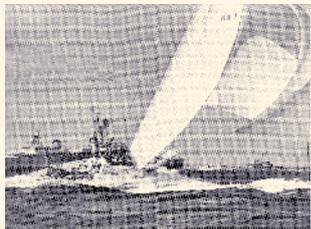


RSYS LOGBOOK SESQUICENTENARY EDITION



1862-2012

IAN HANSEN 2012



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COMMODORE'S MESSAGE

BY MALCOLM LEVY

The 8th of July 1862 marks the formation of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron when William Walker and eighteen other Sydney yachtsmen with similar interests signed the inauguration document. So began the Squadron's great journey with its primary object of promoting and encouraging yachting generally and, in particular, the sport of yacht racing. I am proud to state that the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron has become one of the world's leading yacht clubs and 2012 marks its 150th Anniversary.

William Walker would surely be pleased with the Squadron's achievements, our active participation in ocean racing, including the Admiral's Cup, our challenge for the America's Cup, the participation of Squadron members in the Olympics and, of course, the hosting of a number of world and national championships. Ashore, our achievements are no less noteworthy, we have the impressive Carabella Clubhouse and its amenities. We are graced with a committed and dedicated staff.

In this special Sesquicentenary edition of the Logbook you will find many fascinating stories of renowned members. There are stories highlighting the great successes of the Squadron, including the youth sailing program, our initiatives to foster women's sailing and our highly successful annual cruise.

I hope that members, friends and others alike will celebrate this amazing achievement during 2012.

I take this opportunity to thank Peter Campbell for authoring many of the articles that appear in this publication. His journalist talent and love of yachting is clearly evident in his writings. I also thank those who contributed articles, the Logbook Editorial Committee and of course, our Honorary Historian and Archivist, Peter Bradford.

And finally, my thanks to you, the members, for being part of this 150th Anniversary year.



1862 TO 2012 – THE SQUADRON'S SESQUICENTENARY

BY PETER CAMPBELL



RSYS Clubhouse 1912

The 150th anniversary of The Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron marks the founding of one of the great yacht clubs of the world, a Clubhouse with magnificent facilities for its members and their guests and a yacht racing organisation that provides the highest standard of race management for club, national and international championships and regattas.

The Sesquicentenary also underlines the significance of the Squadron's role in the development of the sport of yacht racing in Australia and, indeed, internationally, as set out in the rules and by-laws:

The primary objective of the Squadron is the promotion and encouragement of yachting generally, and of racing among sailing yachts in particular.

Spanning three centuries, the Squadron has, and continues to achieve, that primary objective. Notable achievements by the Squadron and its Members have included:

- The Squadron had the honour of being the first yacht club in the Southern Hemisphere to be designated a 'Squadron' and the first to be granted a Royal Warrant;
- The Squadron conducted the nation's first ocean race;
- A member's yacht was the first Australian to circumnavigate the world;

- The Squadron was the first Australian club to challenge for the America's Cup;
- Members mounted the inaugural Australian challenge for the Admiral's Cup;
- In Olympic yachting, a Squadron member won Australia's first gold medal at the Tokyo Games;
- Squadron members played a significant role in conducting the sailing regatta of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games on Sydney Harbour.
- The Squadron has successfully hosted world championships for classes such as Farr 40s, Ynglings and Etchells. That is just to name a few achievements,

With a membership of near 3,000, including, many who are not active in yachting, the secondary objective of the Squadron, as defined in the revised rules and by-laws in 1952, reads:

Members are also associated together for social, literary, recreational and all other similar purposes lawfully permissible to a club (registered under the relevant Act of Parliament), including the provision of accommodation and other facilities for such purposes.

These secondary activities have been financially significant to the Squadron, making possible the acquisition and enlargement of the Clubhouse and its amenities, as well as better facilities for yacht owners.

The historic *Carabella* Clubhouse on Wudyong Point, Careening Cove, with its sweeping views of Sydney Harbour, stands as a tribute to the foresight of the founding fathers of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron.

Likewise, the Squadron is noted for the high standard of yacht race management that has been developed over 150 years of conducting club races and national and international regattas on Sydney Harbour and on short ocean courses. Much of this has been achieved by members themselves, volunteering for all manner of onshore and on-the-water activities, complementing the role of professional staff.

On Sunday, 8 July 2012, members of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron will gather at the Clubhouse for a garden party and a toast to "The Squadron" on its 150th birthday.



• *This 150th Anniversary edition of the Squadron 'Logbook' is very much a condensed version of the history of our great club and the deeds of its members. The following articles record, in brief, the activities of the Squadron since its formation, obtained from a wide range of sources but notably the two wonderfully descriptive and detailed books that have been produced on the history of the Club, the first published in 1962 to mark the Century of the Squadron, the second in 2002.*

I am also indebted to the Club's Honorary Archivist Peter Bradford for his advice and for sourcing additional historical records. Other information has come from my own writings and records, along with reports published in early editions of the 'Logbook' and on the website, sail-world.com. There will be historic items missing from this edition of the 'Logbook' that some members may feel should have been included, but within the confines of these pages there is bound to have been some inadvertent omissions.

Celebrating the Squadron's history

The Jubilee of the Squadron was duly celebrated on 8th July, 1912, when a dinner was held at the Australia Hotel, Sydney, to commemorate the occasion. Three of the original founders were there to see the splendid results of their efforts of fifty years before: the Hon H C Dangar MLC and Messrs Charles Parbury and Fred J Jackson.

On 8th July, 1962, the Squadron attained its One Hundredth Anniversary. The Clubhouse and grounds were decorated for the occasion, which was further celebrated at a Grand Centenary Ball at the clubhouse on 20th July.

Another grand function was The Commodore's Centenary of Carebella Dinner at the historic Clubhouse on 17th October, 2003.

On Sunday, 8th July 2012 Members will celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron with a Garden Party on the lawns of *Carabella*.

Sesquicentenary Year Events 2012

Thursday, 7th June:
Sesquicentenary Art Show

Saturday, 7th July:
Classic Boats Regatta

Sunday, 8th July:
Sesquicentenary Garden Party

Saturday, 1st September:
Start of 150th Yachting Season

Saturday, 8th September:
Sesquicentenary Members Ball

Sunday, 16th September:
Opening Day, 150th Yachting Season

RSYS Clubhouse 2012.
Photo: Skyshots Aerial
Photography



1862 – FOUNDING THE SQUADRON

On 8 July, 1862, the Honourable William Walker, a prominent Sydney merchant and yacht owner, invited eighteen other sailing enthusiasts to his office at the Exchange corner, Bridge Street, to consider the formation of a yacht club.



They subscribed their names to a resolution: “We, the undersigned yacht owners, hereby constitute ourselves into a club to be termed the ‘Royal Australian Yacht Squadron’”.

The signatories and their yachts were: James Milson Jnr, *Era*; William Walker, *Chance*; J P Roxburgh, *Eclipse*; J S Rowntree, *Annie Ogle*; Sydney C Burt, *Scud*; Staunton Spain, *Mischief*; I F Josephson, *Ida*; James

Freeman, *Eclipse*; Robert Garrett, *Daisy*; Charles Parbury, *Why Not*; J F Jackson, *Gitana*; T S Threlkeld, *Irene*; R H Hartnett, *Australian*; H Milford, *Eclipse*; R F Pockley, *Mazeppa*; Henry C Dangar, *Peri*; H Stuart Russell, *Old Tom*; J D McLean and J W Brookes, *Mischief*.

The Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron still has the original document, although it seems that at a later meeting the word “Royal” was scored out. Presumably it dawned upon the members of the newly-formed club that something more than enthusiasm was needed before the word ‘Royal’ could form part of the name of their club. Protocol had to be observed.

Within a year, the club was accorded Royal patronage by the Prince of Wales under the name of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, in accordance with the recommendations of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, His Grace the Duke of Newcastle.

At a time when there was intense rivalry between the New South Wales and Victoria, members were advised that calling the club the “Royal Australian Yacht Squadron” might cause antagonism between the then colonies. Thus, our fine club became the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, initiating a proud history in yacht racing that has been maintained with great dignity for 150 years. The first formal meeting of the club saw William Walker elected the first Commodore, with James Milson as Vice Commodore. Walker was followed

as Commodore by James Milson and H C Dangar from among the inaugural members who, incidentally, paid a membership fee of three guineas with an entrance fee of two guineas.

Many descendants of these pioneer yachtsmen continued their active membership of the Squadron over many years. In fact, a current member is a descendent of J P Roxburgh.

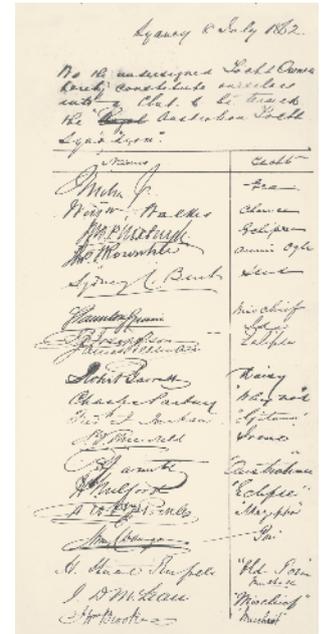
When the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron was formed, yachting had already become a popular recreation for Sydney’s successful merchants, lawyers, bankers, shipowners and medical practitioners. The first recorded regatta had been held in 1827 and the inaugural Anniversary Regatta (now the Australia Day Regatta) was held in 1837. A couple of attempts had been to form yacht clubs, but these foundered after a couple of years.

The catalyst for the formation of a successful yacht club came with the arrival in Port Jackson from England of Walker’s beautiful schooner *Chance*, an iron-hulled vessel of 71 tons, registered with the Royal Thames Yacht Club, a club that had been formed in 1775.

Chance joined *Era*, *Peri*, *Annie Ogle*, *Mischief*, *Why Not*, *Ida*, *Scud*, *Old Tom*, *Gitana*, *Mazeppa* and *Australian* in opening manoeuvres in early October 1862. Unfortunately, *Chance* had carried away her jib-boom in a squall earlier in the week and Commodore Walker directed that Vice Commodore Milson in *Era* should take command of the Squadron.

Taking station in order of their tonnage the Squadron fleet sailed from Farm Cove, around Goat Island in the upper harbour, then making various and impressive manoeuvres as they sailed down the Harbour in a breeze that was described as “eastward of south, with heavy squalls, accompanied by rain and thick cloudy weather” to a rendezvous at Manly Cove. According to a contemporary report, the members were then “piped to lunch and fortified themselves below, so as to attend to any kind of difficulty above.”

When they came on deck they had an “agreeable surprise” to see the Commodore’s yacht, *Chance*, sailing at a smart clip down the Harbour, her jib-boom repaired, to join the Squadron. She had set out in pursuit of the fleet, missing the manoeuvres, but led the Squadron home.



Foundation document 1862

Painting of *Eclipse* in the possession of the RSYs

The Hon. William Walker MLC, first Commodore of the RSYs, 1862-7.

From an oil painting in the possession of the RSYs

Squadron vessels leaving Farm Cove for the opening Cruise, 1866



Abeam of Fort Denison, the Commodore shortened sail. He then hove to on starboard tack, with the signal "Salute", each yacht in succession then saluting the Commodore's flag as they passed under the stern of *Chance*, followed by three cheers for the Commodore and the Vice Commodore from each crew. We are not sure if Commodore Levy is planning similar manoeuvres in this, the Squadron's 150th season.

The first actual race for Squadron yachts was in the Hunters Hill Regatta on New Year's Eve, 1862 with *Peri* the winner, using a tonnage system of handicapping.

This regatta race was first of many famous inshore and offshore encounters by these gaff-rigged schooners and cutters that finally led to a regular programme of yacht racing on the harbour and special short ocean races. The first long ocean race was the dramatic challenge match between *Chance* and *Xarifa* to Newcastle and return, covered elsewhere in this Logbook.

Commodore Walker's office in the city was the Squadron's headquarters for the first 30 years of its existence. Then, in 1892, the members decided it was time they had premises of their

own, leasing a small room on the second floor of a building in lower Pitt Street.

No more than 20 members could comfortably meet in the room at any one time, but the elements of the club were active. One of those members recorded: "It had a bar, a small locker in which was kept a bottle of whisky, a couple of bottles of beer, some glasses, and a money box."

Ten years on, with membership expanding with the growth of the city, the members decided it must find a waterfront site with a clubhouse worthy of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron.

In 1902, the club leased (and subsequently purchased) a property at Wudyong Point on the eastern side of Kirribilli. The site including the stone cottage, *Carabella*, a landing stage and a slipway. *Carabella* had belonged to the Milson family, with James Milson Jnr one of the founding members of the Squadron.

"The waterfront to the property is excellently suited to the Squadron's purposes," said a sub-committee report. "Races can be started and finished therefrom, while the lawn could provide a splendid vantage point to view the racing."

Boating scene of Careening Cove, painted by Alfred James Daplyn, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW. Painted between 1885-1892



View from the lawn, Circa 1900. Powerhouse Museum collection, photo Sam Hood



FIELD GUNS

The site was occupied from 24th January 1903, with the Squadron's Blue Ensign being run up a flagstaff for the first time, as it has been done every day since that historic date.

Carabella remains the Clubhouse, although over the past 109 years the clubhouse has been extensively extended and re-modelled, with an upper floor and wings added. On the waterfront, modern haul-out facilities and a hard-stand have been built for the one-design class yachts, together with an extended floating breakwater.

Over the years, the Squadron has hosted world, national and state championships, the latest being the world championship for Farr 40s in 2011 and earlier this year the worlds for the International Yngling and Etchells classes.

The ocean racing and cruising achievements of Squadron members have included Harold Nossiter's round the world cruise in *Sirius* and the heroic challenges for the Admiral's Cup and the America's Cup.

Squadron members have also had success in the challenging Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, notably the three consecutive wins by the Halvorsen brothers' *Freya* in the 1960s and the line and overall wins by Syd Fischer spanning 43 Hobarts.

In Olympic sailing, Squadron member Sir William Northam, won Australia's first Olympic gold medal in sailing, sailing *Barranjoey* to victory in the 5.5 metre class at the 1964 Tokyo Games.

The stand-out international activity of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron came in its Centenary year, 1962, with Australia's first challenge for the America's Cup, held by the New York Yacht Club since 1851. *Gretel*, skippered by Jock Sturrock, went down fighting, as did a second Squadron challenge in 1970 by *Gretel II*, helmed by Sir James Hardy, but their efforts and the experience gained by Australian yachtsmen and yacht designers paved the way for *Australia II*'s victory in 1983.



The two field guns which have graced the Clubhouse lawns since 1909 are not only treasured Squadron artefacts, but also of considerable historical significance.

Writing in the 'Logbook' edition of June-July 1994, the then honorary archivist Graham Robertson revealed that the field guns are the only relics of the first military contingent to depart Australian shores for active service overseas.

The contingent, consisting of a battalion of infantry and a battery of the New South Wales Artillery, embarked on the troopship *Australasian* at Circular Quay on 3 March, 1885, en route for Suakin, the port of Sudan in the Red Sea.

The artillery contingent, at the request of the British War Office, took their horses and harness for a six gun battery, but not their guns. These were supplied on arrival by the Royal Horse Artillery in the form of six "9 pounder, 6 hundred-weight (cwt) Mark II Rifled Muzzle Loading (RML) horse-drawn Land Service (LS) field guns and limbers."

Some seven weeks after their arrival in the Sudan, the Australian contingent was evacuated without seeing any action. The grateful British Government allowed the NSW Artillery to retain the six 9 pounder field guns in return for the Australians' horses – the magnificent "Walers".

It seems that after the Squadron established its clubhouse at Wudyong Point in 1903 the Committee was keen to obtain a couple of guns to decorate the lawns, as was the custom of the day in parks and public places. The Commandant of the Eastern Military District was persuaded to assign two, now obsolete 9 pounder Mk II RML field guns "with limbers an' appurtenances" to the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron and their arrival is referred to in Committee Minutes of November 1909.

The original Field Guns. Powerhouse Museum collection, photo Sam Hood

INNOVATION – FROM THE *AUSTRALIAN* TO THE *AUSTRALIA II*

Over the past 149 seasons, many famous yachts have been listed on the register of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron. The remarkable *Australian* was among the first 19 boats on the Squadron register in 1862 and while *Australia II* was not, she brought to a victorious climax the efforts begun by the Squadron to win the America's Cup.

Squadron members were the pioneers of organised club yacht racing and regattas even before the club was established in 1862, their magnificent gaff-rigged cutters and schooners capitalising on the superb sailing waters of Port Jackson.

From those early days in the rapidly growing colony of New South Wales, they developed their own sailing skills but also encouraged development in the design and building of yachts that may well have been among the fastest in the world.

Isolation in the Southern Hemisphere prevented those early yachts being tested until that era of Australia's excellence in yacht racing when, in

just a decade or so, boats on the Squadron register, sailed by Squadron members, made two competitive challenges for the America's Cup, won the Admiral's Cup, the Fastnet Race, the One Ton Cup and the Sydney Hobart ocean race several times. In one-design racing, Squadron members and their boats became world champions in Dragons, 505s, Thunderbirds, 5.5 metres, Etchells, J24s and Solings.

To these we can add, in more recent years, world title wins in Ynglings and another victory in Etchells, not to mention three gold medals in Olympic yachting.

This remarkable record of success had its origins in the early competition between the 19 founding members of the Squadron. They were already yacht owners when they met on 8 July 1862 and agreed to establish a yacht club, within a year to be named the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron.

One of those members was R H 'Dick' Hartnett, an Irishman from Cork who settled in Sydney at the age of 21. Over the next two decades he became not only one of the best helmsmen on the harbour, but also the designer of a celebrated yacht, the *Australian*, launched in 1858.

In designing *Australian*, Hartnett paid no regard to the tradition or precedent of yacht design of that era, describing the radically unorthodox design in these words: "I caught a mackerel in Woolloomooloo Bay for the purpose of obtaining correct lines. Opening its mouth, I cut the fish into two parts. Leaving the back and laying the incised portion on a sheet of paper, I took for my load waterline the horizontal lines of the fish which were segments of a circle, the garboard strake corresponding with the waterlines and the mid section of a right-angled floor."

The *Australian* sailed on Sydney Harbour for 35 years and was still winning races in 1885, 27 years after she was built, incidentally, from timbers from a wrecked clipper ship. In an article published in 1888, the leading Sydney designer



Australia II winning over *Liberty*. Photo by Daniel Forster

1862

Birth of the Squadron



William Walker's Chance arrives from UK

Xarifa launched

Royal Warrant granted

1863



1864

First ocean races

of the time, Walter Reeks, described her as “almost a perfect vessel.”

One of those built along the *Australian* design concept was for Henry H Dangar, with her lines below the waterline like the “segments of a circle” but with a straight stem instead of a pointed, cutaway bow. Dangar, also one of the founding members of the Squadron, named her *Xarifa*.

Even before the cutter was built, Dangar had challenged Commodore William Walker to a challenge match with his British-designed and built schooner *Chance*, from Sydney to Newcastle and return, a distance of about 140 nautical miles. Commodore Walker staked 100 pounds to Parbury's 75 pounds.

Xarifa turned in striking performances in her first three races including sailing through a gale to win a race to Long Reef and return. The race to Newcastle and return was set for February 14, 1864. The firing of the one o'clock gun from Fort Denison (Pinchgut) was to be the starting signal.

Dangar's account of this memorable race was graphically descriptive and much of his narrative has been included in the two books published by Squadron: *Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron 1862-1962* and *Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron 1862-2000*.

Dangar described how, during the night, after reaching a point abeam of Nobby's Light, “the gallant little vessel (*Xarifa*) thrashed into the teeth of the gale and against an evil sea.” At 11 o'clock the next morning *Xarifa* sailed, or rather limped into Sydney Harbour, “a wounded sea-bird with a broken wing... her topmast was down, her gaff fished and frapped, her sails reefed and torn, and her crew exhausted.” *Chance* was still at sea.

There have been many ocean races sailed in Australian waters, but that match in 1864, when the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron was in its infancy, will remain memorable in the history of Australian yachting.

Unfortunately, the Squadron's fleet became depleted in the early 1870s when, extraordinarily, the King of Fiji acquired a whole fleet, including *Xarifa*, and they ended up in the South Seas. Other Sydney yachts ended up in Tasmania and California. A clue to this exodus may be found in many disputes of the period over handicapping.

The Squadron went into the doldrums in the early 1870s, but at the turn of the year 1881, the club made a serious attempt to revive interest in



Parbury's *Xarifa*

racing by introducing a system of handicapping based on tonnage, modified by performance. Unfortunately, the club soon reverted to the time-tonnage with a consequent fall in numbers for its First Class fleet, but the change had stimulated yacht racing among the smaller yachts.

Inter-colonial yacht racing was pioneered in 1883 when the veteran Dr Herman Milford sailed his little 5-ton deep-keeler *Doris* on a coast-hugging course of nearly 600 nautical miles from Sydney to Melbourne. Whilst there, *Doris* won races in her class at the Port Phillip Regatta.

The muster of 38 vessels for opening of the Squadron's season in October 1885 began a revival of yachting which has continued with increasing momentum on Sydney Harbour ever since. New yachts were built, new systems of rating yachts and rules of racing were progressively adopted, more and better trophies were offered, and inter-colonial contests became officially established.

The Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, under Commodore Alfred Milson and Vice-Commodore James R Fairfax, took the initiative in this revival. Their efforts were supported by enthusiastic members, and also by the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club – many yachtsmen, then and since, being members of both clubs.

Two notable challenge events were sailed in 1886 and 1887. One was the first inter-colonial contest between the crack Victorian yacht *Janet*, owned by Tasmanian born grazier Sir William Clarke, and the two Squadron boats, Commodore Fairfax's veteran *Magic* and Vice Commodore Milson's *Waitangi*, which had been re-designed by Walter Reeks, then Sydney's leading yacht designer.

Yachting is a sport with risks and, unfortunately, there have been several misfortunes in the history of the Squadron.

In 1913, *Thelma*, owned by Sir Charles Lloyd Jones, was wrecked on the bombora off Middle Head after the skipper and his crew tried to recover a man washed overboard. The crewman was lost, but the rest of the crew were rescued.

In 1926, Rear Commodore A C Saxton was lost at sea when he fell overboard while sailing *Awanui*. In the same year, J M Hardie's *Capella* was stolen from her moorings and wrecked on South Head.

Another tragic loss was that of the noted yachtsman Ron Robertson who was thrown overboard by the tiller of the *Kurrewa IV* in heavy weather as she returned to Sydney from Pittwater.

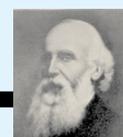


Squadron vessels sail out of Farm Cove for the first cruise

1866

1867

James Milson Jnr
elected Commodore



(Royal) Prince Alfred
Yacht Club formed

Alfred Milson and *Waitangi* convincingly won the first organised inter-colonial contest held in Sydney, 50 years after his father had won the First Class race at the inaugural Anniversary Day Regatta of 1837.

But Fairfax's veteran *Magic* was not done yet; during the 1886-87 season she won the first race ever for the Gascoigne Cup, the now historic trophy that has since been raced for each season ever since, apart from during wartime.

Many outstanding yachts have been listed on the Squadron register since those early years, adding remarkable achievements to the history of the club.

For example, *Archina* (Captain H F Harris) cruised from Sydney to Hobart and back in the late 1880s. In 1928 member Norman Wallis registered his new cruising yacht *Wanderer* with the club. She was to become perhaps the most intrepid cruiser in the Squadron's history but with an unfortunate reputation for striking heavy weather.

Wanderer became the first Sydney yacht to cruise to Lord Howe Island. She also sailed to Melbourne to contest the race across Bass Strait to Low Head, and in 1936 made an expedition, with the co-operation of the Australian Museum, to Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs to examine fish and shell species.

In almost every voyage she encountered heavy weather, including a cyclone whilst searching for a missing vessel from Lord Howe Island.

Even more adventurous was the circumnavigation of the world by Harold Nossiter in his staysail schooner *Sirius*. His crew in the voyage from 1935 to 1937, consisted of his two sons, Harold and Dick, and Charles Russell.

In 1950, following his line honours win the 1949 Sydney Hobart, Philip Davenport set sail in

Waltzing Matilda on a voyage around the world, through the Strait of Magellan in the track of the full-rigged Cape Horners of bygone years.

From the early 1920s through to the start of World War II, yacht racing expanded rapidly on Sydney Harbour and in other port cities around the nation, notably Melbourne and Geelong in Victoria and at Hobart, Tasmania, where the first Royal Hobart Regatta was held in 1838.

Many new and modern yachts were added to the Squadron's register. The outstanding development at that time was the emergence of a new class of comparatively lightweight, centreboard racing yachts known as the '21-foot restricted class'.

As the name implies, they had to be 21 feet long on the waterline, but also had specified dimensions for overall length, beam and depth, a restricted sail area and a maximum crew of six.

The adoption of the 21-foot class was the first time that the Squadron had encouraged among its members the development of the centreboard type of yachting. The newly appointed Governor General of Australia, Lord Forster, a keen yachtsman, joined the Squadron and was elected Commodore and in 1921 presented the Forster Cup as a perpetual trophy for interstate competition in the 21-footers.

The Forster Cup became what was probably the greatest interstate yachting competition in history, the contests creating extraordinary public interest with challenges held in Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Hobart, Perth and Adelaide.

Lord Forster had one built for himself as did prominent Squadron members Frank Albert and J L Milson.

In the early 1920s Sydney yachtsmen realised the importance of encouraging youth into the sport and the Squadron co-operated with the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club and the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club in developing the 12-foot Cadet dinghy class for sons of members of the three clubs. This encouragement led eventually (in 1931) to the designing and building (by Sil Rohu and Charles Sparrow) of an unsinkable 12-footer the Vaucluse Junior, which became known throughout the world as the 'V.J.'

Creating great interest in the later 1920s was the arrival in Sydney of a new racing yacht, the 8-metre class *Norn*, for Alexis F Albert. Designed and built by the famous Norwegian, Anker, *Norn* was the first Bermuda-rigged yacht on Sydney Harbour.



Charles Sparrow with the Powerhouse Museum's VJ, built in about 1955. From the collection of the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney



Benjamin Boyd's *Wanderer*... set the pace in Sydney

1870s

Thames Rule of measurement

Walter Reeks designs



Sydney Amateur Sailing Club formed

1872



1874

Magic launched

Magic and *Mistral* dominate

The first of *Norn's* many major wins was to successfully defend the Sayonara Cup, which the Squadron had held since 1910, against the Victorian challenger, *Acrospire III* in 1928.

One of the Squadron's older yachts, J M Hardie's *Sirocco*, was sold at that time to the film actor Errol Flynn, who sailed her to New Guinea, where she was wrecked on a coral reef.

Hardie replaced her by buying from Sir Alexander MacCormick, a past Commodore, the Fife-designed 65-cutter *Morna* which had previously sailed under the burgee of the Royal Prince Edward Yacht Club. Sir Alexander was then Commodore of the 'Edwards' as well as retaining his membership of the Squadron and to replace *Morna*, he acquired in England a beautiful schooner-rigged yacht, the 73-foot Fife design, which he named *Ada*, after his wife.

Both *Morna* and *Ada* became famous ocean racing yachts when, following World War II, the fledgling Cruising Yacht Club of Australia in 1945 organised the first of now 67 Sydney Hobart Races.

Morna, then owned by Sir Claude Plowman, took line honours in the Sydney Hobart seven times between 1946 and 1960, three times as *Morna* and four times renamed *Kurrewa IV* and owned by the Livingston brothers. *Ada*, re-named *Astor*, took line honours in the 1961 and 1964 races.



There had been many short ocean races out of Sydney over more than a century of sailing leading up to World War II, but the longest race in the Tasman Sea until then was the 1,280 nautical passage from Auckland to Sydney.

The same season, in a close match for the Sayonara Cup, the Victorian yacht *Vanessa* defeated the Squadron's *Norn*. The historic trophy returned to Melbourne where it was destined to remain, apart from a brief sojourn in Hobart, until Bill Northam imported the beautiful Fife-built 8-metre racing yacht *Saskia*.

Saskia sailed to Melbourne in 1955 to take on the Victorian yacht *Francis* and Tasmania's *Erica J* in the Sayonara Cup. Northam won the first two races, lost the third but won the fourth and the Sayonara Cup returned to Sydney and the custody of the Squadron, after 23 years. The following year *Saskia* retained the Cup in a contest against *Frances* and *Erica J*.

In the lighter airs, *Saskia* carried a nylon spinnaker of 1,800 square feet, this being the first use of "synthetic" sail fabric in an important Australian yacht race.

Many interesting yachts and yachtsmen have visited the Squadron over the past 150 years. Joshua Slocum arrived here in *Spray* in the early 1900s and in 1938 the German sea-adventurer, Count Felix von Luckner, sailed into Sydney Harbour during a round-the-world cruise in his yacht *Seeteufel*.

During World War I, he had commanded *Seeader*, the only sailing ship fitted out as an armed merchant raider. Known as the 'Old Sea Devil', Von Luckner had displayed great courage, humaneness and an adventurous spirit during his successful exploits in the Atlantic and the Pacific.

Although welcomed by the Squadron, his visit, with World War II looming on the horizon, created some concern among authorities; but on his return to Germany he renounced the Nazi regime.

During World War II, most of the Squadron's large yachts had been transferred to the Navy or Airforce or to their auxiliaries and when the first Sydney Hobart race was held, many were laid up or had still not been reconditioned.

However, by the second race to Hobart four of the eleven yachts that finished the 630 nautical mile passage were on the Squadron register, including the line honours winner *Morna*. Many more yachts owned and skippered by Squadron members



Joshua Slocum's *Spray*

Saskia on Sydney Harbour 2007

The 'Admiral's Race in 21-footers

A unique contest in the 21-foot restricted class yachts, on December 3, 1924 became known as the 'Admiral's Race, with two Admirals of the Royal Navy at the helm.

Admiral Lord Jellicoe, who had been Commander-in-Chief of the British Grand Fleet at the Battle of Jutland in the North Sea in 1916, was in Sydney on his way back to Britain after retiring as Governor General of New Zealand and he agreed to take the helm of Lord Forster's *Corella*.

The other admiral in the race was Admiral Sir Dudley de Chair, who had been sworn in as Governor of New South Wales earlier that year. Sailing *Cherry Too*, he finished fifth, Lord Jellicoe last, despite apparent efforts by sportsmanlike members to save him from this indignity.

1879

First voyage by a yacht to Hobart

New Handicapping system based on tonnage introduced

Waitangi arrives from New Zealand

1878



Membership recovers to 70

1881

were to add their names to the honour roll of what is now Australia's most famous ocean race. Line honours winners owned by past and present Squadron members (although the yachts were not always on the club's register) to follow in the wake of *Morna (Kurrewa IV)* have been A W Edwards' *Margaret Rintoul*, J R Bull's *Nocturne*, Trygve and Magnus Halvorsen's *Solveig*, F or E J Palmer's *Even*, John Kahlbetzer's *Bumblebee 5*, Syd Fischer's *Ragamuffin* and Andrew Strachan's *Ninety Seven* and Bob Oatley's *Wild Oats XI*.

Overall winners on corrected time owned by Squadron members have been the Halvorsen's *Solveig*, *Anitra V* and *Freya* (three times), Graham Newland's *Siandra*, Sir Robert Crichton-Brown's *Pacha*, Jim Dunstan's *Zeus II*, Denis O'Neil's *Koomooloo*, Syd Fischer's *Ragamuffin*, Roger Hickman's *Wild Oats* (now racing as *Wild Rose*), John Kahlbetzer's *Bumblebee 5* and Bob Oatley's *Wild Oats XI*. Sir James Hardy's classic gaff-rigger *Nerida* won the race in 1950 when owned by Colin Haselgrove, later to become a Squadron member.

Squadron members have been involved in almost every Australia challenge, and victory, in England for that once famous offshore racing event, the Admiral's Cup. The prestigious trophy now resides in the clubhouse of the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club after an Australian team led by 'Alfreds' and Squadron member Bob Oatley won the last international contest at Cowes.

Australia first challenged for the Admiral's Cup in 1965 with a team that comprised two Squadron yachts, *Caprice of Huon* (Gordon Ingate), *Freya* (Trygve and Magnus Halvorsen) and the Middle Harbour Yacht Club boat *Camille* (Ron Swanson). *Freya* and *Camille* were Australian designed boats.

In 1967, Australia won the Cup for the first time. The winning team comprised Sir Robert Crichton-Brown's *Balandra* and Denis O'Neil's *Koomooloo*, both on the Squadron register, and Ted Kaufman's *Mercedes III*. Other Squadron members involved included Anthony Crichton-Brown, Bruce Gould, Graham Newland, John Wigan and Stan Darling.

Australia again won the Admiral's Cup in 1979 with the team of Graeme Lambert's *Impetuous* (Sir James Hardy was one of the helmsmen), Syd Fischer's *Ragamuffin* and the West Australian yacht *Police Car* (Peter Cantwell) competing.

Syd Fischer competed in seven Admiral's Cup and several Clipper/Kenwood Cups, many times



as team captain, also winning the Fastnet Race with his then *Ragamuffin* in 1969, and the 1971 One Ton Cup with the chartered *Stormy Petrel*.

In a remarkable record of sailing in 42 Hobarts since 1962, Fischer has twice taken line honours and once been overall winner of the Sydney Hobart with yachts named *Ragamuffin*. Last year, the octogenarian yachtsman skippered his latest *Ragamuffin*, a state-of-the-art TP52, to third overall under IRC ratings and first place under the ORCi rating system.

The Squadron has been involved in 'one-design' or 'restricted design' yacht racing since the days of the 21-footers between the two World Wars. The Jubilee class was the first one-design class to race as a fleet but the post-WWII years saw keen fleet racing in the Jubilee, Hood 23, Folkboat and Dragon classes.

The early 1950s saw the build-up of the Olympic classes towards the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games, with the Squadron running fleet racing for Dragons, 5.5 metres and Finn dinghies. Later, the Flying Dutchman class was included in Squadron racing.

Keen to stimulate racing in the Olympic classes, the Squadron bought five Finn dinghies for use by members of this and other Sydney Harbour clubs, while the 5.5 metre class yacht *Kirribilli* was built in the Squadron's boatshed. The Dragon club fleet had increased to 22 boats with close racing throughout the season.

At the Olympic trials on Melbourne's Port Phillip, *Kirribilli*, helmed by Pat Taylor (later to become Commodore of the RSYS) was narrowly beaten by Victorian Jock Sturrock, who went on to win a bronze medal. Sturrock later became a Squadron member when he skippered *Gretel* in the Squadron's Challenge for the America's Cup in 1962.

This was the beginning of the Squadron's long and notable contribution to Olympic yachting,



Caprice of Huon, 1967

Jim Dunstan on Zeus II

Syd Fischer's Ragamuffin

1882

Australian bought by Harry Stevens for £110



1884

Commodores Cup

Squadron adopts the "1730 Rule"

Doris sails to Melbourne for Regatta

1883



Mignonette, murder on the high seas

1885



with members representing Australia at most subsequent Olympic Games as well as making a notable contribution to race management at the Sydney 2000 Olympic sailing regatta.

It was fitting that in its Centenary year, 1962, the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron was to become Australia's first club to Challenge for the America's Cup on behalf of Sir Frank Packer's *Gretel*. However, the Squadron had shown interest in the America's Cup back in 1888 when the noted Sydney yacht designer Walter Reeks visited the USA to inspect American yachts with a view to designing an Australian yacht with which to challenge for the America's Cup. For various reasons, it did not eventuate but it implanted in Squadron members the concept of a challenge that did not eventuate for another 74 years.

America's Cup challengers *Gretel*, *Dame Pattie*, *Gretel II* (twice) and *Steak 'n' Kidney* all made their bid to win the Cup flying the burgee of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron. *Gretel II* is still on the register, wonderfully refurbished by its latest owner.

When Alan Bond and the Royal Perth Yacht Club came on the America's Cup scene, the Squadron and its members were still closely involved right through to the victory of the wing-keeled *Australia II*. Victorian John Bertrand steered *Australia II* to that remarkable win over the New York Yacht Club's defender, *Liberty*, but Sir James Hardy played a significant role as his back-up helmsman and mentor.

(The Squadron's challenges for the America's Cup is covered in more detail in another feature article)

In its Centenary Year, 1962, the Squadron had 1,352 members with 153 yachts on its registers, developed from the 19 members and 15 yachts when it was founded in 1862. "In the course of that century, the Squadron had well and truly carried out the intentions of its founders and had

grown venerable in its accumulated traditions, while retaining always a forward-looking view of its achievements and responsibilities," wrote the authors of the first edition of the Squadron history. Over 150 years of its life, the Squadron's racing fleet has moved from the days of spectacular gaff-rigged yachts such as *Xarifa*, *Magic*, *Era* and *Friendship* through to the era of the "metre" style racers of the likes of *Saskia* and on to state-of-the-art ocean racing yachts such the latest *Ragamuffin*, a TP52.

Squadron members, too, have been world leaders in innovation in yacht design and construction, several notable ones as yacht designers and builders. Founding member R A Hartnett's little *Australian* began that innovation with "mackerel" hull shape in the 1860s, followed by *Xarifa*.

Walter Reeks was the foremost designer in Sydney in the late 1800s, Alan Payne not only created the America's Cup challengers *Gretel* and *Gretel II* but also designed great ocean racing yachts, including Sydney Hobart winners *Nocturne*, *Solo* and *Cherana*, the first of his Tasman Seabird class.

Trygve Halvorsen introduced significant advances in the design, building and equipping ocean racing yachts in the 1950s and 1960s, notably with *Freya* which won three consecutive Sydney Hobarts and represented Australia at the Admiral's Cup.



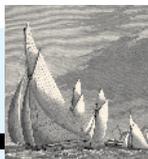
From the fish-shaped *Australian* to the wing-keeled *Australia II*, yachting in Australia has undergone extraordinary development that has placed this nation among the leading yachting nations of the world, in almost every aspect of the sport. The Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron has always been to the forefront of innovative development and expansion of the sport of yacht racing and will continue to be so in the next fifty years and beyond.

Gretel during trials

Freya, 1964 Sydney to Hobart

1886

Season Opening, 127 yachts muster



Six clubs in opening of season

Janet sails up from Melbourne

Intercolonial Challenge Match

1888

Walter Reeks and America's Cup

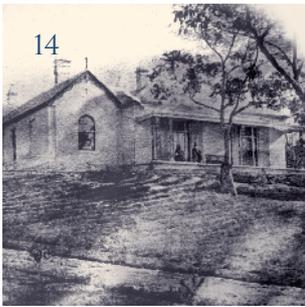


Magic wins first Gascoigne Cup

1887

Ocean race to Bird Island

1890



Carabella circa 1859

The 1903 regatta to mark the inaugural ceremonies of the Squadron's new home, Carabella, did not go quite to plan for the club's race officers in the start boat.

"Attired in stiff, starched pants and gold badge yachting caps" the officials had obtained a small brass cannon to start the races. According to a report of the day's proceedings, in the Squadron's archives:

"After the first explosion, when the smoke had cleared away, we found to our dismay that we had blown three planks away from the stem-head of our boat, and the water was pouring in. By trimming after, we kept the damaged part just above water, but our pants got awfully wet."

But more misfortune was to come. "For the next shot, we lifted the muzzle, and bang! There was the Pheasant's sail flat on the water, with her crew in the water and her skipper yelling to high heaven. He had caught the wad fair under the ear, falling overboard and so releasing the tiller, causing the boat to pickle." Otherwise, apparently it was a good day!

CARABELLA – THE SQUADRON'S HARBOUR HOME

Without question, *Carabella*, the clubhouse of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron overlooking Sydney Harbour, enjoys the finest position of any yacht club in Australia. It has an outlook that must be the envy of yacht club members from around the nation and overseas whenever they visit the Club. Like many aspects of the Squadron's 150 year history, the choice of *Carabella Cottage* as a Clubhouse more than a century ago owes much to the foresight of those early members of the Squadron.

Carabella, set above sweeping waterfront grounds and excellent boatyard, hard stand and docking facilities, is a Clubhouse commensurate with the status of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron as Australia's senior yacht club and one of the nation's finest private clubs for men and women.

Within *Carabella*, the Squadron provides outstanding facilities, fine dining, casual dining, an outstanding wine cellar, accommodation for members and visitors from other national and international yacht clubs. There are meeting rooms used by associated yachting organisations at state and national level.

Carabella is also an historic site in its own right, a significant part of Sydney's colonial history with a close link to one of the founding members of the Squadron, James Milson Jnr, elected as first Vice Commodore of the Club in 1862.

His father, James Milson, was one of the earliest "free settlers" in New South Wales, arriving in Sydney in 1806 and receiving a large grant of land on the north shore. He married Elizabeth Kilpack in 1810 and had six children, one of whom was James Milson Jnr, whose sister Sophia married William Shairp.

In 1829 Shairp built the original *Carabella Cottage* at the head of Careening Cove, near the present Milson Park. The elder Milson died there in 1872 at the age of eighty-eight.

The present Clubhouse of the Squadron was the second home to be called *Carabella Cottage* and was built in the 1860s on land overlooking Sydney Harbour at Wudyong Point, at the entrance to Careening Cove. Ownership of *Carabella Cottage* had changed hands several times in the late 1800s when the members of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron began looking for a waterfront property to replace the rented premises in the city of Sydney.



A descendant of the original James Milson Snr, Arthur J Milson, was among several members who suggested that the Squadron take a lease of *Carabella Cottage*. The home was unoccupied at the time, its garden overgrown. Yet the old stone building was structurally sound and ideally situated for the premises of a yacht club.

With Commodore T A Dibbs the driving force, a Squadron sub-committee in 1901 recommended taking up the offer of a seven year lease, at an annual rental of 180 pounds. The Squadron would have the option at the end of that period of renewing the lease, or buying or leasing the whole or part of the grounds, together with the buildings, which was valued then at 400 pounds.

The sub-committee reported immediate expenditure would be required for improvements to the cottage, including a billiard room, an additional bathroom, an extension to the dining

1892

New clubroom
in Pitt Street

116 Members,
30 yachts



Alexander MacCormick
a notable new Member

1893

1896

First Sydney to
Hobart cruise



Joshua Slocum
sails *Spray* to
Sydney

room, and improvements to the landing stage and slipway. There would also be an outlay for furnishings.

The sub-committee pointed out that the water frontage to the *Carabella* property was excellently suited for the Squadron's purposes. Races could start and finish there and would be well clear of the main fairway of harbour traffic. The grounds would provide a splendid vantage point for viewing races.

There were ample and sheltered anchorages for yachts in nearby Careening Cove and Neutral Bay. Ferry wharves at Kirribilli and Milsons Point, within a few hundred metres, "would make the Squadron's new home easily accessible from the city."

To finance the proposal, the sub-committee suggested that 1,250 pounds be raised in 4 per cent debentures, the interest on which would be a first charge on the property. Taking into account the saving on rental in the city, an increase in membership and revenue from residential accommodation, the sub-committee's report, comprehensive, precise, and persuasive in every detail, concluded emphatically:

"The Squadron is thus in a position of practically having the whole establishment run for a merely nominal expense. If it is made use of by members to the extent that is reasonable to expect, there will be large revenue to meet the increased expenses, which a large attendance would entail, and to repay debentures. There is every reason to anticipate a great success if the Squadron carries out this scheme."

The Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron did just that. To put the transaction on a formal legal basis, as the Squadron did not have power to enter into a lease, a company named Yacht Squadron Club House Limited was incorporated on November 1902. On January 5, 1903, a formal agreement was signed between the Squadron and the company, whereby the premises were sublet to the Squadron. From that date, the Squadron had its long-wished-for waterfront home.

On 24th January, 1903, the official opening of the new Squadron Club House was celebrated with a garden party in the grounds, and for the first time in history, the Club hoisted the Blue Ensign over its headquarters on a flagstaff presented by Frederick (later Sir Frederick) Waley.

This historic flagstaff had been a mast salvaged from the collier *Bellambi*. It is 60 feet high, with a topmast of the same length, and doublings of 10 feet, thus giving a height above the ground at the truck of 110 feet.

Waley also presented to the Squadron two jaw bones of a whale from the whaling station at Twofold Bay on the NSW South Coast. They were eventually erected to form an arch across the path leading to the former jetty and replaced some years later by new ones obtained from a Norwegian whaling ship. With the towering mast and the two historic field guns, they still provide a striking feature.

Membership of the Squadron reached 205 by 1907 and *Carabella* was well used by members, their families and guests, judging by an article written in *Sydney Mail* by T B Dibbs, son of Commodore T A Dibbs. He wrote, in part: "The club house of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron is a quaint old cottage... generally speaking the house looks more like the home of a gentleman in straightened circumstances than a club. Yet the members love the old house and keenly resent the remarks of newcomers who suggest a more up-to-date habitation for the senior yachting Squadron."

Dibbs went on to write: "Band evening is always a delightful function and sometimes as many as 500 guests and members gather on the well-lighted upper lawn, or sit on the grassy slopes in groups, watching the moonlight effects on the water, the many lights of the ferry steamers gliding past, and listening to the band. There is no extravagance, no ostentation; everything is simple and in good taste."

On May 8, 1911, the Yacht Squadron Club House Ltd signed a contract to purchase the freehold of *Carabella*, thus acquiring the freehold of the Clubhouse and two acres of waterfront land. Acting virtually on behalf of the Squadron, the company proceeded to enlarge the Clubhouse by the addition of annexes, including a wide verandah, and quarters for the accommodation of the staff of servants.

During 1926, some members strongly moved that ladies should be admitted to membership as "Lady Associate members". In 1929, the Squadron and its property holding company, anticipating the admission of ladies, proceeded with plans for a new wing on the north side, in which a drawing room was provided for associate members.



Whale jaw bones from Twofold Bay, NSW



NZ-built *Bona* joins Squadron fleet

1899



1900

Federation and 39th year for Squadron



Walter Marks' *Culwalla I* wins Squadron Cup

First Carlton Cup to Commodore's *Thelma*
Squadron's patron now King Edward VII

Linear Rating and Metre Rule adopted

1901

In a significant development project, the former clubroom was converted into a large dining room, while the former dining room was retained for special luncheons and dinner parties. A new common room was placed at the southern end. A card room was provided; also a library and eight new bedrooms were added upstairs.

At the annual meeting in August 1929 the proposal to admit lady associate members was carried, with only two members voting against.

Three years later, the Harbour Bridge was opened to traffic, bringing the Squadron's Clubhouse within easy access of members living in all parts of Sydney, greatly increasing property values on the north shore. High density building began at Kirribilli, but the Squadron's waterfront site would never lose its sweeping harbour views.

The early post World War II years saw more development of the Carabella site, including a new slipway at the boatyard and the laying of additional moorings in the offing of the clubhouse.

By 1950 the Squadron's membership had increased to a total of 930, of whom 218 were associates, with wide use of all facilities. It became a popular place for city members and their guests for lunch and dinner. Dinner and social bridge evenings became an integral part of Squadron functions.

Improvements in the Clubhouse included the renovation of the upstairs lounge, glassing-in and re-decking of the verandah, enlargement of the dining room and modernisation of kitchen and laundry equipment to meet the extra demand

for services. This era saw the introduction of distinctive Squadron china.

A most significant development was the decision to buy a two-storeyed house and more than an acre of land adjoining the Squadron's southern boundary. This purchase added 100 feet of waterfrontage to the Clubhouse grounds, and also forestalled any possible encroachment of high density building close to the Clubhouse.

Many members regard this purchase, and those of 'Tiverton' and the Peel Street property as the turning points in the club's post-war development.

They were the brainchild of then Commodore R A "Dicko" Dickson who, during his term supervised the upgrading of the boatshed, the further extension of the dining room, and the expansion of the club's real estate holdings. He set the pattern followed by other commodores when circumstances allowed – to preside over major developments.

The past four decades have seen further significant improvements within the Clubhouse itself, including the replacement of the timber curved verandah facing the harbour by a deeper curved concrete structure to become the new main Carabella Dining Room and the building of the sandstone terraces.

Over the past decade the significant projects have been the extension of Careening Cove Anchorage with it's a la Carte Brasserie to provide for more casual luncheon and après-twilight dining. Notable, too, has been the building of the award-winning Club cellar to house the Squadron's outstanding stocks of fine wines.

On 17th October, 2003, the Squadron held The Commodore's Centenary of Carabella Dinner, with Commodore Rex Harrison hosting a dinner of fine food, complemented by Carabella Selection wines. Toasts were proposed to "Her Majesty the Queen" by Vice Commodore William Wood, "The Centenary of the Clubhouse and the next 100 years" by Rear Commodore Malcolm Levy and "The Members of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron: Past, Present and Future" by Captain Richard Chapman.

Carabella will once again host an historic event, when on 8th July 2012; Members will celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron with a traditional garden party on the sweeping terraces and lawns below the Clubhouse, as they did on 8th July, 1903.

Squadron clubhouse 2012



1902

Yacht Squadron Club House Limited formed

First Squadron cellar at *Carabella*

1904

Membership fee increased to four guineas

Awanui and *Rawhiti* join fleet



Sydney Yacht Racing Association formed

Historic *Carabella* leased, burgee hoisted

1903



Sayonara's visit revives interstate challenge



Squadron's first paid secretary

1905

FORT DENISON CELLAR – A FINE VINTAGE

As with the Centenary celebration of *Carabella* clubhouse in 2001, we have commissioned a limited edition of celebratory wines for the event. A Semillon and a Shiraz have been made by Tyrrells wines of the Hunter, with fruit sourced from some of the oldest vines around the legendary 'Stevens' vineyard.

These wines are true collectibles with unique artwork and whilst they can be enjoyed now, they were chosen because they can be cellared and enjoyed over the next 10-15 years.

These are just two from the magnificent range of wines stored in the Squadron's remarkable Fort Denison Cellar, a cellar that showcases some of the world's greatest wines. It has, in fact, been recognised as the Best Club Restaurant Wine List Award in Australia for many years and now in the Hall of Fame.

To just read through the list of wines cellared in the Fort Denison Cellar is an experience in itself, and now with the converted cellar Members can enjoy these wines with a personalised and matched menu at the Cellar Table.

The Cellar can offer the very best from the vineyards and wineries of France, Italy, New Zealand, Spain, Argentina, the United States of America, as well as the finest of Australian vintages from New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia.

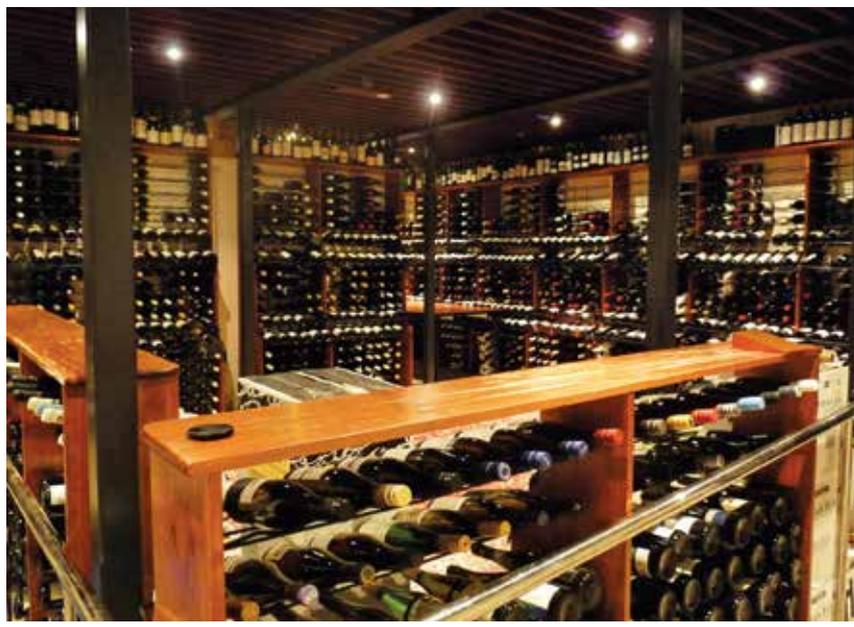
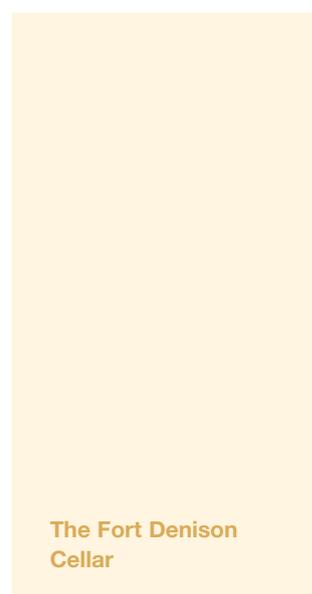
For example, for a suitable toast to the Squadron's Sesquicentenary Garden Party you might like to order Squadron Sparkling with a slight rose blush made for us by the team at Croser or a Billecart-Salmon 'Blanc de Blancs' from Mariel-suy-Aÿ, or a Josef Chromy 'Pepik' from Tasmania.

If the afternoon is chilly, then a Shiraz may be appreciated and here again the Fort Denison Cellar has a magnificent range in stock, including numerous vintages of Penfolds 'Grange Hermitage' Bin 95 Shiraz.

Gourmet Traveller Wine Magazine has voted the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron wine list as the Best Club Wine list. Facing stiff competition from some of Australia's most prestigious private clubs, the Squadron also collected the '3 Goblets' award.

The Squadron's Fort Denison Cellar regularly provides members with its 'specials'. For May/June, the list comprised half a dozen fine wines from the Margaret River area of Western Australia, ranging from a Mosswood Semillon 2011 through to a Cullen 'Diana Madeline' Cabernet Sauvignon 2009.

The Fort Denison Cellar and the Squadron's wine list is a tribute to the foresight of several flag officers and prominent members who, over the years wisely invested in such a fine cellar in our clubhouse, *Carabella*.



<p><i>Rawhiti's</i> Sayonara Cup challenge</p>	<p>1908 6-metre <i>Culwalla II</i> wins Northcote Cup</p>	<p>1910 King George V continues royal patronage</p>
<p>Brass cannon and field guns</p> <p>1907</p>	<p><i>Culwalla III</i> wins Sayonara Cup</p> <p>1909</p> 	<p><i>Carabella</i> purchased for Squadron</p> <p>1911</p> 

OLYMPIC GOLD AND WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS



Jock Sturrock

Although yachting began as an Olympic sport at the Paris Olympic Games in 1900, Australian sailors first competed at the London Olympics in 1948. It was not until the lead-up to the Melbourne Olympics in 1956 that the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron became involved in the Olympic classes, initially lagging behind other States.

A glass case, mounted on the wall of the Member's Bar in the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron contains one of Australia's most historic yachting trophies, the first Olympic Gold Medal won by an Australian yachtsman.

In the lead-up to the Tokyo Olympics, prominent Squadron member Bill (later Sir William) Northam, and his 5.5 metre class yacht *Barranjoey* won a berth at the Games, along with another Finn dinghy sailor Colin Ryrie, a member of the Royal Prince Edward Yacht Club and *Gretel II* crew member in 1962. He then sailed *Barranjoey* to victory in the 5.5 metre class at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics with Peter (Pod) O'Donnell and Dick Sargeant as his crew.

Although he won the Sayonara Cup with *Saskia* and raced *Caprice of Huon* offshore with success,

Northam was a newcomer to Olympic class racing – at the age of 60 and a grandfather!

He and his crew outsailed the champions of 14 nations in his first and only international series, steering the boat brilliantly through bewilderingly unpredictable wind changes to achieve an outstanding score of 1-6-2-1-dnf (foul against Italy)-1-4. Ryrie finished a creditable sixth.

The gold medal epitomises the significant role the Squadron has played in the development of Olympic class sailing in Australia, beginning with the lead-up to the 1956 Melbourne Olympics, highlighted by the role of the Squadron's race management team at the Sydney 2000 Olympics, and continuing this year with a member competing at the London 2012 Games.

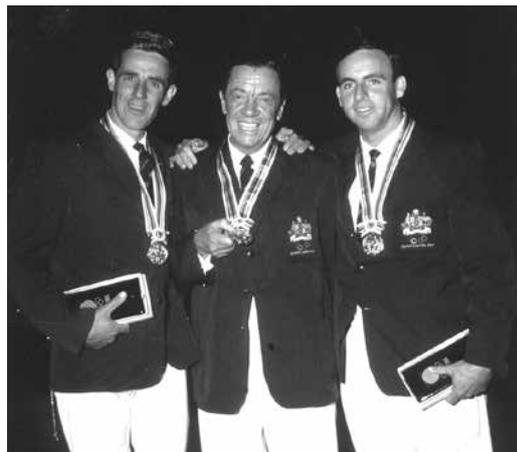
Victorian A S (Jock) Sturrock, later to become a Squadron member when he skippered *Gretel* in the Squadron's 1962 America's Cup Challenge, contested the London Olympic Games in 1948, skippering a Star, with the sailing off Torbay.

Four years later, at Helsinki, with the sailing on the Gulf of Finland, Sturrock sailed a Dragon, then at the 1956 Melbourne Games he won a bronze medal in the 5.5 metre class on Port Phillip. Sturrock competed in his fourth Olympics at Rome (Bay of Naples), again in the 5.5 metre class, but did not win a medal.

The Squadron stimulated interest in Olympic classes in the 1950s, including building Sydney's first 5.5 metre class yacht, *Kirribilli*, in the boatshed and buying, along with other clubs, six Finn dinghies.

At the 1968 Mexico City Olympics, with the sailing on Acapulco Bay, the Australian team included then or subsequent Squadron members David Forbes (Star), Bill Solomons (5.5 metre) and Jim (later Sir James) Hardy as 5.5 metre reserve.

Seven Squadron members were in the team at the 1972 Munich Games, sailed off Kiel: David



Bill Northam and crew with 1964 Gold Medals

1912

Squadron's Jubilee year



Wreck of the *Thelma*

1914-18

Commodore Sir Alexander MacCormick at World War I

Wireless telegraph installed at Squadron

The "Culwalla squall" hits harbour

Ladies at the helm

Membership fee raised from four to five guineas

1913

1915

Forbes (Star); Klaas Berkeley and Denis O'Neil in the Soling class (the helmsman was Bob Miller, who later changed his name to Ben Lexcen and created *Australia II*); Mark Bethwaite and Ian MacDiarmid (Flying Dutchman); Gordon Ingate and Rob Thornton (Tempest). Forbes and his crew, John Anderson, won the gold medal in the Star class while a second gold went to Queenslander John Cuneo in the Dragons.

For the 1976 Montreal Olympics, sailed off Kingston, Lake Ontario, Bethwaite and MacDiarmid again represented Australia and the Squadron in the Flying Dutchman class, while David Forbes and Denis O'Neil sailed in the Soling class. Among the press team was Peter Campbell, later to become a Squadron member, covering the first of five Olympic Games for Australian and British newspapers and radio.

The Australian yachting team controversially boycotted the 1980 Moscow Games, where the sailing was to have been off Tallin on the Gulf of Finland. Named in the team had been Geoff Davidson (Finn) and Mark Bethwaite and Ian MacDiarmid, this time in the J24 class.

Australia competed in the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics with the sailing off Long Beach, but there were no Squadron members in the team.

At the 1988 Seoul Olympics the sailing was held off the port city of Pusan where two young women Nicola Green (Bethwaite) and Karyn Davis (Gojnich), both later to become Squadron members, contested the women's 470 class, finishing sixth overall. At the 2004 Athens Olympics they again represented Australia, this time in the Yngling class.



The Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron had a huge involvement in race management at the Sydney 2000 Olympics where Australia won two gold medals for only the second time. Squadron members Neville Wittey, David Edwards and Joshua Grace sailed in the Soling class, placing sixth.

Young Squadron member Nathan Outteridge skippered the 49er at the Beijing Olympics, finishing a luckless 5th in the sailing off Quindao. He has been chosen again to compete at the London 2012 Olympics, with the sailing at Weymouth. Intermediate member Lucinda Whitty has also been chosen in the women's match racing crew.

Australia won two gold and a silver medal at Quindao and is favoured for even more medals at the London Olympics this year.

Squadron members also have an outstanding record in World Championships, the latest victory being that of the crew of *Iron Lotus* in the International Etchells worlds hosted by the RSYs earlier this year.

Skippered by Sydney 2000 gold medallist Tom King from Melbourne, the crew of *Iron Lotus* included Squadron members Ivan Wheen and David Edwards.

Edwards has now been a member of winning crews in Ynglings, Solings and Etchells as well as sailing in the Soling class at the Sydney 2000 Olympics.



The RSYs Sydney 2000 Olympics Race Management Team

Nathan Outteridge, multiple World Champion

David Edwards, Neville Wittey and Joshua Grace with Soling Trophy

1917

T A Dibbs made an honorary Life Member of the Squadron



1920

Royal Prince Edward Yacht Club formed

Arthur J Milson elected Commodore



21-footers and Forster Cup

Revival of yacht racing after WWII with the Victory Regatta

1919

1921



Mark Bethwaite Laser Masters and Grand Masters World Champion

Farr 40 World Champion 2005 Richard Perini

Graham Newland at the GII 30 year reunion

Tom King, David Edwards and Ivan When winners of the 2012 Etchells World Championship in Sydney

Other Squadron members, past and present, who have won World Championships as skippers and crew members include:

- 1966 Sir James Hardy and Max Whitnall (505 class)
- 1967 Sir Robert Crichton-Brown, Anthony Crichton-Brown, Bruce Gould, Graham Newland, John Wigan, Stan Darling (Admiral's Cup)
- 1970 David Forbes, Kevin McCann and Tony Parker (5.5 metre)
- 1971 Syd Fischer, Peter O'Donnell, Graham Newland (One Ton Cup)
- 1976 Julian Bethwaite (Cherub)
Frank Tolhurst, Mark Tolhurst (5.5 metre)
- 1977 Ron McLaine (5.5 metre)
- 1978 Frank Tolhurst, Jon Mitchell, Steve Gosling (5.5 metre)
Frank Tolhurst (Etchells)
Syd Fischer, Tony Ellis (Clipper Cup)
- 1979 John Savage (Etchells)
Frank Tolhurst, Jon Mitchell (5.5 metre)
Rob Porter, Ian Porter (Dragon)
Graeme Lambert, Sir James Hardy, Syd Fischer (Admiral's Cup)
- 1980 Peter O'Donnell, Richard Lawson (Etchells)
Syd Fischer, Tony Ellis (Kenwood Cup)
- 1981 Mark Bethwaite, John Diacopulous (J24)
Mark Bethwaite, Julian Bethwaite (Soling)
- 1984 Iain Murray (Etchells)
- 1995 Ian McCrossin (Flying Dutchman)
- 1996 Neville Wittey, David Edwards, Joshua Grace (Yngling)
Syd Fischer, Tony Ellis (Kenwood Cup)

- 1997 Neville Wittey, David Edwards, Joshua Grace (Soling match racing)
Ian McCrossin (Flying Dutchman)
Stephen Allen (Formula 42 sailboard)
Stephen Allen (Funboard overall)
- 2000 Mark Bethwaite (Laser Masters)
James Mayo (Etchells)
- 2001 Ian McCrossin (Flying Dutchman)
- 2002 Nathan Outteridge (ISAF Youths, double-handed dinghy)
- 2003 Mark Bethwaite (Laser Grand Masters)
Nathan Outteridge (ISAF Youths, double-handed dinghy)
- 2004 Mark Bethwaite (Laser Grand Masters)
Neville Wittey, Jean Claude Strong (Yngling)
Nathan Outteridge (420 Youth)
- 2005 Richard Perini (Farr 40)
- 2007 Mark Bethwaite (Laser Standard Grand Masters)
- 2008 Nathan Outteridge (49er)
Mark Bethwaite (Laser Standard Grand Masters)
Guy Stening (M30)
- 2009 Nathan Outteridge (49er)
- 2011 Guido Belgiorno-Nettis (Farr 40)
- 2012 Nathan Outteridge (Moth and 49er)
David Edwards, Ivan When (Etchells)



1922

Utiekah II launched for Harold Nossiter



1924

The Admiral's Race in 21-footers

1926

Vice Commodore lost at sea



Last founding Member sails on

1923

Prime Minister W M Hughes new member

Death of designer Walter Reeks

1925

VOLUNTEERS STILL KEY TO RACE MANAGEMENT

The Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron and its members had good reason to celebrate back in February at the end of the 2012 World Championship for the International Etchells class.

Well into its Sesquicentenary Year, members could take a bow for the highly professional manner in which the largely volunteer team had organised and conducted the championship on offshore courses. Race management had been a huge logistical exercise.

Lavish praise came from the many international and interstate competitors who made the Squadron their base for the regatta.

Olympic gold medallist Tom King, who helmed the winning yacht, *Iron Lotus*, was very complimentary of the on-course race management. In an impromptu dockside comment after the final race, the Victorian yachtsman paid tribute to the efforts of PRO Ross Wilson and his support team led by the RSY's Rob Ridley in conducting races in continually shifting winds off Sydney Heads. "The race management has been absolutely faultless," he said,

More than 150 Squadron members volunteered their time and expertise to make the Etchells Worlds Championship a memorable event for competitors and the nation's senior yacht club.

"They came from all areas of club membership and from all different classes that sail here to help, providing their boats, moving Etchells trailers around, crewing tow boats and helping the teams in every possible way," said volunteers co-ordinator Richard Lawson.

"I had 91 registered volunteers but we picked up another 15 or 20 who just turned up to help," Lawson said. "It was a magnificent response by Squadron members."

On the water, there were 34 volunteers manning the committee boat, patrol and safety boats while volunteer members of Marine Rescue NSW towed the huge Etchells fleet from the Squadron to the Heads each day.



Similar praise had come from international competitors who contested the World Championship for the International Yngling class in January. With the racing for the Ynglings within the confines of Sydney Harbour, race officers did a fine job in setting fair courses clear of the commercial activities of the port.

Since its inception, the Squadron has relied mostly on trained volunteers drawn from its members to conduct its races. These days they are needed for weeknight twilights, the Saturday summer point-score racing and for the three short ocean races on the summer programme, not to mention the national and international regattas hosted most summers by the club. The Squadron Cruise has always been organised and conducted by members for members.

In fact, it was not until 1972 that a full-time sailing secretary was appointed. A further development was the creation in 1979 of the position of chairman of race officials to co-ordinate race management and to train race officers to the highest standard.

The profound effect of this was seen at its best during the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games when the Squadron provide a volunteer team fully trained to Olympic standards of race management, as well as the Club's boats *Gitana* and *Era*, to conduct the racing on Bravo Course.

Ross Wilson was Race Officer with the Squadron's Charles Maclurcan his Deputy Race Officer. For the three years in the lead-up to the Olympic sailing regatta it had been Maclurcan's task to organise the Squadron's contingent and to see that they achieved the required skills for an international Olympic regatta. From the forty or so volunteers from among the Squadron membership, 27 were approved by SOCOG for Olympic level yacht racing management.

To sum up the entire Olympic experience, one can do no better than to reprint the comment of ISAF on its web site, for the entire world to see: "By common consent the best organised and managed regatta ever held."



Schooner *Capella* piratically stolen

1928

Wanderer sails to Lord Howe Island



1930

US yacht *Chance* visits RSY

First TransTasman Race



Alfred G Milson Memorial Cup presented
Sirocco sold to Errol Flynn,

First Lady Associate Members



1929

VJ designed

1931



THE SQUADRON CRUISE – 43 YEARS STRONG

BY JULIAN FARREN-PRICE,
CRUISE CAPTAIN, 2012-13

Gordon Ingate and his daughter Christine, 2010

The annual Squadron Cruise is one of the popular events on the club's calendar, an event enjoyed by young and old over the past 43 years.

The first Cruise started on Saturday 9th May 1970 and has been held each year since thanks to the many volunteers who plan and run an event that has involved up to 70 yachts and some 450 sailors. Over the years, the Cruise participants have ranged from an infant of 18 months to a doyen of yachting racing in his mid-eighties. (I am still threatened with being reported to DOCS for starting a race with a wheel in one hand and my two-year-old on my lap, held by the other hand).

Getting the Cruise established was not a simple task as initial enthusiasm for the event was not strong among the Squadron general committee. Thanks to the persistence of Brian Northam, the Squadron hierarchy eventually agreed in 1969 to it being organised for the following year.

The notion of the Cruise was conceived, by all things, as a result of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron Challenge for the America's Cup in 1962. *Gretel* and her trial horse *Vim* had been shipped to New York for the challenge and, can you believe it, some of the crew took the opportunity to participate in the annual New York Yacht Club Cruise with *Vim* while some of the crew performed alterations to *Gretel*.

I cannot see this happening with the current generation AC boats! Times have certainly changed!

Brian Northam was part of the *Vim* cruise crew and no doubt got a good impression from the event, which aimed to combine light-hearted races with socialising and family participation.

Sydney certainly has an ideal environment for an annual cruise with the proximity of wonderful waterways such as Pittwater, the Hawkesbury River and Lake Macquarie. With this in mind, the Club general committee was lobbied over a number of years by Brian and fellow enthusiasts Frank McNulty and Dennis Lake, without success.



Brian persisted with the notion and the catalyst for getting the Cruise approved was the brilliant suggestion that the recently received New York Yacht Club Trophy be used as the major trophy for a cruise.

On 14th October 1969 Brian Northam wrote to then Commodore R A Dickson, suggesting a four day cruise during the Easter weekend of April 1970. He noted that his impression of the NYYC cruise was that it offered:

1. Class Racing
2. Family Cruising
3. Safe offshore racing of short distance
4. General entertainment and conviviality
5. An opportunity for non-participants in yacht racing to join in Club activity

Forty-three years on and these words still perfectly describe the attributes of the Squadron's Annual Cruise.

The suggestion to dedicate the NYYC Trophy to the Cruise cemented the idea and in a very short time the event was brought to reality, albeit a seven day event in May as opposed to four days over Easter.

On Saturday, 9th May 1970 a fleet of 37 yachts assembled at Watsons Bay for the first offshore race north to Careel Bay in Pittwater and then a day later further up the Central Coast to Lake Macquarie.

Sydney Harbour Bridge opens



1933

Junior Membership established



Joseph Conrad visits Sydney

1936

Wanderer's dramatic voyages

Sayonara Cup lost to Victoria

1932

Inaugural Flag Officer's Race

1935-37

King George XI becomes patron

The first Cruise Captain was Brian Northam's father, Sir William Northam, and the inaugural winner of the New York Yacht Club Trophy was Cruising Yacht Club member I.H.S Irwin in *Talisman*. Irwin was also Squadron Secretary and it was noted that he was the first club Secretary to win a trophy for a Squadron race.

A notable competitor in the first Cruise was America's Cup skipper and current New York Yacht Club member Gordon Ingate. Gordon has the honour of participating in the most number of Cruises, having attended 40 of the 43 Cruises held to date.

In recent years, Gordon has chartered yachts from Tim Cox and sailed with three generations of the Ingate family. Still competitive, Gordon was a potential winner of the 2012 Cruise until a torn mainsail before the start of the last race put paid to that ambition.

Gordon's other noteworthy claim to fame on the Cruise is the number of times he has gone aground. I personally have seen him come to a gentle halt on four occasions and once not so gently in Botany Bay.



Over the 43 years the Cruise destination has generally been a mixture of spending the week in Pittwater or alternatively combining a stopover in Pittwater with a trip to Lake Macquarie. The cruise has also ventured south to Port Hacking and Botany Bay on more than one occasion.

Lake Macquarie is a magical destination as seen in the image of boats entering in 2005 Swansea Bridge and a picturesque scene of a raft up at Wangi Wangi Workers Club at Wangi Wangi.

Unfortunately, in recent years Lake Macquarie as a destination has become more problematic with the unreliable dredging of the channel combined with the ever-increasing drafts of modern boats.



The image on this page will give you an idea of the current predicament of getting 2.3-2.6 metre draft boats into the Lake and the reason why we find it difficult to return.

Unless things change, it is likely that the Squadron Cruise will continue in its current format to Pittwater and the Hawkesbury, which is no great hardship. Logistically, it is closer to Sydney, making it easy for crew changes. This is a pity, as there is certainly more adventure in visiting the Lake and the flat water sailing there is quite magical.

Sunrise at Wangi jetty 2005.

Going thru Swansea Bridge 2005

Getting into the lake 2005



1938
German *Old Sea Devil* visits Sydney

Carabella enlarged

75 Years on...
469 Members

1937

Outbreak of
World War II

1939



So, if one was to participate on a Cruise what would you expect? Interestingly looking back at the original 1970 format very little has changed; so the formula must be right.

Firstly, size is no obstacle. To do the whole Cruise, including the offshore races, you need category 4 safeties. However. You can do the inshore only with Category 7 and just need to be able to sleep your crew on board. The Hood 25 of Simon Coventry has been a long term participant on the Cruise and back in the early days a Hood 23 sailed in the Cruise to Lake Macquarie – and returned in half a gale!



Essentially, from Saturday to Saturday we have three ocean races and four inshore races around Pittwater. While there used to be both spinnaker and non-spinnaker divisions, in recent years it seems participants prefer a more relaxed event; due to the dwindling spinnaker numbers it is now a non-spinnaker only event.

After the first ocean race to Pittwater it has become a tradition to moor at Hallets Beach (near Refuge Bay) for drinks on the beach in order to meet new participants and old. Always a good night with in the vicinity of 150 people on the beach.

Sunday is a around a 2-3 hour inshore race, starting and finishing near the mouth of Refuge Bay, followed by a raft up at Mushroom Bay (near Akuna marina) so crews can change over for the week should they require. This is a beautiful bay which always seems to be dead calm.

Other favourite locations include Pinta Bay, Smith's Creek, America Bay and it is not uncommon to have 20 or more boats tied up together so close to the rocks you can nearly jump ashore.

Typically mid week there is a non-racing "lay day" with a catered barbeque at The Basin in Pittwater. Apart from a great chance to get together and enjoy an easy meal it is an opportunity for more socialising and activities such as Laser sailing, bushwalking, cricket and radio control yachting.

On the Thursday or Friday evening there is an official dinner at either of the very welcoming Royal Prince Alfred or Royal Motor Yacht Clubs at Newport.

One of the main aims of the Cruise is to encourage youth participation and hence the reason it is always held in the school holidays. Thirty or more youth sailors can be scattered among the Cruise and this is a great opportunity for them to gain offshore experience, exposure to bigger boats and, importantly, get to know some of the older members of the Club. I only wish I had had this sort of opportunity at their age.

In relation to the racing, it is worth noting that the enjoyment and safety of all participants is paramount and courses are modified or offshore races changed to inshore races to make it as pleasant as possible for everyone. Alternatively, on a passage race, if the wind is not in we will

Get together on Hallets Beach
Lunch at The Basin



Inaugural Sydney to Hobart Race

1946
First of *Morna's* seven line honours



Victory Regatta



Duke of Gloucester Cup won by *Morna*

Squadron membership increases to 756

1945

1947

motor in the direction of our destination until such time as a start can be made. The expectation is that every boat in the fleet can finish within the time limit.

Other activities on the Cruise can include the popular Creative Cuisine cooking competition, Navigation estimate competition (with a very generous prize usually from Coursemaster) and the ever famous Cruise Crossword that generally features every cruise entrant in the answers. Gone are the days of the impossible to finish, Keith Long crosswords. We now have a more moderate Bill Manning in charge.

Number of boats on the Cruise has varied considerably over the years. From the original 37 boats in the first Cruise, the fleet swelled to more than 70 in the 1970's. We have come back to the 30-40 range over the last three decades.

Interestingly, we are getting more and more "support" boats, ie families bringing a motor cruiser as a base station or people joining us on cruisers or yachts and participating in the social activities/raft-ups, but not necessarily racing.

Essentially you can be as involved or uninvolved in the sailing as you wish and either way the Squadron Cruise is a great week of fun and being with the family afloat. I have been on 17 of the last 18 cruises and can say I look forward to each one.

Generally speaking, the Cruise has gone smoothly over the 43 years but naturally in this time some interesting incidents have taken place. Without doubt the darkest event connected with the Cruise (but something that did not actually occur during the Cruise) was when, during the return voyage in strong southerly conditions from Lake Macquarie, several of the boats turned back to the Lake. The rest of the fleet reached Broken Bay and Pittwater in safety, albeit after a long, wet and rough sail.

The following weekend the yachts that had returned to Lake Macquarie attempted to sail back into what turned out to be an "East Coast Low" with winds of up to 80 knots.

More light heartedly, on a ladies day race one daring helmswomen removed the steps of the flagship. The embarrassed lady was taken aback when the said steps were presented to her at the prize giving on the following Saturday evening.



I have many fond memories of the Cruise over the years and will not forget the sight of Bruce Gould's classic yawl *Margaret Rintoul* trying to be pulled off the sand in the Swansea Channel or a very infamous sail on the Lake where we, like the Pied Piper, led the fleet over a sandbank. Miraculously, we sailed though unscathed, then looked astern to see a fleet of yachts under spinnaker stopped dead on the sand.

We have also seen a water spout near Port Hacking that nearly sucked *Gannet* into the heavens; torrential waterfalls in America Bay and Refuge Bay in the great rains of 2012; and in one of the early 1970's Cruises a yacht swamped after venturing too close to Long Reef. Fortunately, the yacht and its crew survived and the same boat still participates on the Cruise today. Certainly, there have been so many interesting and entertaining moments in the 43 years of adventure on the Cruise.

Overall, the Squadron Cruise has been a great success over the past 43 years and will be for a long time to come. We have a lot to thank Brian Northam for making sure his concept came to reality. Many wonderful friendships have been made over the years and countless youth introduced to sailing.



Raft up in Mushroom Bay 2011
Gannet 2011

1948

Australian sailors at London Olympics



1950

Australian Yachting Federation formed

Sayonara Cup contest revived



Member donations for *Carabella* refurbishing

1949

Waizung Matilda around Cape Horn
Jubilee class joins Squadron fleet

Squadron Yacht first to Hobart

1951

AMERICA'S CUP – THE SQUADRON CHALLENGES

BY PETER CAMPBELL

For more than 160 years, yachtsmen and yacht clubs (and quite a few entrepreneurs) around the world have been captivated by multi-million dollar attempts to win or retain the world's oldest sporting trophy, the America's Cup. The Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron and many of its members have been prominent among those actively involved in the Challenges, with their interest in the Cup surprisingly dating back more than 125 years.



Americas Cup victory 1983

While it was the Royal Perth Yacht Club that ultimately became the first club outside the New York Yacht Club to own the America's Cup after *Australia II*'s extraordinary victory at Newport, Rhode Island, in 1983, it was the Squadron that initiated the first interest by Australian yachtsmen back in the 1880s and the inaugural challenge by an Australian yacht club in 1962.

Earlier challenges by the Squadron without question played a significant role in the successful challenge by *Australia II*, vital experience having been gained in the logistics of mounting a challenge in the USA and, most importantly, in the knowledge gained in yacht design and construction, as well as the sailing techniques and tactics of match racing in the 12 metre class yachts.

Since that victory in 1983, followed by the loss of the Cup in the Defender Match off Fremantle in 1987, there have been extraordinary changes in the concept of this historic event, including

long and costly legal battles between syndicates overseas and in the types of craft sailed in the Cup events.

The next Challenge Match, on San Francisco Bay, will be sailed in massive, high performance catamarans with towering wingsails – a far cry from the 12-metre class yachts, the so-called 'lead mines', in which the Matches of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s were sailed. But then the America's Cup scene has always been one of remarkable innovation in yacht design and construction, dating back to the encounters between the British challengers and the American defenders, among them being the magnificent J class yachts.

Each of the Squadron Challenges, beginning in 1962 with Sir Frank Packer's *Gretel*, followed in 1970 with *Gretel II* and again in 1977 with Gordon Ingate's revamped *Gill*, and then by Syd Fischer's bid to defend the Cup in Fremantle with *Steak 'n Kidney*, has seen Australian innovation and initiative come to the fore.

The skills and determination of Australian yachtsmen taking on match racing sailing for the first time on *Gretel* have been refined over subsequent challenges and were honed to the pinnacle of professional efficiency when *Australia II* took on and defeated *Liberty* in 1983.

The winning challenge by Alan Bond through Royal Perth Yacht Club in 1983 also had significant input from Squadron members, including Sir James Hardy as the back-up helmsman to John Bertrand. Sir James' experience in helming *Gretel II* in 1970 (when Bertrand was also a young crew member) and again with *Australia* in 1980, played a key role with the *Australia II* challenge in 1983.

The Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, as Challenger of Record, also had a significant role in the, at times, controversial Match in 1983.

Until the New York Yacht Club lost the America's Cup on that late September day in 1983, most Americans knew little or nothing of this venerable yachting trophy. Even after *Liberty*'s narrow loss to *Australia II* at Newport, Rhode Island, the news coverage in the USA was relatively limited, other than in New York and Boston (whose yachting inhabitants were rather pleased to see the New York Yacht Club lose its oldest and most prestigious trophy).



The America's Cup captured the interest of several prominent members of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron during Australia's centenary year, 1888. They formed a syndicate and sent Walter Reeks, the leading designer of the day, to the USA to study practical problems of challenging for 1890.

Reek's plan was to build a yacht in Sydney, approximately 90ft LWL, on the lines of *Era* and *Volunteer*, match-winning yachts of the time. They had developed from the highly original design of R A Hartnett's *Australian*, Charles Parbury's *Xarifa* and Alfred Fairfax's *Magic*.

The rules of the Deed of Gift of the America's Cup at that time placed a limit of 90ft LWL on contestants and also required the challenger to sail on her own bottom to New York, based on the premise that the original America had sailed across the Atlantic in 1851 to take on the best British boats.

The application of that rule to a yacht from Australia would have entailed a long and difficult ocean passage, either across the Pacific to the Atlantic via the Magellan Strait or Cape Horn (the Panama Canal did not open until 1914), or via the Cape of Good Hope or the Suez Canal. The dauntless Reeks considered that a yacht of 90ft would be big enough to sail from Sydney to New York.

In New York, Reeks inspected the American yacht *Volunteer*, which was a centreboard sloop with a steel hull, 106ft LOA, 86ft LWL, Customs tonnage 209, and therefore very much bigger than her Sydney namesake. He also examined other crack American yachts in New York and Boston and held discussions with officials of the New York Yacht Club regarding the deed of gift governing the America's Cup.

When Reeks returned to Sydney, via England, he was unable to find financial backers to build

a 90ft yacht. He then announced plans to modify the 53ft *Volunteer* as a potential challenger for the America's Cup, but these plans also lapsed.

Reeks' ambitious ideas were to lie dormant for 71 years, until they were revived by a syndicate of Squadron members, including the newspaper magnate Sir Frank Packer. Frank Packer, Richard (Dicko) Dickson and Bill Northam had been to the 1958 America's Cup where the British yacht *Sceptre* had been defeated four-nil by the American defender, *Columbia*.

Packer is reported to have remarked at the time that "Anything the Poms can do, we can do better" and he was bitten by the bug. Back in Sydney the trio, at a lunch at the Squadron, decided to pool their talents and, through the club, issue a challenge. It was after that lunch that Packer instructed Alan Payne to design a 12-metre class yacht for the 1962 America's Cup.

Later, when asked by an American journalist his reason for challenging, Packer, shooting from the hip, replied, "Alcohol and delusions of grandeur."

The New York Yacht Club accepted the challenge, but the syndicate had to sail through some stormy weather before it became a reality. Many Squadron members opposed the challenge, claiming it a waste of money, but the real opposition came from the Red Duster syndicate of the Royal Thames Yacht Club.

There was concern at the Royal Thames that a "colonial" yacht club should dare to enter what it considered the long-time territory of English yachting. Two days later the Royal Thames sent off its, belated challenge and persuaded Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, to write to the NYYC asking them to defer the Australian challenge.

The prominent British yachtsman, Captain John Illingworth RN, winner of the inaugural Sydney Hobart Race, personally visited the NYYC, asking them to ignore the Australian challenge, or arrange an elimination series between the English and the Australians. Cables and letters flew back and forth, with Packer reminding the British that "As you are aware, His Royal Highness Prince Philip is the patron of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, so no doubt our challenge will carry his blessings."

Field Marshall Sir William Slim, recently retired as Governor General of Australia and as Commodore of the Squadron, played a significant role in settling this dispute. Having returned to England he was able to make a direct approach to the Royal Thames on behalf of the Squadron and successfully advised that they should defer their challenge until a later date.

Eventually the New York Yacht Club accepted the sole challenge of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron and the syndicate began the huge logistical business of mounting its campaign.

America under sail

The first enlightened move was to charter the well-performed US 12-metre *Vim* and ship her to Sydney to be the trial horse and crew training boat for the yet-to-be-built Australian yacht.

For naval architects Alan Payne and his associate, Warwick Hood, *Vim* gave them the opportunity to measure everything on this 12-metre – and set about designing a better one. The boat was named *Gretel*, after Packer's wife who had died



On an Atlantic roller... Gretel surfs past Weatherly in front of the destroyer Robert Kennedy, with President Kennedy on board. One all.

The crew of Gretel celebrating



in 1960. Champion Victorian yachtsman Jock Sturrock, who had won the bronze medal in the 5.5 metre class at the Melbourne 1956 Olympics, and Archie Robertson were selected as alternate skipper for preparatory training on *Vim*.

Wonderfully detailed reports of the 1962 challenge by *Gretel* and in 1970 challenge by *Gretel II* have been recorded in two fine historical records of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, *Sydney Sails – the Story of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron's First 100 years (1862-1962)* and *Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron 1962-2000*, written by Jim Murrant for the club.

Mick York, a crew member of *Gretel*, kept a fascinating diary of the activities of the crew at Newport, Rhode Island during the build-up to the 1962 challenge, including being feted at cocktail parties which "proved one of the best methods of gaining information and techniques. Each

morning, after such a party, a meeting is held and all information received the previous night over a glass of ale with the crew members of the opposition is discussed, and our techniques are fast falling into line with those of the Yankee yachts."

President Kennedy invited the crews of *Gretel* and *Weatherly* to a cocktail party at 'The Cottage' overlooking Narragansett Bay where, some nine nautical miles offshore, the America's Cup Match would soon be decided. 'There were plain-clothes men roaming all around the grounds and lurking behind every bush, where they have their telephones,' York reported.

Jackie Kennedy was the perfect host, talking to nearly everyone there during the evening. "She mentioned to us that she had backed us for 25 cents with her young daughter Caroline, whom we also met," York recorded in his diary.

York's descriptions of the contest is highlighted by that of the second race against *Weatherly*, which had won a close first race. "It was blowing 20 to 25 knots with large seas... foul weather for 12-metres in anyone's language."

This was a triangular course, with shy runs that would suit *Gretel*. *Weatherly* again headed *Gretel* at the first windward mark. "We both reached across the second leg and at the last mark we were about three boat lengths astern," York wrote after the race.

"From this mark to the finish the seas were rolling in from astern and we hoisted our spinnaker shortly after rounding. It filled beautifully whilst still about 30 feet from the masthead and, while we were struggling to hoist it, a wave lifted our stern and the bow went about two feet under water with yours truly struggling to close the for'ard hatch with half the Atlantic Ocean pouring in.

"This wave carried us up alongside the enemy as they were still struggling to hoist their kite. We caught another similar wave and the Australian spirits were let loose as we surged down this shoot with the water flooding about 11 inches deep back at the grinders.

"We all let out a 'Ya-hoo' which threw the Yanks off guard, and as they turned around to see us shooting past, they saw one of our lads whipping the deck with a rope's end. We sailed through to win this race by 47 seconds and also establish a course record," the young Mick York recorded.

In light flukey weather, *Gretel* got left in a hole in race three but race four proved to be the most exciting America's Cup race ever to that time. *Gretel* finished within 26 seconds of *Weatherly* in the closest race in Cup history.

Weatherly won a closely fought fifth race to retain the Cup for the New York Yacht Club, but the match whetted the appetite of Australians for future challenges and underlined the skill and determination of Australian sailors and the

innovative design concept of Alan Payne.

Gretel was a worthy challenger, fast and innovative and while she was able to take a race from the Americans for the first time in 30 years, her crew suffered from the lack of hard competitive 12-metre match racing and less than adequate knowledge of the complex rules governing cup races.

The Royal Thames Yacht Club got their chance to challenge again in 1964 with *Sovereign* proving no match for the US defender *Constellation*.

Australia fared little better in 1967 with *Dame Pattie* being thrashed 4-0 by *Intrepid*. Since the creditable performance of *Gretel*, the Americans had streaked ahead in design, sails, technology and crew-training.

The Squadron syndicate, again headed by the now knighted Sir Frank Packer, challenged again in 1970.

The 1970 America's Cup was the first truly international challenge, in that four nations, Australia, Great Britain, France and Greece, all entered the lists, with elimination races to be sailed off Newport with the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron as Challenger of Record and organiser of the trials.

The series was an enormous task for the RSYs team headed by Club Captain Bill Fesq, although by the time they started the British and Greeks had pulled out. With both the defenders and challengers focusing on measurement issues, all sides agreed to the appointment of a three-man committee to supervise the measurement of all yachts, defenders and challengers, with an independent, internationally accepted chairman. This was a great step forward and reduced the scope for arbitrary, even unacceptable, decisions. It was to prove critical in 1983.

Alan Payne again excelled himself in creating a state-of-the-art 12-metre yacht in *Gretel II* and the Squadron syndicate's campaign showed the rest of the world that Australia was a force to be reckoned with in international yachting. The two national elimination series saw *Gretel II* outsail France 4-0, with one race descending into farce with Baron Bich taking the helm in one race and getting lost in the sea fog that swept over Rhode Island Sound.

The America's Cup then began between *Gretel II*, skippered by Jim Hardy (later Sir James Hardy) for the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron and *Intrepid*, helmed by Bill Ficker for the New York Yacht Club. The match began badly in the first race when *Gretel II* lost a foredeck hand overboard and was beaten by eight minutes.

The ultimate outcome of the second race proved to be even worse for the Australians. At the start Ficker tried to squeeze *Intrepid* between *Gretel II* and the committee boat, resulting in a damaging collision. Both yachts immediately flew protest

flags and sailed on to complete the course, with *Gretel II* crossing the line 67 seconds in front.

Victory turned into defeat when the protest committee ruled that *Gretel II* had sailed above close hauled as the two yachts approached the start line, and disqualified the Australian yacht. Instead of being equal with *Intrepid*, *Gretel II* was now down 2-0.

The experience prompted Packer's whimsical comment the following day that protesting against the New York Yacht Club was like "complaining to your mother-in-law about your wife."

Gretel II went on to officially win another race and lose another by a boat length. The Australian boat certainly had the potential to win the America's Cup but the records show otherwise.

Several good things came out of the sour taste left by the second race protest, with a number of rule changes introduced for the conduct of the America's Cup, including the decision that the race committee for an America's Cup challenge or defence should be under the control of an International Race and Protest Committee of three. There was also a need for an independent international committee to settle disputes on measurements. The Squadron's Club Captain Bill Fesq played a key role in negotiations that brought out these significant changes.

The early 1970s brought a new player into Australia's bid to unbolt the Cup from its hallowed base in the New York Yacht Club – a brash entrepreneur from Perth named Alan Bond.

Bond's first challenge, through Royal Perth Yacht Club in 1974, was with *Southern Cross*, a radical design by Bob Miller (later to change his name to Ben Lexcen). The boat was extremely narrow forward and had long overhangs either end, and a unique rudder shape.

Southern Cross won the trials against France with startling ease and Bond and his team thought they were on a winner. But in the challenge series, the Australians proved no real match for the superb racing produced by the Americans, and *Southern Cross*, helmed by Jim Hardy, lost the first four races in a row to *Courageous*.

In November 1974 the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron was invited by the New York Yacht Club to issue a challenge for the 1977 America's Cup. As challenges had already been lodged by the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club, the Royal Gothenburg Yacht Club (Sweden), the Yacht Club d'Éyéres (France) and the Sun City Yacht Club in Western Australia, the NYYC asked the Squadron to again conduct the elimination series to decide the challenger.

Although there was another challenge through the Matilda syndicate of Peter Cole, Jim Hardy and Alan Payne, the Squadron notified the NYYC of its inability to conduct the series. It



Gretel II crew, with Jim Hardy at the helm

was a wise decision as the Matilda syndicate was subsequently withdrawn.

However, a year later, in May 1977, a syndicate led by Gordon Ingate asked the Squadron to renew the challenge that had been withdrawn in 1976, proposing that a remodelled *Gretel II*, with Alan Payne designing the alterations, become the challenge yacht.

Gretel II was recommissioned at a ceremony at the Squadron and the syndicate, comprising Sir William Northam, Sir William Pettingell and Messrs A W Byrne, R A Dickson, P Holmes a'Court, G W Ingate, W I Manning, J B Reid and N B Rydge, Jnr, undertook to indemnify the Squadron for any expenses incurred.

Arriving in Newport, Rhode Island, the historic port city on the New England Coast with its quaint 'clapboard' cottages, holiday mansions of the millionaires and a tumbledown waterfront, Ingate and his crew became known as 'Dad's Navy', because many of the crew were in their forties.

Despite the wealth of experience in the crew and its back-up team, plus a still competitive, greatly modified yacht in *GII*, they were eliminated in the trials by the Swedish yacht *Sverige*. Nevertheless, it was a memorable time for all of the team and we proudly retain our *GII* badges to wear at re-unions.

A younger member of the crew was David Kellett, then working in the marine industry at Newport. David returned to Australia after the Cup to become a noted ocean racing yachtsman and Australia's long-standing representative on the International Yachting Federation (ISAF). He is expected to be elected President this year.

Having beaten one Australian yacht, the Swedes came up against Alan Bond's *Australia* for the right to challenge, but were soundly beaten. In the Cup races, the colourful American Ted Turner

sailed *Courageous* to a clean sweep of *Australia*, skippered by Noel Robins.

In 1980, the tenacious Alan Bond returned to Newport with *Australia*, although the 12-metre had virtually been rebuilt under the direction of Ben Lexcen. Also back was the colourful Baron Bich with *France III*, the Swedes with a much altered *Sverige* and, for the first time in almost two decades, Britain was represented by *Lionheart* with a radical mast.

Australia, with Jim Hardy again on the helm, dominated the elimination series, but was to come up against a most formidable NYYC defender in *Freedom*, skippered by Dennis Conner, already noted for his aggressive starting tactics. During the lead-up to the 1980 defence, Conner tuned and raced *Freedom* and *Enterprise* a total of 230 days and his diligence and professional hardness proved too much and he went on to win 4-1.

Bond, equally dedicated to winning the Cup, was positive about the result. He was confident the gap that had existed between the defender and the challenger was gradually being whittled away and he announced that he had commissioned two new designs from Ben Lexcen. He also named the Olympic bronze medallist John Bertrand, who had sailed on *Gretel II* in 1970, as his skipper for the 1983 challenge.

Encouraged by *Australia*'s performance and by the NYYC's decision to set aside its rule forbidding any yacht to use technology and equipment from any country than its own, clubs from around the world lodged challenges for the Cup in 1983. Australia had four challenges, Britain two while France and Sweden challenged again, along with Canada which was challenging for the first time since 1881. Italy also entered with a syndicate headed by the Aga Khan.

Moving quickly to protect the famous trophy that it had held for 132 years, the NYYC manoeuvred to have the bendy masts, used so effectively by *Australia* in the 1980 campaign, outlawed, and stipulated that all yachts had to be crewed by nationals.

All challengers planned long and meticulous campaigns. The assault on the 1983 America's Cup had never reached such heights of intensity and fierce rivalry. The design and building of *Australia II* was carried out in absolute secrecy. Transferred to the water, the hopes and dreams of the foreign contingent paled against the awesome determination of the Australians in the form of the Ben Lexcen-designed *Australia II*. With Bertrand and Sir James Hardy sharing the helming, she won the two elimination series to be the official challenger with unnerving ease, confirming that Alan Bond had indeed a very remarkable 12-metre yacht.

The winged keel was, of course, the most innovative and potentially controversial feature



KA2 and KA3
Ben Lexcen



KA5 Australia

and it was kept out of sight until the end of the last race of the challenge match, allowing the Australians to keep up the tension and pressure on the Americans at a fever pitch. There were stories of underwater cameraman attempting to photograph the keel and other spying activities. Well aware there was something radical below the waterline of *Australia II*, the NYYC launched an attack on the validity of the Royal Perth Yacht Club's entry and tried to sink the challenger before it got into the water. But Bond and his team had done their homework on the legalities of the keel and despite the NYYC's final appeal to the International Measurement Committee, the Australian challenger was declared legal.

The rest is history. In the closest match ever in the history of the world's oldest sporting trophy, John Bertrand and his crew of *Australia II* fought against the ferocious defence of Dennis Conner at the helm of *Liberty* to come from two races down to level the series 3-all with one race to sail. Newport, Rhode Island erupted as did Australia and the world media.

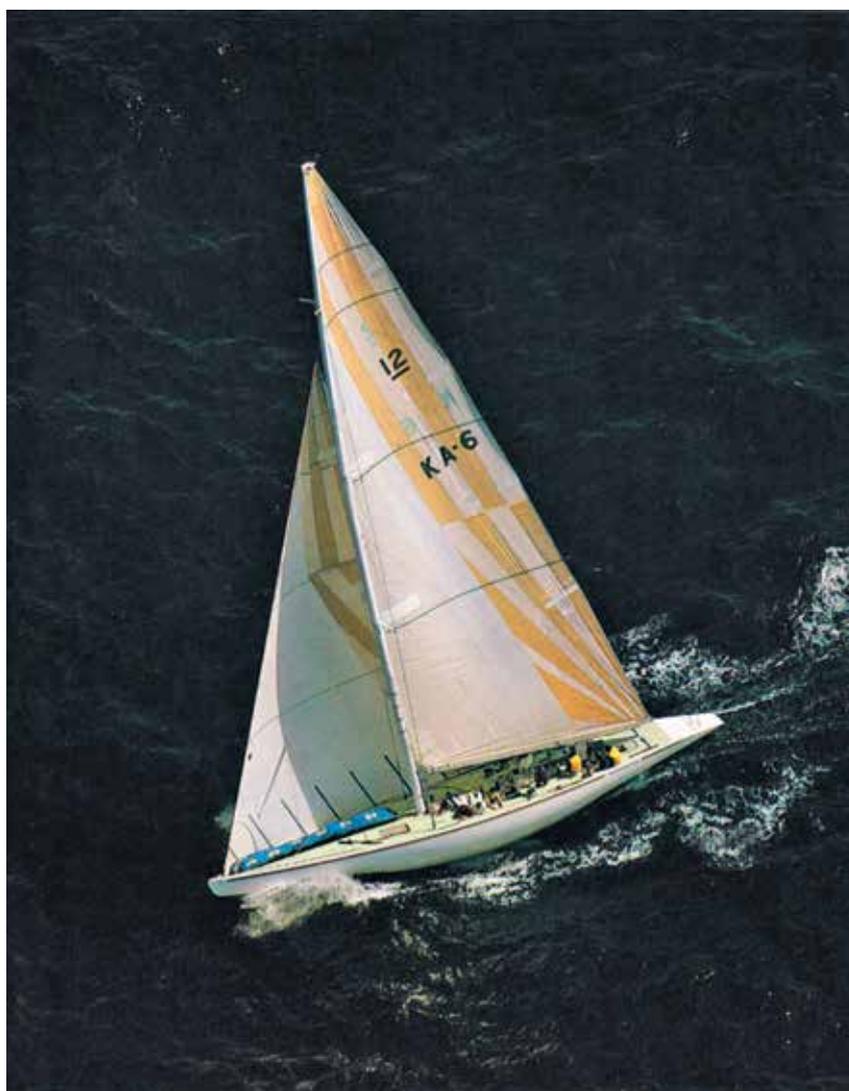
Amid claims of possible sabotage, *Australia II* lost the start of the deciding race and *Liberty* led by 29 seconds at the first windward mark, extending this to 57 seconds at the final windward mark. The break came on the final downwind run when *Australia II* came from astern on the square run to sail through *Liberty* after they split gybes.

Watching from the press boat *Hell Cat* (a descriptive name) it seemed that Conner had picked the more favourable gybe. Then, it became clear that Bertrand and his afterguard had decided there was no point in following *Liberty*. They also sailed into more pressure in the light to moderate breeze and when the two twelves came together *Australia II* was in front, rounding the leeward mark 21 seconds ahead.

In a heart-stopping moment for the thousands of spectators on the waters of Rhode Island Sound and possibly even more so for those back in Australia who had stayed up all night, *Australia II* sailed a perfect final leg to achieve the seemingly impossible goal of winning the America's Cup.

The defence of the America's Cup off Fremantle, Western Australia, in 1987 was the largest and last gathering of the International 12-metre class, with an extraordinary line-up of four Australian syndicates as potential defenders and 13 challengers from six nations, including six syndicates from the USA.

The Squadron's Syd Fischer, who had led an unsuccessful challenge bid with *Advance* at Newport, Rhode Island, in 1983, entered the beautifully shaped but curiously-named, *Steak 'n Kidney* (said to be slang for Sydney), while South Australia nominated a boat called *South Australia*, and Western Australia came up with two rival



syndicates, Alan Bond's America's Cup Defence 1987 Limited with *Australia III* and *Australia IV* and Kevin Parry's Taskforce '87 syndicate with *Kookaburra II* and *Kookaburra III*.

Royal Perth Yacht Club built a new annexe down at Fremantle at the mouth of the Swan River. Fremantle itself changed within a few years from being a rather seedy and rough waterfront town, whose largest building was the infamous Fremantle Gaol, to being a relatively up-market maritime precinct, with old hotels being upgraded and new apartment buildings rising rapidly to accommodate the massive influx of America's Cup sailors, their support teams of designers, boat-builders, sailmakers, even legal advisors,

Australia II.
Courtesy of
'The Contenders'
by Peter Campbell

From a nautical scribe...

This article is not intended to replicate the wonderfully detailed reports of the Squadron's Challenges for the America's Cup published in the two excellent books on the history of the Squadron. Rather, it looks at the background to involvement of the Squadron and its members in Australia's challenges and defence through to the loss of the Cup in 1987.

and, the biggest media contingent in the then history of the Cup.

The America's Cup regatta Fremantle was a magnificent event with most of the racing enjoying the fresh sea breeze known locally as the 'Fremantle Doctor' that cooled down the hot hinterland of the city of Perth and its suburbs.

The record line-up of syndicates stretched the resources of the newly gentrified Fremantle to the limit, but it was the ultimate international yacht racing regatta. It injected millions of dollars into Western Australia over several years in the lead-up to the start of the America's Cup match on 31 January 1987. Yet before that date, all but two 12-metres had disappeared from the race course; within a matter of days the America's Cup had been lost to Australia, never to return as a victory trophy.

The Fremantle defence of the America's Cup was not without its incidents on the water and land, including a massive protest that did not finish until 4am and the 'keelgate' allegations by Dennis Conner against the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron's challenger *K7*, skippered by the aggressive young Chris Dickson. Conner claimed irregularities in the thickness of the boat's fibreglass hull and the measurement committee required an ultra-sound and a core sample be taken from the hull.

Conner's claims were incorrect and the antipathy was carried through on the water when *Stars and Stripes* met *K7* to decide the challenger for the 27th America's Cup. Conner won a long and

tough match and then outsailed *Kookaburra II*, skippered by Iain Murray, 4-0.

Fischer's *Steak 'n Kidney*, designed by Peter Cole and helmed variously by project manager Fred Neil and official skipper, Olympian Gary Sheard, proved very fast, handing out a few frights to competitors, including the ultimate winner Dennis Conner. According to some observers, *Steak 'n Kidney* did not get a fair go in the draw for the defender trials, suggesting a Western Australian bias against a boat from Sydney.

The Squadron's Syd Fischer is the most prolific challenger ever for the America's Cup yet he has yet to be honoured in the America's Cup Hall of Fame.

"A colourful, forceful, resourceful and effective operator" to quote author Jim Murrant in *Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron 1962-2000*. Fischer's challenges at Newport, RI, Fremantle, WA, and later at Auckland, NZ, have been well organised but his boats have failed more often on technical grounds, or because the boats were simply not good enough. The exception was *Steak 'n Kidney* at Fremantle.

Of great significance to Australian yachting, it must be noted that Syd Fischer. In his challenges for the America's Cup, and in his ocean racing, has given many young yachtsmen the opportunity to gain experience at the highest international level.

Among them have been Iain Murray, who helmed *Advance* at Newport, Rhode Island, in 1983 and James Spithill who skippered *Young Australia* at Auckland in 2000. Both went on to skipper yachts in America's Cup challenge matches, Murray with *Kookaburra II* in Fremantle, while Spithill, at the age of 30, in 2010 became the youngest skipper ever to win the America's Cup, helming the 90ft American catamaran *Oracle Racing* to victory over the Swiss at Valencia, Spain.

Spithill is expected to helm the newest *Oracle Racing*, a huge wingsailed catamaran in the 34th Match for the America's Cup on San Francisco Bay in 2013.

That will mark 125 years since a syndicate of Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron members sent Walter Reeks to the USA to explore a challenge and just over half a century since the Squadron's first challenge came to fruition when *Gretel* went out to race off Newport, Rhode Island.

Historical sources:

Sydney Sails – Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron 1862-1962; Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron 1962-2000, by Jim Murrant; The Contenders, the America's Cup Challenge 1987, by Peter Campbell with Phil Smidmore and Nigel Lovell; Archives, Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron; Peter Campbell's America's Cup files and personal experiences.



Two oldtimers duelling, KA5 and KA14, *Steak 'n Kidney*

HARDY CUP – YOUTH MATCH RACING

When former America's Cup helmsman Sir James Hardy donated the Hardy Cup to encourage match racing competition between up-and-coming young Australian sailors he probably did not anticipate just how much his concept would achieve in international yachting.

Sir James, who is coming up for 50 years of membership of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, continues to support the annual regatta, now an ISAF under 25, Grade 3 match racing event.

Most Hardy Cup regattas see the eminent yachtsman out on the water, casting a critical eye over the young sailors as they do battle in the Squadron's fleet of Elliott 6s, showing the sailing skills and tactics that has taken many of them to greater success on the international circuit.

The Elliott 6s have proven ideal boats for match racing, fast and manoeuvrable to be sailed by the crew of three, sometimes four if they are within the weight limit.

Competitors have come from New South Wales and Western Australia, Auckland and Wellington in New Zealand, and from other overseas countries including Great Britain, Sweden, Italy, the United States and Japan. Young men have dominated the results, but there have been several impressive young women sailing, too.

The most successful competitor since the Squadron took over conducting and developing the Hardy Cup as an ISAF under 25 match racing regatta in 2001 has been Michael Dunstan, son of past Commodore Jim Dunstan and a graduate of the Squadron's youth sailing program.

Michael has won the Hardy Cup three times and twice finished runner-up against strong competition before reaching the age limit.



Michael's success opened up for him an international career in sailing in the Farr 40 world championships, International Etchells and also as a helmsman aboard Syd Fischer's ocean racing yacht Ragamuffin in several Rolex Sydney Hobarts.

Other winners and top competitors in the Hardy Cup have moved onto the international match racing circuit with success, including New Zealanders Simon Minoprio and Josh Junior, Sydney sailors Evan Walker and Seve Jarvin, leading Australian women sailors Lucinda Whitty and Katie Spithill, and the Squadron's Jordan Reece and David Chapman.

This year's winner David Gilmour was the first West Australian sailor to win the Hardy Cup, following in the wake of his father Peter Gilmour, an America's Cup helmsman and several times world match racing champion.

The match racing competition achieved by the Hardy Cup and the outstanding young helmsmen and tacticians it has produced is a deserved reward for one of the great America's Cup skippers in Sir James Hardy Kt OBE.



Hardy Cup finalists 2011

**Sir James Hardy and
Bruce Gould viewing
the Hardy Cup**

**Michael Dunstan
and crew on their
way to victory**

WOMEN SAILING AT THE SQUADRON

BY GWENYTH TAYLOR AND MARJORIE COLMAN

MOBS on "Morag Bheag"

Social sailing 1947/48 season on the 21 footer Wattle

"... from its earliest years, a delightful aspect of cruising and other outings in Squadron yachts had been the presence of ladies on board, some of whom became adept in handling sail and tillers." The year 1911 saw "the inauguration of Ladies Day" when the racing fleet was "to be steered by ladies who may receive verbal assistance only". *Sydney Sails. The Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron 1862-1962.*



At the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron women have been sailing socially with their families and friends on Sundays and family holidays throughout the decades. In the 1970s this was extended to the very popular Friday Twilight series and the annual Squadron Cruise. In the late '60s Margaret Maclurcan (mother of Squadron identities Charles and John) formed a group known as MOBS – Mothers on Board – who supported each other as mothers with sailing families. Other RSYS linked members were Kit Sturrock, Peg Leventhal and Ros Furze.

Competitive women sailors were few and far between for most of last century. The legendary Sheila Patrick (later Cohen) was racing 12ft skiffs and other dinghies with the boys of the North Shore Dinghy Club during the 1930s, later joining the RSYS, RPEYC and CYCA.

In the 1940s she raced her Jubilee class yacht *Southwind*, often with an all-girl crew, and during the 1950s, '60s, '70s and '80s she raced her 27ft Tumlaren yacht *Svalan* and then her Folk-boat *Capella*. She was always encouraging other women to sail, be it with their families or in competition. Amongst her many contributions to the sport was her far reaching influence in her role as a feature writer for *Seacraft* magazine.

Just out of university, Sally Saalfeld sailed aboard her father's yacht *Jasnar*, one of the smallest boats in the 1950 Sydney Hobart Yacht Race. She was only the second woman to finish the gruelling ocean race. The race skipper was her future husband, Gordon Ingate, whom she had met sailing VJs at the Mosman VS and VJ Sailing Club as a teenager. After *Jasnar* berthed in Constitution Dock, Gordon sent a telegraph to Sally's father, Colonel Saalfeld, reporting that all was well and adding... "may I marry your daughter?" The Colonel's reply, also by telegram was... "which one?"

That was Sally Ingate's only Sydney Hobart, but she was also a strong supporter of Gordon's extensive and successful national and inter-



Sheila Patrick's Certificate of Competency, 1941

<p>1952 Squadron Yacht first to Hobart</p>		<p>1954 Prince Philip visits the Squadron</p>	 <p><i>Squadron builds 5.5, Kirribilli Cellar committee founded</i></p>
<p>Norn's consecutive Gascoigne Cups</p> <p>1952-54</p> 	<p>Sydney to Noumea race</p> <p>1953</p>	<p>Halvorsens win Sydney to Hobart</p>	<p>Saskia regains Sayonara Cup</p> <p>1955</p> 

national sailing career, and was also one of the most enthusiastic bridge players at the Squadron for many years.

Twin sisters Pat and Joyce Warn learnt to sail "with pure cotton sails, timber spars and no wool tufts" when they bought the first of their two Bluebird class yachts in 1956. They joined the Squadron in 1961, racing their International Dragon class yacht until 1973.



The 1980s and '90s saw a steady increase in the number of women crewing in Saturday racing. More women owned and/or skippered yachts including Ann Finlay (J24), Louisa Geddes (Folkboat and Etchells), Kerri Goudge (J24), Robyn Grosvenor (Yngling) and Jeanne-Claude Strong (Yngling, Etchells). Elizabeth Curran competed in national and international Laser regattas.



Pat and Joyce Warn on the first day on their first yacht Charm 1956

Pat and Joyce Warn with Tneal Kawalla at Sail Melbourne January 2005

From 1974 to 2009 they owned seven International Ynglings, racing in one World Cup, 23 Open World, seven Women's World, four Open European, four Sail Melbourne, multiple State and National championships, as well as Sydney Harbour club races on Saturdays.

Pat and Joyce have been involved in Squadron Race management team duties and Yngling Class Associations for decades.

The Club's highly successful Junior/Youth Sailing programme began in 1960 and for over fifty years it has given both girls and boys a wonderful introduction to sailing.

In 1968, Marjorie and Eve Freeman purchased the Jubilee Triton. The original four girl crew also included Jan Downes and Elizabeth Drummond with regular reserves Jane Taylor, Vicky Longworth, Verity Halvorsen, Ruth Downes and Libby Longworth.

With the exception of Elizabeth, all were Junior Sailing graduates. The sight of an all-girl crew amongst the Saturday fleets drew cries of amazement across the harbour.

From the late 1960s and into the '70s the only women racing regularly with the RSY on Saturdays were Pat and Joyce Warn in their Dragon class boat, Sheila Patrick in her Folkboat, the Triton girls and Louise Sullivan crewing on her father's Brolga class yacht Pimpernel.

In 1986 Ken Godfrey donated the Joanne Trophy (Yachtswoman of the Year) in memory of his wife Joan, who was "an enthusiast, deeply involved and an active participant rather than a spectator and sailed from the Squadron for some 15 years". In the mid to late '90s the Squadron ran two very popular series of women's learn to sail classes in Ynglings.

As the 21st century rolled in, women's sailing at the Squadron was reaching new heights. Fiona Herbert's Yngling team 2002 was ranked World No 1, the 1988 470 Olympians Nicky Bethwaite (2004) and Karyn Gojnych (2004, 2008) represented Australia at Olympic level in the Yngling class. Pat and Joyce Warn were now in their sixth decade of racing and were elected Life Members of the Squadron in 2002.



Kristen Kosmala, Melanie Dennison and Fiona Herbert



Nicky Bethwaite, Karen Gojnych and Kristen Kosmala, won silver at the 2004 Yngling World Championship in Sydney

1956
Melbourne Olympic Games



1958
Ron Robertson lost from Kurrewa IV



First Prince Philip Cup
First edition of the 'Logbook'

RSYS Dragons wins Prince Philip Cup

1957

Challenge for America's Cup announced

Junior Sailing Programme introduced

1959





Jane Recny, Jenni Brown, Deb Curran, Deb Staniford, Anne Sinclair and Gwenyth Taylor planning the first LOTS programme

LOTS – learning to rig Ynglings in the pond, 2007

Trish Stanley, who has raced *Willyama* for many years, was the first woman Cruise Captain. Eve Sheppard co-skippered *Trilogy* in short course ocean race series and three cruises to north Queensland. Julie Clarke (*Senta*) became a Division 2 rep and Mel Nathan joined the Yngling fleet. There were many women crewing in most classes on Fridays and Saturdays, summer and winter.

In 2004 a group of women, mostly mothers of Youth Sailors, wanted to learn to sail in as good a programme as Youth Sailing and thus “Ladies of the Sea”, or LOTS, was born.

Each Sunday for 10 weeks, women sail together in a structured programme in Ynglings. With women instructors (mostly from Youth Sailing) the atmosphere is completely non-threatening and co-operative. By week six, after two hours theory and four hours on the water each Sunday, they are ready for their first assignment – rig the Yngling, sail out of the pond, around Pinchgut

and back into the pond, without assistance or a coach.

Many women have spent years on boats with their family, but never really learnt to sail – some want to know what to call “things” on a boat, and what to do if their husband falls overboard or becomes ill. Others want more, and move on to owning their own boat, to being contributing members of a crew and to serious harbour and offshore racing.

At around the same time Bruce Gould and Gwenyth Taylor proposed a Tuesday twilight series and the two ideas have worked very well hand-in-hand. LOTS provides the training and the Tuesday Ladies Twilight series provide the experience.

Women’s twilight races are increasingly crewed entirely, or almost entirely, by women and the 2012 series winner was an all-girl crew.

Well over 100 women have now developed their sailing skills through the LOTS programme. Graduates Genevieve Slattery, Deb Curran and Margaret Houston own and skipper Ynglings, Cheryn Croker and Amely Zaininger now skipper *Daydream* and *Zinger* respectively. Cheryn won a race in the competitive Division 4 against all-male skippers during the past summer season.

Karyn Gojnich is a role model for the Squadron’s growing numbers of female sailors of all ages, and a great friend to the developing women’s sailing movement at the Squadron, being a key player in improving the standard of the Squadron-owned Ynglings used for LOTS training.

She is working with Hazel Sullivan, Lynne Flynn, Cheryn Croker and Genevieve Slattery, experimenting with ideas for using the Elliotts in an advanced women’s sailing course.

A wonderful “Women Celebrate Sailing” dinner was held at the Squadron in 2010 and there was much to celebrate. With opportunities abounding in all areas of the sport and the enthusiasm to match, the future for women’s sailing at RSYS certainly looks promising.

Acknowledgements:

Geoff Cohen, Margaret Maclurcan, Don Taylor, Pat and Joyce Warn

1962

Squadron’s Centenary Year
America’s Cup Challenge Match



1964

Australia’s first Olympic gold medal

Gretel launched on Sydney Harbour



Halvorsens *Freya* wins Sydney to Hobart

1963



Halvorsen’s *Freya* wins Sydney to Hobart for 3rd time

1965

ONE DESIGN RACING – A SQUADRON SPECIALTY

BY PETER CAMPBELL



A fleet of 74 boats contested the Etchells World Championship in February 2012, they made a spectacular sight in the Squadron pond

Over the past two seasons, the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron has conducted, with internationally-acclaimed race management skills, world championships for three major international one-design classes: Farr 40s, Yngling and Etchells.

The choice of the Squadron and Sydney to host their championships was an obvious decision: The waters of Sydney Harbour and off Sydney Heads would be ideal for one-design racing; the Squadron had an impeccable reputation in conducting major events, including its involvement in the Sydney 2000 Olympics; the Squadron had the biggest fleets in the Southern Hemisphere of Etchells and Ynglings; and the Squadron had the finest clubhouse and dockside facilities to handle big fleets.

The competitors, winners and losers, in those three world championships, went home with a smile on their face; the Squadron had entertained

the owners, crews and their supporters with superb hospitality; the organisation ashore for boat handling was brilliant; on the water, race management of the races in at times difficult weather conditions, was without peer.

The Etchells class is the largest International class racing with the Squadron, with regular fleets of 25 to 30 boats making it one of the largest club fleets in the world. The Yngling class regularly attracts a dozen or so boats while the other one-design class racing regularly with the Squadron, the evergreen Dragon, continues to attract a dozen or more boats each week through summer.

Yacht racing with the Squadron began back in 1862 with a mixed fleet of heavy displacement schooners, cutters and sloops, all gaff-rigged, some carrying square sails for downwind running.

It was not until the early 1920s that the nearest thing to one-design racing evolved with the

1966

Gypsy Moth IV arrives at RSYS



1970

Gretel vs America's Cup challenge



Australian team wins Admiral's Cup



First Squadron Cruise

Syd Fischer wins Fastnet, One Ton Cup

1967

1971

21-foot restricted class from which evolved the Forster Cup interstate contest. However, this was a development class, built within a box rule.

The Jubilee one-design class was designed in Melbourne in the early 1930s as a stoutly-built, stable, all-weather 18-footer sailed by a crew of three or four. Its popularity grew quickly on Port Phillip and after World War II, several Squadron members, including Alan Baldick, Pat Taylor and Ralph Ross, established a Jubilee fleet at the Squadron. Interstate competition followed for the Huntingfield Cup.

Baldick was a Life Member of the Squadron, Taylor was Commodore from 1978-1981 and they continued sailing Jubilees for many years until the numbers became too small to warrant class racing.

The Melbourne 1956 Olympic Games was the catalyst that brought one-design yacht racing to prominence with the Squadron in the early 1950s. Until then, the Squadron had lagged behind interstate clubs in the Olympic and International one-design classes.

However, the Squadron in the early 1950s joined in the Olympic movement, actually building a 5.5 metre class yacht, *Kirribilli*, in the club boatshed and buying, with other Sydney yacht clubs, six Finn class dinghies, the demanding single-handed men's dinghy for Olympic competition.

In the lead-up to the Melbourne Olympics, the Squadron conducted class racing for the International Dragons, 5.5 metre, Flying Dutchman, Finn and Dragon class fleets. None of these classes are still used in Olympic competition. Only the Dragon continued as a major one-design fleet with the Squadron.

The Dragon became the Olympic three-man keelboat in 1948 and this fact led a rise in interest in Australia. The International Dragon Association

of New South Wales acknowledges that the introduction of Dragons to Australia was largely due to the efforts of Sir Norman Nock in urging his son Graham and Alan Jarman to build boats in Sydney, while Jack Linacre, E R Scott, Dick White and Keith Dalton had Savage build boats for them in Melbourne.

Apart from its Olympic status, the Dragon was found to be ideally suited to Australian sailing conditions. At least nine boats were built in 1951.

The first Prince Philip Cup was won by America's Cup skipper Jock Sturrock (later to become a RSYS member) sailing *Kamulla* in 1954. Competition for this most prestigious trophy continues today, with New South Wales hosting the Cup next summer on Botany Bay.

New South Wales yachtsmen have won the Prince Philip Cup fifteen times, most of them Squadron members. Norman Booth won three times, Eric Strain twice, Ted Albert twice, while other NSW winning skippers have been Bill Fesq, Alan Jarman, Norman Longworth, Rob Donohue, Jamie Wilmot, Matt Whitnall, Ian MacDiarmid and Gordon Ingate. Longworth and Ingate, both in their eighties, are still racing Dragons, Longworth is about to launch a new Ridgeway boat built in Tasmania.

Australians have won the Dragon world championship three times, Robert Porter (NSW) in 1979, Stephen Boyes (Tas) in 1991 and Nick Rogers (Tas) in 1995 while John Cuneo won the last Olympic gold medal in the class at the Munich Games in 1972.

The ongoing world-wide strength of the Dragons was underlined when the 2011 world championship on Melbourne's Port Phillip attracted fleet of 70 boats from a dozen nations. Europeans dominated the overall results, but several Australians figured well.

The International Yngling class is what the class describes as an "agreeable cross between a planning dinghy and a keelboat." It has also been described as a smaller version of a Soling, the former Olympic keelboat class, although there are differences in sailing characteristics. It has proven a class which women or lighter crews can sail with great skill.

Although designed in 1967, the biggest growth of the class has been over the past three decades with its popularity spreading beyond



Tawarri (Bob Simmat) working a Nor' easter on Sydney Harbour

Dragon Nationals



1972

Gold Medals at Munich Olympics

1976

Squadron crews win 5.5 metre worlds



Dads Navy America's Cup bid

First Friday night Twilight sailing

Carabella and marina development saga

1970-75

1977



Neville Wittey Jean Claude Strong and Sam Newton win the Yngling Worlds Championship in 2004

Karyn Gojnich with Krystal Wier and Angela Farrell in AUS 59

Europe to Australia and North America with more than 4,000 Ynglings built. The Yngling was the Olympic women's keelboat class for 2004 and 2008 but has been replaced for London 2012 by the Elliott 6.

The RSYS is the only club in Australia with an Yngling fleet and has hosted the world open and youth championships three times, the latest in 2012. Members regularly contest the worlds overseas, including a junior team going to Europe this year.

Squadron members have twice won, twice placed second and once third overall in the Yngling world championship, a commendable feat from a relatively small fleet based on Sydney Harbour and against formidable European contenders.

Neville Wittey, Joshua Grace and David Edwards won the worlds in 1996, with the silver medal going to another Squadron crew comprising David Lumb, Campbell Bethwaite and Matthew Levy.

In 2004, Wittey's winning crew was Jean-Claude Strong and Sam Newton. The all-women crew of Nicky Bethwaite, Kristen Kosmala and Karyn Gojnich placed second, with Adrian Nash, Sean Edmiston and Ian Steve, third.



Karyn Gojnich, a three-times Olympian and still active Yngling sailor, sailed with Krystal Weir and Angela Farrell when they were runners-up in the Yngling women's world championship in 2008 to subsequent Beijing Olympic gold medallists, Britain's Sarah Ayton, Sarah Webb and Pippa Wilson.

The Squadron hosted the 2012 Yngling open and youth world championships on Sydney Harbour in January, with Michael Nash and his crew of Mel Nathan and Greg Hartnett placing third overall, only three points behind the winning Dutch crew and one point behind the second placegetter, also from the Netherlands.

1978
Etchells worlds victories



Tragic Fastnet race

1980
Etchells worlds victories



Squadron boats lead Admiral's Cup win

1979



Zeus II's Sydney to Hobart victory

1981



Etchells 2012 World Championship

The strongest one-design keelboat class in Australia is the International Etchells, with strong fleets in most States. The Sydney fleet is the biggest in the nation and is certainly one of the largest club fleets in the world.

American Skip Etchells, a yacht designer and boat builder from Greenwich, Connecticut, designed the Etchells following a competition sponsored by Yachting magazine. At the time, the International Yacht Racing Union (ISAF) was looking for a new three man Olympic keelboat. Skip Etchells entry won the series, but was not selected.

Nevertheless, the Etchells class born, a class organisation was formed, the boat being called the Etchells 22 because its waterline length was 22 feet. In 1974 the class received International status and in 1990 the class officially dropped the '22' to become the International Etchells.

Australian sailors showed early interest in the Etchells as a potentially good club boat in which yachtsmen could enjoy one-design racing without the need for hiking out by heavyweight crew.

An association was formed with Kevin McCann as president and Roger Dane as vice-president.

The association decided to purchase from the USA moulds for building hulls and also agreed to buy dies to make spars. Savage Fibreglass Industries in Melbourne was appointed the first official builder of Etchells yachts in Australia.

The first Etchells in Australia, KA1, *Chardonnay*, was shipped here inside the moulds for the late

Roger Dane. A perpetual trophy in memory of Dane is awarded to the winner of the Masters divisions in the Australian championship. The wooden barney post from *Chardonnay* is a feature of the trophy.

Within a year of receiving the moulds from the USA, Savage Fibreglass industries had built thirty Etchells and by 1980 the company had built 127 boats. Pamcraft was then granted a licence and over the next decade built 200 Etchells. From 1991 until 1996, Bashford Boat Builders built 111 boats. Since 1996 Pacesetter Etchells have been the builder.

There are now 15 fleets in Australia with summer fleets attracting up to 30 boats in Sydney and Melbourne. The Squadron in February this year hosted the 2012 world championship with a fleet of 74 boats. Sailed off Sydney Heads, it was an outstanding success with excellent race management and a top quality international fleet providing highly competitive one-design racing.

Topping up the success was that a Sydney fleet boat, *Iron Lotus*, skippered by Olympic 470 class gold medallist Tom King from Melbourne, won the championship with a crew that included Squadron members Ivan Wheen and David Edwards.

King is the eleventh Australian to have won the International Etchells world title, previous winners having been John Bertrand (2010), Jason Muir (2009), Peter McNeill (2004), Cameron Miles (1999), Colin Beashel (1995 and 1993), John Savage (1988), Iain Murray (1984), Peter (*Pod*) O'Donnell (1980) and Frank Tolhurst (1977).

Indeed, a remarkable record racing against many of the world's finest sailors who have also won the Etchells worlds, including Dennis Conner, Jud Smith, Chris Law, Dave Curtis, Lawrie Smith, Andy Beadsworth, Stuart Childerley and Vince Brun.

One-design fleets will continue to be a significant part of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron's club yacht racing with international results by our members underlining the quality of helmsmen and crew that this racing produces. Apart from the 150 or so senior members participating in one-design yacht racing in Etchells, Dragon and Yngling, the Squadron's has some 80 youth members enjoying one-design dinghy racing in the International Laser class.

1982

Mark Bethwaite's two world titles



Work commences on new hardstand facilities

1985

Hardstand houses 42 yachts

Australia II wins America's Cup

1983



YOUTH SAILING – LIFEBLOOD OF THE SQUADRON

Over its long history, the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron has celebrated significant anniversaries, such as the club's Jubilee and Centenary, *Carabella's* Centenary and, of course, this year's Sesquicentenary. One equally significant anniversary happened two years ago, Fifty Years of Youth Sailing at the Squadron.

Established in 1960, the youth sailing program has been one of the most fundamentally important schemes in the history of the club. Until its introduction, the children and grandchildren of members learned to sail at various small dinghy clubs around Sydney Harbour or as crew aboard their father's yachts.

The concept of the Squadron's youth sailing was, and still is, broadly stated, to foster and promote sailing and to provide young men and women with social skills, confidence, values and friends that will place them in good stead to approach the challenges of life.

It has certainly achieved those goals, with many going on to become sailors of international status, while others have contributed to the development and management of the Squadron, several reaching the senior flag rank of Commodore of the RSYS.

Since its inception, the youth program has resolutely avoided becoming an elitist group. Giving young people the opportunity to enjoy their sport with enthusiasm naturally develops talented sailors, and over half a century many have gone on to become champions in a broad range of the sport, nationally and internationally. Importantly, the Squadron's Youth program has moved forward with the changing popularity of dinghy sailing classes, and the training and youth competition today centres around the International Laser design. This versatile single-handed dinghy has three different rig sizes, the 4.7, Radial and Standard, to suit various youth sailors of different age, weight and experience.



The Laser is the biggest youth and senior sailing dinghy class in the world and the Standard and Radial again will be the single-handed dinghy classes for men and women at London 2012 Olympic Games.

The Youth program caters for youth sailors from 12 to 18 years of age and there are three levels within the program: Trainee, Midshipman and Division Racing. Currently, more than 80 young boys and girls are enrolled.

An intake of youth sailing in 1960, receiving instructions from Fergus Barclay, with model, and Sam Wood

Syd Fischer's
Steak'n Kidney



1988

Ragamuffin's Sydney
to Hobart line win



America's Cup
returns to USA

1987

Work starts on
underground
carpark

Approval to rebuild
the boatshed

1990

The basic concept remains unchanged: teaching the children and grandchildren of members the enjoyment of sailing and the lifelong camaraderie that it can bring to their lives. Many stay on as members of the club, many going back to the youth sailing program as seniors to help train the next generation, including their own children.

One would have to agree that the ethos of the youth program is a perfect match for two aims



Squadron trainees with their Moths in 1960

Geoff Jarrett and Bill Wood were in the first intake of junior sailing trainees

of the Squadron, to foster sailing as well as providing a socially responsible organisation. In fact, there has always been a strong social side to the youth sailing program with such things as the annual camp, trips away to regattas and, of course, participation with their families in the annual Squadron Cruise.

The concept of the program to develop youth sailing at the Squadron was born in 1960, those primarily involved being Past Commodore Sam Freeman, along with Jim McCarthy, Fergus Barclay and Roger Gale. The only small boat racing as a class with the RSYS in those days was the Jubilee and this group of members realised that the club needed to introduce a dinghy class as a more suitable training class, but also one that was exciting to sail.

Under the chairmanship of Sam Freeman, the youth committee chose the Mk II Moth, a fast and fun boat to sail and race. Most of the first group of young sailors had already learnt to sail, now it was the task of the first two coaches, Fergus Barclay and Roger Gale, to teach them how to race well and competitively.

Immediate Past Commodore Bill Wood was in the first group of youth sailing trainees, returning as a senior member of the Squadron to become chairman of the Youth Sailing Committee. "The youth sailing group very quickly became a very social and active sailing group and every chance we got we were out picnicking at a beach on Sydney Harbour – the older sailors looking after the younger ones – and enjoying places like Nielsen's park, Milk Beach, Whiting beach," he recalled in an interview published in the Squadron history, Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron – 1962-2002, written by Jim Murrant.

"The choice of the Mk II Moth was primarily that of Jim McCarthy, who saw the advantage of a one design class, easily transportable and able to be sailed one up or two up. But most important of all, and in those times quite a radical departure from an open dinghy type skiff, was the choice of a fully enclosed self-bailing buoyant boat like the Moth," Wood recalled.

The "first fleet" of youth sailing started with twelve Moths, but as early as May 1963 there were 37 Moths registered and Bill Wood came third in the Moth State youth championship. He was later to become the first graduate to compete as an international yachtsman when he sailed as for'ard hand on Carl Halvorsen's *Crest* in the 5.5 metre championships in Europe in 1968.

Apart from coaching the young sailors, the youth sailing program trained them in water safety, simple navigation, reading the wind and waves and, of course the racing rules, as an approved Yachting Australia sailing school.

As membership increased the high-performance Cherub dinghy was introduced for senior trainees. Between 1974 and 1980 the committee decided that, while retaining the Mk II Moths for introductory training it would add the Laser as a second stage trainer. In 1980, the Club bought fifteen Lasers with the smaller rig, which proved immediately popular.

However, yacht owners looking for crew from among the youth sailors soon realised that most had had little or no experience in spinnaker handling. Richard Dickson and Rob Thornton provided their Solings for training and later Chris Harper organised training in Ynglings.

As the youth sailors became more competent, they looked for new challenges in sailing. Mark Bethwaite, a two times world champion in J24s and Solings and a two-times Olympian in the

1996
Neville Wittey wins
Yngling Worlds



1998
Sydney to Hobart
tragedy

Flying Dutchman
worlds wins

1995

Women become
full Members

Soling match
racing world title

1997



Flying Dutchman class, got involved in coaching, and the program had its first professional coach, Neville Wittey, a former national champion in the Laser class.

Wittey also developed a team of seniors known as assistant instructors to help train the trainees. He also organised the first three sailing camp at Cronulla in 1986. Ben Castle was professional coach from 1993 to 2002 and he organised the first Point Wolstoncraft summer camp in 1994.

Two summer camps were held from 2000 as they were so popular and the numbers in the entire program had grown to more than one hundred. Ben also ran the assistant instructor winter camps in residence at the club from 1993 to 2002. Since the 2002-03 season many of the coaches have been graduates of the youth sailing program, doing a great job with the incoming youngsters. Some of the girl graduates have also been coaching the women's learn to sail program (LOTS).

With the original fleet of Lasers showing their age, the Squadron Yacht Racing Foundation in 1993 agreed to provide three new Lasers each year to the best Laser sailors in the youth sailing fleet. Each youth had the use of a brand-new, fully-rigged Laser for three years and in return he or she had to help out every Sunday morning to coach the new trainees.

The Foundation also helps members taking part in a recognised event, no matter what their age, in a class which the Squadron supports, or for a recognised international regatta. The money comes from donations made by members, some very generous – one such enabled the Foundation to purchase four RIBs for race management and safety.

The Foundation has also funded overseas travel for youth sailing in New Zealand and Japan for match racing and to Europe for the Yngling world championships. The Foundation also funded the purchase of two new Ynglings to campaign for the Yngling world champions held in Sydney in 1996.

The first team comprised Neville Wittey, Joshua Grace and David Edwards, the second David Lumb, Campbell Bethwaite and Matthew Levy. The result of an intensive campaign produced the Squadron's first world champions in the Yngling class. The winning crew of Neville Wittey and his crew of Joshua Grace and David Edwards went on to become Soling match racing world champions and represent Australia in the Soling class at the Sydney Olympic Games.



The youth sailing program currently has some 80 Lasers, Radial and Standard rigs. The club also owns four Ynglings which are allocated to senior youth sailors and other members, and a dozen Elliott 6s which are primarily used for match racing, including the prestigious Hardy Cup Under 25, ISAF grade 3 regatta each year.

Now in its 52nd year, the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron's youth sailing program has taught hundreds of children and grand children of members how to sail competently and how to enjoy the sport of sailing on Sydney Harbour and elsewhere.

The scheme has also produced many outstanding sailors who achieved national and international status. Just to name one successful graduate: Michael Dunstan, five times Australian match-racing champion and three times winner of the Hardy Cup.

The Squadron's youth sailing program will continue to teach many more young people to sail, and to excel in the sport, at the same time developing their life skills.

Youth sailors rigging Cherubs in the 1970s

Youth camp at Lake Illawarra



2000

Sydney Olympic Games

Bethwaite's Laser Masters



Squadron hosts Hardy Cup

2001

Melbourne-Osaka race win



1999

INTERCOLONIAL CHALLENGES AND THE SAYONARA CUP



The intercolonial yacht race: *Janet* rounding the flag boat

Alfred Milson's yacht *Era*, by Henry King. Powerhouse Museum collection

Until the Squadron's first challenge for the America's Cup in 1962 the trophy most hotly contested by Squadron members in large yachts was the Sayonara Cup. An interstate challenge, it was first sailed for 1904 and then, at irregular intervals over the next one hundred years.

Always a challenge between clubs, as is the America's Cup, the Sayonara Cup was contested by some of the most famous yachts of the time, then later specifically by 8-metre class yachts until there were insufficient 'eights' racing. In 1984 the Deed of Gift was changed to make the Sayonara Cup a match race between two International Dragon class yachts.

The last Sayonara Cup challenge was in 2009 with a Tasmanian yacht, *Karabos IX*, regaining the Cup for the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania.

The magnificent Cup currently resides in a trophy cabinet at the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania clubhouse in Hobart, without immediate prospect of a challenge.

Intercolonial yacht racing first became a highlight of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron's activities during the season of 1886-1887 when a match of three races was held in Sydney waters between the crack Melbourne yacht *Janet* and the two Sydney champions *Magic* and *Waitangi*, for a Challenge Cup of 100 pounds with one hundred gold sovereigns added.

Janet, of 54ft 6in LOA, was owned by Tasmanian born grazier Sir William Clarke, while Commodore J R Fairfax owned the veteran *Magic*, of 46 feet LOA, and Vice Commodore Alfred Milson owned *Waitangi*, of 49ft 7in LOA, a New Zealand built yacht which had been re-designed by Walter Reeks, then Sydney's leading yacht designer.

The arrival in Sydney of the jovial millionaire colonial baronet in his beautiful yacht caused a flutter in social and yachting circles. It had all the portents for a brilliant yachting season.

With three yachts of differing sizes, the Intercolonial Challenge Cup was contested under "1730 Rule" time allowances described as "complicated as a Chinaman's garden!"

Alfred Milson and *Waitangi* convincingly won this first organised inter-colonial contest held in Sydney, fifty years after his father had won the First Class race at the inaugural Anniversary Day Regatta of 1837.

In 1888, the Victorian Government joined in Australia's centenary celebrations by opening a huge Centennial Exhibition and offering a cup valued at 400 pounds for an intercolonial race. To that Sir William Clarke added a gold anchor valued at 100 pounds.

New South Wales was represented by three yachts, all on the register of the RSY: Alfred Milson's new *Era*, W P Smairl's *Volunteer* and J H Wants' centreboard boat, *Miranda*. The opposition included Clarke's *Janet* and two other Victorian yachts, together with one yacht from South Australia.



Heritage re-development

2002-08

2004

Neville Wittey wins Yngling Worlds for 2nd time



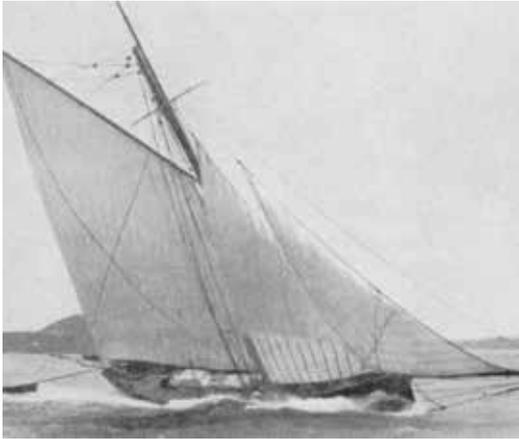
Bethwaite Laser grand master

Breakwater pontoon completed

Farr 40 worlds victory

2005





Designed by Walter Reeks, *Era* was the biggest sailing yacht until then built in Australia. Milson had *Era* built as a successor to *Waitangi* with the objective of winning the intercolonial races of Australia's Centenary Year.

Miranda failed to reach Melbourne in time for the race for the Centenary Intercolonial Cup on Port Phillip and in a thrilling race, *Era* won from *Volunteer*. This was a notable twofold victory not only for the Squadron, but also for Walter Reeks, designer of *Era* and *Volunteer*.

For various reasons, intercolonial yacht racing lapsed for many years, with competition between New South Wales yacht owners confined to Sydney Harbour and some short ocean races. The opening of the 1890-1891 season was marked by a Squadron race to Bird Island, near Tuggerah Lake, and return, a course of 93 nautical miles. This was the longest ocean race held in Australia since the classic match between *Chance* and *Xarifa* in 1864 and was won by *Volunteer*.

In January 1904, the crack Melbourne yacht *Sayonara*, a beautiful 58-footer designed by the noted Scottish naval architect William Fife, was sailed to Sydney by her owner, Alfred Gollin. A member of the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria,

Gollin's objective was to revive interstate yacht racing, known in earlier years as intercolonial racing, with the last event having been held sixteen years previously.

To test *Sayonara* against the Sydney champions, Gollin issued a challenge for a cup to be donated by him. He proposed that the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron and the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club jointly nominate a yacht to represent New South Wales against *Sayonara*, representing Victoria, in the best two of three races over an ocean course outside Sydney Harbour.

The challenge was accepted, and a committee of the two Sydney clubs nominated the New Zealand-built *Bona*, owned by Herbert Binnie. It was agreed that the match would be held under the time allowances and other rules of the British Yachting Association.

Sayonara won the first race, *Bona* the second, but the Victorian yacht took out the third race to win the challenge. Alfred Gollin sailed *Sayonara* back to Melbourne and a month later announced that he would present the *Sayonara* Cup as a trophy in perpetuity for interstate challenge matches.

The deed of gift stated that the contest should be between yachts registered with the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria and either or both the Royal



Volunteer
Culwalla III – Bruny
Island race winners
100 years ago –
RYCT ©



Sayonara and
Acrospire (courtesy
David Wilton HBYC).



Nathan Outteridge's
49er, Moth worlds

2009
Careening Cove
Anchorage opened



Farr40 World
Championship
YA Lifetime Award

M30 Worlds
to *Optimum*

2008



175th Australia Day
Regatta

2011





Erica J

Sydney Yacht Squadron and the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club, representing the State of New South Wales. Based on a similar concept to the America's Cup, the challenger had to sail to the challenge venue on its own bottom.

Gollin's original deed of gift was very explicit in the type of yachts, the courses and other rules. With it, he inaugurated one of the most important yachting competitions in Australia, one which, with some modifications of the conditions, has continued for more than a century.

In 1907 and 1909, the yacht *Sayonara* successfully defended the Sayonara Cup against two challenges from New South Wales by *Rawhiti* and *Thelma*. In 1910, Walter Marks' magnificent cutter *Culwalla III* sailed to Melbourne, via Hobart, to again take on *Sayonara*. In southern Tasmania, *Culwalla III* won the 90 nautical mile Bruny Island Race, then re-crossed Bass Strait to win the Sayonara Cup, but only after a ruling on time allowances was made by the Yacht Racing Association of England, a decision that took months to reach the Squadron.

Because of World War I and other factors, the next challenge for the Sayonara Cup was not held until 1928 when A F Albert's *Norn* successfully defended the trophy against the Victorian yacht *Acrospire III*. However, the trophy returned to Victoria in 1932 when Jack Linacre skippered *Vanessa* to victory over *Norn*.

In 1950, the deed of gift was amended to permit a challenge from the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania and to specify the 8-metre class yachts as challengers. Tasmania won the Sayonara Cup in 1953 with *Erica J*, but Victoria's Francis won it back the following year.

In 1955, Squadron member Bill (later Sir William) Northam sailed his imported 8-metre *Saskia* to a famous victory on Port Phillip and the Cup returned to New South Wales and the RSYA after an absence of 23 years. *Saskia* twice successfully defended the Sayonara Cup, but in 1983 the International Dragon class yacht was selected for future challenge matches because of its size, classic lines and its suitability for match racing.

Boats representing the Squadron, *Kirribilli II* sailed by Rob Porter and *Rawhiti*, skippered by Ted Albert, won the first two challenges for the Sayonara Cup in the Dragon class.

Tasmania's Stephen Boyes won in 1987, steering *Maj Brit*, and the Cup remained in Hobart until 1993 when Mark Bethwaite sailed *Sea Joy VIII* to victory on the Derwent to regain the Cup for the Squadron. Unfortunately, the Squadron's defender, *Ellen J II* (John Vickery) lost to Tasmania's *Karabos VIII*, helmed by Nick Rogers, the following year.

That was the last time the Squadron held the Sayonara Cup, although club member Neville Wittey in 1996 represented the Royal Prince Edward Yacht Club to win back the Cup for New South Wales in *Freycinet*.

After winning his tenth Prince Philip Cup, Nick Rogers, steering *Karabos IX*, in 2009 regained the famous interstate trophy for the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania.

There it remains, awaiting yet another challenge. Perhaps it is time the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron considered it's time to bring it back to New South Wales?



Taranui and Karabos IX, photo by Kylie Wilson

2012

Squadron hosts Yngling World Championship



Youth sailing camp



Squadron yacht wins Etchells World Championship in Sydney



BRIDGE AND THE SOCIAL SIDE OF THE SQUADRON



Ena Ley celebrating her 99th birthday at the Squadron

For more than half a century Ena Ley has enjoyed playing bridge at the Squadron. At the end of May this year she celebrated her 99th birthday over lunch with friends and fellow bridge players in the Careening Cove Anchorage.

Ena is one of about ten ladies listed as 50 Year Members of the Club. She joined as an Associate member in 1950 and remains one of the most active bridge players. Only a week before her 99th birthday she partnered Social Committee chairperson Mary Brookes, and they placed third.

“We have several regular bridge players in their 90s, but recently we have had some enthusiastic younger members join us – they are in their 60s,” Mary said.

Cards games, bridge in particular, have been one of the most enjoyable and keenly contested activities at the Squadron since it moved into Carabella Cottage back in 1907.

On the second Wednesday in the month many members enjoy dinner, duplicate and rubber bridge evenings, with an early dinner served in the Carabella Dining Room. On the first and third Thursdays there are club and private tables for rubber bridge. On the second and fourth Thursdays mornings club duplicate bridge also attracts a strong group.

“We currently have been fifty and sixty members regularly playing bridge at various levels of competition,” added Mary. “We also have friendly games against members of the Royal Sydney Golf Club, the Queens Club and Elanora Golf Club.”

Bridge is, of course, only a part of the activities arranged for Squadron members by the club’s Social Committee, appointed by the General Committee with objective of encouraging more members to become regularly involved in social activities.

The Social Committee took over this role when the Associates member category was wound-up and Associates become full members of the squadron more than a decade ago.

The Melbourne Cup luncheon, the Members Bridge Christmas luncheon and the Mothers Day luncheon are three major activities organised each year by the Social Committee, both always well attended by members.

Lunches with guest speakers are always popular, as are river trips and evenings to popular theatrical shows in town. Members gather at the club for an early dinner and are then taken to the theatre by bus. Upcoming theatre parties include the *Mousetrap*, *Chorus Line* and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*.

Sesquicentenary Squadron Cruise



Sesquicentenary Art show



150th Anniversary Garden Party



Outteridge at London Olympic Games

Classic Boats Regatta

CRUISE OF THE 'SIRIUS'

BY PETER CAMPBELL



Harold Snr and Richard Nossiter on *Sirius* at sea. From a collection at the Australian National Maritime Museum

Cruise to Broughton Island on Harold Nossiter's yacht *Uteikah II* in 1930

At 1900 hours on 20th May 1937, the staysail schooner *Sirius*, flying a rather battered burgee of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, dropped anchor in Watsons Bay, just inside Sydney Heads. Aboard were Harold Nossiter and his sons, Dick and Harold, thus becoming the first Australians to circumnavigate the world in a yacht.

Having sailed from Sydney on Sunday, 14th July 1935, *Sirius* had completed a voyage of 28,145 nautical miles, the first Australian designed and built yacht to achieve this remarkable feat. Today, the binnacle and compass of *Sirius* from that epic voyage are proudly displayed in the foyer of the Squadron while the yacht herself is still afloat, owned in Thailand.

Harold Nossiter, who set sail just two days after his retirement, has long since passed on to calmer waters, but he left a family that has continued to make their mark on international sailing, as well as a legacy of longevity. His son Harold reached 97 years of age, while Dick, the other son who

accompanied him on the circumnavigation almost 75 years ago, celebrated his 102nd birthday on the 22nd June 2012.

Richard (Dick) Nossiter DSC OAM is the oldest and longest serving member of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, having joined the club in 1939. Soon after he headed overseas as a Royal Australian Navy Reserve officer and had a distinguished wartime career.

"Dad still lives alone in Newcastle, looking after himself and is very alert and quite active," according to his son, Tim, who lives in southern Tasmania where he is skipper of the Research Vessel *Penghana*, based at the Marine Discovery Centre at Woodbridge. Tim's seafaring career includes sailing around Cape Horn on a square rigger.

The Nossiter brothers grew up on the Lane Cove River, crewing on their father Harold's beautiful racing yawl *Uteikah II* and were in their twenties when Harold launched *Sirius* in 1935 and began

planning his circumnavigation of the world in this stoutly built staysail schooner.

Designed by Sydney yacht designer John D Thistlethwaite and built in Careening Cove by James Hayes and Sons, *Sirius* was entirely Australian in her design, timbers and workmanship. She has a full-bodied hull, 53.5 feet LOA and 13.5 feet in beam, with generous displacement, a sharp rise in the garboards and sufficient lift in the ends to keep the decks dry. Her mainmast was 64 feet, the foremast 59 feet and she had a 15 hp engine.

With long cruising in mind, *Sirius* had a large saloon of 13 square feet, three cabins and was well fitted with freshwater tanks and stowage space fore and aft. The only communication was a one-way receiving radio used for time signals to check the chronometer.

The crew of *Sirius* comprised Harold Nossiter, his sons, Harold and Dick, and Charles Russell. Dick was the navigator as *Sirius* sailed northwards to Rabaul and thence north of New Guinea to Bali, Singapore, Penang and Colombo. Here Charles Russell left and the cruise of *Sirius* continued via Aden, Suez, Crete, Athens and Malta and, through rough seas and hailstorms, to Gibraltar and Spain.

Sirius arrived at Plymouth, England, on 2nd June 1936, after a passage of eleven months from Sydney. The Nossiters sailed on to Cowes on the Isle of Wight where, in July, they shared in the moving farewell to the King's yacht, *Britannia*, as she was towed from Cowes Roads to her last resting place, deep in the ocean.

The King's sailing master, Sir Philip Hunloke, on behalf of the Royal Yacht Squadron, invited Harold Nossiter and his sons to use the Squadron Castle at Cowes and to join, as they wished, the racing fleet in the famous Cowes Week regatta.

Sirius' voyage home to Australia began on 17th September 1936, touching at Madeira before crossing the Atlantic to Trinidad in twenty-two days, including the best day's run of the entire voyage around the world, 210 nautical miles noon to noon.

Passing through the Panama Canal, the Nossiters sailed *Sirius* to the Galapagos Islands, then set out on their longest leg, 3,100 nautical miles, to the Marquesas Island. After a leisurely cruise through the South Seas, *Sirius* approached the coast of New South Wales where, off Sugarloaf, she encountered the worst gale of the circumnavigation and was hove-to for nearly three days.

Eventually, Harold, Harold Jnr and Dick Nossiter sailed the *Sirius* into Sydney Harbour on the evening of 20th May 1937, after a cruise of more than 28,000 nautical miles lasting one year and ten months. The Squadron burgee had streamed from the main truck at every port she had entered.

Harold Nossiter Snr recorded their experiences in two books, entitled *Northward Ho* and *Southward Ho*. Praising the navigation skills of his son, Dick, in piloting *Sirius* through the low lying atolls, reefs and dangerous currents of the Tuamotu Archipelago, Harold wrote in the first chapter of both books: "The younger (son), Dick, gladly welcomed the chance of seeing the world and at my suggestion studied navigation with a view to obtaining a yacht master's certificate. In October, 1933, he sat for that examination and passed brilliantly." Dick's Yacht Master's Certificate was the second such certificate to be awarded in Australia.

By the time the Nossiters returned to Australia war clouds were looming over Europe and in 1939 Dick joined up as a Royal Australian Navy Reserve officer. On loan to the Royal Navy, he served overseas from 1940 to 1946, in command of five different ships, mostly corvettes. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for bravery during convoy work to Murmansk in Russia when he rescued about one hundred survivors from a ship that had been bombed.

On the eve of his 100th birthday, 22nd June 2010, Dick Nossiter was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia OAM, recognising the historic voyage of the *Sirius* and also his distinguished naval service during the World War II.

After the war Dick Nossiter returned to live in the family home at Northwood and became an alderman of Lane Cove Council, serving as Mayor for three years.

"Dad ordered a case of French champagne for his 100th birthday and has just bought another case of the same for his 102nd," recalls son Tim Nossiter.

Harold Nossiter not only left his mark on the



The deck of the *Sirius*. Australian National Maritime Museum's collection

Richard (Dick) Nossiter celebrated his 102nd birthday in June





**“Time to heave to”
Wanderer in a storm,
1936. From the oil
painting by Dennis
Adams in the
possession of
N K Wallis**

history of Australian yachting, but he left a family legacy of adventure afloat that is being maintained by his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Dick's son Tim has sailed around Cape Horn on a square rigger and now skippers a marine research vessel in southern Tasmania; Harold Jnr's sons, Tony and Ben are both still actively involved in yachting on Sydney Harbour, while Tony's son Anthony ('Knocker') Nossiter has three times represented Australia at the Olympics in the Finn class. He is currently crewing on a yacht in the Volvo Race around the world.

And the *Sirius*? She is still afloat and in outstanding condition after 77 years, thanks to her current owner Simon Morris, a recently retired British Airways pilot who lives in Thailand. He keeps *Sirius* there, sailing and racing the historic staysail schooner regularly in local regattas.

Harold Nossiter's grandson Tim and other family members have chartered *Sirius* for two weeks next February to cruise the Merguie Archipelago in Burma.

The circumnavigation by *Sirius* and the Nossiters is without question the most famous in the annals of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron but there have been other notable cruises by Squadron

members and their yachts.

For example, back in 1928 Norman Wallis registered with the Squadron his new yacht, *Wanderer*. The schooner was to become perhaps the most intrepid cruiser in the club's history, but with an unfortunate reputation for striking heavy weather. Later that year she became the first Sydney yacht to cruise to Lord Howe Island. On the return voyage she ran into a cyclone.

The next year *Wanderer* sailed from Sydney Harbour to Port Phillip to enter a yacht race across Bass Strait. On the way to Melbourne she encountered two severe gales and took 13 days to complete the voyage. The race to Low Head was sailed in one of the worst gales recorded in Bass Strait for many years, winds rising to hurricane force with huge seas. *Wanderer* hove to for three days and made port with a jury rig on the foremast.

In early January 1936, *Wanderer* made an expedition, with the co-operation of the Australian Museum, to Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs, to the north of Lord Howe Island, to examine fish and shell species. Again she ran into heavy weather and while trying to shorten sail a heavy sea swept the owner and a crewman overboard.

The crewman managed to grab part of the mainsheet and got back on board, but Wallis, with four fingers of the right hand torn out of joint and a knee injured, was left floundering astern. Fortunately, part of the main sail, which was torn, was trailing the boat and Wallis grabbed it with his good hand and was hauled to the stern where another wave washed him onto the deck of the boat.

Back in Sydney with *Wanderer* undergoing a refit, Wallis heard that a Lord Howe Islander, Gower Wilson, was missing in the Tasman Sea. Wilson had prepared a search for *Wanderer* when she had been delayed by storm earlier in the year and Wallis felt compelled to join the search for him.

Wanderer put to sea and spent 17 days sailing 1,200 nautical miles along the possible tracks of the *Viking*, Wilson's missing vessel. In that time, they were battered by the worst storm and roughest seas *Wanderer* had ever encountered. Sailing through the eye of a cyclone in the Tasman Sea, the yacht lost her rudder, but Wallis and crew sailed 500 nautical miles back to Sydney by sail trim alone. Gower Wilson and *Viking* were never found.

In the late 19th century several Squadron yachts cruised the coast of New South Wales and in 1879, according to later recollections, a yacht named *Elba*, owned by R J Webster, C Barclay and W G Searle, was sailed by Lou Jones from Sydney to Hobart to compete in the Royal Hobart Regatta. If that is correct, *Elba* was the first yacht from the Squadron to make an inter-colonial cruise and to take part in inter-colonial racing.

GASCOIGNE CUP – FROM THE SIEGE OF KHARTOUM TO SYDNEY HARBOUR

According to the Squadron's archives, our earliest members raced for 'purses', often quite considerable amounts of money, recorded as either guineas or pounds.

The great challenge match between the Squadron's first Commodore William Walker's British built schooner *Chance* and the locally designed and built cutter *Xarifa*, owned by Charles Parbury, saw the Commodore staking 100 pounds to the Parbury's 75 pounds. It is recorded elsewhere in this edition that *Xarifa* won the challenge, a race from Sydney to Newcastle and return in 1863.

Many yacht races and regattas offered valuable trophies, too. First prize in the Hunters Hill Regatta of 1863 was a claret jug valued at 35 pounds, the winner being *Peri*, skippered by another prominent founding member of the Squadron, H C Dangar.

Over the past 150 years, the Squadron has acquired many magnificent trophies. Most have been donated as perpetual trophies, several by past Governors-General and State Governors, others by Squadron members commemorating past members.

The oldest and, arguably, the most prestigious trophy in the Squadron's trophy cabinets is the Gascoigne Cup. It also has one of the most interesting histories, linking it to the infamous Siege of Khartoum in the Sudan.

At the Squadron's annual meeting in August 1886 it was announced that Colonel F G F Gascoigne wished to donate a trophy to honour the heroic service in the Sudan campaign of his son, Captain Gascoigne, then Aide-d-Camp to Lord Carrington, Governor of New South Wales. Captain Gascoigne, a keen sailor and member of the Squadron, had been part of the unsuccessful attempt to rescue the embattled General Gordon and his forces at Khartoum.

The original Deed of Gift specified that the Gascoigne Cup be an annual ocean race for yachts of over 5 tons measurement, until won three times in succession by the same yacht with the same owner. The then

veteran yacht *Era*, owned by Commodore J R Fairfax, won the first contest for the Gascoigne Cup in 1887, an appropriate name for the winner of an event that has now been raced for 103 times over the past 125 years.

While a number of Squadron yachts won the Cup in its first 45 years and even more in total, none could achieve three in a row. In 1933 the Deed of Gift was amended to make it a perpetual trophy.

Remarkably, it was not until the 1950s that A F Albert's 8-metre, *Norn*, achieved three consecutive wins (1952, 1953 and 1954), scoring five wins in total. The most successful yacht in the Gascoigne Cup, however, has been the famous Admiral's Cup team yacht, *Caprice of Huon*, which has won the Cup seven times, although with different skippers.

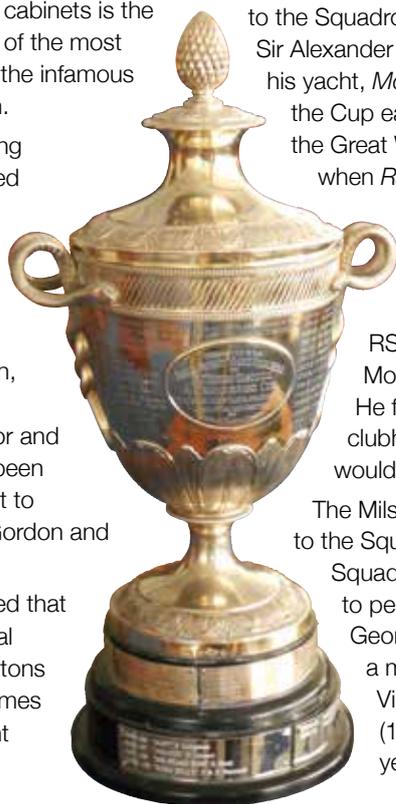
The Gascoigne Cup is one of three short ocean races that the Squadron conducts each season, the others being the Morna Cup and the Milson Cup.

Each event attracts strong fleets of offshore racing yachts as they are part of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia and Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron's short ocean pointscores.

The Morna Cup is a sterling silver cup presented to the Squadron in 1913 by Past Commodore Sir Alexander MacCormick and named after his yacht, *Morna*. Squadron yachts raced for the Cup each season, except for during the Great War, until the 1927-29 season when *Rawhiti*, owned by M F Albert, won it outright.

In 1971, Albert's son Alexis (later Sir Alexis) Francois Albert, Commodore of the RSYS from 1971-75, donated the Morna Cup back to the Squadron. He felt its rightful place was in the clubhouse, something his late father would have wished.

The Milson Memorial Cup was presented to the Squadron by two members of the Squadron, Q Deloitte and C J Henty, to perpetuate the memory of Alfred George Milson, who had been a member of the Club for fifty years, Vice Commodore for seven years (1882-89) and Commodore for four years (1890-04). His foresight also



Gascoigne Cup



New York Yacht Club Trophy

Dragon Gold Cup

The Perseverance Trophy

Yngling King Haakons Cup

resulted in the establishment of the Squadron's clubhouse at Kirribilli.

Last season the Squadron re-dedicated another perpetual trophy, the Perseverance Trophy, for the highest-scoring yacht, entered through the Squadron, in the three short ocean races for the Morna, Gascoigne and Milson Cups.

The Perseverance Trophy is a fine model of the two-gun brig *Perseverance*, built by the late Donald Maclurcan, a prominent member of the Club for many years. *Perseverance*, a colonial brig of 138 tons, 80 feet LOA, was launched in 1807 for Robert Campbell, a noted Sydney merchant and ship owner of that time.



Each year, the Squadron fleet races for many fine perpetual trophies, the engraved names of the winning yachts are a history of the sport of yacht racing on Sydney Harbour and off the coast of New South Wales, ranging back more than 125 years. There may be even older trophies held in the Clubhouse trophy cabinets or hidden away in the attic.

In addition to those mentioned above, active race or regatta trophies sailed for by Squadron fleet each season include the New York Yacht Club Trophy for the Squadron Cruise; the Milson Silver Jug, the Duke of Gloucester Cup, the Norn Cup,



the Geoff Lee Trophy and the Boomerang Cup for Division 1; the Carleton Cup, the Intercolonial Cup, the Milson Silver Tray and the J A V Minnett Memorial Cup for Division 2; the L F (Livvy) Mann Trophy, the Xarifa Teapot, the Flag Officers Trophy for Division 3; the Commodore Knox Jubilee Trophy, the Rawson Cup, K H Scholtyssek Tankard and the Herbert Rosenthal Memorial Trophy for Division 4.

The International Etchells compete each season for the Kopsen Trophy along with the John 'Choco' Winning Memorial Plate, the Ted Albert Memorial Trophy, the Jim Annand Trophy, the Phil Pearce Trophy and the Xarifa Chalice.

The Dragons list of trophies include the Prince Philip Cup, the Eric Strain Trophy, the Alan Jarman Trophy, the Jock Carr Memorial Trophy, the Archie Robertson Trophy, the Dragon Gold Cup, the Elaine Rowntree Trophy and the Colin Venables Crew Trophy.

On the Yngling list of perpetual trophies are the King Haakons Cup, the Jan H Linge Trophy and the Royal Temple Yacht Club Trophy.

The Short Ocean Pointscore major trophy is the Royal Thames Yacht Club Eddystone Lighthouse Trophy.

Then, at the end of each summer season, the top-placed boats in each of the divisions and one-design classes race for the Varuna Trophy, presented to the Squadron by members of crew of the *Varuna* and many of the racing rivals of her owner/skipper, Dr John Musgrove.

Always distinctively dressed in his sailing whites and skipper's cap, 'Doctor John' had maintained the timber-built *Varuna* in immaculate condition since returning from World War II. Legend has it that his father brought *Varuna* alongside the troopship as she entered Sydney Harbour and that young John stepped aboard and went sailing straightaway – a tradition he was to keep up for 64 years before his death in 2010.



THE ADMIRAL'S CUP – ULTIMATE IN OFFSHORE RACING

BY PETER CAMPBELL

The Royal Ocean Racing Club's Admiral's Cup ranked as one of the great international offshore racing events for more than four-and-a-half decades, beginning with a biennial challenge between teams representing Great Britain and the United States of America in 1957.

Australia first challenged in 1965; since then yachts from around the nation have formed the three-boat teams of ocean racing yachts to take on the world's best. Squadron members helped conceive the first challenge and they led the early teams, continuing to be involved until the last Admiral's Cup series in 2003.

Traditionally, the Admiral's Cup has been centred around Cowes Week on the Isle of Wight off the south coast of England and, until the latter years, ended with the 603 nautical mile Fastnet Race.

Having reported on seven Admiral's Cups, I believe it was the most significant ocean racing series ever held, having had an enormous effect on the design, building and equipping of yachts for ocean racing throughout the world. In the early 1970s it also became a lead-up campaign in logistics, crew training and sail design towards the America's Cup.

One year even saw a side challenge for a purse of gold sovereigns between two colourful, aspiring America's Cup syndicate heads, Britain's Peter de Savary and Australia's Alan Bond. Lack of wind saw the match aborted.

Cowes Week in itself was, and still is, a remarkable yachting experience. Linked every second year with the Admiral's Cup from 1957 to 2003, it became the mecca of yachting for the world's best designers, sailmakers, equipment innovators and, of course, the world's best yachtsmen and their yachts.

At its peak, the Admiral's Cup attracted up to 19 international teams, including high profile yachting personalities from around the world. Captain John Illingworth RN, Eric Tabarly (FRA), Sir Edward Heath (GBR), Dennis Conner (USA), Alan Bond (AUS), Peter de Savary (GBR), Dick Carter (USA), German Frers (ARG), Baron E de Rothschild (FRA), Hans-Otto Schumann (GER), Ted Turner (USA), Ted Hood (USA), Robin Aisher (GBR), Willi Ilbruk (GER), Peter (later Sir Peter) Blake (NZL), Neville Crichton (NZL), Bruce Kirby (CAN) Peter de Ridder (NET) and Ed Dubois (GBR) are just some of the famous yachtsmen who have skippered yachts in the Admiral's Cup.

That's not to mention noted Australian skippers such as Syd Fischer, Graeme Lambert, Sir James Hardy, John Calvert-Jones, Peter Kurts, Gordon Ingate, Gordon Reynolds, Trygve Halvorsen, Sir Robert Crichton-Brown, Denis O'Neill, Alan Bond, Lou Abrahams, Gary Appleby, Don Calvert, Bob Steel and last, but not least, Bob Oatley. Many of them are present or past Squadron members and many have skippered their yachts to victory in the Sydney Hobart Race.



Since Australia's first challenge in 1965 our teams have won the Admiral's Cup three times, 1967, 1979 and 2003, have four times been runners-up and twice placed third. The Cup was last sailed for in 2003 when a two-boat Australian team from the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club comprising Bob Oatley's *Wild Oats* and Colin O'Neill's *Aftershock*, won a hard-fought series. RSYS members and their yachts have played a significant role in most of Australia's eighteen challenges for the Admiral's Cup.

To quote from Jim Murrant's book *Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron 1862-200*, "If, as Sir Frank Packer said, Australia's first challenge for the America's Cup was born out of delusions of grandeur and too much alcohol, then much the same can be said about the impromptu genesis of the first challenge for the Admiral's Cup."

The first Australian team that went to England for the Admiral's Cup 1965. Courtesy David Colfelt.

2003 Admirals Cup, *Wild Oats*

Ragamuffin at the
1969 Admiral's Cup

1967 winner *Caprice*
of *Huon* (page 55)



The idea was born in a pub near Hobart's historic Constitution Dock, just after the finish of the 1964 Sydney Hobart Race. Three competitors, Trygve Halvorsen and Norman Rydger Jnr, from the Squadron, and Bill Psaltis, Commodore of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, were discussing the gale they just battled through on their way south.

Rydger, out of the blue, announced that he planned to compete in the Fastnet Race, Britain's famous ocean race, with his yacht *Lorita Maria*. Halvorsen, who had just skippered *Freya* to its second successive overall win in the Sydney Hobart, said he might go, too. Psaltis then suggested organising an Australian challenge for the Admiral's Cup the following year.

The team ultimately chosen was the Halvorsen brothers' *Freya*, Gordon Ingate's *Caprice of*

Huon, both owned by Squadron members, and Ron Swanson's *Camille* from Middle Harbour Yacht Club. *Caprice of Huon*, which is still racing in Sydney today, won three of the Cup races on The Solent, but the team faltered in the light winds and tides of the 603 nautical mile Fastnet Race and finished second. Nevertheless, it was an astounding first-up venture into international ocean yacht racing.

Two years later, in 1967, two Squadron yachts were again chosen to represent Australia – *Caprice of Huon*, this time skippered by Gordon Reynolds as Gordon Ingate was involved in America's Cup elimination races, and Bob (later Sir Robert) Crichton-Brown's new *Balandra*, along with Ted Kaufman's *Mercedes II* from the CYCA. This time the Australians clinched victory in the Fastnet Race, sailing in weather that ranged from a gale to dead calms, and claimed overall victory over the British and USA.

The 1969 Admiral's Cup saw the international racing debut of Squadron member Syd Fischer, today regarded as the doyen of Australian ocean racing. Sailing his then *Ragamuffin*, a Sparkman & Stephens 49, Fischer joined with Denis O'Neill's *Koomooloo*, also a Squadron boat, and Ted Kaufman's *Mercedes III*. The team finished a close second overall.



The Halvorsens
on *Freya*



Fischer went on to represent Australia, and the Squadron, in a total of seven Admiral's Cup regattas, then described as the unofficial world championship of ocean racing. He also won the 1971 Fastnet Race overall with *Ragamuffin*, although the team was relegated to third in the Cup standings after *Koomooloo* broke her rudder in the Fastnet.

Australia's second, and most dramatic victory came in 1979 with the team comprising Fischer with *Ragamuffin*, fellow Squadron member Graeme Lambert and John Crisp with *Impetuous* and the West Australian yacht *Police Car* (Peter Cantwell).

Australia's victory was overshadowed by the tragic Fastnet Race with Lambert later describing the rounding of the lonely Fastnet Rock as awesome. "With the roar of sea, the moaning of the wind, four feet of scud covering the deck of the boat, and spume hitting the sails – lit only by the intermittent light of the lighthouse – the scene was unimaginable." Jim (later Sir James) Hardy, who had skippered his own boat *Runaway* in the 1977 Cup, did most of the steering on *Impetuous* in the storm-battered race.

Other Squadron members, past and present, to have been involved in challenges for the Admiral's Cup have included Anthony Crichton-Brown, Bruce Gould, Peter Hemery, John Wigan, Tony Ellis, Dave Forbes and Stan Darling. Bob Oatley, who led the RPAYC team to victory in the final Admiral's Cup in 2003, is also a member of the Squadron.

Despite several efforts to revive the Admiral's Cup, the Royal Ocean Racing Club has been unsuccessful in attracting the world's great ocean racing yachtsmen and their yachts back to Cowes. Cowes Week continues as it has since 1826, as do the offshore races that once made up the Admiral's Cup, the Channel Race and the Fastnet Race.

AUSTRALIAN YACHTSMAN OF THE YEAR

Many members of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron have been named Australian Yachtsman of the Year since the prestigious award was introduced following the season of 1962-63.

The first Australian Yachtsman of the Year was Jock Sturrock, the Victorian skipper of *Gretel*, Australia's first Challenge for the America's Cup. He became a member of the Squadron as the challenge was through this club.

The Australian Yachtsman of the Year award continued through to 1996 when Yachting Australia changed the format to an Australian Male Sailor of the Year and Australian Female Sailor of the Year, as well as introducing other award categories.



Sir William Northam was named Australian Yachtsman of the Year for 1964-65 after winning Australia's first gold medal in yachting at the Tokyo Olympics. Trygve and Magnus Halvorsen shared the award the following year, 1965-66 in recognition of their third consecutive win with *Freya* in the Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

Syd Fischer has twice been Australian Yachtsman of the year for his national and international successes in ocean racing, in 1970-71 and again in 1992-93. Most of his yachts have been named *Ragamuffin*, exceptions being his America's Cup challengers.

Other Squadron members to have been honoured with the nation's premier yachting award have been David Forbes (1972-73), Kevin McCann (1974-75), Peter 'POD' O'Donnell (1979-80), Sir James Hardy (1980-81), Mark Bethwaite (1981-82), Iain Murray (1984-85), Richard Perini (2003-04).

At the 2010-11 Australian Yachting Awards, Ian Kingsford Smith was presented with a Lifetime Award for services to yachting, while Peter Campbell has twice received the Australian Yachting Media Award.



Ian Kingsford Smith received a Lifetime Award in 2010-11

Trygve & Magnus Halvorsen shared the award in 1965-66

SQUADRON COMMODORES & LIFE MEMBERS

Commodores

1862-1867	William Walker
1867	James Milson Jnr
1867-1875	Henry Carey Dangar
1875-1882	William Oswald Gilchrist
1882-1883	William Laidley
1883-1884	Edward William Knox
1884-1889	James Reading Fairfax
1889-1893	Alfred George Milson
1893-1895	James Reading Fairfax
1895-1897	Robert Hoddle Driberg White
1897-1900	Alexander MacCormick
1900-1901	The Earl Beauchamp
1901-1904	Thomas Allwright Dibbs
1904-1913	Sir James Reading Fairfax
1913-1920	Sir Alexander MacCormick
1920-1921	Arthur James Milson
1921-1926	Lord Forster
1926-1931	Lord Stonehaven
1931-1936	Paul Ross
1936-1944	Lord Gowrie
1944-1945	James Lord Milson
1945-1947	His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester
1947-1949	James March Hardie
1949-1950	Charles Lloyd Jones
1950-1955	Sir Charles Lloyd Jones
1955-1960	Field Marshall Sir William Slim
1960-1961	Viscount Dunrossil
1961-1965	Viscount de L'Isle
1965-1968	Lord Casey
1968-1971	Richard Arthur Dickson
1971-1972	Alexis Francois Albert
1972-1975	Sir Alexis Francois Albert
1975-1978	William Leverrier Fesq
1978-1981	Patrick Charles Taylor
1981-1983	John Hawken Freeman
1983-1986	George Leonard Bate
1986-1990	Bruce Ian Dickson
1990-1994	Norman James Longworth
1994-1998	William Robert Mobbs
1998-2002	James Robert Dunstan
2002-2006	Rex Edwin Harrison
2006-2010	William John Anderson Wood
2010-	Malcolm Philip Levy

Life Members

1909	J. F. Hoare
1912	F. J. Jackson
1912	A. G. Milson
1912	H. G. Dangar
1912	Charles Parbury
1912	Sir James Fairfax
1917	Sir Thomas Dibbs
1922	J. A. Minnett
1927	J. C. Macdonald
1932	C. P. Bartholomew
1941	Edward Hungerford
1941	Albert Littlejohn
1942	J. L. Milson
1947	N. M. Goddard
1950	C. Waterman
1950	O. A. Meyer
1951	F. F. Buchannan
1952	Sir Charles Lloyd Jones
1952	J. M. Hardie
1952	Charles Trebeck
1954	D'Arcy Shelley
1959	Frederick White
1959	D. S. Carment
1963	R. A. Dickson
1965	J. H. Freeman
1971	Sir Frank Packer
1975	Sir Alexis Albert
1976	J. A. L. Shaw
1978	W. L. Fesq
1979	R. J. B Parkhill
1980	P. C. Taylor
1981	R. V. Gale
1981	Carl Halvorsen
1982	G. W. J. Graham
1982	L. H. Hammond
1982	H. D. Sheehan
1986	G. L. H. Bate
1987	A. H. Willis
1991	A. Burt
1991	A. N. Payne
1991	E. A. Taunton
1992	A. F. Baldick
1992	B. I. Dickson
1995	R. C. Downes
1995	D. G. Peacocke
1995	F. A. Barclay
1997	N. J. Longworth
1997	D. G. Robertson
2002	D. M. Taylor
2002	J. Warn
2002	P. Warn
2004	W. R. Mobbs
2004	C. B. Maclurcan
2005	J. R. Dunstan
2006	R. R. Dickson
2007	R. E. Harrison
2008	J. D. Maclurcan
2010	R. C. Small

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1862-2012



JOHN ALLCOT 1959

