

This article, courtesy of the Historical Committee, is from the Rochester Yacht Club's 1952 Year Book, "Running Lights."

ROCHESTER YACHT CLUB CELEBRATES ITS

75th Anniversary

OUR CLUB had its beginning in 1877. On April 25th of that year thirteen gentlemen organized themselves as directors of a society the object being "the encouragement and promotion of yachting". On May 9th of that year officers elected were: Pres., W. Lincoln Sage; Vice Pres., Frank S. Upton; Sec., Edward W. Willard; Treas., J. C. Tone; Comm., Edward Clifton and Vice Comm., Frank E. Woodworth.

A clubhouse was erected on two lots, an L-shaped plot facing the beach front and 4th Street in Summerville. The building was 83 x 25 ft., two stories in height, and was formally opened with appropriate ceremonies on June 23, 1877. Newspaper accounts reported that a regatta open to all Monroe County boats was held in July. It is interesting to note that a predecessor organization, Genesee Yacht Club, as early as 1874, listed some names appearing later in the organization of the Rochester Yacht Club.

Historical record has a way of leaving gaps in factual recording, and somewhere the first R.Y.C. slipped into oblivion.

In November and December of 1886 a new group, except for George H. Newell, interested in forming a yacht club, made plans and elected officers. Nine men as directors for the first year filed incorporation papers for the Rochester Yacht Club, again its object "to increase the interest in matters appertaining to yachting, and encourage the construction, ownership, and sailing of yachts." The certificate was executed April 4, 1887. George H. Newell was Commodore. Vice Comm., Matthew

Cartwright; Sec., Charles A. Worts; Treas., Edmund Occumpaugh; Capt., Edward N. Walbridge.

Land was leased on the east bank of the Genesee River, and the roster showed 117 members, 15 sail yachts, and 8 steam yachts. The anchorage was just south of the inner end of the east pier. A sunken crib extending into the river gave some shelter from the lake.

About 1892 a clubhouse was secured on the west bank, just north of the present Port Terminal property. The club had grown to 157 members, 29 sailing yachts and 7 steam or naphtha yachts. Such well known sailing yachts as *Madge*, *Majel*, *Velnette*, and *Nox* appeared on the roster.

Another move found the clubhouse now on the lakeshore just east of the east pier. This was 1902, and again the membership had grown to 250 members and 50 non-resident members. This was the era of the Canada's Cup.

In 1899, the *Genesee*, sailed under Chicago Y. C. colors defeated the R. C. Y. C. defender *Beaver*. *Genesee* had been built for R.Y.C. and was selected after elimination races in Chicago. The Cup remained in Chicago, and in 1901 Chicago's *Cadillac* lost it to *Invader* of R. C. Y. C. at Chicago. Thus the cup came back to Lake Ontario, and in 1903 at Toronto, our *Irondequoit* defeated the R. C. Y. C. *Strathcona*, and brought it for the first time to R. Y. C. In 1905 *Iroquois* of R. Y. C. retained the trophy against R. C. Y. C.'s *Temeraire*, and finally in 1907 *Adele*, R. C. Y. C. made an unsuccessful attempt to regain the cup against the sleek *Seneca* of R. Y. C.

No further races were held until 1930 when in 8 metre yachts, by a change in deed of gift, the late William P. Barrows in *Thisbe* defeated *Quest*. *Conewago*, sailed by W. V. (Rooney) Castle both in 1932 and 1934 defeated a new *Invader* of R. C. Y. C. and no further contests for this historic trophy have been held since then.

Returning to 1908, after the successful Canada's Cup years a plan was initiated to dredge a yacht basin where our present basin is located. Some work was done about 1909 and lockers were provided at this site. The area was formerly a swamp, and by continued dredging and enlarging, the area of the present basin was provided.

In 1921 the present clubhouse was built and formally opened. The facilities provided ample room, and large regattas have been accommodated such as

the Canada's Cup races of 1930, '32 and '34, the Lake Sailing Skiff Assoc. in 1931, the International Star Class World's Championship in 1936, L. Y. R. A. regatta 1937. Also 14 International Championships in 1948 and Star District Championships in 1940, 1941 and 1947 and of course the Rochester Races of the past four years.

Beginning in 1943, Lake Ontario has had higher water than many years previous. This has finally caused us to raise our driveway and parking lot about 18 inches and this year the clubhouse has been raised 3 ft. A concrete floor has been installed replacing all former wooden construction, and a completely new ground floor layout has been provided. The 235 members, of all classifications, look forward to a bright future for the Club on this occasion of the 75th anniversary of our founding.



View of the old RYC club house, looking east from the Summerville Pier, December, 1913.