

# GRYC:

## "A casual family club"



By Ernie Mahoney  
OF THE NEWS

There will be a lot of people, new-comers and long-time residents alike who will read this story and not believe it. At least not until they go and see for themselves the two acre island paradise that sits at the end of the Gleneagle Road and is home to the Gatineau River Yacht Club.

The Club was founded almost 25 years ago-in fact it celebrates its Silver Anniversary on Sept. 2, 1987.

Of the five original founders, Pat Evans, Al Ritchens and Gerry Byers are still alive. Ivan Hebert and John Winfield died some years ago. These gentlemen were very far sighted-despite the humble beginnings of the Club in a ramshackle old cottage at the bottom of the Gleneagle Road. The cottage was subsequently sold and renovated and the Club purchased its present island site in 1964 and it hasn't looked back since!

### SPACIOUS

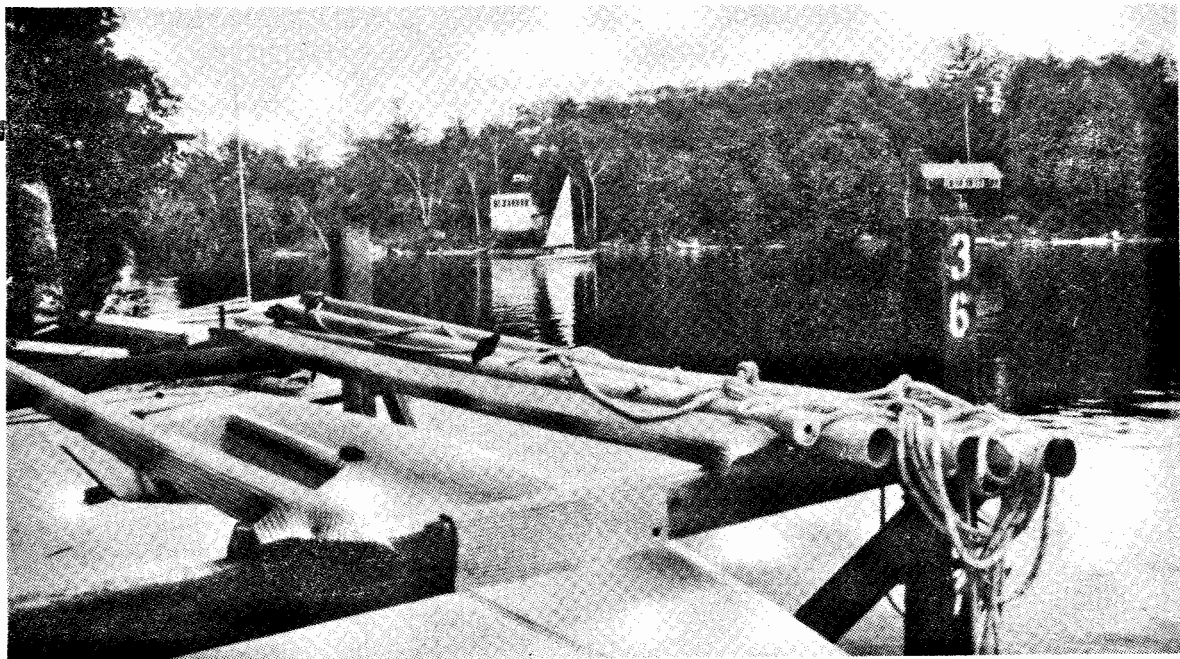
The island, or more correctly, two islands (there's a small, almost unnoticed bridge joining the two) had a large family style cottage on it that served as the club house for a number of years. In 1978 Jim Strutt, long-time club member and Dean of the School of Architecture at Carleton University designed a new structure for the club. It was a major undertaking and completed the following year.

It is indeed a spacious building that well accomodates the activities of a busy family club. The huge deck that faces northwest provides a magnificent view up the Gatineau River. Sunsets from the deck are one of the features of the club that members get as a bonus to their fee.

The major storm that hit West Hull last summer did quite a bit of damage on the island. Over 60 trees were up-rooted and the well-known landmark (or should I say 'water-mark') lighthouse was swept away. Much of the damage has been cleared away and the winner of a competition to re-design the lighthouse will be announced shortly.

The floating walkway to the Club is being partially replaced with newly built pontoons. This is a considerable investment for the Club as each section is worth over \$700. in materials alone-the labour was contributed by the Club members.

Commodore Don Henning said the the GRYC could best be described as "a casual family club." The fee structure itself is kept low to encourage family participation. For example, the family membership fee is only \$220. per year. This covers any number of dependent children up to 19 years, or over 19 if they are attending school. Senior memberships for the over nine-teens is a bargain at \$150. Incidentally, new members are required to pay a \$100., non-refundable "initiation



HARBOUR AT THE GATINEAU RIVER YACHT CLUB ELM Photo

fee" upon being accepted for membership by the Board of Directors.

**Club MEMBERS**

Don Henning said that membership tends to fluctuate, but is now once again on the upswing. He did mention that while the club does not have an open-end membership (the islands can only accommodate just so many) there is still room for new members, who, if they own a boat will be assured a docking spot in the water. This is quite a contrast to the larger area clubs who may well admit new social members, but have a long-long waiting list for dock space. For example, at Britannia Yacht Club, it takes several years to get a slip, or place to dock your boat.

The membership pretty well reflects the family orientation of the club. Of the ninety members, fifteen are senior or single members. About one third are from town. The other two thirds are 'locals.'

The various programs are certainly geared toward the younger set.

The Junior Skipper Program is designed for children aged seven to ten with little or no experience with sailboats and boats in general. It provides basic instruction in water safety, use of sailboats and the enjoyment of water sports.

For kids over nine, the White Sail Program, based on the Canadian Yachting Association and the Quebec Sailing Federation Standards of instruction. After passing the three levels of the White Sail Program, the

kids are pretty proficient sailors that can feel confident (their parents will too) in small craft under

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## LAWN SERVICE



### MOWING

WEEKLY  
OR  
BI-WEEKLY

### FERTILIZING

WEED & FEED  
SPRAYING

827-0254

# GRYC

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## BEAVERS JOIN GRYC

"sailable" conditions. Perhaps it should be noted after this last comment by yours truly, that the sailing instruction for juniors is held in the mor-

at the club.

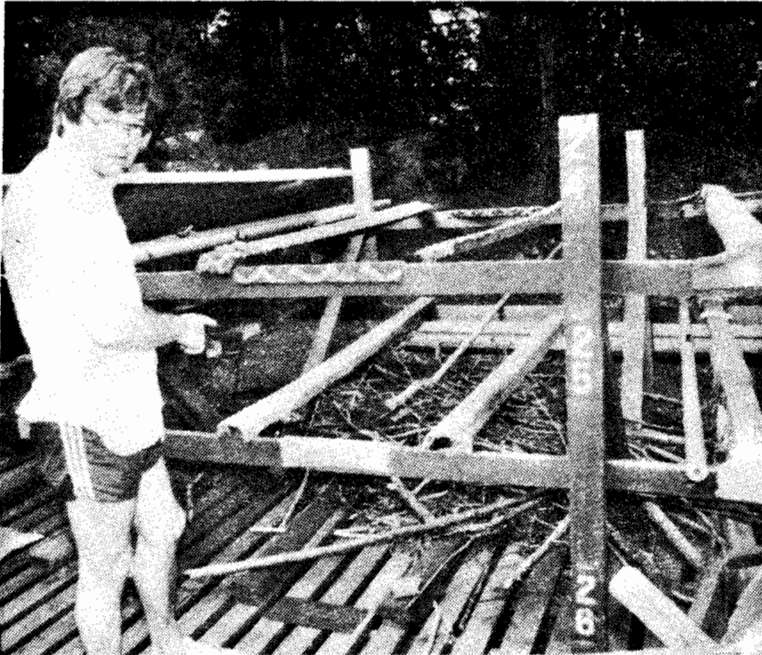
Speaking of the 420's earlier years, it is recalled that the "Club Fleet" consisted of 420's and Albacores, a fine, safe family dingy that was very popular in the late 1960's through the 1970's. It was a grand sight to see 20 or so Albacores moored along the catwalk over to the island.

ed by the Club for the Junior sailors. The fleet of club boats also includes two Code 40 and two 460's plus a windsurfer. These are available for use by members.

The GRYC sailing school instructors have been selected on the basis of their sailing proficiency and their training experience. They are all qualified sailing instructors with pertinent experience.

Don did also stress safety as an important factor in all of the youth programs. The Club has two "crash boats" that are out on the water supervising the sailing and racing classes.

Speaking of classes, the GRYC has introduced a new program this year to initiate adult would-be sailors into the theory and practise of the art. Called an "Invitation to Sailing," it is a splendid program aimed at the first time sailor, who will be provided with the opportunity to explore the use of a sailboat and the basics of boat handling. Open to members and non-members (for a slightly higher fee) the eight hour program will give a dryland tutorial on safety and basic rules to observe to prevent accidents. By the end of the course, students should have a pretty good grounding in sailing basics. Aside from being a pleasant way to spend a week-end or a couple of days, the course will give a person the idea that they are capable and willing to learn all the nitty-gritty needed to be good sailors. By using the Club boats, it is a lot cheaper this way than going out and investing a few thousand in a sail boat and discovering you are incompatible with each other!! (The course costs \$60. for members and \$90. for non-members; fee structure is the same for non-



A beaver has built it's lodge over and under the launching ramp at the club. Commodor Henning wonders how to solve this problem. ELM photo

nings when wind on the Gatineau River is fairly light.

In the afternoon, when a good breeze is not unheard of, the thirteen and overs are out doing the "racing team program."

This program takes the students to Canadian Yachting Association "Bronze IV and V" and "Silver VI" levels. These are very high standards, and even with forty years of sail under this scribes belt, I'd probably have to check the text book to get a passing grade.

## SAILING SCHOOL

The GRYC Sailing School has been in continuous operation since 1964

Incidentally, this was the main mooring for the club and now this has faded away somewhat in favour of private docks being built around the lee-side of the island.

Another boat that was very popular by the "young set" in the early years' of the Club was the 420. A very fast racing machine that originated in France. The 4-Flyer fleet was also much to the fore in those days too. The "Y" is an 18 foot racing scow- that is reputed to go so fast that it could tow a water skier under ideal conditions!

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### SAILING SCHOOL

The GRYC Sailing School has been in continuous operation since 1964 and has trained generations of sailors and swimmers. The Club is proud to have initiated and trained many sailors who have reached the highest level of regional, national and international sailing competitions.

One example that comes to mind is Jim Brown, who frequently figures in NEWS stories for other reasons. He was 1966 Canadian 420 champion and second for the North American title. In 1967, Jim and crew Bruce MacDonald came 33rd in a fleet of 155 in the World Championship. Another GRYC sailor, Mike O'Sullivan won the 1967 Canadian "Y-Flyer" championship. His young son Matthew also was a recent product of the school.

Bruce MacDonald, Jim's crew way back then, is still an active member and sails the only 4-Flyer left

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Well, as a minor digression, this scribe owned "old No. 4" of the first built in the 1950's. Although it was indeed fast, even laden with several cases of 24 and numerous pretty girls- it wasn't really much of a match for the newer sleek "Flying Dutchmen."

The fashion in boats changes over the years too. For example, the Laser is now the "in" boat at the Club. They don't come cheap, but dollar-for-dollar, they are pretty "hot" boats and give a great thrill to the experienced (and not so) sailor. They are mostly "dry-sailed," so the impressive number of boats at their moorings no longer greets the visitor to the island.

### NOT HEAVY

Don Henning commented that the junior sailors really covet Laser sailing, but that they just aren't heavy enough to keep them up-right. The "Pram," a standard training boat is u-

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The Club has a program for would-be racers too. This is designed to give "semi-experienced" sailors a basic in racing rules, tactics, and of course actual races over the Club course.

### SWIMMING PROGRAM

Perhaps one of the very important Club services is the kid's swimming program. Over the years, hundreds of youngsters have learned to swim at the Club. Instruction is offered in eight different levels. Bronze Medallion training and the Red Cross swimming program are also provided. This year the Club has introduced the Esso swimming program for advanced students who are interested in other water sports.

Incidentally, while the media is currently full of horror stories about beaches

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being closed, the water quality of the Gatineau is pretty constant as "safe recreational water." The Club does regular tests to monitor this status.

Many other adult social activities are carried on throughout the summer. These include several parties and general fun activities. Don mentioned the "Moon-light Madness" regatta-non-serious night racing- once won by a chap who had a lighted candle on his bow that never went out!

Another highlight of the Club season is the Annual Invitational Regatta for Albacore and Lasers to be held June 28-29.

There's also an open house on July 1st, so people can come down and see for themselves what the Club has to offer.

The Gatineau River Yacht Club is indeed an institution in the community. Members should well

take pride that theirs is such a wonderful facility for kids and adults alike to enjoy the benefits of the great Gatineau River. They are well to be envied.

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## RESTAURANT

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assurances" and further that he has the impression that; "There's a good deal of good will" surrounding the operation and those running it.

Also in the letter, Mr. Gordon explained that the Regie des Permis d'alcohol had an incorrect address on the notice they published. This was described as a clerical error which the Regie will correct immediately.

According to the letter, the main aim of Mr. Gordon is to "assuage some local fears" and to answer the community's concerns. He ends with the following statement; "We look forward to a long and cordial relationship with the community of which we are a part."