



## **THE ROYAL HAMILTON AMATEUR DINGHY CLUB HISTORY**

The Hamilton "Dingey" Association became an entity as a result of Fitted "Dingey" Races held by a Hamilton School (Head Master Charles E. Clay) in 1882. The Club was formed with Joseph Trimmingham being the first Commodore. It is believed the first meetings were held in his house.

The Club, in its new premises, introduced "amateur" fitted dinghy racing and was later recognized as a gentlemen's luncheon club to include sailing, tennis, snooker and social events all rolled into one.

In 1883 H.R.H. Princess Louise, Marchioness of Lorne, and Wife of Canada's Governor General, conferred the title "Royal" to the Club, whilst on a winter holiday. On becoming the ROYAL HAMILTON AMATEUR "DINGEY" CLUB, a white Flag, traditional style of the British Yacht Clubs of the time, was uniquely designed for the Club's exclusive use.

William Whitney donated twenty pounds to purchase a Challenge Cup for the Club.

A silver Cup was presented to the Club by H.R.H. Princess Louise in 1887. This was to be raced to celebrate Queen Victoria's Jubilee, hence the Jubilee Cup.

In 1890 the procedure governing titles was changed and the privilege was given to reigning Monarchs only. Hence the Royal title was lost. The Membership decided to extend itself into a social Club and find a Clubhouse. In March 1890 rooms were taken over on the second floor of the house on the corner of Reid and Queen streets.

In 1896 the word Amateur was dropped and the name of Hamilton Dinghy Club held until 1953.

Also, the red ensign of the Merchant service with foul gold anchor and letters HDC under the anchor, was adopted along with a corresponding Burgee.

25th September, 1899 saw a move to "Belvoir" J. E. Lightbourn's house on Reid Street, to become "the Most Commodious Clubhouse in town". A fire in 1916 destroyed many records.

The Championship (Jubilee) Cup Regatta was held for first time 1912.

1927 the Club purchased an imposing mansion on Church Street, Hamilton. This was opposite the site of the old Hamiltonian Hotel. Called an "Oasis in the City", it had a front lawn with two Royal Poinciana trees. The Club became incorporated at that time.

The 1927 Act was altered in 1954 when the name became the Hamilton Dinghy Club.

The 1930's were hard times. Rear property was sold and actions of staunch members saved the day.

In 1944 the Championship Cup competition was revived, thereby expanding the sport of Fitted Dinghy racing of old dinghies.

H R. H. Elizabeth II granted the reinstatement of the Royal Charter, hence on June 4, 1953 the Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club became the only "Royal" dinghy club in the world.

1964 saw the move to the present location of Mangroville, Pomander Road, Paget.

In 1977 the Club became co-sponsors of a cruising race held on a biennial basis between Marion, Massachusetts and Bermuda. The arrangement between the Beverly Yacht Club, the Blue Water Sailing Club and the Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club has proved to be a resounding success, with the attraction of a cruising and family race encouraged a large number of enthusiastic participants.

In 1990 the Club carried out major "rehabilitation" and remodeling to its premises, so continuing its status as Bermuda's premier maritime club.

In 2001/3 the Club extended the marina increasing the number of berths from 37 to 105.

Junior and Adult Sailing now offer year round courses with a record number of Optimist sailors qualifying and competing in the IODA International Regattas.

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