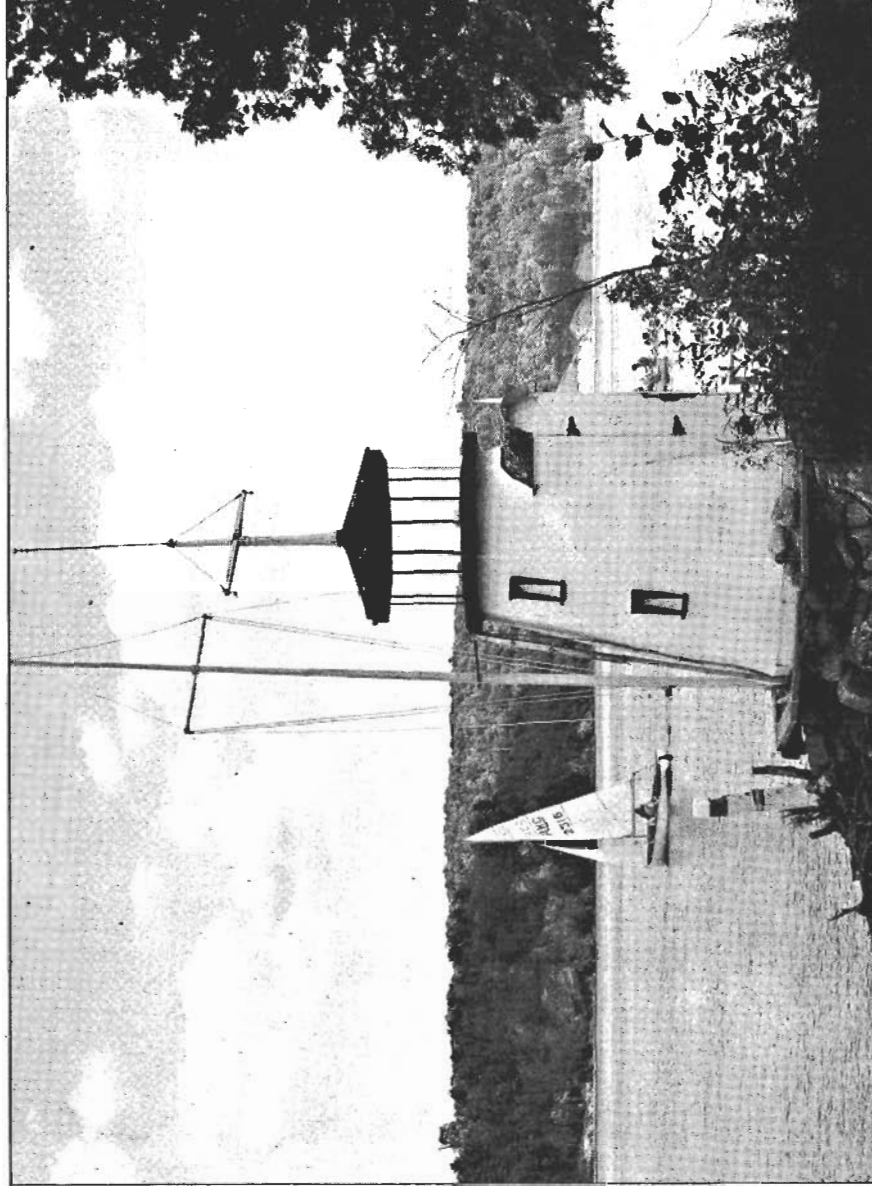


Way We Were

Five sailing buddies, an island and a yacht club is born



The Club's first lighthouse in the early 1960s, a starting point for boat races.

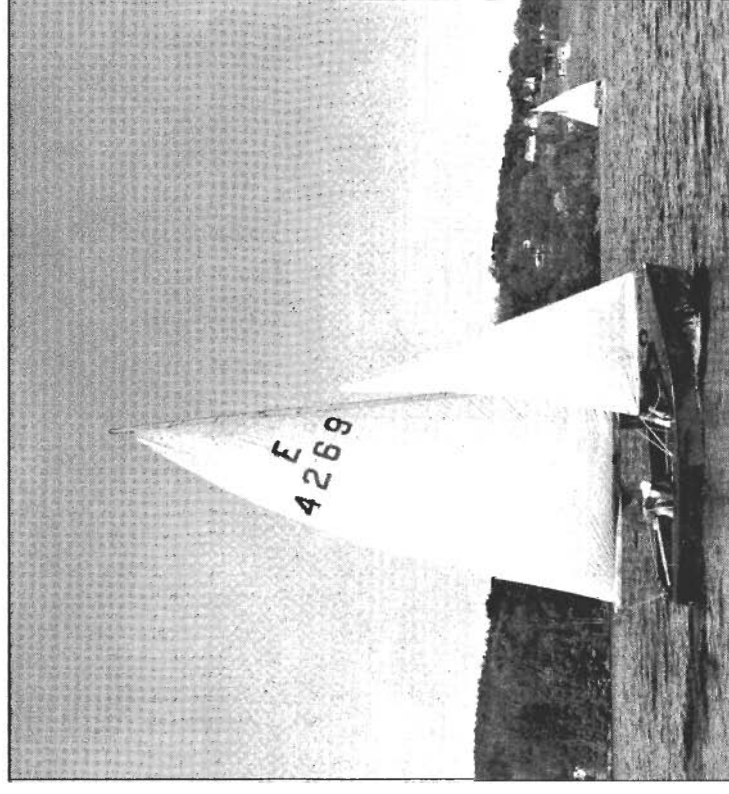
Photo courtesy Gatineau Valley Historical Society.

By Louise Schwartz

At one time, sailing on the Gatineau River would have been a risky business. Until 1926 this narrow river had thunderous waterfalls and rock-filled rapids. After its damming for a major hydroelectric project, the river was broader and slow-flowing.

36 years before a sailing club was formed. In September 1962, a group of five sailors met around a kitchen table in Chelsea. Gerry Byers, Pat Evans, Ivan Herbert, Allan Richens and John Winfield were all landlocked locals who moored together on a log boom in Gleneagle Bay. In one (probably long) evening, they

so popular that by the following spring some 90 members had already signed up, doubling to 181 by the end of that first season. Today, 47 years after the club's creation, membership is capped at 300 and there is a waiting list. Allan Richens is the only one of the original five left. Still a resident of Gleneagle and ac-



Above: Crew Joyce Richens with skipper Allan Richens sailing their Enterprise with Kirk's Ferry in the background, fall 1962.

Photo courtesy of Joyce Richens.

Below: (left to right) Manager Nick Anning with founder Allan Richens and member Erik Rask at the Gatineau River Yacht Club, October 2009.

Photo courtesy of Mike Beedell.



