

THE HISTORY OF COBOURG HARBOUR

THE RENAISSANCE CONT.

In 1991, two of the remaining oil tanks closest to the shore were removed by massive cranes and loaded on a barge to be scrapped. There were still two tanks left further inshore, but this did not deter the dawn of the “Hoffman Years” and the area's first condominium development.



Developer James Hoffman was a visionary and had concepts of urban planning that were ahead of his time. He stated that *“Cobourg today is literally returning to its waterfront for renewed economic stimulus, but now in the form of residential and commercial development and the emerging tourism industry.”* He further remarked that *“remediating the lands which contained*

petroleum, hydrocarbons and heavy metals was surprisingly the least difficult thing to do. Land acquisition, meeting with area stakeholders, public disclosures and education regarding the environmental conditions of the land, and gaining financial support were more difficult challenges.”

The developer's estimated clean up costs were \$2 million and Cobourg spent an additional \$3 million over three years from 1995 to 1998 on roads and changing north-south links. The fact that Hoffman developed the residential area in phases probably explains why there is no consistency in condo design.

The Diversey Water Technologies Plant was in the process of closing its doors when Mayor Joan Chalovich and her Council entered into negotiations with the company to purchase the land. In 2001 the Town finalized the purchase for \$2 but the remediation of the site carried a \$1.5 million price tag. The cleaned up area is now home to the Rotary Harbourfront Park.



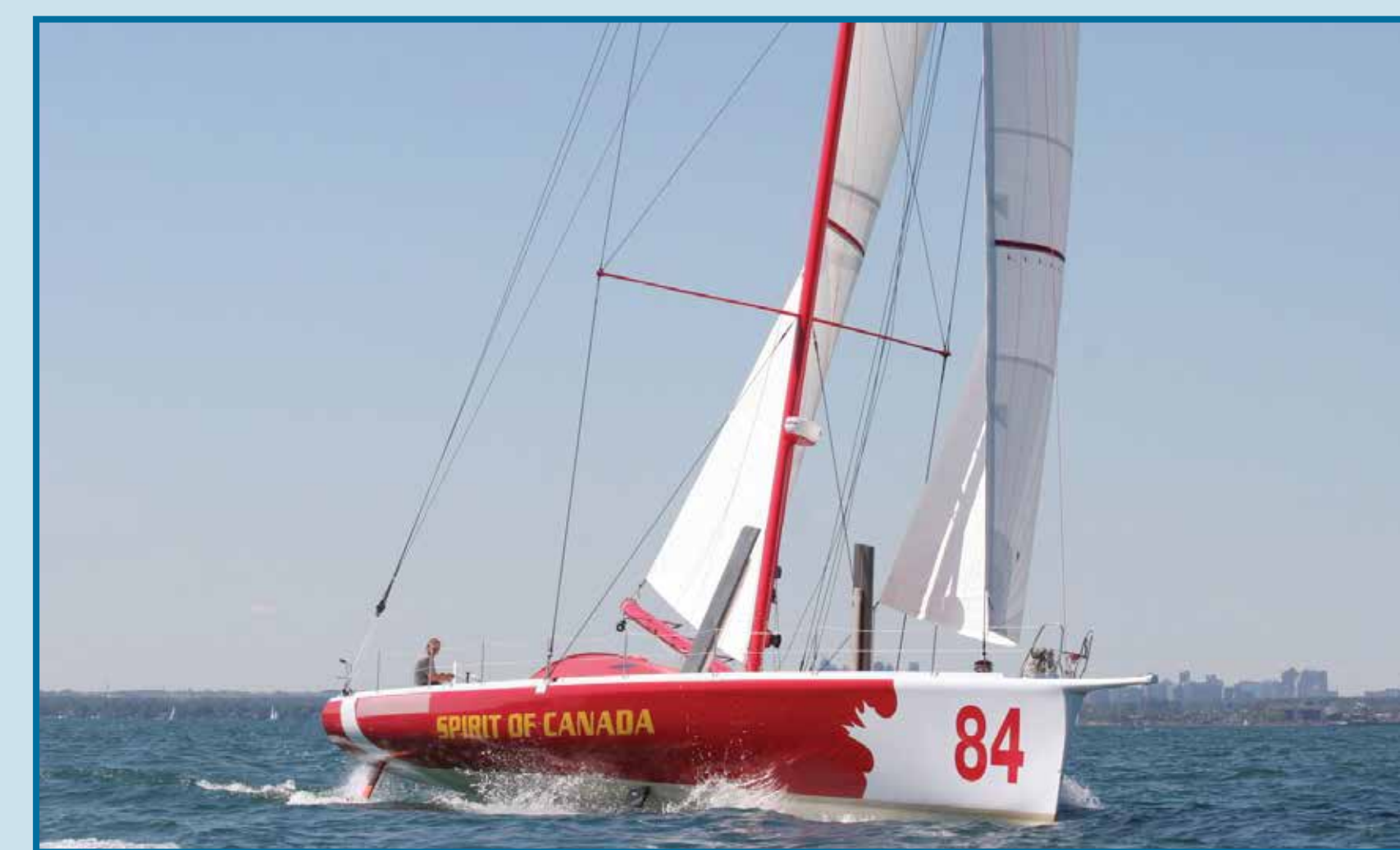
Rotary Harbourfront Park



Boats in Cobourg Harbour, c2008
(Credit: Bobcatnorth, Flickr.com)

The transformation of the harbour and waterfront was now almost complete with a beautiful setting and a mix of residential and commercial development as originally envisioned.

In September 2006 it provided the backdrop for the launch of the *Spirit of Canada*, a single-handed ocean racer built in Cobourg by Derek Hatfield. Hatfield and the *Spirit of Canada* placed third in the 2010-2011 version of the prestigious *VELUX 5 Oceans Race*.



Skipper Derek Hatfield onboard his yacht, Spirit of Canada preparing for the VELUX 5 OCEANS around the world race.