

History of the Club

The Greater Wildwood Yacht Club resides on Forget Me Not Road in Wildwood Crest overlooking beautiful Sunset Lake. It was the summer 1938 when the Yacht Club was founded.

For years the residents that lived on the lake were talking about starting a yacht club. Finally after years of talking the plans were made. Charles Englefield, Doc Lukens and Ed Flood held the first meeting on Palmer Ways' yacht and became the Commodore, Vice Commodore and Rear Commodore. The yacht was the floating clubhouse.

The following summer, Ward and Cooper Bright generously donated their homestead and it became the first home of the GWYC. The house was moved to a lot on Wisteria and the bay. It was a good beginning. Thirty nine members joined the first year. During World War II, most members were called to serve their country. While the fathers were at war, their children were busy winning trophies on weekends at the regattas held at the club. Hot sailors of that time were John Martin, Ed Flood, Tommy Sorensen, Dick and Dave McGrath.

In 1945 under the helm of Commodore E.G. Monville plans were formulated for a new clubhouse. The old site was quickly sold and a new clubhouse was built on Forget Me Not Road. Construction began in late March of the following year and was completed by the 10 minute gun of the 9th annual Regatta in August 1946 when Dr. R.C. Kell was Commodore.

Under Commodore Bert Parker there was smooth sailing in 1948. Little Joe McGrath won the Jr. Moth Series and young Asa Colson, along with sister Jane, won the mid-week Comet series. A good start for the first 10 years of the GWYC. With the increasing popularity of the sport of sailing, the South Jersey Yacht Racing Association (YRA) was formed. Five clubs participated in weekend regattas, each one taking turns as host. On these weekends, over 100 youngsters throughout the area would compete in sailing races.

In 1970, the GWYC held the International Moth-Class World Championship. Burgees from France, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand flew from the clubhouse yardarms. At that time, dignitaries were honored from New Zealand and the United Kingdom. One of the highlights of the visit was the bonfire held at Higbees beach in Lower Township.

While sailing was the main attraction at the club, the members turned it into more of a social destination as the years went by. On Saturdays, there would be a full course dinner served to members and guests and Fridays were casual meals. Membership increased to include both sailing and social members. The yacht club continues today to be a place where families enjoy new friends and beautiful sunsets for which the lake is named.

While the sunsets have remained the same, a few things have changed today at the yacht club. The Sunfish, Laser and Optimist fleets have replaced the Moths and Comets of years gone by. A larger, Mid Atlantic Yacht Racing Association was formed from the old South Jersey YRA. Today, water sport activities have expanded to include powerboats, personal watercrafts, kayaks and windsurfers as well as sailing.

Contact GWYC

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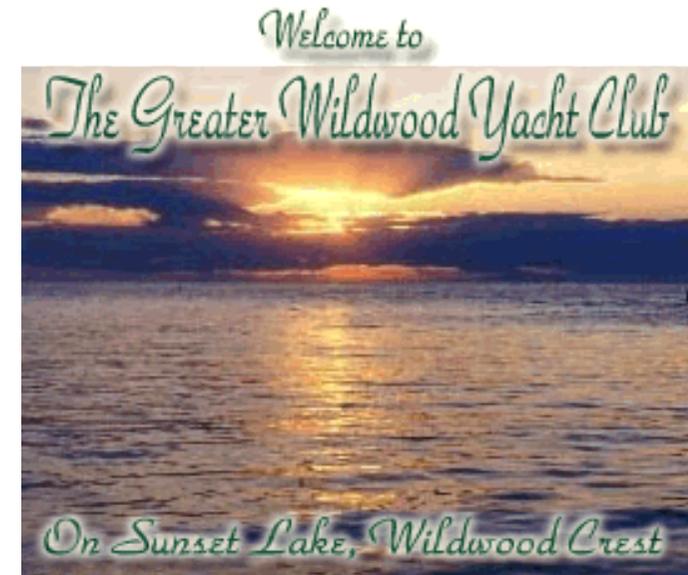
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New members are always welcome. Arrange a visit to start your summer memories of a lifetime!



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