



## Commodore's Report "Bilge" June & July 2023.

### The month of June:

1. **End of Financial Year 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023.**
  - a. Preparations for EOFY included:
    - i. Organising and assisting with stocktake Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June.
    - ii. Meeting with the Treasurer review financials.
    - iii. Preliminary key results subject to audit.
      1. Trading Income \$101,186.00
      2. Gross Profit \$82,885.00
      3. Grant Income \$16,099.00
      4. Operating Expenses \$73,701.41
      5. Net Profit less Grant Income \$9,184.18 vs last year \$9,131.57
  - b. Contacted auditors Morley & Co to confirm as our auditors for FY22/23, audited result to be completed end of August to comply with ASIC compliance deadline September 2023.
2. **PSYC Membership.**
  - a. Assist Director 1 (Membership) and Treasurer to prepare Revsport membership rationalisation of data ahead of 1<sup>st</sup> August automated PSYC membership renewal invoicing.

3. **PSYC Business Insurance renewal from 1/7/2023**
  - a. Negotiated with our current insurance broker AON plus others, effective 1/7/2023 reducing our premium by \$2500 for the same coverage as the previous year.
4. **ZHIK sponsorship.**
  - a. Contact Anthony Hamilton Sales & Customer Service Coordinator
    - i. Emergency Services Regatta sponsorship.
    - ii. New sponsorship for PSYC ongoing confirmed website discount 20%.
5. **Emergency Services Regatta.**
  - a. Liaised with David Blakemore & VC on the detail of the ESR.
6. **Xmas in July Function.**
  - a. Assisted Margaret McKay - Director 2 with planning.
7. **PSYC Board Changes.**
  - a. Vice-Commodore Julian Bell resignation and Rick Pacey (Director 3) accepted acting VC role up to the November 2023 AGM, thank you to both Julian and Rick for the work and time you have provided to PSYC in the past and the future.
  - b. Director 2 Margaret Flockhart resignation and Margaret McKay stepping up as Director 2 up to the November 2023 AGM. Thank you for the work and time you have provided to PSYC in the past and the future.

## The month of July:

1. **Xmas in July**
  - a. Fully booked (56 members & non-members) thanks to Margrete McKay running her first PSYC social event a great afternoon was enjoyed by all who attended, a bit more work on the food side, very tasty but could have been hotter, something to work on for the next event.
2. **Emergency Services Regatta.**
  - a. Final numbers seven (7) PSYC yachts participated over the two (2) days of racing, lots of fun, rain, variable winds and prizes, a great time with lots learned for next year, thank you to all the volunteers and competitors.
3. **PSYC Board Changes.**
  - a. With former Secretary Deb Wellwood moving to Director 1 effective July 2023, sailing member Clive (CJ) Jones has agreed to take over the role of PSYC Secretary up to the AGM in November. Thank you for the work and time you have provided to PSYC in the past and the future.
    - i. Clive, an active sailing crew member sailing Wednesdays and Saturdays, has an extensive knowledge of the rules of sailing and handicapping systems.
    - ii. Currently retired from full-time work.
    - iii. Has been an active volunteer with:
      1. Port Stephens FM (no longer active)
      2. The Koala Sanctuary (currently active).
      3. PSYC – Club Captain (some 6 years back when Bill Haskell was Commodore).

- iv. CJ is very keen to join our board and help contribute to the growing of PSYC with its members and the community in general and has time to commit to the PSYC secretary.

#### 4. PSYC upgrade projects

- a. Stronger Communities Programme Round 8
    - i. Thankyou Letter Ms Swanson - Port Stephens Yacht Club its members and Board of Directors wish to thank you and those involved with awarding the “Stronger Communities Programme Round 8 grant to Port Stephens Yacht Club” the carpets of 45+ years have now been replaced, plus some painting and carpet & nose threads to the stairs (a WHS issue for some time) have been completed lifting the appearance and appeal of PSYC to club members and the community when they visit the yacht club.
  - b. NSW Sports Grant
5. Still chasing builder for final quote and information required to submit “Works on Council Land” to Port Stephens Council for approval expected early August

#### 6. PSYC OPEN DAY 23/24 Sailing Season Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2023

- a. Reserve the Date.
- b. Proposed timeline for the day.
  - i. 11:00 to 12:00 yacht owners prepare yachts ahead of Sail Past.
  - ii. 12:00 to 12:30 PSYC board members meet guests and dignitaries at club house. Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony subject to availability.
  - iii. 12:45 members and guests assemble at the foreshore area adjacent to the starters caravan. Yachts Sail Past best presented yacht prize.
  - iv. 2:00pm back to the clubhouse
    1. BBQ lunch free to members and non-members \$5
    2. Band
  - v. 5:30pm close

Michael Kirby

Commodore

# Vice Commodore's Report

Hi all, it's been a busy period of late with the interesting Police and Emergency Services Regatta having just been run by the club in partnership with their club, the NSW Police & Emergency Sailing Club. The event went really well despite the weather and far less than expected attendance on the P&ES side. That said the eggs and bacon breakfast and race format was a success and as an inaugural event was considered a great outcome with planning for future events already underway and hopefully becomes a major annual event for us. Great effort by all that attended with She's the one and Adios on equal first place points and 'Thief of Time' in 3rd spot. Other boats competing included Smoke & Mirrors, Elusive, Gift Horse and 2 Way Street.

The other key activity was the holding of the Skippers Meeting and Race Committee meetings taking on the feedback to put together the next 2 seasons calendars. Check out the website for the Spring and Summer Programs. Key things that came out of the meeting were:

- the inclusion of the non-spinnaker short course sternchaser races now held with the programmed sternchasers. Check out the Sternchaser NOR for the details, but basically a long spinnaker (existing TopYacht handicaps) and short non-spinnaker using the long standing Wednesday afternoon format and 321 handicap system.
- As raised by members, and now that covid impacts have stabilised we can now publish both Spring and Summer programs to help people plan their commitments, notwithstanding that unexpected things we may tweek things along the way. The aim going forward, is to put out the season after next as each concludes, so as to have a 6 month program in place throughout the seasons.
- We keep experimenting and have included a 2 and single handed race in October and hoping to maintain interest in Women's Helm races and Twilights. Lets see how they go.
- Next big event will be our club season opening and sail past on September 2nd. A great way to kick off the 2023-24 season.
- Of note is our club's effort to resurrect a national trailable regatta in November this year.

The weather continues to confound us with strong westerly and then no breeze challenging our racing. At the time of writing we have only had 2 winter pointscore (one a lay day) complete races!! Let's hope that side of things improves. That said, any day on the water is a good day, and how good can it be when it wants to be!

As always I encourage you to take the time to read the just updated SIs and new season NORs. These have evolved over many years and can always be adapted as things and our fleet changes so let me know of suggestions.

Thanks and see you out on the water.

Rick Pacey

Vice Commodore



# Director 3 - Communications and IT Update

Hi all, with the help of Paul Sinclair our volunteer IT Manager, we continue to hopefully improve the website layout and our IT systems to the smooth running of the club and increased information and ease of use to members. RevSport has been embraced by the club and while that seem a pain in some areas brings heaps of benefits to the management of the club and members. Best example is the way the new Calendar works. As demonstrated a couple of times at the club the Calendar links to the race documents.

Rick Pacey

## Club Captain's Report Tim Peachey

### Sternchaser races revamped

Following input from members and the July Skippers meeting and the recent Race Committee meeting, the Club is keen to encourage more participation in our sternchaser events by running an additional format course.

As such, with this new format, skippers will be given the option to race the traditional long course or an alternative short course **non-spinnaker** event along the lines of the popular Wednesday afternoon format using the Excel based 3 2 1 handicap system.

- Skippers will be able to switch each time within each series throughout the year and will appear on both start sheets.
- The choice of the event to enter must be relayed to the start caravan when logging in by radio at the start each day.

“Start times will be posted on the website prior to the race and given to you by the Race-Starter when you log in”. The initial start times for the first race on the 29th July will be based on the previous Wednesday's race based on the final positions that day.”

**Please refer to the new NOR instructions for the details, available on the website and from the new Calendar link.**

**NOTE:** Tim Peachey, our Club Captain and his crew Julian and Arty Bell, are representing us at the Airlie Beach Race Week.

His “Mr T” the sports boat (we have not seen much of) is out to show us how. (Ed.)

# Rear Commodore's report

Hi All

Well what a difference some new carpet and a paint job does! Plus a few other things like making a feature area of the back wall and building some cupboards to increase our storage space. An enormous thank you to all the volunteers who have worked hard getting this makeover to happen! Also thank to the NSW Government for providing and approving the grant to make it all happen. The work isn't finished yet, as there are still shelving to be installed in the cupboards, some more nautical artifacts to be displayed and the digital display to be set up.

The next works to be carried out are the rest room refurbishments. A number of issues have made this a tough gig for the board to get it across the line, but we have now been able to pass the first financial gate to lock in the first part of the grant and can now forge ahead with this project. It will still be a while yet before things firm up, though, but the changes will see replacement toilets for males and females on both floors and also a disabled toilet and shower on the bottom floor. The office will be a victim of the change, so to provide the lost storage it was decided to install cupboards in the main bar area on the bottom floor. Not only this will provide the storage space, but an alcove within it will house the computer and printer, thereby carrying out the function of an office. It is an interesting reflection to think that only a few years ago it took a whole room to administer the needs of a club, whereas now it only takes a bit of space in a cupboard...!!!

Oh, and finally the council is satisfied that we employ the contractor to paint the eaves, balcony rails and so on, giving the club some much needed external maintenance and a facelift. When finished the colours will be similar to the Soldiers Point Marina, giving it a much more modern look. I am just waiting for the contractor to advise me of when he can schedule the work.

Cheers Rossco

## Director 1 and Outgoing Secretary's Report



Clive (CJ) Jones has agreed to join the PSYC Board as Club Secretary with immediate effect. All Directors have agreed to this appointment until the AGM in November 2023. I will step into the Director 1 role until the AGM.

For those of you who don't know Clive, he is an active crew member sailing Wednesdays and Saturdays. He is retired from full time work and has been an active community volunteer: Clive Jones has been a very keen Dragon Class yachtsman.

CJ is very keen to join our Board and help contribute to growing PSYC with its members and within the community. We welcome Clive to the Board!

Kind Regards, Deb Wellwood.

# Membership Renewal

Dear Members,

Its time to renew your Membership for the 2023/2024 season!

This season, your Board has taken the decision to move to online registration. This process both ensures the accuracy of information held about your Membership, and cuts down the administrative burden on our volunteers. As such, we would really appreciate your support in helping us transition to this new way of working. That said, the Board of course recognises that change is not always easy, so Deb Wellwood (Director 1) and Tory Stewart (Treasurer) are here to help. Deb (Saturdays) and Tory (some Wednesdays and some Saturdays) will be at the club after racing and very willing to help with any issues that you have using the form. Please also feel free to email Deb at [Director1@psyc.com.au](mailto:Director1@psyc.com.au) at any time with any issues. Here is a [Link to registration form](#). If you don't know your Australian Sailing number, you can use the [AS Number finder link](#).

Please also find here a link to the 2023/2024 [Membership categories and associated fees](#). This season your Board has also mandated the use of PIN payments to pay for Membership fees. Again this is to reduce the burden on volunteers of having to manually reconcile 360 plus bank payments against invoices. We greatly appreciate your support with this change as it free's Board Members time to help manage our comprehensive program of improvements to our Club house and operations.

As many of you will appreciate, Membership fees contribute a third of the income of our club and are therefore very important to the financial wellbeing of PSYC. As such, your support in paying your fees on time would be very much appreciated.

Cheers,

Deb Wellwood

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## The Auditors Are Coming!

WRITTEN AND AUDITED BY Andrew Parsons.

Yes boat-owners, it's that time of year again, when you get to scabble around the bilge looking for that skin-fitting plug which should have been attached by a lanyard to the toilet discharge, or discover that the "brand new, unopened" bottle of sunscreen has an expiry date of 2014.

Your Club Equipment Auditors want to make your audit as quick and painless as possible (where have I heard that before...?), but guess who has to do all the work to make that happen? Yes, **you!** Remember, "The safety of the boat and her crew is the sole and inescapable responsibility of the owner...". The auditor's role is to **confirm** that an owner has demonstrated compliance with the Australian Sailing Special Regulations at the time of the audit. An audit does not in any way diminish the complete and unlimited responsibility of the owner.

So, here is some guidance to preparing your boat and equipment for audit. Your first port of call is to go to [www.sailing.org.au](http://www.sailing.org.au) then click on Information and Services then Resource website “Club and Class Resources”, then “Equipment Audit Forms”, and scroll to the Category within which you plan to sail. Download and print a couple of copies of your Category’s audit form. Then go back to “Club and Class Resources” and open “Racing Rules and Special Regulations”. You will need to work through the Blue Book in tandem with the Equipment Audit Form, the Blue Book gives detailed specifications of the items only briefly described on the Form. You are not just ticking boxes but ensuring that you have all the required equipment, it is in good and working condition and if necessary, has been serviced and/or is in date (in particular- Flares, Medical Items, Fire Extinguishers, PFDs, Life Rafts). Be rigorous and honest with yourself...don’t leave it to the auditor to find that the bitter end of your anchor line isn’t attached, or your bilge pump doesn’t actually pump water, or the handles fall off your buckets when they are filled with water, or the bolts for the emergency tiller are rusted solid or missing, or your PFDs are missing their Australian Standards labels, or the bloody sunscreen is actually out of date.

Next, work back through the Audit Form and renew/replace/locate/service those items which are as yet unticked. Maybe use a fresh Form to do your final check, including filling out the “Earliest Expiry Dates” section at the bottom to note those items which will be “in date” at the time of audit, but will be expiring within the year ahead.... The Club Captain will be getting back to you re those! Take note of the Club’s NORs and SIs with respect to waivers/exemptions for storm sails, EPIRBs, lifelines etc..

Now you are ready to book an audit with one of your Club Equipment Auditors. Don’t leave it until the last minute, there aren’t enough of us and we have lives too! And we like to sail, so avoid times immediately before racing, we need time to rig our own boats.

Ideally boats on moorings should be brought alongside a marina arm, for safety and convenience. That also allows you to lay out your anchor line/chain/anchor on the dock for inspection and measurement (hint, hint!). Things go faster for bigger boats/higher Categories if there are also knowledgeable crew on hand to display and demonstrate equipment to our audit team. Portable equipment should be laid out for easy inspection. If you keep out-of-date medical items just in case, remove them from your medical kit so the auditor doesn’t have to sort through to find the in-date stuff. Same with flares. Move all the mattresses and other junk to give easy access to hatches hiding shut-off valves, skin-fittings, emergency tiller attachments etc. (of course you will have already done that when you carried out your own inspection....). For Cat 4, your Stowage Chart (4.28.1) will also give an easy equipment location guide to the auditor, won’t it! In other words, the faster and easier it is for the auditor to confirm compliance with the Special Regs, the faster we can all go sailing. Safely! We await your call.

### **Club Equipment Auditors:**

Keith Albury 0418231149

John Coonerty 0466358566

Greg Cumberland 0428292108 (unavailable 28 Aug- 16 Sep)

John Humphreys 0438157868

Rick Pacey 0417544230 (Away for two months)

Andrew Parsons 0418421658 (unavailable 14 Aug-10 Oct).



# Our Wednesday Handicap System Explained

By Gordon Dyer and Martyn Jeggo

| Place | NUMBER OF FINISHERS IN THE RACE (Select this first) |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-------|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|       | 1   | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 1     | 0   | +1 | +1 | +2 | +2 | +2 | +3 | +3 | +3 | +3 | +3 | +3 | +3 | +3 |
| 2     |   | -1 | 0  | +1 | +1 | +1 | +2 | +2 | +2 | +2 | +2 | +2 | +3 | +3 |
| 3     |   |    | -1 | -1 | 0  | 0  | +1 | +1 | +1 | +2 | +2 | +2 | +2 | +2 |
| 4     |   |    |    | -2 | -1 | 0  | 0  | 0  | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +2 | +2 |
| 5     |   |    |    |    | -2 | -1 | -1 | 0  | 0  | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 |
| 6     |   |    |    |    |    | -2 | -2 | -1 | -1 | -1 | 0  | 0  | +1 | +1 |
| 7     |   |    |    |    |    |    | -3 | -2 | -1 | -1 | -1 | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| 8     |   |    |    |    |    |    |    | -3 | -2 | -2 | -1 | -1 | -1 | 0  |
| 9     |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | -3 | -2 | -2 | -1 | -1 | -1 |
| 10    |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | -3 | -2 | -2 | -2 | -1 |
| 11    |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | -3 | -2 | -2 | -2 |
| 12    |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | -3 | -3 | -2 |
| 13    |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | -3 | -3 |
| 14    |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | -3 |

## 3.2.1. Adjustment Table – Stern chaser start times

The adjusted start time each week is based on only two factors, where you finished in the race and how many boats finished. All adjustments (forward or back) are made in minutes with a maximum of 3 minutes added to the first boat(s) and maximum of 3 minutes deducted from the last boat(s).

As an example, if you finished 4th. in the race and 10 boats finished. Along the top is the number of boats finishing – in this case 10 boats and going down you finished 4th. Where This shows **+1**. Your start time will be one minute **later** the next week.

If you finished 6th. and there were 8 boats that finished the race. Go along the top of the table to 8 boats and then come down to 6<sup>th</sup> position. This shows **-1**. So you will start one minute **earlier** the next week.

**NOTE:** If more than 14 boats finish, the **first six and last six** change their start times.

The results of this handicapping now apply to the **SHORT COURSE** stern chaser races. The other races are adjusted using the Top-Top Yacht computer program.(See Below)

# Club Captain's Report

## Max and Edna Berman Trophy.

And top Yacht Calculations

Sadly, only five yachts participated in the Max and Edna Berman Trophy race run on 1 July 2023. The race participants experienced strong Westerly winds now deep into winter-time. The race had been cancelled earlier and moved to the Lay-day because of the forecast Gale Force winds on the scheduled day.

The Berman trophy commemorates the work and dedication of the Bermans in founding our yacht club.

Using these results we can see how Top Yacht handicapping calculates and adjusts start times

### Berman Trophy results from Top Yacht:

| Yacht name       | Elapsed Time | AHC Allotted H'Cap | Corrected Time | BCH Back Computer calculated HC | CHC Changed H'Cap (New Allotted. time) |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Yulunga       | 02.25:30     | 0.684              | 01.35.31       | 0.720                           | 0.696                                  |
| 2. She's The One | 01.49:01     | 0.961              | 01.44:46       | 0.961                           | 0.961                                  |
| 3. Bellamy       | 01.56:52     | 0.897              | 01.44:50       | 0.896                           | 0.897                                  |
| 4. La Sonrisa    | 02.47:12     | 0.684              | 01.54:22       | 0.627                           | 0.625                                  |
| 5. Shere Khan    | 02.00:09     | 0.974              | 01.57:02       | 0.872                           | 0.961                                  |
|                  |              |                    |                |                                 |  |

### Top Yacht Terms – the simple version:

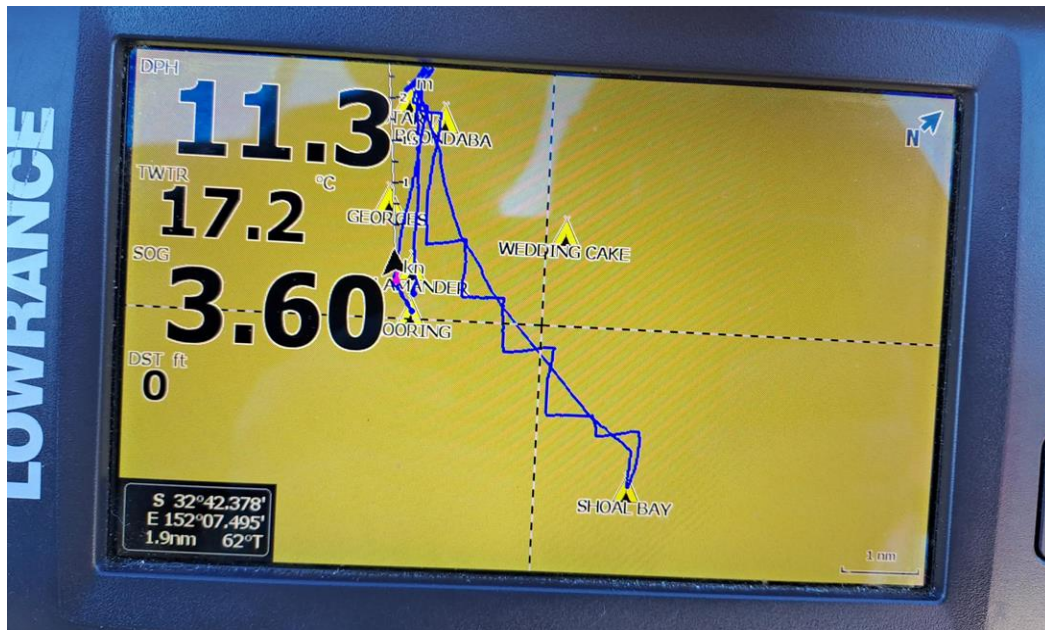
**Elapsd:** How long you took to sail the course

**AHC:** Your handicap for this race

**Cor'd T:** Your Elapsed time corrected by your handicap (ACH)

**BCH:** The handicap that you actually sailed to for this race

**CHC:** The handicap that you will have for the next race in this series (it will be the AHC in next race!)



Yulunga’s race track to Shoal Bay and return in the Berman Trophy Race.

## How does Top Yacht handicapping work?

Interestingly, on **corrected time**, Yulunga came first just 9 minutes and 15 seconds ahead of She’s The One, which was only four seconds ahead of Bellamy on **her corrected time**. That’s close racing!

From the above table we can see how the Top Yacht handicap system effects us. It compares each entrant with the performances of the other competing yachts.

It basically works on the elapsed time each yacht takes and compares the performance of the median time of the yachts competing for that day. She’s the One had the median elapsed time (middle time) of the boats racing and therefore her handicap rating of 0.961 remains constant.

Yulunga had a starting (allotted) handicap rating of 0.684, she sailed above her handicap to a handicap rating of BHC 0.720 and thus had her handicap **changed** to CHC 0.696 which is now her new (less generous) start handicap (AHC).

La Sonrisa’s handicap was **changed** from 0.684 to the new (more generous) start handicap rating of 0.625. because she sailed below her handicap time.

Bellamy’s handicap was **unchanged** at 0.897 because she sailed to her handicap.

# EXPLANATION of Top Yacht Program

*The Top Yacht program uses a multiplying factor based on the elapsed race time of each yacht.*

*This is calculated using parameters derived from our chosen Club settings.*

After each race, the top Yacht program recalculates the allotted times from an average of the last four performances (using the set parameters) and can include a clamping figure which disregards any yachts with outline (out of normal) performances either forward or behind.

For a summary explanation please log on to the Top Yacht Software Program.

<https://www.rsays.com.au/top-yacht-handicap-system/summary>

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**ZHIK are offering all PSYC members their own account with a 20% discount off all RRP.**

Send an email to [anthony@zhik.com](mailto:anthony@zhik.com) with your name, phone number, address and email for an account activation and I will be in contact.

Regards , Anthony Hamilton.

Sales & Customer Service Coordinator

+61 2 9420 9355 [anthony@zhik.com](mailto:anthony@zhik.com)



**Anthony and partner Jenny from Zhik**



Graeme Ellis, "Adios" (L) and Michael Kirby "She's the One" (R) wearing their equal first prize coats from ZHIK prize to the value of \$360.00.

# Emergency Services Regatta

NSW

Police & Emergency Services Sailing Club conducted their inaugural Winter Regatta at Soldiers Point, Port Stephens, on the 23 and 24 July 2023. This event supplements similar regattas held on Lake Macquarie every November and hosted by the Royal Motor Yacht Club, Toronto, and previous regattas held on Sydney Harbour and hosted by the Middle Harbour Yacht Club.

This Winter Regatta, hosted by the Port Stephens Yacht Club, fielded a fleet of 8 yachts crewed by a mix of members of the PESSC and local members of the PSYC. A total of 49 sailors registered, 20% being current or past serving members of an Emergency Service.

The fleet:

- Adios, skippered by G Ellis
- Bellamy, skippered by S Liney
- Elusive, skippered by R Pacey
- Gift Horse, skippered by A Parsons
- She's The One, skippered by M Kirby
- Smoke N Mirrors, skippered by D Rundle
- Thief of Time, skippered by D Ramsey
- Two Way Street, skippered by J Humphreys



**David Blakemore (PESSC Commodore) with Anthony Hamilton (from Zhik) and his partner, Jenny, observing the racing from the committee boat on day 2.**

The regatta comprised 4 races run over the two days. Each day started with a breakfast BBQ (provided by the PSYC) to accompany a pre-race briefing. Two races followed by an afternoon BBQ (provided by the PESSC) to accompany that day's race results.

All competitors found the conditions challenging with variable winds, occasional showers and the ever present tidal current, especially with race 2 taking the fleet to Shoal Bay.

## Race results:

Race 1: Adios (1) Two Way Street (2) Thief of Time (3)

Race 2: Elusive (1) Smoke N Mirrors (2) She's the One (3)

Race 3: Adios (1) Thief of Time (2) Gift Horse (3)

Race 4: She's the One (1) Smoke N Mirrors (2) Elusive (3)

The final series scores showed that the overall winner was tied between She's the One and Adios with a series score of 12, closely followed by Thief of Time with a score of 13.

Race and series winners enjoyed a prize pool valued in excess of \$1,000. Thanks go to the major sponsors Zhik <https://www.zhik.com/> and Marine Outlet, Morrisett <https://marineoutlet.com.au/>.

Special thanks go to Anthony Hamilton, Zhik Sales & Customer Service Coordinator, who was present on day 2 viewing the races from the committee boat and presenting the prizes to the series winners.

A great couple of days racing was enjoyed by all. The NSW Police and Emergency Services Sailing Club would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the Port Stephens Sailing Club, Club Commodore Michael Kirby, volunteer starters and timekeepers, skippers and members for a wonderful regatta, and we look forward to this becoming an annual event.

Peter Davis

## Regatta Pictures



# Mariners Bar Renovations



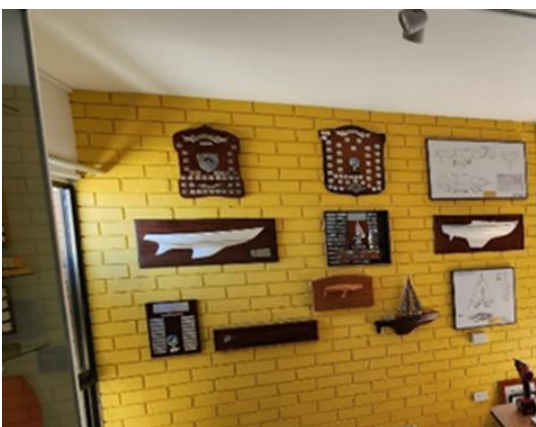
Graeme Ellis Painter extraordinaire (left)



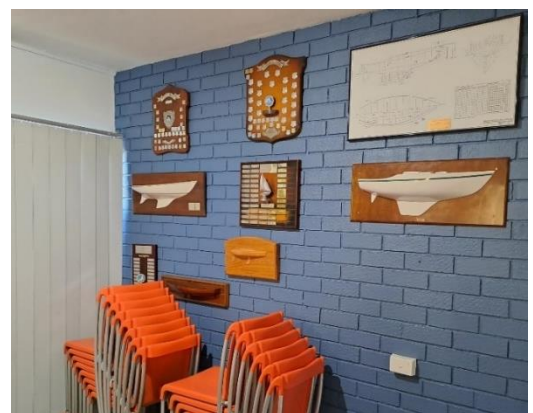
Philip Bendeich covering tables.



John Humphreys flanked by Leslie Hurrell.....



How they left it.....How it is now



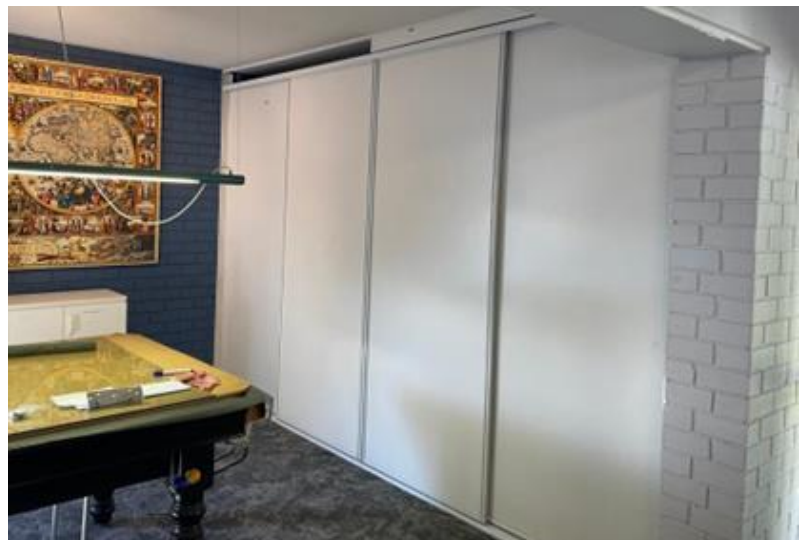
# The carpet installation



The non slip stairs



The cupboard to contain the office equipment.





# Yacht Club VISITORS Competition.



Rick was in Cairns-and- Jen Hills went there too!-



Dave Rundle made it to Airlie Beach.



Rick was also in Port Douglas

# Gift Horse Goes West

By Andrew Parsons

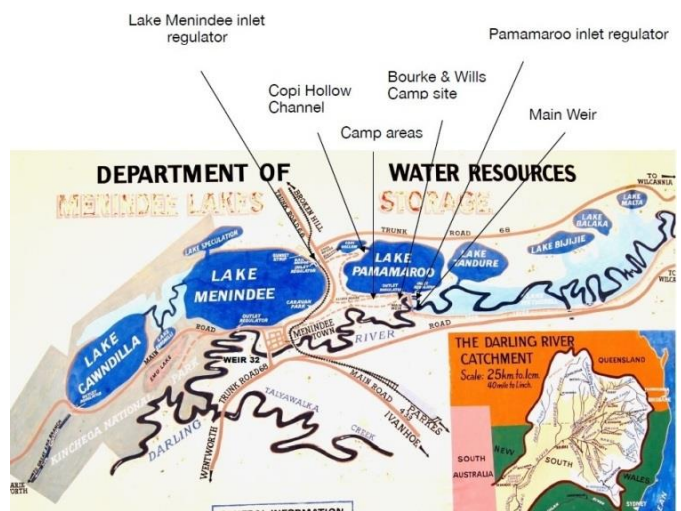


What is a horse with an unusual name “Gift Horse” doing in the desert? Read the feature article written by Anrew Parsons.

## The Story.

The Menindee Lakes Water Storage Scheme was completed in 1967, converting the ephemeral lakes alongside the Darling River at Menindee from boom-or-bust, at the mercy of flood or drought, to a permanent water storage of up to 1.8 million megalitres, guaranteeing a water supply to Broken Hill 100km further west and allowing large agricultural developments surrounding Menindee, as well as regular water releases into the river system downstream.

As a kid growing up in Broken Hill, the lakes were our second home; it seemed like every weekend we would pack up various boats and head “out the Lakes” for another baking-hot day, enjoying the relief from the desert heat given by the cool brown water. Lake Menindee was the jewel of the lake system, at 16km by 14km a huge expanse of water up to 5.4m deep. Broken Hill had a large and very active sailing club with fleets of Flying Dutchmen, Sharpies, Enterprise and Heron dinghies, and a growing fleet of Skimmers which were a locally-designed 2-man plywood dinghy ideal for lake conditions. Like many others, my father and I built our Skimmer in the back shed, and joined in regular class racing. There were plenty of drowned trees around the edges, but we steered clear of them mainly because they were popular refuges for the local snakes. Occasionally a capsized boat would end up with the unsealed alloy mast stuck in the mud, then a red silt cascade filling the boat when the rescue boat managed to get us upright. In the late 1960s during a huge flood the regulator dam burst and allowed Lake Menindee to drain into the Darling. The sailing club shifted operations to Lake Pamamaroo, still a large lake but with heaps more trees. It was basic stuff, no club shed or launching ramp, and the first job on arrival was to clear the drop toilets of snakes. We sailed there for a couple of seasons while the regulator was rebuilt, then shifted back to Lake Menindee.



When we weren't sailing we waterskied on Copi Hollow, a smaller intermediate lake dedicated for power boats, or went yabbing in the Darling. As kids we thought we had the best playground on the planet.

Such a paradise couldn't be allowed to continue, and gradually there became more pressure on the Lakes Scheme for environmental flows to make up for water stolen upriver by over-allocations to cotton farmers, and chronic mismanagement of the Murray-Darling rivers system. The excuse that too much water was lost from the lakes by evaporation to justify continued storage, was used to allow the main lakes to empty, and Lake Menindee eventually became a dustbowl. The shacks at Sunset Strip on the lake shore lost their water views, instead seeing cattle and camels trekking across the dry lake bed. From time to time local rain would partially fill the lake, but never enough to make it usable for more than watering stock and ferals. It became too depressing for me to visit the lakes on my trips back to the Hill, but I never gave up hope that one day I would sail on Lake Menindee again.



**That hope** was finally realised this year. The major rain event which occurred in northeast NSW and southeast QLD in late 2022/early2023 sent masses of water into the Darling catchment, and that water slowly made its way down the river system. The Menindee Lakes were allowed to fill, to help control the flow southwards, and my spies in the Hill confirmed that at last Lake Menindee had filled and that "Sail Lake Menindee 2023", a regatta with one entrant, could happen. This fitted perfectly with a two-week work commitment I had in Broken Hill, so Gift Horse was hauled onto the trailer and preparations began for the trip west. My

mate Geoff, who sailed with me as a kid, agreed to make the trip out with me for moral and crew support. We left early on a Wednesday and reached Nyngan for an overnight stop in the 'van park. It was my first time sleeping in the Horse; now I know how Dracula felt as he bedded down in his coffin. We reached Wilcannia late next morning and turned



off the Barrier Highway to take the dirt road southwest, following the Darling towards Menindee, and had our first glimpses of Lake Pamamaroo a couple of hours later. Lake Como it isn't, but the sight of a big stretch of brown water studded with dead trees

was beautiful in our eyes. We left the boat on its trailer in the Copi Hollow 'van park and reconnoitred Lake Menindee and possible launch sites. There is now no sign of the old sailing club facilities and no access to the water in that area, but luckily there is a good concrete ramp at



one end of the holiday-shack settlement of Sunset Strip. Then it was time to retire for drinks and dinner at historic Maiden's Hotel in Menindee, the last civilization enjoyed by Burke and Wills on their ill-fated expedition in 1860. We hoped ours would end better. On Friday morning we trailed the boat over to Sunset Strip, rigged on the ramp, and eventually managed to winch her backwards off the trailer and anoint her with the holy Menindee waters. The lake was deserted and we set off in a light breeze from the south. I had installed a sounder as part of preparations and we had steady readings of 3.2-3.8m, ample for Gift Horse's

draught of 1.5m. By the time we reached the middle of the lake the breeze had dropped away to a zephyr, so we took the time to soak in that we were actually sailing there again, after almost 40 years. After about an hour the breeze kicked in again and we took off at a brisk trot, tacking towards Snake Island, the only island. It would have been great to have had a drone with us for some off-board photos. We beached the Horse on Snake Island, where we found camel tracks from a few months earlier, before the lake filled. It was then an easy reach back to the ramp, for retrieving and unrigging. We had a great feeling of “mission accomplished”; we knew there was more to come next day, but we hit Maiden’s again for a celebratory dinner. Saturday was cold and gusty. My mate Chris came out from Broken Hill to join us, and we launched at the powerboat ramp in Copi Hollow right next to our cabin. I had memories from teenage years of stepping off water-skis into calf-deep water, so it was a surprise to hear from the caretaker that Copi gets to over 9m deep in the middle. We motored across Copi towards the channel which connects to Lake Pamamaroo. We stopped to set a few yabby traps (more accurately yabby feeding-stations), then had a mild panic when we had to pass under the powerlines which crossed the channel. It had very confusing signage so we landed Geoff who watched from the top of the bank and gave us the thumbs-up to clear the lines. As we entered Pamamaroo we hoisted sail and set off through the trees for a “been there; done that” cruise for an hour or so, before retracing the channel and a last sail under jib alone across Copi to the ramp. A farewell visit to Maiden’s included toasts to Gift Horse, the Lakes and ourselves. It was great to have achieved the dream after many years of waiting for the water, but sad that a repeat is so uncertain. After a couple of weeks of work in Broken Hill and Wilcannia, Gift Horse and I did the long trail (1260km) back to the Bay. She is back in her pen, but she still has traces of red western dust to remind us both of the trek back to the West.

**The trip home was also interesting! (right)**



## CHRISTMAS IN JULY - By Leslie Hurrell-Clarke

On Sunday 16th July, 2023 I went to Christmas in July at the PSYC. It was a sellout event!



I was lucky enough to sit with my friend Frank/Felix from Port Stephen FM radio station, his lovely wife Jude and Rita.

The food was delicious, the pork was tender and the crackling was to die for.

There was plenty to drink and the dance floor was alive with music by the duo Let the Mango.

My husband, Ian, won a lucky door prize of a nice white wine.



Frank/Felix, Lesley, Rita and Ian.

Kind regards,  
Lesley Hurrell-Clarke.



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