

Reprinted by permission of



The history of C&C Yachts

by Dan Spurr



A tale of two designers, three builders, and the publicly held company that crossed the Canadian border to compete with America's best racers and builders - and won.

C&C YACHTS, THE LARGEST-EVER builder of sailboats in Canada, was named for two of its founding partners, George Cuthbertson and George Cassian, both yacht designers. But the story of C&C Yachts runs far deeper, to George Hinterhoeller, to two other boatbuilding firms - Belleville Marine Yards and Bruckmann Manufacturing - and to a stockbroker who had the bright idea of bringing them all together to form a single company that would shape and profoundly affect the entire North American sailboat industry. A number of the company's innovative building techniques were widely adopted by others. C&Cs rakish designs and lightweight construction excelled on the racecourse and were cruised by many families around the Great Lakes and around the world.

George Cuthbertson

George Cuthbertson was born in 1929, in Brantford, Ontario. His father died when he was 13, precipitating his family's move to Toronto. The next year he joined the Royal Canadian Yacht Club's junior sailing program where he was introduced to the sport as well as to the form and structure of sailboats. A 1983 corporate history of C&C Yachts says, "He was beginning to see beauty, grace, and speed as qualities that could be governed by mathematics, albeit a mathematics tempered by artistic instinct." Making drawings, often of ships and airplanes, was a favorite pastime of his. Soon he was drawing sailboats, too.

At age 17, Cuthbertson was made the club's official measurer, a testament to his ability in mathematics. In 1950, he graduated from the University of Toronto with a degree in engineering. His first job was with the Swedish ball-bearing manufacturer, SKF, but he soon teamed up with fellow club racer Peter Davidson to build small fiberglass boats.

Beginning in 1953, the two young men built about 80 Water Rat dinghies. There wasn't a lot of work for yacht design in Canada at that time, so they operated a yacht brokerage, which imported yachts from Europe, under the name of Canadian Northern Co.

His big break in yacht design came when the Canada's Cup was revived in 1954. This was a match-racing event between selected yacht clubs - U.S. and Canadian. It was contested in 8-Meter yachts between Cuthbertson's Royal Canadian Yacht Club and the Rochester Yacht Club in the U.S. Cuthbertson was hired to rework an existing boat named *Venture II*, owned by Norman Walsh. Cuthbertson drew the modifications, and he and Davidson also crewed, winning three straight races to return the cup to Canada for the first time since 1903.

This timely success landed Cuthbertson a handsome commission from Norman Walsh: *Inisfree*, a 54-footer which was launched in 1958. Her successful racing career established the young designer's reputation. He and Davidson dissolved their partner ship when Peter moved to the U.S. to become a sailmaker.

Cuthbertson modified a number of European yachts for the North American market. These Canadian Northern 35s were designed and built of steel by Kurt Beister in Norderney, Germany. A half dozen were built by Cliff Richardson in Meaford, Ontario, including one named *Carousel* for Perry Connolly. This relationship would continue to be beneficial for both men. "At this time, Ted Brewer was very involved with

our brokerage and import activities," Cuthbertson says. "Ted was with us for about three years, functioning as a yacht broker (and a very effective one) while studying yacht design in his spare time through the Westlawn course. In time, he also moved to the U.S. to take a job with Luders Marine Construction in Stamford, Conn., and so began his distinguished career."



At left, George Cassian, George Cuthbertson and Perry Connolly in high spirits in 1969 at the launching of *Manitou*. Perry Connolly was the original owner of *Red Jacket*.

Red Jacket, the winner of 11 of 13 races in her first year, making history for C&C Yachts



George Cassian

In 1959, aircraft designer George Cassian walked in the door of Cuthbertson's office in Port Credit, Ontario. A project he'd been working on involving the Avro Arrow jet fighter had been canceled, and he was in search of design work. Cuthbertson told him that there was little to be had in the marine field and that his fledgling firm made most of its money brokering boats, many from Europe. Cassian still was interested, and a few days later Cuthbertson offered him a job, which he held for less than a year before bolting to Detroit, hoping to make it big in the automobile industry.

They kept in touch, however, and it wasn't long before Cassian asked for his old job back. This time he wanted a share in the company as well. Cuthbertson sold him a 25 percent share, which eventually was increased to a third. Their partnership was formed in 1961 as Cuthbertson & Cassian.

Cuthbertson managed the business, doing much of his design work late into the evenings. The two worked in collaboration, with Cuthbertson doing the preliminary lines and calculations and Cassian the interior plans and details. Later they would come to be known by staff as "Cumbersome and Casual," a humorous reflection on their differing styles. Their first designs included a 34-foot steel boat, *Vanadis*, built by Kurt Beister in Germany and *La Mouette*, built of wood at Metro Marine in Bronte, Ontario.

The stage was set for Cuthbertson's return to fiberglass, a material he had not worked with much since his early experience of building Water Rat dinghies. The opener came from yet a third George, this one named Hinterhoeller.



George Cassian, at right, in the early days (early 1960s).

George Hinterhoeller

Born in Austria, where he learned the boat carpenter's trade at the Frauscher yard, George Hinterhoeller emigrated to Canada in 1952. "I arrived in North America, where the streets are paved with gold," he wrote, "with a box full of tools, a training in boatbuilding, and \$30 in my pocket." He had a job waiting for him at Shepherd Boats in Niagara-on-the-Lake. "This was a model boatyard and the premier powerboat builder in Canada," he said. "The only trouble was that, as an ardent sailor, powerboats were not my love."

In his spare time Hinterhoeller began building sailboats. Sandy Edmison bought a Y-Flyer from him, which won the Canadian championship. As the design of *Inisfree* had done for Cuthbertson, this bit of providence propelled Hinterhoeller into a full-time business of his own. Hinterhoeller incorporated in 1963 and, in all, built 40 Y-Flyers.

When that market dried up in 1959, he designed the 24-foot Shark, an incredibly fast sloop that once averaged more than 10 knots in an 80-mile race. Interestingly, in 1964 a Shark took line honors in the 40-mile Blockhouse Bay race, finishing just ahead of the 56-foot *Inisfree*.

It was with the Shark that Hinterhoeller made the transition from wood to fiberglass. "The first boats were of cold-molded plywood construction," he said. "Then Bill O'Reilly came along and stated that he liked the design but wanted a fiberglass boat. 'But fiberglass is no good,' I countered, after which he asked how familiar I was with that material. Bill introduced me to Bert Miller, who built fiberglass powerboats as a hobby.

"Bert was an exuberant person, a tool and die maker with several patents to his name. He said, 'Why don't you come to my shop on Saturday morning and help me build a 16-foot hull?' On one Saturday morning a 16-foot hull? I thought the man was pulling my leg. But I watched Bert spray the gelcoat at 8 a.m., at 9 a.m. two more fellows showed up, and by 11:30 the job was completed. I was stunned. I drove home shaking my head all the way. Then I called my business partner, Gordon Brinsmeac informing him that there was indeed faster way to build a boat."

Other Hinterhoeller boats of the early 1960s included the Niagara 30, the Hinterhoeller 25 and 28, the latter his own designs. When he decided to commission an outside designer for his next boat, he selected C&C. The design they delivered was named the Invader 35, their first boat in fiberglass. About two dozen were built, followed by the more popular Redwing 30 and 35. (The latter was never sold as the Redwing 35, rather as the C&C 35, because it came along just as C&C Yachts was being formed.)

Other players

In 1965, Ian Morch of the Belleville Marine Yard commissioned C&C to design the 31-foot Corvette. The centerboard sloop was built of fiberglass and numbered several hundred before production ceased.

"Despite a number of forays into the cruising genre, primarily with the Landfall series, C&C's bread and butter always was the racer/cruiser, with emphasis on the racer."

The same year, Canadian yachtsman Perry Connolly, who a few years earlier had bought a 35-footer from Cuthbertson, asked C&C to design a custom 40-foot racing machine for him. The design directive called for flat-out speed. Connolly said he wanted "the meanest, hungriest 40-footer afloat," Cuthbertson recalls.

The builder selected was Germanborn Erich Bruckmann, who had emigrated to Canada just two years after George Hinterhoeller, in 1954. Bruckmann had been shop supervisor at Metro Marine when *La Mouette* was built. In 1966 he set up his own boatbuilding company, Bruckmann Manufacturing, in Oakville, Ontario. *Red Jacket*, as she was christened, was his first job.

Cuthbertson avers that *Red Jacket* was the first boat with a balsa-cored hull (other earlier boats had balsacored decks, and powerboat builders were using it in transoms and superstructures). No doubt the weight savings and panel stiffness of her cored hull contributed significantly to her racing success.

During her first summer racing on Lake Ontario, *Red Jacket* took 11 of 13 starts. In 1968, she won the SORC, which was a series of six races with the major two being from St. Petersburg to Fort Lauderdale and from Miami to Nassau. *Red Jacket* made a name for her owner as well as for her designers and builder. She is still actively raced by her owners, members the Royal Canadian Yacht Club.

C&C Yachts formed

The four eventual partners - Hinterhoeller Ltd., Belleville Marine Yard Ltd., Cuthbertson & Cassian, and Bruckmann Manufacturing Ltd. were small outfits, none with many employees, but they recognized a certain interdependence. Hinterhoeller and Bruckmann bought stanchions from Belleville Marine Yard's machine shop, and all three were working closely with C&C's seven-member staff, building boats to their designs.

Though there had been some informal discussions between the four about pooling their efforts, it was not until Bob Sale, president of the investment firm of Walwyn, Stodgell & Co., made a formal proposal that things began to move forward. Sale owned a Corvette 31, knew the various operations, and believed there were distinct advantages for each.

George Hinterhoeller described these events: "In 1969, Bob Sale, a stockbroker, asked (us) how we felt about forming a publicly owned holding company. We liked the idea, and by fall we were one big happy family.

"The value of each company was determined in part by the earnings of the year prior to amalgamation. Ours was the lowest. Miraculously, from that point on we provided the lion's share of the (business of the) three boatbuilders, even before the shop expansion.

"We decided that my company should build keelboats 25, 27, 30, 35, and 39 feet long. The Bruckmann-built Redline 25, and our Hinterhoeller 25, Hinterhoeller 28, and Redwing 30 were phased out. By about 1972 we displayed our fleet at the Annapolis Boat Show."

The C&C corporate history states, "On September 26, the lever was officially pulled that brought their independent operations together under one roof, to be known as C&C Yachts Limited. In addition to varying cash considerations, each company acquired 150,000 shares in the new venture. These companies continued to function as individual entities, with the parent company responsible for the financing, marketing, and accounting for the group."

Owing to his degrees in engineering, and business administration, Ian Morch of Belleville Marine Yard was made president. George Cuthbertson directed the design effort, Erich Bruckmann the custom work, and George Hinterhoeller production.

The year of the merger, 1969, was a high-profile year for the young company. It was Canada's Cup time again, and Bruckmann built three C&C designs for the Canadian defense of the cup. *Manitou* was the eventual winner of the trials and won the series 4-0 over the Sparkman & Stephens-designed challenger, *Niagara*. Perry Connolly was skipper and one of the three owners. The sailing world took notice.

"The exposure and high public interest doubtless had a lot to do with the success of the C&C Yachts Ltd. public offering later that year," Cuthbertson recalls.

In addition, in 1971 *Endurance*, a C&C 43, won the Chicago-Mackinac in a fleet of more than 300, Cuthbertson notes.

"Probably our most successful year on the racecourse and in the public profile was 1972," he continues. "Not only did *Condor* win the SORC overall (our second), but we took three of the five classes. Also Robon, a C&C 61, was first to finish of 180 starters in a heavy upwind Bermuda Race, defeating six maxis in the process. Second overall was our 50-foot *Phantom*."

Expansion of the plants

The 1970s were good years for the sailing industry, and C&C Yachts experienced similar growth. Not only was fiberglass making boat ownership less expensive and less maintenance-intensive, but the energy crunch of that decade, headlined by the OPEC oil embargo, made sailing more affordable than powerboating.

During those years, C&C was also designing boats to be built by others. "At home," Cuthbertson says, "Ontario Yachts built the Viking 22, 28, and 33/34 plus the Ontario 32. Paceship built four or five of our designs in Nova Scotia. In the U.S., Lindsey Plastics (later Newport Yachts) built many Newport 41s. In England, Anstey Yachts built the Trapper 27, 28, and 35 (which was a C&C 35). We did the Whitby 45 for Kurt Hansen of Whitby Boat Works. We designed several yachts for OY Baltic in Finland and the Benello 37 for Cantiere Benello in Livorno, Italy. There were others, but those are the ones which come to mind."

With the strong Canadian dollar, trade between America and Canada favored the latter; U.S. boats sold in Canada were subject to a 17.5 percent tariff, whereas Canadian boats sold in America paid only a 3 percent tariff. The industry as a whole was growing at double-digit speed - 10 to 15 percent a year - and C&C Yachts participated fully in that prosperity.

Going in, Belleville Marine Yard was the largest of the three builders, with a 20,000-square-foot facility and 55 employees. By 1970 it would add another 12,000 square feet. In 1969, Hinterhoeller's 57 employees built 181 boats. Its 20,000-square-foot addition doubled capacity to 386 units.

"The plant expansion, development work, and production came off without a glitch," Hinterhoeller said. "We now had some 100,000 square feet of floor space, five production lines, and 150 people on the shop floor. Soon thereafter, we purchased an adjacent piece of land and built the development shop, machine shop, and spar shed, adding another 20,000 square feet. Belleville Marine Yard was closed down as a result of consistent losses after amalgamation."

"Probably the most popular model of all time was the C&C 27, first introduced in 1970 and reissued in four versions, plus a 26-foot version that looked a lot like the last 27 iteration."

A dealer network was established and expanded during the early 1970s. By September 1970, five dealers were added in Canada and eight added to the 15 already established in the U.S. Models included the C&C 25, 27, 30, 35, 40C, and the custom C&C 61, probably the largest semi-production fiberglass sailboat of that time. *Sorcery* won a number of races, and her lean and mean lines were exciting just to look at. The next year, 1971, the C&C 39 was introduced. Total sales that year reached \$5.2 million.

But all was not rosy. Ian Morch's Belleville Marine Yard was losing money and probably as a means of avoiding bankruptcy, he vigorously pursued a plan whereby operations would become more centralized. Cuthbertson opposed the plan, seeing virtue in their degrees of autonomy. After a number of heated board meetings, Morch's proposal was accepted, and the four firms became as one.

"The holding company was transformed into a wholly owned corporation," Hinterhoeller said. "That is, C&C Yachts, and names like Hinterhoeller, Division of C&C, disappeared. I voted for this transition, which proved to be a mistake."

Production at Belleville Marine Yard ceased. This shifted the production burden (other than Bruckmann's custom work) to Hinterhoeller, and a plant expansion was undertaken. Personality differences were not resolved by these moves, however, and Morch resigned. He bought back the assets of Belleville Marine Yard and then was forced to sell them to Credit Foncier.

The board named George Hinterhoeller to succeed Morch as president, but it was a role for which he was not particularly well suited, nor one he liked. A boating writer described him as a "craggy man, with a worn look, who smokes heavily and looks across at a pile of telephone messages with small enthusiasm . . . a dreamer with dirty hands."

He lasted less than a year before returning to the shop, which was his love. Among his innovations were placing hulls in holes dug in the shop floor so workers didn't have to climb ladders, a trailer with hydraulic arms to move hulls, and the reverse flange hull/deck joint with vinyl rubrail sandwiched in between, which

became a standard industry practice. Hinterhoeller eschewed split molds and did not like large molded interior pans and headliners that prevent "proper" bonding of bulkheads to the hull.

In the spring of 1973, Cuthbertson burned out and retired to his farm to recharge his batteries. Rob Ball became chief designer in his place. Cuthbertson couldn't stay away for long, however, returning at the end of the summer and agreeing to take the helm of C&C, a position he retained for eight years.

Committed to performance

Despite a number of forays into the cruising genre, primarily with the Landfall series, C&C's bread and butter always was the racer/cruiser, with emphasis on the racer. By using balsa core in hulls as well as decks, C&C proved that for most uses, and certainly racing, lightweight, stiff hulls are superior to heavy, single-skin hulls.

"C&C's first real commercial success was the C&C 35, essentially the same boat as the Redwing 35 designed originally for Hinterhoeller."

C&C's first real commercial success was the C&C 35, essentially the same boat as the Redwing 35 designed originally for Hinterhoeller. First off the line was *Redhead*, taken to the 1970 SORC with Bruce Kirby, editor of *One Design & Offshore* magazine, at the helm.

Unfortunately, *Redhead* was rigged for light air, and that week it blew. She broke a rudder in the St. Petersburg to Ft. Lauderdale race. "We did not feel *Redhead's* performance was a disappointment," Cuthbertson said. "And neither did the public, I guess. The C&C 35 sold like crazy and was later identified, with the C&C 61, as two of the definitive designs of the era." Success again visited C&C in 1972, when *Condor*, the prototype for the Redline 41, won the SORC, as noted previously.

Probably the most popular model of all time was the C&C 27, introduced in 1970 and reissued in four versions, plus a 26-foot version that looked a lot like the last 27 iteration. Somewhere around 1,000 27s were built. The C&C 30 came out the following year and also developed a huge following. A few years later, when management thought that the C&C 25, 27, and 30 were growing tired, it tried to replace them with the C&C 24, 26, and 29 but with poor results. Like most, if not all of the large production builders, C&C found itself competing with its own used boats: why buy a new 29 when you can buy a four-year-old 30 that's bigger, better equipped, and costs less?

By the end of 1973, there were 180 employees producing 480 boats in six models, plus four models at Bruckmann's plant. C&C was having terrific success in penetrating the U.S. market. But, Cuthbertson recalls, "There was a lobby active in Washington seeking to impose a heavy import duty because we had gained such a high portion of the U.S. market. We needed more productive capacity and decided to locate in the U.S. as a defensive measure against possible imposition of such a tariff."

In February 1976 C&C opened a 56,000-square-foot plant in Middletown, Rhode Island, financed in part by a \$1.5 million bond sale from the Rhode Island Port Authority and Economic Development Corporation. The C&C 24, 29, and the new 33 were scheduled to be built there, as well as the Mega 30.

Ahead of her time

The Mega, introduced in 1977, is one of the most interesting boats ever built by a high-volume production yard. It was the brainchild of C&C and North Sail's Peter Barret, who proposed to serve as the class-association president. Their idea was a trailerable one-design, but so many demands were placed upon it that the boat ended up at 30 feet with standing headroom, a self-tacking jib, and a retractable bulb keel. "In some respects, such as the open transom and the deckhouse configuration," Cuthbertson says now, "the design anticipated the future."

Only 150 Megas were ever sold. Cuthbertson explained the public's dismal reaction: "We became too concerned about the trailerability aspects just at a time when people stopped buying big cars, let alone trailering big loads behind them. Trailerability aside, the concept was good; the failure was in execution. The market refused to embrace Mega for three reasons: unorthodox appearance, mediocre performance (particularly upwind), and many warranty problems. On the plus side, C&C produced a useful 30-footer at half the price (\$16,000) of a typical C&C 30-footer. Now, if we had just done it right . . ."

This disappointment was offset by two highlights of 1977-78, the first of which was the introduction of another C&C 40, which raced well, and 167 were sold.

And a C&C won the 1978 Canada's Cup. Her name was *Evergreen*. She was a most unusual boat, perhaps the most sophisticated of her time. The Two Tonner's hull was cored with balsa, the norm for C&C, but her

deck was a paper-honeycomb laminate, and the bulkheads were cored with an aluminum honeycomb. She had a four-spreader, hydraulically tuned rig and a jibing daggerboard.

Changes

C&C's international ventures didn't end in the United States. The same year it moved to Rhode Island, C&C got a loan from the city of Kiel and the state of Schleswig-Holstein, West Germany, to build a 27,000-square-foot plant there. Workers were trained by C&C staff, and in 1978 production of the C&C 30E, 24, and Mega began. As luck would have it, the deutsche mark chose that time to jump from 32 to 65 cents Canadian, making it cheaper for C&C to build at home and ship overseas than to build abroad. The company reported an annual loss of \$496,000.

By now, George Hinterhoeller had left C&C to recreate Hinterhoeller Yachts as an independent company. "A number of factors, which I don't care to describe, led me to the conclusion that we should part company," he wrote. He left at the end of 1975 and by 1977 had persuaded four former C&C employees to join him in building several designs by Mark Ellis, who'd also been employed by C&C. These were the Niagara 35 and the Nonsuch line of catboats.



Red Jacket sail plan

In 1976, Cuthbertson hired David Gee to oversee Erich Bruckmann's custom division. Bruckmann was an expert builder, and Gee came with an MBA and experience at General Foods and commercial banking. He didn't know much about boats but believed he could improve the company through team building, market-driven product design, and a corporate mindset.

One of the designers said of Cuthbertson's return from the farm, "He had a different attitude when he came back. Cuthbertson said that while everyone wanted to design race boats, even a good one didn't stay on top long. He said it was a fickle business . . . and aimed us more toward a combination boat."

Hence, the general purpose racer/cruiser that can compete in Wednesday-night club races and also take the family on a week's cruise with some degree of comfort. But it was the speedy end of the performance continuum that identified C&C and to that end the boats had to be light (balsa cored) and fast looking: Cuthbertson's knife-edge bows, reverse transoms, and strong sheerlines filled the bill. The perforated aluminum toerail, to which one can shackle blocks anywhere, became a C&C trademark and was much copied by others.

In 1977, the Landfall series of dedicated cruisers was initiated. The first was the Landfall 42. This break from the racer/cruiser formula was not entirely successful, though several other models - the Landfall 38, 39, and 48 - also were developed.

C&C Yachts 1968-2002

C&C 24	C&C 30 Mk II	C&C 35 Mk II	C&C 40
HR 25	Mega 30	C&C 35 Mk III	C&C 41
C&C 25	Redwing 30	Landfall 35	Landfall 42
C&C 25 Redline	Corvette 31	C&C 36	Landfall 43
C&C 26	C&C 32	C&C 36 XL	C&C 44
C&C 26 Wave	C&C 33	C&C 37	C&C 45 C
C&C 27	Viking 33/34	C&C 37 R	(Star catamaran)
HR 28	C&C 34	C&C 37 +	Landfall 48
C&C 29 Mk I	C&C 34 R	C&C 38	C&C 51
C&C 29 Mk II	C&C 34 +	Landfall 38	C&C 54
C&C 30 Mk I	C&C 35 Mk I	Landfall 39	C&C 57

Note: Not listed are the custom boats, most of which were built as one-offs by Bruckmann's plant.

The four models below were designed by Glenn Henderson late in C&C's life and have uncertain production runs.

C&C SR 21	C&C SR 25	C&C SR 27	C&C SR 33
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

The turbulent 80s

The 1980s was a difficult decade for boatbuilders. Cal, O'Day, Pearson, Ranger, and Columbia, to name a few, ran out of money and disappeared. While C&C would weather the storms of recession and cultural change, it also suffered.

As a publicly held corporation, C&C was unique in the industry. But C&C owner and Air Ontario businessman Jim Plaxton became nearly obsessed with wanting to buy the company and, after a protracted battle, he finally got controlling interest. His initial offer of \$3.1 million (\$4.50 per share) for 51 percent of the shares was turned down. Next he offered \$5.25 per share for 70 percent. Cuthbertson and the other directors owned 65 percent of the outstanding 404,000 shares and held out for \$6 per share, emboldened by year-end profits of \$1.7 million on sales of \$39.6 million.

Plaxton was undeterred. To raise the cash he formed a partnership with Stanley Deluce, owner of Austin Airways. The deal went down in January 1982, with Deluce paying the C&C shareholders and in return getting half of Plaxton's Delplax Holdings, which owned Air Ontario. Plaxton replaced Cuthbertson as chief executive, and Gee stayed on as president.

It was another case of an MBA believing he can run any kind of business, because the principles taught in the classroom and boardroom are the same for any industry. But C&C wasn't the first boatbuilder to prove the danger of such thinking. The errors are several: first, the building of large boats continues to resist labor-saving shop methods such as injection molding and, second, the pleasureboat industry is swayed by hard-to-predict vagaries of the economy and cultural trends, the high cost of slip space, perceptions of onerous maintenance, and state-by-state tax laws.

Under a cloudy forecast, Gee jumped ship in 1985. Marketing manager Lee Ramsay and sales manager Wes Dalby did the same, leaving Stanley Deluce's son, Bill, in charge. C&C fell into receivership in April 1986.

In June, a Toronto group, headed by charter operator Brian Rose, bought C&C for \$9 million. In 1992, Anthony Koo and Frank Chow of Wa Kwang Shipping in Hong Kong took C&C off Rose's hands, but within a few years they, too, would be gone. In 1994, a devastating fire destroyed 40 molds and three C&C 51s under construction. Insurance covered only part of the loss, and Koo and Chow found it too expensive to restart. The doors closed. Tooling for just the C&C 36 was shipped to China with the vague notion of possibly supplying the Asian market.

In 1998, the Fairport Marine Company, which had bought Tartan, purchased the name and remaining molds. None of the old designs were built by Fairport Marine, however. The president and designer, Tim Jackett, designed several new boats, the C&C 99 (32 feet), C&C 110 (36 feet), and the C&C 121 (40 feet) as lighter,

cleaner, more performance-oriented alternatives to the increasingly sluggish Tartan cruiser lineup.



The early staff in a photo by George Cuthbertson: Mark Ellis, Steve Killing, Rob Mazza, Rob Ball, Tony Godwin, Ruth Gard, George Cassian, Ruth Coombes, and Len Cox.

Epilogue

C&C was a source of national pride for Canada, and rightly so. It competed head-on with U.S. builders and won, not only on the racecourse but also in the showroom. In its first 17 years, C&C built 7,000 boats. They were sufficiently fast, good-looking, and well built that the company survived the persisting tensions of its four founding members. It is not surprising, however, that C&C eventually succumbed to the cancer within and the many slings and arrows loosed upon it: the 15 percent U.S. tariff, a strong U.S. dollar (which opened the door for French giants Beneteau and Jeanneau), a policy of accepting C&C trade-ins at original prices, and its own high prices . . . not to mention the other economic and cultural factors noted earlier. Interestingly, the two large U.S. builders who did survive - Hunter and Catalina - are closely managed by hands-on owners, not corporate teams.

George Cassian died of a heart attack following a strenuous squash tournament in 1979 at just 46 years of age. George Hinterhoeller's new company also changed ownership several times during the 1980s. He retired for good in 1988 and died in the spring of 1999. Erich Bruckmann is retired, but his son, Mark, carries on the tradition of building boats under the family name.

George Cuthbertson lives a quiet life on the same property to which he fled in 1973 trying to escape the workaday world of C&C Yachts. Most of his papers have been given to the Marine Museum in Kingston, Ontario. Presently, he is awaiting a new sail for one of his Water Rat dinghies, which he converted to sailing. Nearly 50 years old, this Water Rat shares, along with its designer and builder, a wonderful legacy that still is the pride of Canada.

C&C history in review 1958–1998

