
- July 9 and
July 10, 1966 GRVC Invitational. Wild winds on the second day, 180
watchers gasp as one terrific blast upsets more than half
the 38 boats. The winner was Jim Brown.
- July 16 and
July 17, 1966 National Capital Regatta at Britannia. GRVC did well in
Albacores -- 1st. Connla Wood; 2nd. Bob Lewis; 4th. Pat
Evans.
The old electric stove needs to be disposed of - it ends up
as anchor for the new swimming raft.
Macintyre Shield Day (July 23). Won by Gord Grant in a
"great drift".
- August, 1966 Ladies' Race Day (August 6). Won by Judy Dodunski.
Creumens' Race Day (August 7). Won by Lynn Omholt-Jensen.
GRVC represented at 420 National Regatta. Jim Brown and
Bruce MacDonald came first, Kent Omholt-Jensen came fourth.
An excellent showing.
August 20: the Theme Party, a Roman one, 90% wore costume.
Lots of fun with "dancing girls" (of both sexes).
Junior Squadron Regatta at Dow's Lake. The finals were won
again by RCNSA in spite of Kent Omholt-Jensen's five firsts
and two seconds.
Moonlight Race (Saturday, August 27). Prams with garden
torches for marks. Dick Medland declared the winner.
- September, 1966 Fourth birthday party (September 3). Junior Prize-giving,
and Indian display by the juniors in the evening.
Labour Day - a fun race organized by Pat Evans. Racers
could not round marks in consecutive order: set one's own
course and hope for the best.
- September 19 Jim Brown and Bruce MacDonald came SECOND in the North Amer-
ican "420" Championships held at Ossining, N.Y. Congratu-
lations from us all at GRVC.
- October, 1966 Albacore Regatta for the Ottawa area held at GRVC (October 2).
Connla Wood won the Thompson Trophy, presented by Phil
Thompson.
October 10 - Thanksgiving and Clean-Up Day. The ladies
again serve a hot turkey dinner, with all the trimmings.
Final meeting of the Planning Commission (October 18) and an
excellent report prepared.
Legal work for incorporation completed (October 19) and the
papers signed.
Presentation Dinner held at the Sampan Restaurant (October 21).
The O-J's held a costume party for the going-away of the Ted
Jacksons.
- November 23 Fourth Annual Meeting. Planning Commission's report rec-
eived mixed reception, but agreement in principle.

1966 (cont'd)

Dick Medland elected Commodore at AGM.
Albacore owners get together at HMCS Carleton on November 29, and form an Ottawa and area Albacore Association, with the GRYC's Conna Wood as President.
Ted Jackson and Pat Evans were GRYC's reps at the Annual Meeting on December 1 of the St. Lawrence Valley Yacht Racing Association at the Royal St. Lawrence Y.C. at Dorval.
David McQueen bought the first Albacore manufactured by Skene Boats in Ottawa and brought it up to GRYC. Jack Patterson bought his Albacore from Grampian.

1967

Well, here it is -- CENTENNIAL YEAR, and much planning.
January 18, a Red Letter day. Word was received that our Incorporation was achieved on November 24, 1966. How does it look? GATINEAU RIVER YACHT CLUB, INCORPORATED.
New fees set at \$50 for Family, \$35 for Seniors and \$20 for Intermediates.
Annual Meeting of the Canadian Yachting Association at Royal St. Lawrence Y.C. (February 4), attended by Dick Medland and Jim Brown.
GRYC has been offered sponsorship of one of the NATIONAL JUNIOR CENTENNIAL CHAMPIONSHIP REGATTAS - and we've accepted the challenge. Not bad for a club less than than five years old!
Social evening (February 24) at HMCS Carleton for area sailors.

Spring, 1967

Dick Medland, Ted Jackson (soon to leave) and Pat Evans work hard on brushing up and bringing by-laws into line with new incorporation. The by-laws were presented to the membership at a special meeting late in April. What a day -- it's Opening Day at EXPO, By-Laws ratified and our Charter received. Jim Brown ran a series of sailing classes this spring with good attendance
Plans rapidly taking shape for the Junior Regatta. We are to expect young sailors from coast to coast. We're to sleep and keep them while they're here.
The season gets off to a start - Spring Frostbite - Junior Squadron organizes - C.J.O.H. Regatta - much work and painting of clubhouse - flagpole painted and rigged with gaff and yard, equipped with new halliards. Only the very best for Centennial Year and Junior Regatta.

Dominion Day

The Sail-past had to be postponed a week - cool and rainy. Trials for Junior Squadron (July 4) to pick representatives from GRYC at Evans & Kert competition.

July 8 and
July 9, 1967

Centennial Invitational Regatta at GRYC. Social Evening and Supper, with well over 200 people (Quality Caterers). GRYC did not do too well. Bill Fell managed a 4th place in the Y-Flyer class.

July 15 and
July 16, 1967

GRYC Albacore sailors at Britannia for the National Capital Regatta. We managed to pick up: 1st. Connla Wood; 3rd. Barrie Jeffery; 4th. Bob Lewis; 5th. Pat Evans and 7th. Phil Thompson. Just short of a clean sweep. Our Junior Squadron is leading in the Evans & Kert (July 18). Connla Wood constructs and launches a new swimming raft for the Club.

August, 1967

Ladies' Day Race (August 5) won by Heather Quipp. Crewmen's Day Race (August 6) won by Ross Laycraft. GRYC sailors at New Edinburgh for the regatta. 1st. Phil Thompson; 2nd. Connla Wood; 4th. Pat Evans (August 12). Our Junior Squadron sailors are still leading (August 15) as they enter the final races for the Evans & Kert, only to have the trophy snatched from their grasp by the RCNSA Juniors -- for the fourth year in a row. Sad news today (August 17). John Winfield, one of the Club's five founding members, was killed in a car accident, and son Kim very badly injured. The evening's Theme Party postponed out of respect. August 19 and 20 -- The Macintyre Shield won by Gord and Marg Grant for the third successive year.

August 21 to
August 25, 1967

NATIONAL CENTENNIAL JUNIOR REGATTA. Juniors from Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Edmonton and Vancouver. The main effort of course is to compete in sailing, but there were social parties, tours in to Ottawa, etc., etc. The visitors are being hosted by GRYC families at their homes so there's much socializing between visiting and GRYC Juniors. Competition is keen, in Albacores loaned by Club members, and is carried on over a period of days. Winners are the Vancouver team of Alan Drinkwater and Patrick Finnigan. On the last evening there was the "big bash". A Navy band arrived to play on the island; Dr. Gaston Isabelle presented gold, silver and bronze medals to those who won or placed, while the Hon. Doug Harkness (one of our own members) presented Centennial Medals to all the other competitors. Quality Caterers served an excellent buffet supper to the 220 participants. GRYC may well make a bow.

September 2, 1967

G.R.Y.C.'s fifth birthday. Film presentation by Phil Thompson, followed by presentation of prizes to the Juniors, and the usual birthday cake and ice cream to bring the event to a happy end. The balance of the Centennial Sailing season sees the usual Frostbite Series and other trophy races being crammed into a very busy 100th birthday year for our Country.

So there's the first five years of the Club affectionately known by its initials G.R.Y.C. as extracted from the Club's log. The history does not end here, of course. As the years have continued to roll by, evolution has taken place; some traditions have continued, others have been established from time to time, a few have been discarded where they served no useful purpose.

In the years that followed the "first five" many "happenings" have taken place. Can you remember all or any of the following happening at, or in connection with, G.R.Y.C?

- You never knew the island was not the home of the yacht club -- then you are aged 20 or younger.
- The Annual Meetings being held at the Wakefield Inn, the Anglican and United Church Hall and the Elementary School in Wakefield, the Barn and Municipal Chambers in Aylmer.
- The disposal of the purple piano, how it bumped and jumped as it went over the cliff.
- Changes in the old clubhouse, the enlargement of the kitchen and later its reduction; changing the old front porch to a senior's lounge; the construction of bunker seats, the new front deck, etc.
- The \$100 Loan changed to an Initiation Fee because capital funds were so hard to build up when the Club had to refund a resignee's loan.
- The term Watch Officer became Staff Officer, finally Manager.
- When "You & G.R.Y.C." was first issued to each membership, and you knew where you stood.
- The boom walkway had a plywood decking and when the boom broke, once in the middle and next time at the island end, and when it had to be buoyed up.
- When G.R.Y.C. bought the land around the island and on the mainland between high water and low water marks, and how Ed Quipp's crane installed the steel culvert which now serves as the crib where the drawbridge is installed. What an artiste that crane operator was!
- "The Masthead", under the editorship of a series of devoted editors and how it came out at odd times in the winter to keep members abreast of plans for the next season.
- When the shacks on the property became changing huts - with lockers.
- The cornboils, when we ate corn until it came out of our ears.
- The Junior parties on Friday nights.
- When the barge became so waterlogged and was replaced by two crash boats.
- The signs which announced "NO PETS ... NO DOGS".
- The Gypsy, Flower Power, Space Age and Shipwreck Theme Parties.
- How G.R.Y.C. lured Graeme Parkinson to the island to become Manager.
- The institution of the Hansum Transum, to recognize those bizarre and often spectacular things that happened to people, or were caused to be happened by such persons.
- Our sailors who competed in "foreign" waters, who either covered themselves - and GRYC - in glory by gaining firsts, seconds or thirds or did so badly that we never heard about it; such stalwarts as Connla Wood, Phil Thompson, Colin Ramplee-Smith, Dave Strutt, Geoff

Erskine, Bill Andrews and others; and members of our Junior Squadron who likewise took their skills with them and made a showing.

- How the interest in 420's waned and the new and exciting Lasers took over and became the boat to own and sail: Albacores have remained a steady favourite.
- How the "single-handed" sailing at the Club required trophies and how generously our members came through and presented such trophies.
- The succession of Canteen concessionaires who each in turn satisfied the hungers of so many of us -- Hazel Murray, Esther Gachnang, Nikki de Villiers, Geoff Erskine, Wanda Wilde and Heidi Honegger, Nick Andrews, John Pomeroy and others.
- The Prize-giving Parties at the Crow's Nest in the Navy Mess, at Carleton U. and Jimmy's Restaurant, and other places; what fun they were and how modestly the winners went up to receive their trophies midst much applause from their fellow sailors.
- The combined events with the Larrimac Golf Club, called "Hit & Blow", when our sailors spent the morning at the Golf Club, trying to pop a little white pill into a series of tin cups let into the ground. At midday the golfers put on a spread for the hungry mob; and in the afternoon the sailors took their landlubber friends on board for a spin, and likely scared them half out of their wits: and how the day was finished by GRYC providing the evening meal -- a good time, etc., etc.
- The 24-hour races at Stormont Y.C. which attracted members of our Junior Squadron to go and compete.
- The construction of the new dock and shack for the "dry" sailors -- and how the dry sailors became less so up in the Clubhouse.
- The institution of "Midnight Madness" by Geoff Erskine -- and the parties which followed in the wee small hours.
- The "clean-up" or "put away" parties, with everyone at least trying to look busy, and how the weather was either beautiful or foul according to the mood of the weatherman: how everyone enjoyed the company of everyone else and the work surprisingly got done.
- How we enjoyed those meals on Wednesday evenings and at the weekends, put up by the concessionaire.
- The break-ins and the pilferings in and around the canteen and the trap we set, only to catch in the net some nude swimmers who came from town late at night to cool off in their male and female birthday suits.
- The competitions for the Young Tray by the Y-Flyers in the early days and how gradually interest waned and the trophy was retired.
- The SAILORAMAs which were instituted by Pat Evans, and you never knew what weird event he'd come up with each year.
- The long up-river races when it was either a drifter or a hell-bent sail.

- The picnics up at Banana Island, with the island almost being sunk by the sheer weight of the visiting sailors.
- Jim Strutt's model of a new clubhouse and the dream of the members, which came to reality: the many hours of back-breaking work and the various skills of the members put at GRVC's disposal: the satisfaction of being able to say "we did it ourselves", and the wonder of it.
- And can you remember?
- When Gord and Geoff Erskine were little tykes and they sat in their Flying Junior just yards from the finish line and watching the other juniors one by one coming up and passing them, and the advice we all yelled to the Erskines from shore - all to no avail.
- When Fraser got mad with the race starter because he was 7 seconds late with his starting signal.
- When one of the three catamarans, up from Britannia, turned turtle and it took three motor boats, in tandem, to turn her right side up.
- When Frances Leeney sat in a Pram in the middle of the river, armed with a candle, and recorded the participants of one of those early night races coming over the finish line.
- When GRVC had a Visitors' Book which was a useful indicator of the visitors who shared our facilities even if only for a brief while: sad abuse of the book caused its withdrawal -- the same type of abuse cost us our suggestion book.
- When the Juniors, all much older now, attended Ainley Jackson's handi-craft classes, making tikkis for sale to raise funds -- and others who joined Judy Crawley's nature rambles around the islands.
- When the start-finish line was manned (pre women's lib) by the ladies -- Jen Quipp, Musie Brown, Jane Lewis and Lynne Grant, to mention a few.
- Do our members realize that Rene Gachnang has been servicing the Club's water supply -- "on" in spring and "off" in the fall, ever since we moved to our island home.
- Who remembers the flower boxes around the old clubhouse? the box supper socials? the Bingo parties? the Square Dances? the Boat Fund?

Obviously other members will be able to recall other memories of growing up but the foregoing will convey by word picture the foundation upon which the G.R.V.C. was built. Now, FAIR WINDS AND A SNUG HARBOUR, to all.