

Part 2

The Clyde Canoe Club

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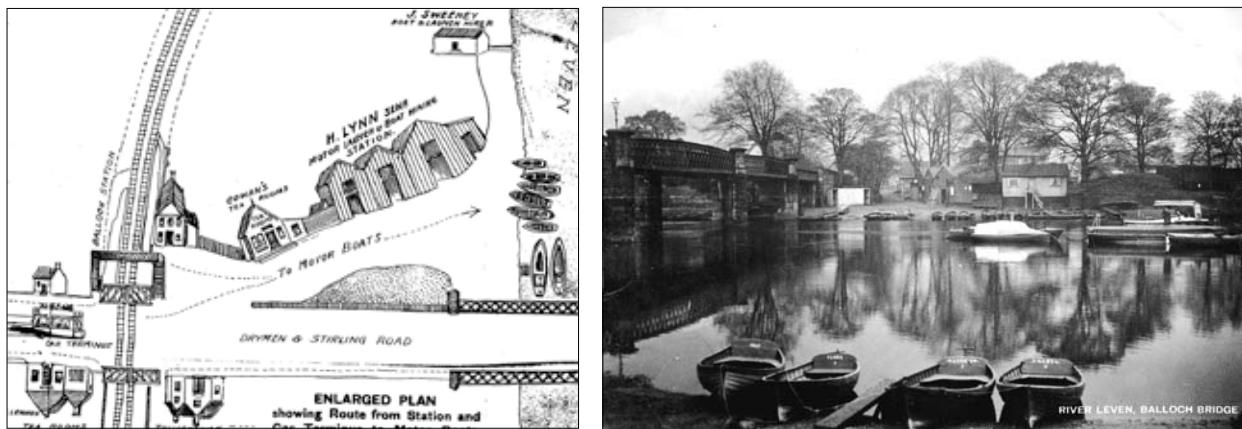
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‘The Queen’ on Loch Lomond at Ardlui, c. 1910.

20. The Club on the River Leven at Balloch



Hand drawn map shows Lynn's boating station with sheds on the west bank of the river Leven at Balloch Bridge. The CCC rented the upper shed to keep their canoes and a pc from c.1920 shows the sheds also.

As has been said Loch Lomond had long been recognised as an excellent canoeing venue and the old Club had made frequent trips to the Loch. However Club tradition has it that it was the announcement by the British Canoe Association that it intended to hold its 1898 annual regatta on Loch Lomond which made the CCC members decide to move there themselves. Any reference to a BCA Regatta on Loch Lomond in 1898 has proved pretty elusive so far although a photograph showing a "finishing committee of 2" suggests that not only did a Regatta take place but that the CCC was involved in it in some way. The Club had planned to hold some races at the same time as the BCA meet, but there is no record of the CCC participating in it other than the photo. This may well have been because of a clash of dates with holidays or it may be that the BCA did not welcome any local intrusion in their event. What is agreed, however, is the understanding that the BCA was coming to Loch Lomond in 1898 seems to have been the CCC's main motivation in deciding to set up a base on the Loch. In 1899 the Club moved to temporary accommodation on the River Leven at Balloch.

The Club's base remained on the banks of the Leven for about a decade. The members started a search for some land on which to erect a new clubhouse, but as an interim measure they offered the firm of Henry Lynn & Sons at Balloch the sum of £6 per annum for the exclusive use of his "upper shed" in which to store the club's canoes. Henry Lynn & Sons was at that time based only on the west bank of the Leven and the "upper shed" would have stood close to the edge of the present car park above the yard of what is now Sweeney's Cruises, backing onto what was then Balloch railway station's goods yard. It therefore had the advantage of being very convenient for the transport of boats by rail from Glasgow



Nellie on Loch Lomond.

Obviously the CCC wanted premises of their own and started a search at the southern end of Loch Lomond for land on which they could erect their own Clubhouse. In the meantime the members resumed the normal activities of a canoe sailing club. In the first season, 1898, the Club attracted 19 members with 18 canoes. The new constitution called for races to be held the first Saturday of every month during the racing season. However, the change of membership and location did not change the fact that the members still preferred cruising to racing, and a typical entry for the races had only the 4/5 canoes of the 3 Yuile brothers, J. A. McNeil and George Ure taking part. In the early years the races were usually won by David Yuile in his canoe "Nellie" which was the successor to the Ludith, with which he had begun the revival of

the Club. The Nellie was built in 1898 and relative to most other Club canoes was quite large – 17ft 6 inches by 4ft 8 inches. The fact that she dominated the Club races for the next 15 years probably didn't help the entry either.



Ralph H. Yuile, club secretary for many years with Joe Hunter pictured 1901.

Many of the members who were prominent at the Club for many years in the 20th century were already around at the time of the revival, or soon afterwards. They included David Yuile's younger brothers Ralph, who was Secretary for many years, and Harry, J. A. MacNeill who was active at the Club for 50 years serving as Captain, Commodore and Honorary Commodore and George Ure who became a canoe designer of repute. Some members of the original Club also returned to the fray on the Loch in addition to the aforementioned Horatio Bromhead, including Wilfrid Smith, who had a credible claim to be the Club's founder, and who was still taking the occasional paddle at the Club almost until his death, aged 80, in 1930 as well as James Coats; both Coats and Smith had been listed as founder members in April 1873.

21. The River Leven Clubhouse, 1904

The search for ground to rent at Balloch eventually bore fruit in 1904 when Luss Estates (i.e. the Colquhoun family), who owned the land on the east bank of the River Leven between Balloch Bridge and the Dennistoun Brown's Balloch Castle estate, agreed to rent them land on which to erect a wooden boathouse. It was duly built by a local joiner called Davidson at a cost of £78, and so although the Club only rented the ground from Colquhoun, it owned the actual clubhouse building. The Clubhouse stood within a few feet of the "White Dyke", which was the southern boundary of Balloch Castle Estate, and sufficiently far back from the water's edge both to avoid flooding (just) and also to avoid being seen as an obstruction to any potential riverside right-of-way, which was something of a hot potato on the banks of the Leven in the first decade of the 20th century. In to-day's terms, it stood as near to the top of the present Moss o' Balloch slipway into the Leven as makes no difference.



River Leven Clubhouse and White Dyke can just be seen in this early 1900's postcard.

This Clubhouse, which had a smart external appearance, was considerably smaller than the former Clubhouse at Rosneath, and although it had room to berth 24 canoes, the Club continued to use Lynn's shed on the other bank of the Leven for storage until it moved to the Drumkinnon Bay Clubhouse in 1907. The River Leven building was the CCC's headquarters for only 3 years but it proved quite adequate and was certainly an enormous improvement on renting a shed. There was also ample ground behind it on which the members could camp. Luss Estates seem to have been a perfectly reasonable landlord in the 10 years in which the Club rented the ground, and the Club never came under any pressure from them to move. Indeed, even after the Club had moved to the much larger new Clubhouse at Drumkinnon Bay it retained the River Leven clubhouse for storage, although when it burned down on the evening of Saturday February 14th 1914, it was not replaced.



Boathouse just built with launching ramp still to be added.



As luck would have it, the Club probably moved out just about the right time because in later years the launching area for the Club canoes would have been surrounded by moored boats and cabin cruisers, but as pictures of the time show, around 1900 there were only about half a dozen boats moored on that bank between Balloch Bridge and the Loch. The only slight draw back was the half mile or so paddle up to the mouth of the Leven against the current in what is, locally at least, reputed to be the second fastest flowing river in Scotland but the canoes could often hitch a lift from a passing launch or cruiser as a contemporary photo shows opposite.

The members were also lucky to be moving out before a number of riverside protests got under way in earnest; these were generically called "Rights of Ways" protests, but each had a different background.



Camping in the field above the river Leven boathouse c.1910. Better known today as the Moss O'Balloch. The 'white dyke' seen here, extended into the river and was built to keep the public out of Estate land.



The riverside clubhouse roof can be seen top centre of this picture taken 1911 at time of the protests.

22. The Rights of Way Protests

Any location on the Leven's banks at Balloch from 1905–12 would have had the potential to involve the Club in one of a number of rights-of-way protests, and pictures from the 1911 "Tea Boat" protests suggest that the Clubhouse, by now only being used for storage, was at least physically at the centre of one of the demonstrations. These protest meetings often attracted crowds of 7,000–10,000 to the river banks over 6 years or so and although the subject of each varied, the fundamental issue was always the same: public access to the shores of Loch Lomond and the perceived (often real) efforts on the part of local landowners to deny the public access. They invariably caught the mood and the sympathy of not only the Vale people but also outdoor enthusiasts from Glasgow and Clydeside, who had developed a justifiable distaste for and reflex suspicion of the big local landowners and their acquisitive ways.

The White Dyke alongside which the Clubhouse stood had been a bone of contention since it was built about 50 years before, astride an ancient track leading up the east side of Loch Lomond to the first Balloch Castle and on to the ancient hamlet of the Aber. Fishermen always objected to the Dyke and a hole was made in it quite regularly to give them access to the east bank up to the mouth of the river. However, the Clubhouse didn't obstruct anyone and neither the Club nor Clubhouse were ever a target or subject of protest, although their landlord, Luss Estates, which belonged to the Colquhouns was. In fact the 1911 protest had nothing to do with the White Dyke and pictures are quite deceptive, because the crowds weren't as near the building as the picture above suggests.

23. Canoes in the Revived Club 1898–1914

The passion of members for designing and building their own canoes was not unique to the founder members and indeed it was a continuing feature of the Club up until the outbreak of WW1, although it is also the case that many of the canoes were built by McAlister's of Dumbarton. Members like Spence, Yuile, McNeil and Ure earned national reputations with their expertise in designing sailing canoes in the approximate period 1895–1914. Canoe design was evolutionary and was regularly updated by canoeists at large and members of the CCC in particular. By 1910 cruising canoes carried up to 150 square feet of sail rigged as yawls, they had metal centre plates, built in buoyancy tanks fore and aft, a cockpit with a flat floor on which the canoeist could sleep under a boom tent and were a seaworthy craft which could cope with quite severe conditions. The early years of the 20th century in particular saw considerable development in canoe design. In 1901 for the first time, the Club produced a written definition for a class of sailing canoe to be used for competition between members and appointed a club measurer to ensure that member's canoes complied with the definition.

In 1908 the Royal Canoe Club sent the Club a discussion paper on some new canoe class specifications, including their new ideas for "A" class canoes. The Club considered these new specifications very carefully but decided that the proposed new rules were too biased in favour of racing canoes and did not take the CCC's cruising conditions into account. In particular the CCC thought it essential to insist on buoyancy tanks at both ends, so the Club Committee chaired by J.A. McNeil produced its own classifications and duly adopted them in the spring of 1909. These new classifications defined 3 canoe classes A, B and C with dimensions being the determinant about the class of each canoe, while a number of common requirements covered all 3 classes.

24. CCC Canoe Specifications 1909

"The common requirements: the canoe shall be seaworthy, sharp at each end, decked, the centre board and rudder shall be removable, and liftable above the keel. She shall be capable of carrying cruising and camping gear in a shipshape manner and shall have a space free from obstruction sufficient for the owner to sleep in. No deck seat shall extend beyond the side. At each end she shall have watertight compartments of a combined airspace sufficient (on an actual test if called for) to float all deadweight and crew when the central compartment is full of water.

The Required Dimensions for each class were as follows:

Table of Maximum Dimensions

Class	Length Over All	Beam	Section Rise at 2/3 beam	Fixed Draft	Total Sail Area	Main Sail Area
A	18 ft	4 ft	10 inches	10 inches	150 sq ft	125 sq ft
B	18 ft	3 ft	10 inches	10 inches	85 sq ft	75 sq ft
C	18 ft	2 ft 6 inches	10 inches	10 inches	65 sq ft	55 sq ft

Minimum Dimensions

Class	Plank	Deck	Bulkheads	Inside depth gwie to gbd	Well Length	Side Deck Width
A	1/4 inch	3/16 inch	3/8 inch	12 inches	4 ft	10 inches
B	1/4 inch	3/16 inch	3/8 inch	10 inches	3 ft 6 inch	8 inches
C	3/16 inch	1/8 inch	3/8 inch	9 inches	3 ft	7 inches

Tanks may be substituted for bulkheads. Classes B and C shall be manned by one person only. Class A shall be manned by only one person when in competition with other classes.

Nothing in these rules will affect adversely any canoe owned prior to 1909. Any canoe conforming to the letter of these rules and evading the spirit will be disqualified. The restrictions are intended to exclude racing machines and encourage canoes of a good cruising type."

The first purpose of these rules was to ensure safety in the build both in terms of the watertight compartments and also in the strength of materials being used. The second aim was to achieve uniformity of build and thus have cruising canoes within each class which could compete fairly with each other in races, with success being based on sailing skills rather than the boat. Reading the rules to-day one is struck by the simplicity and clarity of the language used and the comprehensiveness of the specifications. There is no real scope for ambiguity but recognising that where there is competition you will always get someone trying to bend a rule, unforeseen loopholes are closed off with the statement "disqualification for trying to evade the spirit of the rules". Hopefully, competition would depend on the skill and fitness of the canoeist.

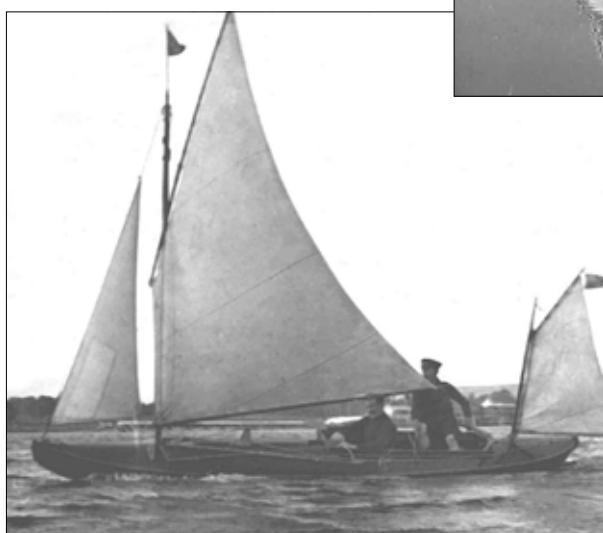
J. A. McNeil was not the only recognised sailing canoe design expert at the time, George Ure was another. He designed and sailed his own yacht Betty with great success, but his best design was probably Darthula



George Ure, boat designer.

which was built and sailed by R. B. Brown. The Darthula design was published and critiqued in Yachting Monthly, in which the Club regularly featured. Ure took exception to some of the comments made by the editor, feeling that it was being criticised for not being something that it had never set out to be, but the editor was certainly not looking for a fight as he showed a few months later when the magazine ran a canoe design competition. So many enthusiasts were coming up with new canoe designs and having them printed by Yachting Monthly that in December 1909 the magazine decided to get out ahead of the fashion and it held a competition for new canoe designs. No less than 22 new separate canoe types were submitted to this competition. Yachting Monthly wisely deferred to experience and invited the committees of both the Royal Canoe Club and the CCC to judge the entries. A division of labour based on expertise was decided upon with the RCC judging the racing canoes and the CCC evaluating the cruising canoes.

Although no one knew it at the time, this was the peak of sailing canoe development as far as the Club was concerned. Within a few years the First World War had broken out and more important matters took precedence. After the War, sailing canoe design went off in an increasingly different direction which over a period of 15 years or so greatly increased the emphasis on the sail at the expense of the paddle, with fundamental consequences for the club.



The Darthula at Drumkinnon Bay, wind in her sails and above, dead calm.

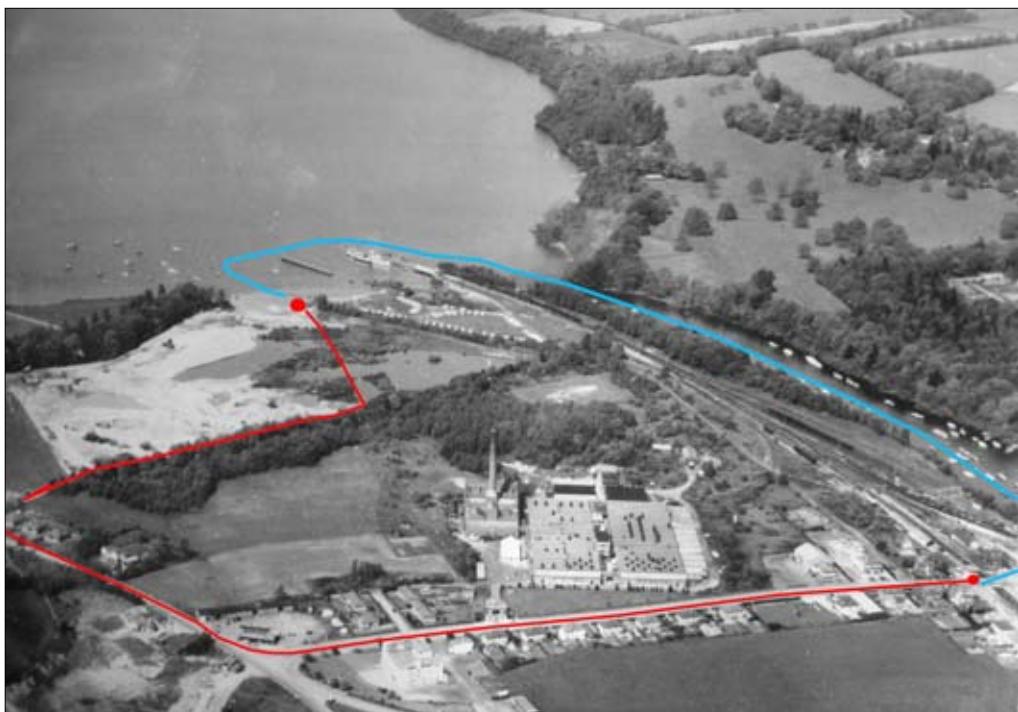
25. The New Clubhouse at Drumkinnon Bay



Hand-coloured original picture of the Clubhouse from archive collection.

The search for a long-term site for a new Clubhouse which met all of the Club's recreational needs continued even after the opening of the Clubhouse on the River Leven at Balloch in 1904. In 1907 the Club eventually found an ideal piece of ground at Drumkinnon Bay. It was owned by the Trustees of the late James Campbell, the owner of Tullichewan Castle and Estate, in effect James Adair Campbell and his siblings. Until the arrival of the railway in 1850 the Campbells of Tullichewan had owned almost all of the land on the west bank of the Leven from Alexandria to Loch Lomond at Drumkinnon Bay, including the land on which the railway line,

the two Balloch stations and Balloch piers were built. When James Campbell died in 1901 his estates still included the Loch foreshore immediately to the west of the railway property right up on to Stoneymellan hill. One quirk of the land which the Club rented was that although it shared a common boundary with the railway property (an iron fence which appears in many of the photographs of the Clubhouse) and although all of the railway property had originally belonged to Tullichewan Estate, there was no access from the railway land to the Clubhouse. So although Balloch Pier station was only a few hundred yards away, and Balloch Central station about half a mile away (at the other end of the Bay Road which was constructed about 1912), Club members had to take the long way round on leaving Balloch Central station, walking up Balloch Road, turning north onto Luss Road and after 400 yards or so turning right (east) onto a track which led down into Drumkinnon Bay and the Tullichewan Estate boathouse as well as the CCC Clubhouse. James MacNeill describes it as a 15 minute walk or row and we'll happily take his word for it.



This 1960's picture indicates the two routes to the Clubhouse from Balloch Central station. The railway boundary fence into the loch meant a slight detour round the obstacle when rowing or paddling.

It's not clear now why the Club didn't rent this land in 1904 instead of the ground on which the shed was erected on the banks of the Leven, but the most likely explanation is that the Tullichewan Trustees didn't want to rent it at that time. However, the Campbell family interest in Tullichewan was waning – from 1902 until about 1910 the Castle was rented out to Sir William Beardmore, the Glasgow forge-master, ship-builder (Dreadnoughts were built at his Dalmuir Yard), car manufacturer and aircraft builder. So it's no surprise that about 1907 a parcel of land at Drumkinnon Bay was duly rented to the Club by the James Campbell Trustees. There is some confusion about this date because although the Club history says that the land was rented from 1907, it is not until the Valuation Roll of May 1909 that the CCC appears as a tenant of the land and owner of the Clubhouse. It seems more likely therefore that the Club rented the ground in 1908 and that its dream Clubhouse was completed just too late to appear in the Valuation Roll of May 1908. From a Vale of Leven perspective it's a pity that the Club was not able to buy the land either then or in 1922 when the whole Tullichewan estate was sold off in job lots at public auction, because if it had, then the chances are that it would still be based in Drumkinnon Bay, a considerable asset to the area.

However, it has to be said that to-day the whole membership of the Club is very pleased that it was forced to move in 1932 and that it escaped what would inevitably have been decades of pressures from the commercial development in Drumkinnon Bay. The Club would perhaps have been forced out anyway at a later date when it would not have been able to buy a suitable site for a Clubhouse which would have been anything like as convenient as the present one.

The construction of the Clubhouse was expensive and only possible through the considerable financial generosity of the founder member James Coats, who probably paid the total cost of the new building. And what a building it turned out to be – arguably the finest Edwardian boathouse in the whole of Scotland, outstanding not just in its design and build but also in its location and outlook – straight up Loch Lomond over Inchmurrin and the islands and onto Ben Lomond. The building with its picture windows and balcony was equal to the view.

It's hard to think how facilities in the Clubhouse could have been improved upon. On the ground floor was the boathouse with racks for the storage of the canoes, sails, paddles etc. At the front of the boathouse a launching ramp ran down from the doors into the Loch and a trolley was provided to transport the canoes down the ramp into the Loch. Also downstairs were the kitchen and dining area. Upstairs was the Clubhouse complete with lounge, toilets and bedrooms where the members could stay overnight – up to two bunks could be accommodated in each room. Since this was still very much a men-only club these facilities were probably a bit more spartan than they might otherwise have been, but they were still light years ahead of what any other sports club in the area could provide. The many photographs which we have of the Clubhouse all show it to be perfect for not only its boating functions but also for its social functions as well. The shots of the crowds on the balcony, with the women in their spectacular hats, look as if they could have been taken to-day, or at least at this year's Royal Ascot.



The following pictures were not captioned in the archive but Peter Yuile pointed out that the pictures with the gutter unfinished and no flag pole was the official opening of the club and the picture with the clubhouse finished was a Ladies Day.



A scene from the Official opening of the Clubhouse.



A closer shot of the fashion of the time.

The magnificent clubhouse



The finished Clubhouse and a Ladies Day: guests viewing the sailing from top balcony. The rear of the clubhouse extended quite a distance and housed the canoes.



Close-up of people on the balcony.

Officially women were allowed into the Clubhouse on only one day per year – which was called predictably enough “Ladies Day”. However, there were Ladies races at the Club’s Annual Regatta, and women do feature in so many of the photos not only at the Clubhouse, but also on the water on what look like cruises, that it’s hard to believe that they were not around a lot more frequently than that. It’s certainly true, as we’ll see later, that women couldn’t become members of the Club until 1951, but that was typical of most sports clubs at that time and still at least 20 years sooner than most other sports and recreational clubs in the area.

26. Clyde Canoe Club Regattas at Drumkinnon

The location and facilities at Drumkinnon Bay transformed the Club’s activities overnight. In the first summer of occupancy the Club held its Annual Regatta at Drumkinnon on 21st August 1909 and there is a report of what was a very successful day with much local interest and good crowds in the following week’s *Lennox Herald*. The Club’s Office Bearers by now included James Coats as Commodore, James A. MacNeil Captain, and Ralph H. Yuile as Secretary, a position he held for many years. The programme of events was perhaps more wide ranging than might be expected and included races in:

- Motor launches
- Canoes – there were 3 separate canoe races
- A Ladies Rowing Race (it was another 60 odd years before there was one at the Rowing Club’s Loch Regattas)
- A 23ft jolly boat rowing race.

This was an astute program put together by the Canoe Club because it included activities for its neighbours and fellow Loch users such as the Loch Lomond Regatta and Rowing Club (usually referred to as just “the Rowing Club”) and the Loch Lomond Corinthian Motor Boat Club (succeeded after WW1 by the Loch Lomond Motor & Houseboat Club), as well as individual motor boat owners of which there weren’t many in 1909. These other Clubs had their own annual regattas on the Loch, but were happy to participate at the CCC Regattas. The Rowing Club Regatta was for much of the 19th century by far the most popular single event on Loch Lomond with crowds attending in their tens of thousands – special trains were laid on to bring spectators and competitors from Glasgow and further afield, with boats strapped to railway carriage roofs. Part of the popularity was that many of the races were for professional oarsmen of which there was a steady supply in the Vale of Leven, with substantial prize money being on offer. This in turn saw betting taking place, albeit not quite legally, which added to the interest already fuelled by lots of other side shows in addition to the rowing races.



Fleet lined up in front of Drumkinnon Bay clubhouse ready for Regatta.

Any event being held on the Loch in those days was sure to draw a good crowd and the CCC Regatta would have been a welcome addition as far as the public and the neighbouring clubs were concerned. It's a measure of the camaraderie amongst these Clubs that the Rowing Club entered its strongest crews in the CCC event, which they duly won as was to be expected, since the winning crew was one of the best in Scotland.

In addition to the Regatta, a regular programme of Club races continued to be held at Drumkinnon, but the favoured activity of the majority of members remained the regular Club cruises, with overnight camping in several favourite spots. There was also the annual summer cruise of up to 12 days on the Loch in which most members participated – a substantial photographic record of many of these sails has survived. Cruises to more distant shores which had been pioneered by the founders of the original Club were undertaken mainly

by individual members, except for the occasional sortie for a challenge match down the Clyde, e.g. with the Mudhook Yacht Club. The Mudhook, formed in the same year as the CCC, had no clubhouse but was based at Fairlie and Carrick Castle. Indeed the CCC attended the Mudhook's first regatta in 1876 at Hunters Quay.



Typical overnight camp.

J. A. MacNeill captured the great attraction of these camping outings on the Loch in an article which he wrote for Yachting News in 1908, shortly after the new Clubhouse had opened. Because it is as topical to-day as it was when it was written – as a guide to getting the very best out of boating on Loch Lomond it has never been bettered – we have included a slightly abridged version of the article, but with all of the salient features intact.

27. "With The Clyde Canoe Club" by James A. MacNeill (1908)

Twenty miles from Glasgow lies Loch Lomond, the Mecca of all the good canoeists of the Clyde Canoe Club. Thither each week-end a band of enthusiasts turn their eyes and steps, the smallness of their number being a constant source of astonishment

to each member of the party, for the glorious outings they enjoy are in marked contrast to the dullness of the city. And yet there are hundreds of men suffering from boredom, wishing they had something to do on Sunday and oblivious of the fact that close at hand are some of the finest and loveliest cruising waters imaginable. However, so let it be. There is more room and seclusion for those who have wit enough to raise their eyes and look around them.



Winter scene, clearing track to clubhouse, c.1910.

The beauties of the Loch itself are beyond any poor descriptive powers possessed by me. I shall not attempt the impossible, but invite all good sailing men who love scenes of rugged grandeur and pastoral beauty to come and see for themselves. The trip can be done after a fashion in one of the Loch steamers, but they cannot penetrate the many delightful little nooks, creeks, and havens that make the Loch such a paradise for the canoeist. . . So if you



View of Ben Lomond in the winter of 1911 from the Clubhouse.

would see the Loch as we see it, please honour me by accepting my invitation to a weekend cruise in fancy – if you are not above sharing the well of a canoe, 18ft by 3ft and a tent 8ft by 6ft. It will be just such a trip as the CCC men have nearly every weekend in the summer.

Get the train to Balloch, a short, cheap comfortable run. A 15 minute walk or row brings us to the clubhouse. When you mount to the balcony fronting the spacious clubroom upstairs you will I am sure admit that the view is one of the finest you ever witnessed. Downstairs are conveniences such as the kitchen and grubroom (I refrain from calling it the messroom.)

Behind is the canoe-house where the craft and gear are neatly stored, while on the floor above is a large number of little cabins, each containing 1 or 2 bunks, according to the taste of the owner, and storage for kit and gear. Each holder of a canoe berth below has one of these cabins above Our little ship is lifted from her rack, placed on the trolley and wheeled to the long slip where she is rigged, packed with stores, tent, poles, pegs, clothing and blankets in oilskin bags, cameras, oilies, Primus stoves, cooking gear and all the odds-and-ends that go to make up a camp kit. Then she is launched by simply running the trolley into the water and floating her off.



Inside the canoe-house and the kitchen opposite.



L/r — Duncan, Kirk, ? McTaggart, Connor.

There is quite a crowd of craft starting along with us – Betty, Yo San I, Marina, Zelma, Darthula also Nellie and Ithona veterans with thousand of miles and numberless races to their credit. For example last year Ithona left Loch Lomond one July morning at 8 am and negotiated the 8 mile stretch of the River Leven. A fine breeze carried her fast down the Firth of Clyde and 7 pm the same day found her 50 miles from home in the Kyles of Bute. From there she slipped up Loch Fyne, through the Crinan Canal and up the Highland coast to Oban, thence up Loch Linnhe to Fort William and home, logging 300 miles. She carried full camping kit for her crew of two, who camped ashore each night.

All hands being ready and afloat we discuss our venue and decide on Inchcailloch, with a visit to Inchmurrin on route. So we make sail and the little hookers lie down to a nice NE breeze, ripping along in fine style. We reach Inchmurrin having covered two and a half miles in twenty minutes. Not bad work for canoes! Inchmurrin is the largest island on the Loch being about two miles long, hilly and beautifully wooded. It is the haunt of herds of graceful little fallow deer that frisk around our tents



at night when we camp there, tripping over the guy ropes in the dark and alarming inexperienced hands. Just hitch the painter to the little wooden pier and we will stroll up and interview the keeper, from whom we receive a cordial greeting.

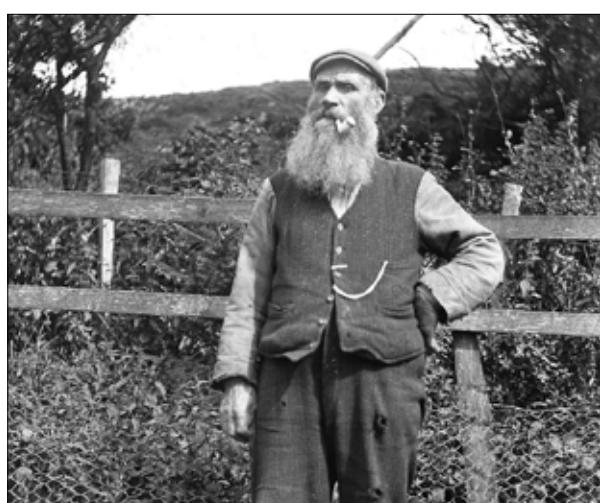
A short stay and we go afloat again, all converging on Inchcailloch. We are now clear of Inchmurrin and I ask you to look northwards and tell me if you ever saw a finer scene than the sun setting amongst the mountains. You may admire the picture to your hearts content as we paddle past Creeinch and Torrinch, two lesser islands, and just as evening falls, slip in between the latter and Inchcailloch, entering the beautiful little horseshoe bay which has seen so many CCC camps. In ten minutes the tent is pitched, gear arranged and the Primus is roaring. A real camper's "tuck-in follows" and at its close we lie back and light the "mild Havana" or the "pipe of peace". The doleful notes of a tin whistle break out and presently a mouth organ

joins in. Darthula whose tastes are powerfully and patriotically Scottish treats us to a "bit skirl o' the pibroch". Darthula's accommodation is limited but room must be found for the "pipes of the misty moorland".

Now the moon rises. Suppose we tramp through the woods to the ancient graveyard on the hill-top which is quite a nice spooky-looking place at this hour. This silver fairyland we see in the mysterious light of the moon is really beautiful beyond all description. We return down hill and through the woods to camp, where we strike up the usual sing-song to midnight, when all hands turn in.

Six a.m. and a glorious morning. A refreshing plunge and a run in suit of delicate pink on the white sand. Then to breakfast. We strike camp and get afloat into the fresh rush of wind and water and head nor'-west, past Darroch a tiny islet which is only a stone's throw from its big neighbour, Inchfad, low and green where we often camp. Turning more easterly we pass through the channel between Inch Fad and Inch Cruin – also low and green – then northward again past a little island called Bucinch, owned by a gentleman said to possess a Gladstonian propensity for felling trees single-handed. Right ahead lies Inchlonaig or Deer Island. We will take the east channel between the Island and the mainland, and get ahead with all possible speed for you must see Ross Point Bay.

At length we sail into the deep little bay and land on the shingle beach. Here is an ideal spot. We always camp in the coppice beside that little brook. But we wish you to see Dhu Lochan (Black Lakelet) so we quit the beach and strike north through the coppice by the woodcutter's path. Five minutes tramp brings us to the shores of the little lake, with Ben Lomond reflected in its waters and forming a magnificent background to the north. Northward



The keeper at Inchmurrin, Mr Power, 1905.



A rough guide showing the route taken.

In addition to the various well-frequented camp-sites mentioned by McNeil, the Club also rented a hut on Clairinch for a time, but no trace of it has survived.

from this point the Loch contracts to an average width of about a mile. The mountains make an ideal setting that would be hard to beat from a scenic point of view. But as a hatchery for squalls that sometimes descend almost perpendicularly in the midst of flat calm it is remarkable. Short sail and sharp lookout are essential.

Six miles up the west shore from here is Tarbet. Tarbet portage (to Loch Long) is one of the four means of leaving the Loch. The others are, first down the River Leven, a ninety-minute trip from Balloch which brings us into the River Clyde; second, the Inversnaid portage over to the freshwater lochs, Katrine, Achray and Vennachar where we get amidst the loveliest scenery in Scotland. Lastly, there is the railway at Ardlui right at the head of the Loch and twenty-four miles from the clubhouse, where canoes can be loaded on truck or in van and railed to the West Highland coast.

Our picnic ended we get afloat once more on our return voyage, close-hauling westerly towards Luss and bearing away again on reaching Heather Isle. We are now about to enter the most charming part of the Loch. The islands lie closely interlocked with each other, forming little winding channels and water lanes, and on the shores are numerous good camping places. We land and climb Inchtavannach and obtain a bird's-eye view of the whole southern portion of the Loch and the islands which lie spread out beneath us like a map. Afloat again, the channel opens out into a charming little expanse of water about half a square mile in area, known as Inchmoan Harbour lying between the island of that name, Inchconnachan and Inchtavannach, and three narrow straits connect it with the Loch outside. This is our trump card. From a canoeing point of view it is the prettiest and snuggest nook in the whole Loch.

Through the south channel and out into the open, still a fresh rattling breeze and we make short miles past Ross Dhu and Inchmurrin, getting a tearing squall out of the Fruin valley that makes all hands sit out and sends the water flying. Once past Inchmurrin we are in sight of home. As evening falls so does the breeze and we drift slowly over the last mile to the clubhouse. We join the crowd of cooks in the kitchen. In about an hour we place our chairs on the balcony to admire the sun setting grandly amid purple and gold beyond the mountains; to watch the darkness gather and the moon rise."

28. The Club's Summer Cruises Before WW1

The grand tradition of exploring far-flung waters on the Club's summer cruises, begun by the founder members in 1874–1876, wasn't a major feature of the revived Club. McNeil mentions one trip to Fort William and back, but the Club seemed to favour waters nearer home with the occasional foray into the Clyde either for races against other Clubs such as the Mudhook Yacht Club or shorter trips to destinations such as Loch Fyne – 7 members joined a Loch Fyne cruise in the summer of 1910. It was during one cruise on Loch Fyne that R. B. Brown had an encounter with a shark, which was probably more frightening than previous members' meetings with whales.

However, there was one member at this time that was notably more adventurous – David Yuile. Having built Nellie to follow Ludith he soon added a third boat "Ithona" and he took both the Ithona and the Nellie into far-flung waters.

These trips by Yuile included:

- 1904 – The River Shannon in the west of Ireland
- 1904 - From Fort Augustus to Inverness and back
- 1905 - From the Clyde up the west coast to Fort William
- 1907 – The Upper River Shannon
- 1908 – The Norfolk Broads
- 1912 – 3 weeks around the Clyde
- 1914 – 3 weeks in Holland
- 1919 – 3 weeks on the Thames Estuary

Fortunately he has left a substantial photographic record of many of his trips, some shown here.



Pass of Melfort.



Portage, Arrochar to Tarbet.



PS *Neptune* on the Clyde. c.1900.



Fuin Kettle 11.10.1910.



Invercoe Village 1905.



River Ness, 1906.



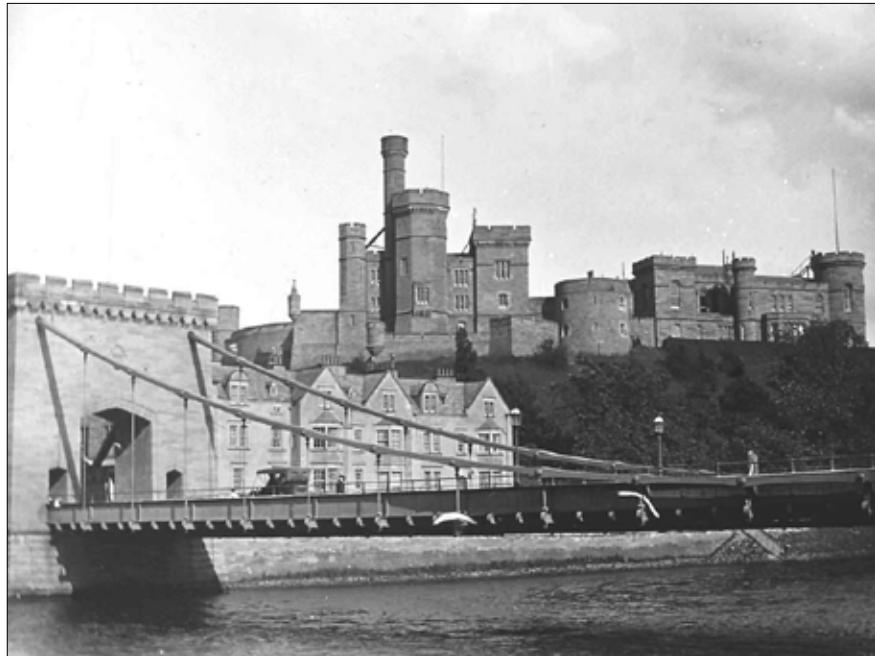
Glen Garry, Inverness, 1906.



Ballachulish, July 1905.



Youthful admirers, Kames, 1904.



Inverness Castle, July 1906.



Castle Stalker, Appin 1905.



Corran Straights, 1905.



Fort Augustus, 1906.



Seil Sound, 1905.

29. Forced out of Drumkinnon Bay

In May 1922 Tullichewan Castle and Estate was sold off at public auction held in the McLellan Galleries in Glasgow. The Castle, houses, farms and various pieces of land were sold off as separate lots. The ground on which the Clubhouse stood was bought as part of a larger parcel by the adjacent land-owner, Smollett of Cameron House, while the land on which the British Silk Dyeing's ("BSD") factory was to be built starting 6 years later was bought by the farmer who had been tenant of Tullichewan Home Farm, a Mr Black. However, the ground immediately to the west of the Clubhouse escaped Smollett's control because the boathouse for the Tullichewan Estate stood on it. The boathouse and the ground on which it stood were packaged in with another Tullichewan Estate property, Woodbank House, presumably to attract a better price for it, and the House and that land were bought by a Mrs Mary Gardner Rowan-Henderson, the estranged wife of a Clyde based shipping magnate. It's a pity that the Woodbank package didn't include the whole Tullichewan Estate foreshore at Drumkinnon Bay, because when a later owner of Woodbank House converted it into a Hotel in the spring of 1933 at the exact same time as the CCC moved into their new Clubhouse at Cashel, she proved herself very amenable to renting out the boathouse land and Thomas Hogg set up his boatyard there in 1933 or 1934, a few yards from the former site of the CCC Clubhouse. Hogg's boatyard was there for the next 40 or so years, until he retired. Indeed Jack Henderson, a British Olympic canoeist in 1948 in the K2 races kept his original canoe at Hogg's yard and the Hostellers Canoe Club also kept canoes there since it was very convenient for Auchendennan Youth Hostel.

All of that was in the future and Smollett's acquisition of the CCC land posed no immediate threat to the Club, which continued with a happy and successful existence at Drumkinnon throughout the 1920's. In 1929 as the second wave of the Great Depression



Removing the contents of the clubhouse. The building was dismantled and wood taken to Cashel.

was about to grip the UK economy an Anglo-French firm – the British Silk Dyeing Company Ltd, better known as the BSD or the Silk Factory – opened a new factory on land about half a mile south of Drumkinnon Bay on Balloch Road. Again, it posed no apparent threat to the CCC. However, it soon ran out of money and was closed for a time. In May 1932 it was revived with an injection of Swiss capital, technical know-how, and management although contrary to popular belief it seems to have remained UK-controlled.

Part of the Swiss know-how involved greatly increasing the use of water from Loch Lomond and that required a dedicated extraction system from the Loch including a new pipeline and pumping station. The site chosen for extraction and for the new pumping station was the Smollett-owned land on which the CCC Clubhouse stood. In 1932 the CCC was duly given 6 months notice to vacate the land and had to start the search for a new site for their Clubhouse. Given the circumstances of the time – the Vale of Leven was one of the worst unemployment black-spots in the whole of the UK with male unemployment in 1932 standing at 64.2% of the working population and female unemployment at 31.3% – its quite understandable that practically nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of re-opening a factory which was creating hundreds of jobs.

But that's not the whole picture, because extracting water from the Loch at Drumkinnon Bay was nothing new. At the end of the 19th century the Vale's water supply had been extracted just a few yards east of the CCC clubhouse on land which belonged to the railway company, and this had continued until the opening of the Glen Finlas scheme in 1909. So there was an existing pipeline running down what is now the Bay Road alongside the boundary of the Silk Factory. True the pump house for that scheme had been converted to the winch-house for the



Silk Factory pump house can be seen far right in this picture from 1932 with a Loch Class sailing canoe on slip.

steamer slipway (which it still is, incidentally), but the new pump-house was a very modest affair as many people will remember and photographs show; it could have been accommodated anywhere, even behind the Clubhouse if necessary. Finally, one of the main reasons why the Vale stopped taking water from Drumkinnon Bay was that the steamers were polluting the water – had that changed by 1932?

There were a number of practical other means by which the new water supply could have been provided to the BSD that would not have involved moving the CCC Clubhouse, but perhaps understandably the blinkers were firmly on both the Council and the BSD. The CCC Clubhouse, one of the finest buildings on the Lochside, became another victim of unnecessary commercial pressure and the Lochside lost an outstanding asset. The BSD is long gone, the railway has long ceased to run up to the Bay, the steamers no longer sail, the Woodbank stands in ruins, the Campbell and Smollett estates are a memory, but the CCC is alive and well, living on with its new name of Loch Lomond Sailing Club. We'd like to think that there's a lesson in all of this, but experience suggests otherwise.

30. Canoes in the Inter-War Years

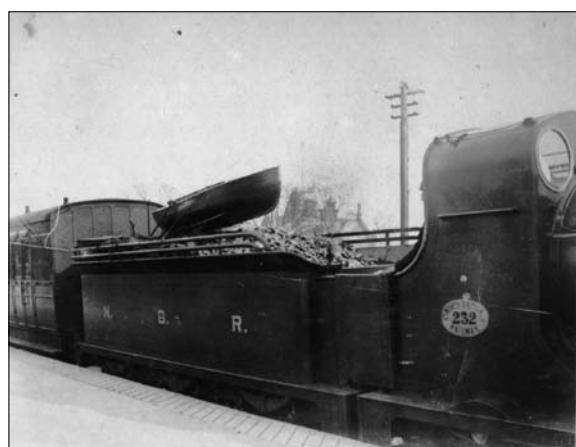
Club members did produce some new designs in the 1920's and 30's. The first of these developments at the CCC was the Alethea, which was designed by C. McLean Gibson and built by Abeking and Ramusen of Lemwerder near Bremen in 1923. In Lloyds Register for 1930 she is owned by Richard D. Brown of Glasgow and in 1938 by T. D. Russell Ferguson by which time she is shown as a Clyde Canoe Club, One Design. Her Length Overall was 25ft, L.W. 22ft, Beam 7ft 8 inches, T.M 5.2 Tons, Draft 2ft 6 inches and 6ft, sails 400 sq ft. Three copies of the Alethea were built for the Loch by local unemployed shipwrights. It is fair to say that the Alethea and her sisters were really small cruising boats, a type still known as canoe yawls. Although the Alethea was sold out of the Club in 1948, she continued to sail from Luss until 1970.



Alethea

Another yawl called Minna was built in 1933 and owned by D. Q. A. Bates whose daughter Mary is still a member of the Club. The Minna continues to be sailed on the Clyde, almost 80 years after D.Q.A. Bates took it from Loch Lomond to race in the then Clyde Fortnight Regatta along with 3 other CCC yawls – Morag, Ailie and Alethea. He left a log of the 4 weeks or so which he spent getting to and from the

Regatta as well as participating in the races. That log is Appendix 2 at the end of this story. The Minna was taken by railway wagon from Balloch Pier to Bowling Harbour where it was launched onto the Clyde. Some things haven't changed much in 80 years – the weather was foul for much of the two weeks of racing and the handicappers favoured Clyde-based boats over the visitors from Loch Lomond. That didn't stop Bates, and other members of CCC from participating in some of the races and enjoying – frequently over-enjoying – the evening hospitality in the towns and villages which was a prominent feature of the Regatta. The return journey to the Loch was via Dumbarton where a Denny's crane lifted it onto a railway truck for the trip back to Balloch Pier and onto the Loch.



Ure's, 'Betty' being transported on a coal waggon.



The Puffin. (Sailing club collection).

Yet another copy of the Alethea went to the Humber Yawl Club and as recently as 2005 another copy called the Puffin was built in Lancashire. It sailed up the west coast of England and Scotland, through the Caledonian Canal to Findhorn. While on the Moray Coast it participated in the Scottish Traditional Boat Festival of 2005.

In the 1920s a design called the Loch class was introduced. They were smaller clinker built canoes, which were intended as a compromise between sailing and paddling and they seemed to herald a brief revival in canoe sailing. Four were bought by members but unfortunately they turned out to be not very good at either paddling or sailing and have long since passed into history.

Allan Dunn has provided the definitive history of the next class of canoe used by the Club – the C Class. The C Class canoes were developed from a model designed by Lt Commander D.W. Walker RN while on active service in the early 1930's. He brought the original canoe ashore in pieces and it was from that prototype that the original C Class was developed.

Members of Forth Canoe Club visiting the CCC in August 1937 showed great interest in a one-off 12ft 9ins long canvas skinned sailing canoe kept at the club. Discussions between the clubs soon followed, resulting in the rapid development of a 14ft long canvas skinned sailing canoe known as the "Clyde & Forth One-Design". The plans for what became the Forth & Clyde C Class canoe were drawn up by Lt Cdr Walker and Ian C. Robertson of the CCC. Most of the craft were built by John Marshall, an established builder of the "Queensferry" and "Lochaber" paddling canoes, based at Queensferry on the Forth. They proved so popular by the end of the following year that the club decided to publish the design, for the use of amateur builders. The class raced until 1966, being brought out annually to compete for the Argentine Cup. The British Canoe Union had wished to adopt the design as a BCU "C Class" one-design. However, changes were required to conform to the BCU Class rules, that body having adopted the Royal Canoe Club Class rules, which differed from those at the CCC. I. C. Robertson of the Club spent considerable time and effort preparing plans for this BCU version, which unfortunately never took off."

There were at least 5 of the original C class canoes in the Club – Clyde, Spey & Ailette being 3 of them.

During WW2 Ian started redesigning the C Class, the limitations of which are already documented. The result was the "Clyde Design" C Class of which there were 5 in the Club – Clyde (belonged to Ian C. Robertson), Ellwyn (Allan Dunn), Cart (J.P.) another whose name has been forgotten at the moment but which belonged to an MP. The fifth belonged to Ian McBeith and is still owned by LLSC.

During Allan Dunn's time as administrator for the plans, 5 sets were issued 2 of which went to the FCC with construction and the other 3 to individuals in England. It is not known how many of them were built, and the records of the subsequent administrator have unfortunately been lost, as has the record of the Sail Numbers. Fortunately the plans were discovered many years later and handed back to Allan Dunn.



The Puffin at Moss's. (Sailing Club collection)

31. The 'Maisa'

The other craft was a varnished paddling canoe brought into the Clubhouse at Drumkinnon by John Lees when he joined the Club in 1920. The canoe was called "Maisa" and John Lees was still paddling the canoe every Sunday until 1970 when he was well into his eighties. An urban myth grew up around that canoe, but like many urban myths, not only is it well worth telling but many of its important aspects have a basis in the truth, which is only slightly less interesting than the myth.

First the myth:– this is that in 1916 a German spy was carried across the North Sea by submarine to a spot just off the Aberdeenshire coast where the canoe which became known as the Maisa was launched under cover of darkness. The spy paddled it to a lonely spot on the beach, walked to a small railway station and asked for a ticket to London. Unfortunately for him, he fumbled too long over the money to pay for the ticket; the railway clerk became suspicious and summoned the village policeman who arrived on his bicycle. The spy was arrested and he did indeed make the trip to London – to the Tower where he was duly shot. The first point of connection with the truth was that there really was a German spy who landed on the coast of the Moray Firth, who was quickly arrested when he bought a ticket to London from a branch line station, taken to London where he was shot in the Tower. He had absolutely nothing to do with the Maisa which would probably not have fitted into a WW1 German submarine anyway and was vast overkill to cover a few hundred yards to the shore.

But it's easy to see why people would have made the leap between the true story and a German spy. Firstly, the Maisa had been built in Germany before WW1 at the W. Deutsch Boatyard in Stralau to the design of Otto Protzen. Secondly she was brought to Scotland by a German Military Officer, although it

was in July 1914, and it was on board an ordinary cargo vessel which sailed into Leith. The Officer was Colonel von Diest who intended to have a kayaking holiday in Scotland with a friend, Herr Rintelen, who was a director of a German bank and who had named his canoe "Maisa" after his daughter. For whatever reason, Herr Rintelen couldn't come on the trip and he was replaced as Colonel Diest's travelling companion by another German officer Lieutenant von Brandis, to whom Rintelen lent the Maisa.

Perhaps the holiday really was an innocent recreational kayaking trip and perhaps Herr Rintelen really did call off for legitimate reasons, but the arrangements were being made as war was looming ever closer and its hard now to avoid at least a suspicion that the trip was a cover for a spying mission, especially since they were sailing into the Forth which was the home of the British North Sea fleet at Rosyth. The pair also made it up the west coast of Scotland where they were entertained by acquaintances. British naval intelligence, even before the outbreak of WW1 was pretty competent, and they seem to have kept an eye on the pair so that when hostilities broke out they arrested and interned Lieutenant von Brandis and impounded the Maisa at Leith.

Colonel von Diest evaded arrest and made it home to Germany. There he published an account of his escapade in 1916 titled "Bei Kriegsbeginn in Fiendesland – Schottische Kajak-Reise Juli 1914" or "In Enemy Territory at the Outbreak of War – Scottish Kayak Trip July 1914". It was just the sort of derring-do tale beloved by the combatant governments intent on maintaining morale, and it's a pity that there's not a full English translation of it.



The German canoe with John Lees and other club members outside clubhouse c.1929.

It was partly translated by a friend of Duncan Winning, Tony Ford, a British soldier who served in Germany for much of his Army career and who stayed on in Germany after he retired from the Army. He too was a keen canoeist and took over the running of the Historic Canoe Association in 1994. On a trip to visit Duncan in Scotland, Duncan took him to visit the CCC without telling him what he would find there. Tony was astonished and delighted to be shown the Maisa, since he thought that it would not have survived the war never mind the peace.

The Maisa was stored for the duration of World War One in the Currie Line warehouse at Leith docks. At the end of the WW1 J. Allan bought it from the British government, and he sold it to John Lees. It was brought to the Clyde Canoe Club at Drumkinnon Bay in 1920. John Lees spent many happy hours paddling in her every Sunday in summer right up until the 1970's when John Lees was well into his 80's. The Maisa made another historic appearance in 1994 when she was used as Robert Louis Stevenson's canoe in a television production of his first book "An Inland Voyage" which was made to mark the centenary of the author's death.



(Sailing Club collection)

32. The 1930's and Canoe Sailing

Quite inadvertently canoe sailing was dealt a mortal blow by one of its greatest enthusiasts and exponents, Uffa Fox. Fox, who later gained widespread fame as the Duke of Edinburgh's sailing partner at Cowes Regatta from the 1950's to the 1960's, was a very keen and successful canoe sailor out of his home club at Cowes. He was also a prolific designer of sailing dinghies and during his lifetime his designs dominated British dingy sailing for exactly the same reason as the sailing canoes died out – Fox designed a canoe which was able to plane. His canoes swept the boards in the American Canoe Association Championships in New York in 1933, but 5 years previously he had already demonstrated the overwhelming superiority of his planing dingy design. The problem this posed to a sailing canoe is that once a boat takes to planing, the speed is no longer related to the square root of the water line length, which was the very reason for having the long narrow shape of a canoe in the first place.

There is a possible exception to this – the planing ten square metre sailing canoe which was really a cross between a high performance racing dingy and a canoe. One such canoe was built by Club member R. M. Barge who unfortunately was killed in WW2; his father Colonel Barge donated the canoe to the Club. The class is still supported by a small but enthusiastic band of sailors throughout the world. Two are presently sailing at LLSC and in July 2013 the European Championships – a week's sailing – will be held at LLSC. So the canoe connection continues.



Nellie II on the Thames near Kew.

Having said this it remains that the extra stability of the broad planing dingy allows less competent sailors equal performance and crucially allows them to concentrate on racing tactics instead of having to concentrate on staying upright. Naturally enough the dinghy proved to have the wider appeal to sailors. As far as the members of the CCC were concerned there was quite another non-technical aspect to the sailing dingy versus sailing canoe debate: what was more likely to be attractive to women? Immediately after WW2 the more perceptive members had already realised the desirability indeed the inevitability of the admission of women into the Club, if the Club were to survive. Since the dinghy was much less likely to pitch the crew into the water than the less stable canoe it was rightly thought that the dinghy would be much preferred by women – although why it was thought it was only women who would prefer not to be pitched into the water is never explained.

33. The New Location at Cashel

In mid 1932 the search started for a new site for the Clubhouse and it proved more difficult than the Club probably expected. There was the possibility of a site on Inchmurrin which the Duke of Montrose had put up for sale in the spring of 1932, and which was bought in its entirety by the parents of late owner, Tom Scott, in that year. However, this was considered too inaccessible. Eventually Mr C. M. Collins offered a 14 year rental on the land on which the present Clubhouse stands. The rental of £10 per annum was acceptable and although there were some restrictions such as no motorboats, most of the restrictions were aimed at protecting the fishing along the shore, something which the Club would have wished to do anyway. A deal was struck with Mr Collins and at the AGM of 16th October 1932 a removal Committee was appointed with powers to receive tenders for the demolition and reconstruction of the Clubhouse and the building of a suitable shed for 24 canoes. The price agreed for moving the Clubhouse was set at £200 and the move was soon under way. The first meeting in the new Clubhouse, which included material from the Drumkinnon Bay building, was held on April 22nd 1933.

No sooner was the Club in its new location than it was invited in 1933 to join the Clyde Yacht Clubs Conference for the first time, and to the regatta of the Mudhook Club. The CCC reciprocated in its new location and in August 1935 there is a report in the *Lennox Herald* that the CCC had held inter-club races on the Loch and afterwards entertained its guests at the Rowardennan Hotel. Since the Club was no longer located in the area in which the *Lennox Herald* circulated, that report suggests that the Club was keen to remain in touch with people in the Vale and perhaps Garelochside as well. Although more remote than Drumkinnon, Cashel proved to be an ideal sailing location. It particularly favoured the big yawls and several other larger boats. In the years from 1933 until the outbreak of the war in 1939 they were the most active class both in racing and cruising.



Building the road to Clubhouse at Cashel.



Digging out the foundations



Frame goes up.



New Clubhouse built 1933.

34. The WW2 Years

WW2 stopped all organised sailing events but some members managed to get to the Club for an odd day of sailing. Only 3 or 4 members managed to stay over on a Saturday night on a regular basis. However, some members including Dr D. W. Walker, "Baldy" Bates, Robert Easthaugh, Ian Robertson and T. D. Russell-Ferguson met regularly on care and maintenance problems, and it is no exaggeration to say that without their efforts there might not have been a Clubhouse by the end of the war.

The Army occupied the Clubhouse as a local HQ for supervising the storage of huge quantities of ammunition, cordite etc which was dispersed in the

woods around Loch Lomondside as well as in many other parts of rural Stirlingshire and Dunbartonshire. Much of the ordnance was stored under corrugated iron shelters and some of these were bought up after the war for boat storage. Slightly to the north of the Clubhouse, German PoWs were used in forestry, most notably during the construction of the Loch Sloy Hydro Electric Scheme, which is on the opposite shore of Loch Lomond a few miles to the north-west from the CCC Clubhouse. Timber for use on the scheme was felled on the east shore, loaded on to barges at a small pier and then towed by launch or tug across the Loch to Inveruglas. That pier has all but disappeared now but it remains to generations of Loch users the "German Jetty".

35. Immediate Post-War Developments at Cashel

When the war ended in 1945 there were many pressing matters which had to be sorted out. The most urgent of these was the lease of the ground, which was coming to the end of its 14 year term. Fortunately in April 1946, in negotiations led by T. D. Russell Ferguson, the Club was able to purchase the ground from Mrs Collins for the sum of £250. This purchase exhausted the finances of the Club at the time but it has ever since been recognised as the wisest piece of business ever transacted by the Club.

Another pressing problem was dry rot which was found under the floor of the Clubhouse and for which immediate action was required. Neil Robertson's firm did the necessary work for less than cost, but debentures had to be raised to provide the necessary funding – most of them were not repaid but gifted back to the Club in later years.

It was self evident that the Club was at a low ebb both in terms of membership and finances and that

some innovative action would need to be taken to address these issues if the Club were to survive. At the AGM in 1947 Duncan Ferguson suggested that lady members be admitted. As was to be expected, there were some to whom such a change was not immediately welcome. However it was discussed in a friendly and light-hearted manner amongst the members, typified by the tongue-in-cheek remark of Colin Robertson who suggested that if the ladies clubhouse were some distance away – Luss, for example – it might encourage the gentlemen members to do more sailing. That remark brought the house down.

In 1951 ladies were admitted to the Club, although with some minor restrictions for a short time. To put this in perspective, the CCC was almost certainly the first long-established club on Loch Lomondside to admit women to membership and did so 25 years before the Rowing or Angling Clubs got round to it, while the penny has still to drop in some other clubs in the area.

36. Sailing Dinghies

By the late 1940's, sailing had become the predominant activity at the Club rather than canoe sailing, and choices had to be made about what type of sailing dingy members should use – some standardisation was necessary not only for competitive purposes but also to determine what boat and equipment facilities the Club would have to provide.



14ft Day boats arrive at jetty, Cashel, 1950's

In 1950 the Club agreed to adopt a class of sailing dingy and after investigation the Yachting World 14ft day-boat was chosen. This proved a good choice, and the class grew to 12 dinghies making it the most popular boat in the Club until the 1960's. In the 1950's Uffa Fox produced the 12 ft Firefly which was very popular in England, the 15ft Swordfish of which only 1 was seen in Scotland and the 18ft Jollyboat. All three types gave outstanding performance in their respective classes, but could only be produced at the Fairey Marine factory in Hamble. This meant that when Fairey stopped producing a class, the only way of adding to the Club's fleet of that class was to hunt for second-hand boats, which was not a long term solution.

However, dingy racing itself threw up a solution. At Largs Regatta in 1958 CCC member Dr Chassels was sailing his Jollyboat in the handicap class when he came up against an Osprey dingy being sailed by Peter Turner, who was not at that time a CCC member. It was obvious to both men that the Jollyboat and Osprey were well matched and could race against each other without handicap. This meeting was of double benefit to the Club because not only did it introduce the Osprey as the replacement for the Jollyboat, but it also introduced Peter Turner to Club membership. Peter went on to become a Club stalwart who amongst other things prepared a Club history on which much of this article is based. By 1965 the 18ft 6ins class consisted of 10 Ospreys and 4 Jollyboats and later including 505's, provided the best racing the Club has ever seen.

The Ospreys were also used by Club members to return to the Club's roots - north-western sea waters. From 1960 to 1974 Osprey owners Dr A. Jamieson, C. Williamson, P. Turner, and J. Pledger and Jollyboat owner Dr A. Rennie spent their summer holidays at Morar cruising in their dinghies to Skye and the Cocktail Isles. The boats proved very good on the sea with the Jollyboat relatively faster on the salt water, but the Osprey more stable. These holidays proved to have a missionary aspect as the locals took to the sport and to the Ospreys, and at least 3 of Club fleet ended up sailing at Morar.

Another return to Club roots took place in the early 1960's when the Club returned to the Clyde for the first time in many years. The whole of the 18ft class would trail to the Largs and Helensburgh regattas; at that time no other club in Scotland had a fleet with a comparable performance.

Fashions change and many people want the latest equipment. As time went on more extreme dingies have emerged and are well represented in the Club to-day. There has been an encouraging increase in the Uffa Fox designed Flying Fifteen keel boat class, several being crewed by man and woman crew. To serve the younger members and children, Mirror self-build dingies held sway in the seventies. For the very young children there emerged a fantastic little sailing dingy called the Optimist, which suited children as young as 5-6 years old. Training youngsters is given priority for Club children and several have featured in national competitions.

From 1970 onwards there was an increasing interest in small Cruiser Racer keel boats which don't normally capsize. The first of these boats to appear was the Hunter 19 which was followed by the Achilles 24 of which there are now over 16 boats. Racing is still dominant but for many years now some small cruisers have been taken by Landrover and trailer to spend time cruising and racing on the West Coast for periods of up to 4 weeks. These boats are also much used for cruising round the islands on Loch Lomond – the best of both worlds perhaps.



37. Loch Lomond Sailing Club

By the 1970's the Club was well on the way to becoming the Club which it is to-day. It was undoubtedly helped by the growing interest in sailing as a sport from the 1960's onwards. New members came from the Glasgow area, from the villages of Loch Lomondside and Strathendrick, from the Vale of Leven as well as further afield such as East Kilbride and Edinburgh. What had seemed a remote and isolated location in 1932 had become a major drawing card – it was a beautiful setting on the banks of arguably Scotland's most beautiful Loch.

The days of paddling from a base at Rosneath and then Drumkinnon were receding into the distant past and the name the "Clyde Canoe Club" was itself becoming something of an anachronism. Neither "Clyde" nor "Canoe" represented the dominant aspects of the Club. After a bit of heart-searching and with no doubt some regret it was decided that as the new century approached it was time to change the name to reflect its modern setting and location. "The Loch Lomond Sailing Club" was adopted as the Club's new name in 1999.

To-day it is a vibrant, successful club with a total membership of about 150 sailing members and a fleet of more than 80 dinghies, small keel boats and cruiser racers. It is the largest Club on the Loch and its fleet sailing out of Cashel is a great visual asset on the Loch. It is truly a Club with the winds in its sails – a wind its ancestors first felt on their face 140 years ago and which will no doubt still be seeking the breeze in another 140 years.



Club archivist Roger Hancock pictured in the clubhouse (2012).



The Clubhouse at their new location viewed from Loch Lomond at Cashel, c.1933.



Beach at Cashel 1950's.

M. Ritchie, E. Patereson pushing the boat out and M Crawford at Cashel, 1950's

