

Confirmation of 1877 as the starting date of Rochester Yacht Club is contained in the Wm. F. Peck *History of Rochester, New York* published in 1884 which states that,

In the course of the summer (1877) the Rochester Yacht Club, which had been organized in the spring, built a clubhouse at Summerville, and had a regatta on the lake.

The April 14, 1877 edition of the U&A describes the early activities of this newly formed club as follows:

For some days various discussion has passed among yachtsmen in reference to erecting the clubhouse at the Lake House. This house was deemed absolutely necessary to preserve the existence and personnel of the club. It was thought that, although not yacht owners, several of our businessmen would be willing to help such an enterprise - if for no other reason than to encourage the young men in turning their attention

to the healthy active pursuit. Several of them, on being interviewed, expressed their sympathy in the movement and agreed to help the project along. Last evening a meeting was held in the offices of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the plan thoroughly discussed.

It was agreed to raise \$1500 to put up a two-story house and furnish it. The land being a free gift to the club, no money was needed for that purpose. At the meeting several different ideas were presented, among others that it was necessary to interest the ladies in this amusement and, in the coming house, a large piazza will be built on purpose to accommodate ladies and afford them a comfortable location to view the regatta.

In May it was reported that:

The work on the clubhouse will be pushed forward with the utmost rapidity and it is expected that everything will be shipshape by the first week in June. The position selected for the house is one of the most beautiful, and on the Lake, and commands a magnificent view from all sides.

The exact location of the first RYC clubhouse is uncertain but it is likely that it was located on the east bank of the river, somewhat north of the present clubhouse. One report describes it as being on "two lots, an L-shaped plot facing the beach front and 4th Street in Summerville." And so a clubhouse was built. On June 25, 1877 the U&A reported the opening in some detail, as follows:

On Saturday afternoon the new home belonging to the Rochester Yacht Club was formally opened with appropriate ceremonies. A large number of invitations had been issued and in the afternoon the guests began to assemble and by 6 o'clock in the evening over 500 people must have been in the house.

The building is a very large one, measuring 88' long and 25' wide, two stories in height, finished on the top with a deck roof over which spreads a handsome awning, thus making a most delightful cool place to sit and enjoy the beautiful scenery, both lake and inland, that surrounds the house on all sides. The plan of the house was designed by A. J. Warner and built by Frank J. Downing, who is entitled to any amount of credit for the rapidity and solidity with which he completed it. The first post was driven on the 14th of May and 30 days afterwards the house stood completed with the exception of the painting, done by James Gosnell.

In the afternoon the guests amused themselves by strolling about the beach or sailing in some of the numerous yachts belonging to the club, the owners placing them at the disposal of those who wished to enjoy the most enjoyable of amusements. A great many of the fair sex who had never previously ventured in a sailboat, encountered the dangers bravely and on their return voted yachting a great success. Now that the club is underway, it is well that the public should understand its objectives. It must not be supposed that its members consist simply of young men who go down to the lake to have a good time, but it has among its stockholders a large number of our leading businessmen and it is the intention of the board of directors to so conduct the institution that it will prove one of the quietest and pleasant places of resort for ladies. None but stockholders and their friends have any privileges of the club and it will be kept strictly private.

There are many ladies who would like to take their children and spend the day at the lake and this house is intended for that purpose. A complete kitchen has been arranged in which the meals will be served on the most reasonable terms and the services of a most excellent cook have been engaged for the season. The concern is under the stewardship of George Donaldson, formerly of the Stutson House, who will see that every guest is well cared for. A place of this kind has long been needed, and now that it is open it will no doubt meet with the greatest success, and the members will earn the thanks of their lady friends for providing them with a comfortable place to spend some of the best days that are approaching.

At the opening on Saturday it was the unanimous sentiment that nothing finer could have

been undertaken. This feeling might in some measure have been superinduced by the very handsome supper served by Teall and the rippling of Schaick's orchestra, that enabled those present to pass away a very happy evening in dancing or sitting on the veranda listening to the music, but if it is allowable to judge of a first performance, there is no reason to doubt that the directors fully understand how to manage the club and preside over its destinies in the most satisfactory manner.

In this connection the courtesy of Superintendent Burrows, who kindly placed a special train at the disposal of the club to bring guests home, should not be forgotten and the thanks of the members are extended.