

THE HISTORY OF COBOURG HARBOUR

COBOURG YACHT CLUB



Edmond Gendron, 1965

The Cobourg Yacht Club began as the Great Pine Ridge Marine Association with a steering committee chaired by Dr. Edmond Gendron.

The first active duty of the embryo club was to host the crews of the visiting yachts, which that year had selected Cobourg as the end of the 'first leg' of the Freeman Cup Race. Thus was launched the present Yacht Club. The Charter was granted by Provincial Secretary, John Yaremko, on September 17, 1965. Edmond Gendron became the first Commodore of the new club.

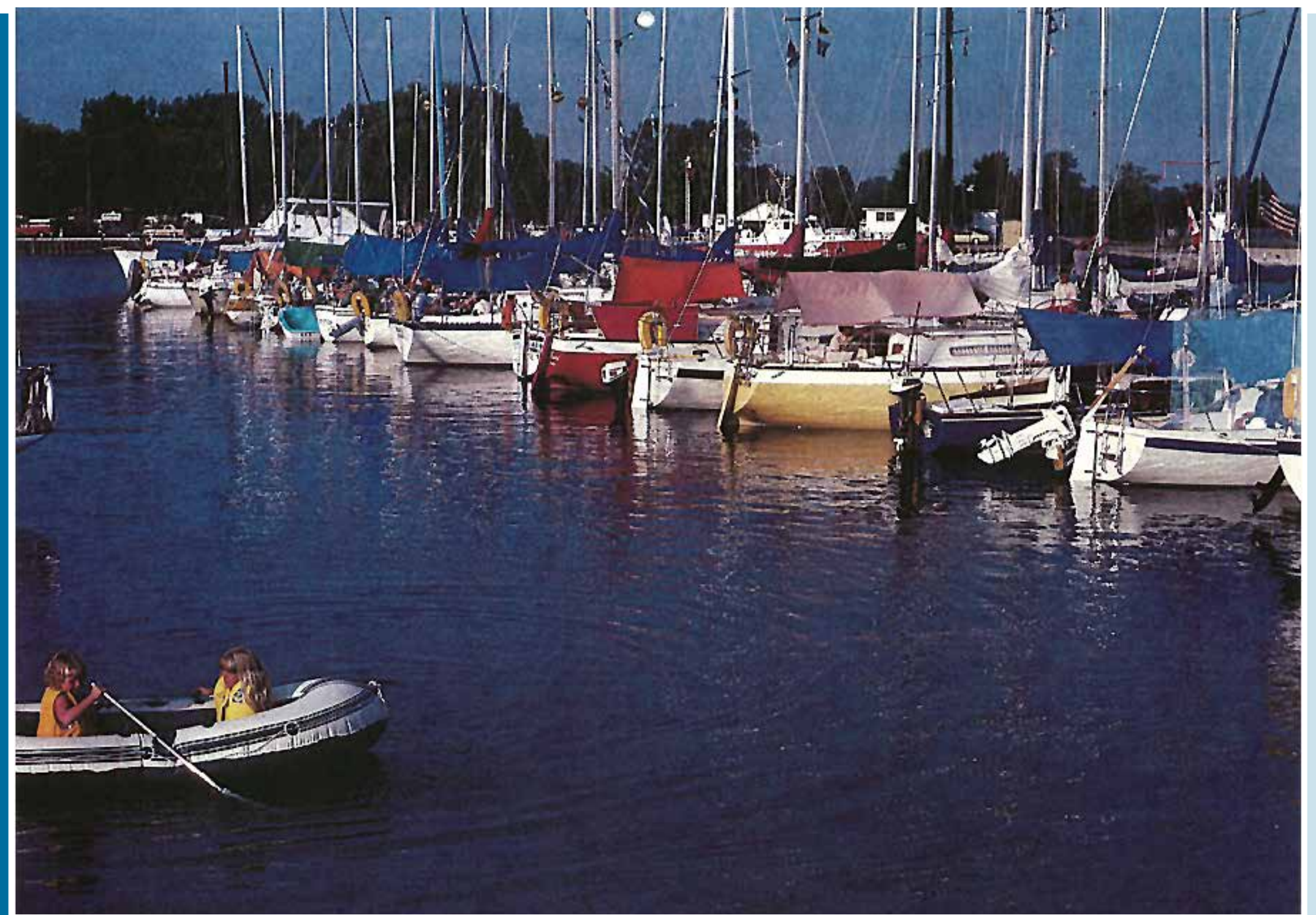
In 1967, surrounded by oil tanks, coal piles and broken down jetties, the first CYC clubhouse was erected, with indoor plumbing and a fully equipped galley installed a little later. Also that year, Commodore David Stewart challenged the Port Hope Club to an annual race between the two towns. The famous brass cuspidor was named the *Centennial Cup*. This classic relic has changed hands many times over the years.

That same year the Cobourg Yacht Club purchased a steel-hulled boat as their safety and rescue boat and named it the *Red Barren* – 'Barren' by name but not by nature. Through rain, fog, and sometimes no wind this boat towed sailing boats back from races. It was also used as a rescue boat in all kinds of weather conditions. The *Red Barren* was the only rescue boat in the harbour until the Coast Guard moved into the harbour in the late 1970s.

As the membership grew, so did the choice of boats. The old wooden Blue Jays gave way to the more sophisticated and faster fiberglass Albacores, CL-16s, Lasers, Catamarans, Day Sailors and Keel Boats. The old mooring slips in the inner harbour amongst the pilings were abandoned in favour of a compound and keelboat moorings.



Improvements made to the small clubhouse, permitted more ambitious activities including barbecues, pot luck suppers, and hosting sailing functions such as "*steak and sail*", sailing picnics, moonlight sails and corn roasts for visiting sailors.



In 1975 Sir Sandford Fleming College, in cooperation with the Cobourg Yacht Club, introduced a Sailing School which has proved an overwhelming success over the years. The School has produced many competent sailors who have participated successfully in regattas. In the 1970s, fifty Wrenettes, Navy League Cadets and Sea Cadets learned to sail courtesy of the CYC. Today, Adult Dinghy courses and Adult Keelboat courses are offered as well as courses at all levels for young adults.



The club has not been without its moments of anxiety with high lake levels and vicious storms taking their toll over the years, forcing the relocation of the compound several times. In 1977 a severe storm did extensive damage to several boats as they were torn from their moorings and swept onto the beach or hurled against the west breakwater rocks.