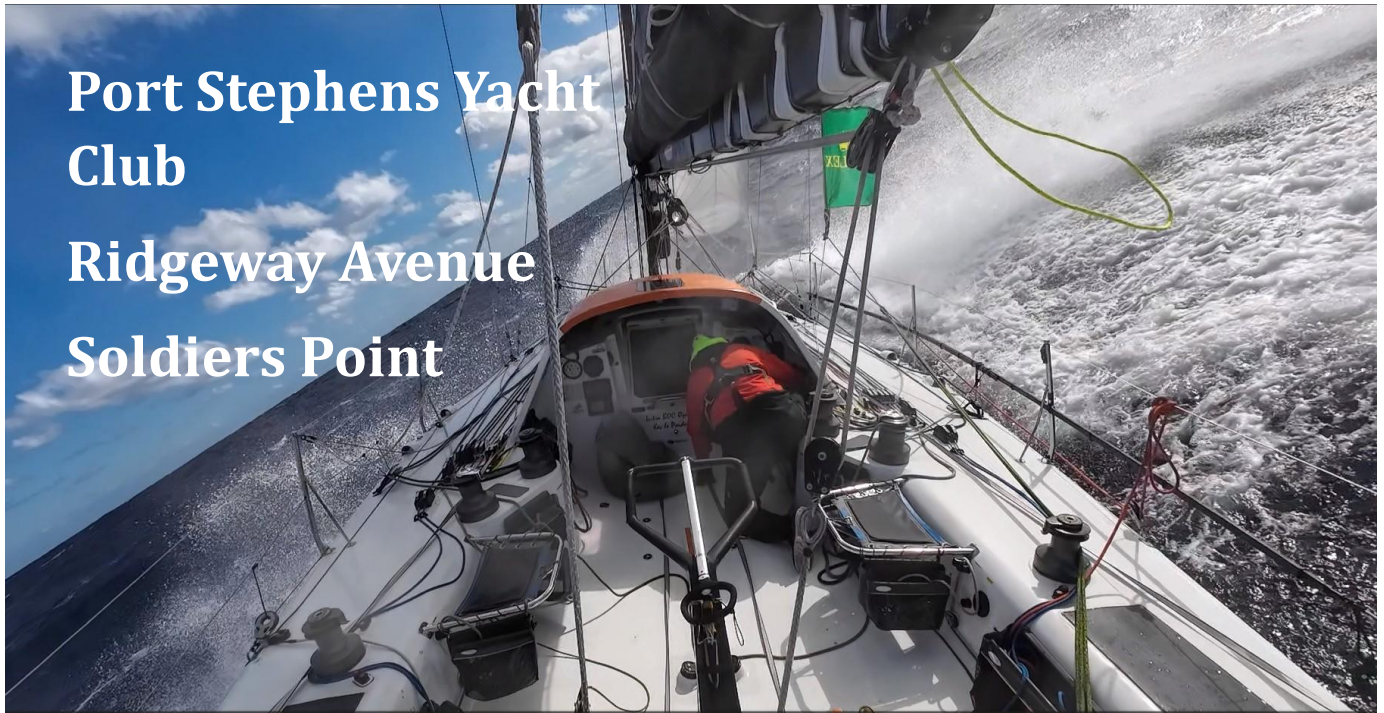




# The Bilge January- February 2026



Port Stephens Yacht  
Club  
Ridgeway Avenue  
Soldiers Point

Kevin Le Poidevin's Roaring 40 competing in the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race.

## Commodore's Report

A big thank-you to everyone who contributed to another interesting newsletter, and to John for once again pulling it all together. As always, there has been plenty happening around the club.

Well done to all boats representing and competing in Newcastle, Sydney, and Lake Macquarie over recent months. These are just some of the strong results our members have achieved across the region.

Elusive delivered an excellent performance, taking 2nd place in the Emergency Services Regatta despite a gear breakage, and following up with a solid 5th place in the Heaven Can Wait Regatta down at Lake Macquarie.

51st has also been active, securing 2nd place on Sydney Harbour and competing in several NCYC Offshore Series events and Bird Island Race.

These achievements reflect the dedication and skill of our sailors, and we look forward to seeing even more of our boats involved in joint-club events as the season continues.

In setting the Club's focus for this year, our recent strategic planning sessions have set a clear direction for the club's future. The resulting plan focuses on increasing our presence, strengthening member engagement, and supporting sustainable growth. Over the coming months you'll see:

More social events to build connection and community

Information and education sessions to support sailors of all levels

Ongoing improvements to club facilities to enhance the member experience

Upgrades to our website and supporting IT systems to improve communication, streamline information, and better showcase our club

New clothing and marketing products to show our support to the club.

All of these initiatives are aimed at growing both our membership and our fleet, ensuring we continue to thrive as a vibrant and active yacht club. We are seeing great results with 15 people now involved in various membership categories since 1 January.

As we move into Autumn, we look forward to the traditionally more forgiving weather and sailing conditions — a great opportunity to get more boats on the water and more members involved.

See you on the water,

Rick, Commodore

## Vice Commodore's Report

We are now well into the second half of the sailing season for 2025-26 and the racing has been close across the range of conditions we have come to expect on the bay. Progress scores for both the Wednesday Afternoon and Saturday championships are below with details of each race and individual series available on our website.

In club news, the Northshore 33 "Cintra" owned by Jeff Kettle joined us recently, along with Jonathon Wynn's trimaran "Evander". 2 former club boats are returning with new owners and another Beneteau is not far away. There is also significant interest from new crew which is good news for boats needing people.

In local sailing, 5 club members; Graeme Lasky, Ross Bell, Dennis Hume, Neil Edwards and Peter Spencer plus friend of the club Tim Peachey, competed in the ILCA Masters regatta out of the Bay Sailing Centre in February.

Coming up in March we have Sailfest Newcastle, evoking the historic Newcastle regatta first held in 1845, kicking off with the 'Magic Round' on Friday 13th March. Good luck to PSYC boats and crew competing in that weekend's races.

PSYC is also entering a club team into the Champion's League regatta 28th-29th March sailing the Elliott 6s. At the time of writing, the team had not been selected.

There's plenty more sailing coming on the bay with an expanded Sail Port Stephens regatta starting with the Commodore's Cup 13<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> April. We look forward to supporting our local boats in the various fleets, this year featuring multihulls for the first time.

**Richard Kerr: Vice Commodore**

Club and Wednesday Championship status as of 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026:

<b>Club Champion progress score</b>		<b>Points</b>
Una Vita	Ken Peachy/Dave Rundle	54
She's The One	Michael Kirby	46
Lickety Split/Shere Khan	Richard Kerr/Ross Kelly	35

.....with Chilli II (34) close behind.

<b>Wednesday Afternoon Champion progress score</b>		<b>Points</b>
Adios	Graeme Ellis	54
Friends	Saxon/Pacey/Kall/Lasky	52
She's The One	Michael Kirby	47

**Richard Kerr: Vice Commodore.**

# Rear Commodore's Report

As Rear Commodore I am responsible for pulling up the rear and sorting out the mess.

I have outlined a list of works needing attention around the club and realise I will need lots of help.

**List includes:**

1. Re-key the entry door
2. Repaint entry door
3. Repair hole in cladding near entry door. (Need help with this.)
4. Clear unwanted items from all sheds
5. Need someone with box trailer to take unwanted stuff to recycle centre.
6. Replace broken umbrella.
7. Repairs to vertical blinds everywhere.
8. Repairs to Sliding doors where rollers failed.
9. Help to replace the door to the storage area behind the fridge eliminating dangerous steps this is an expensive task and needs approval to proceed.

10. Replace bar tops to both bars, this may require professional assistance and not proceed until the budget is worked out and approved.

12. Mount TV's on walls and setup to run video and slide-shows of us all sailing.

Plus work out a design and price for a deck extension with handrail over the steep slope facing west.

On another note, restart Sunset Bar but do it on a Thursday evening for members, guests and interested locals. (We need more patronage at the club to increase from 2 days only.)

**Rear Commodore, Steve Thomas.**

# Director 1 Report **Roger Dunwell**

An auspicious start to the new year with varied sailing conditions challenged all who got out there.

Among them were 5 new crew members; Jessica Lange, Belinda McDonald, Philip Richards, Martin Walters, and Dai Reynolds.

Welcome to your club, and an acknowledgment to Dai, who in the best traditions of volunteering will assist with some book keeping expertise.

A couple of new social members Lyn Webster and Neil Robertson, with a steady schedule of events we are encouraging greater participation in the clubhouse with the trivia nights kicking off the year, getting sell out numbers.

All the extras do put a strain on the staffing requirements however and the bar is always shouting for more R S A's to back up, do the course online and see how you score on responsible common sense and happy hours.

Currently with the She Sails initiatives and Sail pass participation our potential converts have increased with a number coming on board and finding boats already this year, some 20 utilising sailpass at present.

30 boats on the register with a couple of newbies getting ready.

On the water or at your club enjoy, be happy, this is paradise.

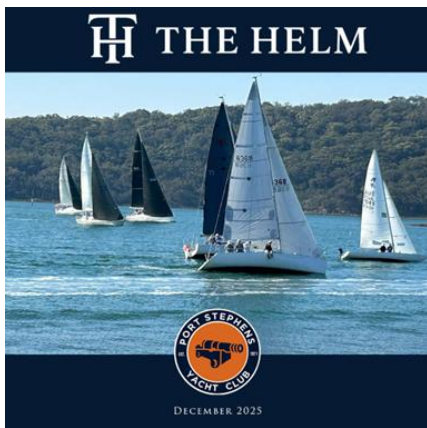
## **New Membership this year.**

We welcome a range of new members since the beginning of the year and hope they enjoy being a part of our club, with membership now at 155 including 20 Sail Pass:

**Country:** Mark Hepple. **Crew:** Lin Chen. **Sail Pass:** William Dunn, Lee Anderson, Phil Grinyer, Stephen Honess, Victoria Seo, Blake Walton, Chris Meulman, Genevieve Brooks, Paul Haynes  
**David Jacobs:** **Social:** Lyn Webster, James Duncan, Neil Robertson.

# Marketing Director's Report

by Margaux Everett



In December, PSYC launched **The Helm**, our outward-facing sailing newsletter designed to strengthen communications, increase visibility, and formally position the club within the broader maritime network.

The response has been positive, with engagement from neighbouring clubs, Members of Parliament, local businesses and sponsors. The Helm now operates as a structured communications channel that reinforces PSYC's presence beyond race day activity.

Members wishing to subscribe can email: [director3@psyc.com.au](mailto:director3@psyc.com.au)

## Digital Growth & Audience Development

Over the past month, PSYC content across Sailing in Port Stephens has achieved more than 400,000 views. For a volunteer-run sailing club with no paid advertising, this level of organic reach is outstanding.

These results are not accidental. They are the outcome of consistent content capture and a structured digital approach.

We have implemented:

- Short-form vertical video optimised for Reels distribution
- Targeted hashtag clustering and geo-tagging for broader discoverability
- A consistent posting cadence aligned with peak engagement windows
- Cross-platform publishing across Instagram and Facebook
- Watch-time optimisation to improve retention and algorithm prioritisation
- Audience targeting focused on sailing-interest groups locally and internationally

This approach increases the likelihood of our content being distributed beyond our immediate follower base and into recommended feeds.

Several individual reels have exceeded 90,000 views, and the current average across recent posts sits at approximately 35,000+ views per post.

Importantly, performance indicators such as watch time, replays and shares show that viewers are not simply scrolling past, they are engaging.

In practical terms, this means the racing you take part in each week is being seen well beyond Port Stephens. Sailors across Australia and overseas are watching, commenting and interacting with our fleet activity.

This visibility strengthens the club's profile, increases membership interest, enhances sponsor value, and positions PSYC as an active and forward-thinking sailing organisation.

Margaux Everett: Marketing/ Publicity Director

### **Marine Rescue – 10 Year Commemoration**

In early January, Vice Commodore Richard Kerr and I attended the 10-year commemoration of the 2016 East Coast Low, hosted by Marine Rescue Port Stephens.

Original VHF Mayday recordings were replayed, serving as a powerful reminder of the intensity of that day and the professionalism of the volunteers who responded. Marine Rescue personnel who deployed were acknowledged, highlighting the commitment of those who put themselves in difficult conditions to protect others.

The morning reinforced the importance of seamanship, preparedness, and the quiet bond that exists within the sailing community.



## **Director 2 Report.** Peter Saxon Williams

As outlined in our Strategic Plan I will be setting up an ongoing social programme and regular events over the year. Planning on an event per month, this will include monthly events such as trivia, wine appreciation, special food activities along with traditional events such as celebrations. The Club continues to support BBQs following sailing and hopefully more take up.

The first is the upcoming Trivia Night which will include a prize for the best Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> outfit. Check the Calendar for more details.

# Our sailors compete in the Laser Masters

Hosted by the Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club.



## 174 Laser Yachts spread out across Port Stephens in the Laser Masters Regatta

The Australian ILCA (Laser) Masters were held on Salamander Bay on 6 - 9 February 2026. It is a very popular venue and I have been told it will be a triennial event. There were 180 entries of whom 174 competed in three groups divided by sail size and age groups. Six local sailors competed, five of whom are members of PSYC.

The first three days Salamander Bay wasn't at its best - ENE 20 knots and below. The final day was problematic with a fluctuating zephyr from the North'ish which meant only one race that day. Peter Heywood won the 75 y.o.+ Division! An incredible performance. Neil Edwards was the best of the local sailors in the ILCA 7 (Standard rig). Tim Peachey had the oldest boat in the fleet. We make special mention of Peter Spencer for his performance in his first ILCA regatta.

Fair Winds & Following Seas, Dennis Hume a.k.a. rhino 🐘

### **Pictured:**

Peter Spencer 'Spence', Dennis Hume 'rhino', Tim Peachey, Neil Edwards, Peter Heywood (kneeling) in front of Tim's boat. Ross Bell 'Dinga' absent.



# Gale force wind hits Wednesday fleet. By John Grainger

We all agree that the weather this summer is somewhat extraordinary and often not conducive to pleasant or consistent sailing.

On Wednesday the 17<sup>th</sup> December nobody expected the sudden change in wind.

We had been experiencing gust of 18 knots intermittently and Chilli 11 had retired with a broken clew fitting and a slight rain event cleared up as soon as we put our rain coats on, but THEN, out of nowhere a sudden gale-force wind descended on the fleet.

The long division yachts which were sailing along the shoreline near the Georges Reserve marker were some-what protected from the Westerly blow, but even then, Adios the eventual winner, sustained a shredded foresail, She's the One had main sail damage and on Exulte a headsail halyard failure cause them to retire.

There were only two yachts left in the short course division, Yulunga and Gift Horse; both were more exposed causing Yulunga to retire with headsail damage where the UV strip stitching parted and Gift Horse, which was behind Yulunga, somewhere near the Northern shore, had simply disappeared. Yulunga being the only close yacht, noticed that "Horses" was nowhere to be seen and raised the alarm when Gift Horse failed to respond on the radio. Yulunga alerted Race Controller, Michael Kirby on She's the One, of the disappearance of Andrew Parsons and his crew Jo, on Gift Horse.

Yulunga managed to furl the damaged headsail and motored to where Gift Horse was last seen. Eventually a mast appeared heading steadily for Soldiers Point. Andrew had obviously recovered and was happily motoring full force back to the marina. Yulunga could not catch them but Exulte kindly escorted Gift Horse back to the Marina.

**Later:** Andrew Parsons told me the story. The wind had flattened his yacht, suddenly throwing Jo into the water with her inflatable lifejacket on. Somehow Andrew had grabbed hold of her, happy that the yacht was no-longer in danger. It was floating high on its side as the yacht was designed to do, while the wind and waves passed them by.



**Pictured: Gift Horse during stability trials when it was imported into Australia.**

Jo wanted to swim to the stern of the yacht to try and scramble in from there. Andrew however, refused to let go and somehow Jo was helped to scramble into the cockpit from the side. It was only then that they noticed that Jo's life jacket had failed to automatically inflate. It all happened so quickly.

When safely back in the yacht, Jo managed to manually trigger the jackets inflation, but then she found that the huge inflated bladder hampered her movements. So much so she could not manoeuvre quickly to operate the ropes etc.

Had the jacket inflated when Joe was in the water, it would have been much harder to haul her aboard.

Amazingly Gift Horse manufactured by Beneteau, floated happily on its side, keeping the outboard motor well above the water, enabling Andrew to motor back to Soldiers Point unassisted.

**The next day Andrew purchased a new non-inflatable life vest for his crew.**

**Jo added this:** John, I just wanted to add the info that I didn't realise how quickly the boat (with a full mainsail & partly furled headsail), would right itself & start sailing off with, or without crew on board. I was in the water holding onto some rigging whilst Andrew quickly scrambled back on board as the

boat righted itself. I think he realised how short the time window was & that a one-armed haul back over the side was going to be much quicker than a swim followed by a scramble aboard from the stern of the yacht. Having said that it's true that either of those methods of retrieval would have been extremely difficult if my life jacket had self-inflated when I hit the water making me into a 'pouter pigeon'.

## Defence Force and Emergency Services Regatta.

By Rossco Mc Donald.

The ADF and Emergency Services Regatta was held over two days in the Elliott 6's from NCYC. The racing was conducted in the Basin, in front of the Honeysuckle Hotel. The first day saw 5 races in a light SE, the second day saw 7 races in a building easterly. Each course was 2 laps around a windward-leeward format with each race lasting about 20mins, faster when the wind strengthened!! There were teams from the Police, Fire Service, RAAF, Army, RAAF VETs (including Rhino) and Saltwater Veterans. Saltwater Veterans is a wonderful organisation who assist struggling veterans to get out on the water, learn some new skills and make new connections.

I skippered the RAAF boat with two crew who work at RAAF Williamstown. Neither had a lot of experience nor had sailed with a spinnaker before, so I had my work cut out teaching them spinnaker handling in the middle of some intense racing! In fact, they did not set the pole until the second day! Fortunately due to the unique conditions in the race area we were not too severely handicapped, but it still was a bit frustrating to watch the opposition gain on you each downwind leg.



The racing soon settled down to the top three boats having a ding-dong battle, swapping leads and podium positions regularly. By the end of the first day, it was the RAAF Vets on 9pts and the Firies and RAAF tied on 11pts. This continued until the ninth race (in fact by then each boat had a relatively equal share of wind bullets!), where the freshening breeze and more frantic pace took its toll on my inexperienced crew, a bit. The RAAF Vets started to eke out a comfortable lead until the last race, where I'm sure Rhino pushed his skipper overboard (I could be wrong there - my glasses were smudged, but it makes for a good story!!) They finished 6<sup>th</sup>, so it was a nervous wait for the results. They were tied with the Fire Service!! However, they won on the countback!! Well done team!!

It's always interesting sailing with a Defence Team. You get what you can get at the time. Most times there will be at least someone who you meet for the first time as you step on the boat. As in this case I had met one previously, the other was a stranger and I had never sailed with either. Also the experience level is widely variable. In this case I had someone who didn't really know how to trim a sail and someone who did in the most basic forms. Trying to teach them how to operate a spinnaker in the middle of racing (there was no training time!) was interesting, but we got some semblance of operation happening. This is where the Defence training comes in and I always admire Defence personnel's ability to adapt, create a positive team environment and learn complex procedures extremely rapidly with minimal instruction. It gives you confidence that we have very capable people in our Defence Forces.

You can watch the action on youtube: [2026-02-17 ADF & Emergency Services Regatta](#)

# Interest returns to PSYC club house.

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February saw an influx of 50 members at the club house.

Commodore Rick was announcing the yacht race placings when the picture was taken.

Things must be looking up, and it was not only to sample some of the unused yacht parts on offer by Commodore Rick Pacey and our new Life Member and ocean racing sailor, Kevin Lepoidevin.

Well done people.



## Notice of new rule change –

from Damien Boldyrew a member of (NCYC) an 'accredited World Sailing International Judge and Umpire'.

There is a subtle change in RRS 20.1<sup>1</sup> for 2025-2028, that's rearing its head on the water, and it makes a big difference that is important for sailors to be aware of. Previously there was no requirement for specific words to be used when hailing for room to tack, and "water" was commonly used and accepted.

The addition of "...by hailing 'Room to Tack'.", now **requires those exact words be used**. Kind of like an on-water protest requires 'Protest' to be hailed for a protest to be valid (RRS 60.2(a)(1) and RRS 60.4(a)(1)).

Whilst the World Sailing case book for 2025-2028 has not yet been published, the current interpretation affirmed by Appeal 2025-02 ( [Link to Appeal Decisions](#) ) is that if the words 'Room to Tack' are not used, then Rule 20 simply does not apply between the boats and no response is required under rule 20 from the hailed boat.

*This advice will be updated should a different interpretation be issued by World Sailing*

### **If you're the hailing boat:**

1. Use the exact words '**Room to tack**' when hailing. Hail as loud as you can and hail a second time if need be.

2. In addition to the requirement to hail '**Room to tack**', when conditions are such that the hail may not be heard, then the boat should make a signal to clearly indicate her need for room. This signal is not codified but rule 20.4(a) requires such a signal to be clear. For example, the following are established signals:

For 'Room to tack', repeatedly and clearly pointing to windward; and for 'You tack', repeatedly and clearly pointing at the other boat and waving the arm to windward.

### **If you are the hailed boat**

Be aware that even if there is an invalid hail, you still have obligations to avoid contact (RRS 14).

#### **1. 20.1. Hailing**

A boat may hail for room to tack and avoid a boat on the same tack by hailing '**Room to tack**'. However, she shall not hail unless

- a. she is approaching an obstruction and will soon need to make a substantial course change to avoid it safely, and
- b. she is sailing close-hauled or above.

In addition, she shall not hail if the obstruction is a mark and a boat that is fetching it would be required to change course as a result of the hail.

## **Jeanne Socrates has a narrow escape at Port Philip Bay Rip.**

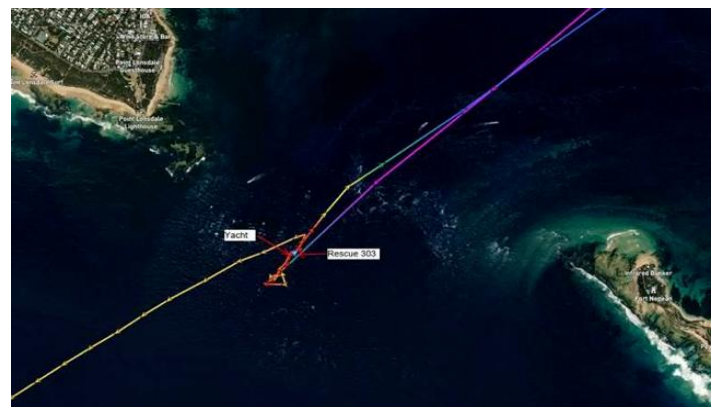
Jeanne, who stayed at Soldiers Point and visited our club while staying at the house of Cheryl Stone a year ago, had a narrow escape on the first of March this year just outside the Port Philip Bay entrance known for its strong rip tide. She was transiting to Apollo Bay in the main shipping channel when her anchor slid off the bow taking all 90 metres of chain with it. The anchor caught the bottom, and Jeanne was left stranded in the busy shipping lane.



As a lone sailor, the eighty-year-old lady was unable to retrieve the anchor. Fortunately, the Point Lonsdale Pilot service and the Marine Rescue Service 303 came aboard and retrieved the anchor.

Jeanne is the oldest female to sail nonstop single-handed, unassisted around the world and has just completed a circumnavigation of Tasmania in preparation for her next adventure, which is to circumnavigate mainland Australia.

*When Jeanne's husband died Jeanne just kept on sailing. For a fascinating account of Jeanne's achievements, visit her web site [Socrates Yachting](#).*



**Right: The GPS map shows Jeanne's yacht and the track of the rescue boat 303. That is, in the middle of the famous rip amid the shipping channel.**

# Painting Classes.

**Basic watercolour Technique Painting Classes are being held at Port Stephens Yacht Club.**

**Mondays and Tuesdays, 9am to 12pm.**

**Classes are suitable for anyone interested in learning how to paint.**

**Cost /per person for a three-hour session is \$30**

**Refreshments are available for purchase at the nearby café during the session.**

**CONTACT – SUZY COOPER**

**M: 0422574716 Email: suz54cooper@yahoo.com**

## **The Saga of Larry, The Eternal Sailor.**

**Captain of the Ketch, Blue Star.**

### **The final departure of Larry Mims.**

The American lone wolf who sails the world stopping wherever he fancies or in this case wherever the winds force him to seek shelter and await repairs. Larry, the man who was only staying for a week or two, finally left Soldiers Point Marina fourteen months later! We all enjoyed his stories of his sorties around the world over a beer or three conducted well after the sailing presentations on Wednesdays and or Saturdays.



Pictured below, are the Border Force officer and Steve Thomas seeing Larry off.



BUT true to form, Larry only got around to the Anchorage Marina area, then ran aground when his autohelm system failed, sending his yacht onto the sand bank!



The next photo is of the Marine Rescue crew assisting with the refloating.

Larry then motored to Fame Cove to repair the autohelm connections before his second and final departure to Noumea. Even then, on the way, Larry typically hit the end of the cyclone season and once again suffered considerable damage to his sail wardrobe on the way.



**Larry's email to Steve reads:** Arrived Noumea 25-02-26. I'm fine but full gale ripped up my Genny again. I was quadruple reefed down. Examining the tatters, it may have been the repair failed.

Tough passage made tougher by autopilot failure and "Inreach" not providing weather updates. Just had the first meal in a month, I didn't cook. I was so desperate for fresh greens, I ordered a Caesar salad!

Miss all you guys and my favourite chair. Looking forward to hearing more. My Visa is good for three months, so may be here till the cyclone season ends.

Fair Winds. Larry.

## Captain Cook's Endeavour



On Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December, the sail training ship STS Young Endeavour sailed into Port Stephens and anchored in Little Salamander Bay behind Yulunga.

(see pic taken by Greg Howes).

The next day she moved to Shoal Bay to anchor off. PSYC Club members Margaux Everett and Michael Schneider went aboard. (Facebook account.)

Who knows what sort of ship it is?

Well, the Young Endeavour is a steel sail training ship built and given to Australia by Great Britain at the Bi-Centenary celebrations in 1988 as a sail training vessel.

After 35 years of service, the Young Endeavour will be replaced by a new vessel currently being built at Port Macquarie.

The new vessel will have barque rigging with three masts. The current vessel is a brigantine vessel with only two masts.

**Note:** The foremast(s) in a Barque and a Brigantine ship are square rigged, while the other mast supports Fore-and-Aft sails.

The Endeavour Replica (see pic below) commenced construction initially by the Bond organisation in Western Australia after the Bicentenary. It's hull was built of Jarrah wood to the specifications of Cook's original Barque. The Endeavour Replica is operated from the Australian Maritime Museum, Sydney.



**LEFT: Endeavour Replica:**

**RIGHT: Yulunga with Sail Training Ship Young Endeavour.**

## **We Stopped in London.** By John Grainger.

My wife Sherrill, organised a luxury trip to Europe starting in September 2025, just before my 80th Birthday and before our travel insurance expired. Our travel agent found a budget room in a newly renovated hotel adjacent to the London Paddington Station. You know the station where the famous toy Paddington Bear was found. There is a lovely brass statue of the bear with his hat at the station. We had seen it before, but I could not take a photo because children were climbing all over it. Now they have shifted Paddington Bear to the number one platform site without its large plinth.



The real reason for choosing lodgings in Paddington was to rest after the 24 hour flight and because of the famous, gloriously designed station now 150 years old. More important was the fact that this station is the hub for trains on the Great Western Railway line from London to Devon

and a dedicated line to Heathrow Airport and easy access to all of London via the Underground rail network. **It was just our luck that the train union went on strike for the week!**

Consequently, we learnt a lot about Paddington. Firstly, coffee cost \$10 Australian a cup and beer was far more expensive. The Aussie dollar was only worth half the UK pound.

## Paddington Station.

### BRUNEL the ENGINEER:

I learnt that The Great Western line, including bridges and stations were built by my favourite British Engineer, Isambard Kingdom Brunel. He is considered one of the most ingenious and prolific figures in engineering history. **Brunel's bronze statue, commissioned by the Great Western Railways commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> Year, is also in Paddington station. (Below left)**



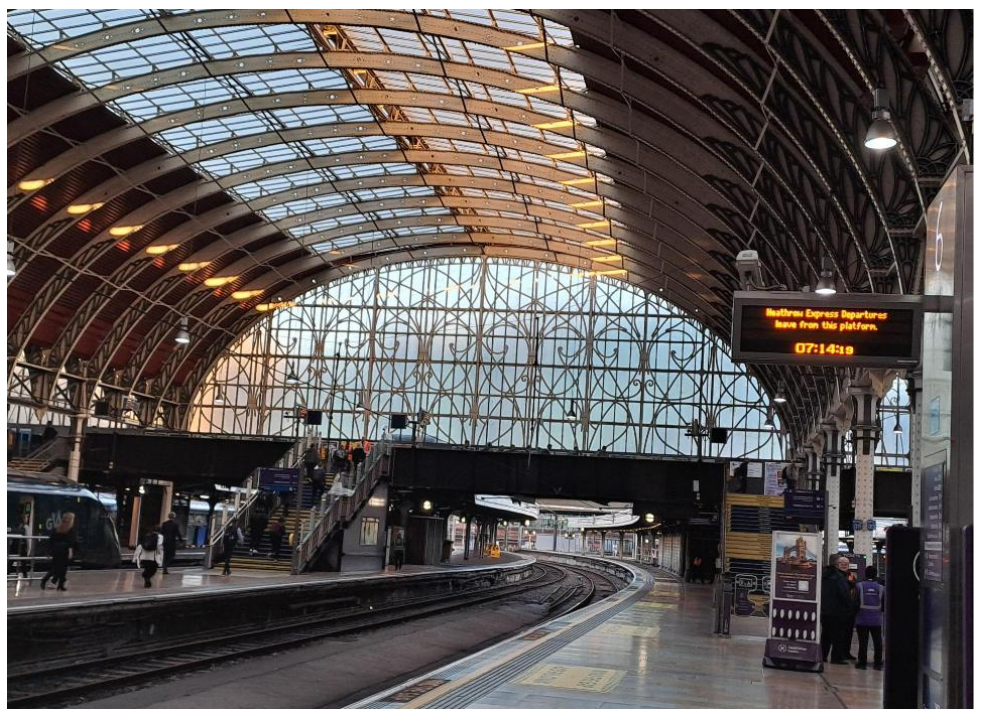
Isambard and his father had previously dug and bricked the first tunnel under the Thames River; an exercise in which Isambard nearly drowned.

The revolutionary tunnel first used for pedestrian traffic, was big enough to hold evening functions. It is now part of the underground railway.

Brunel's association with James Watt and his locomotives for the railway, later led him to build the first ocean going steamship with an adapted propeller.

Brunel is better known in England for his bridge building, in particular the Clifton Suspension Bridge spanning the Avon Gorge at Bristol (utilising massive chains to span the widest span yet built in the world) across the Avon River. This revolutionised engineering and bridge construction world-wide.

Isambard also designed three iron-hulled steam ships the SS Great Western, the SS Great Briton and the SS Great Eastern, the largest ship in the ocean, thus revolutionising Naval ship building. The great Eastern could carry 4,000 passengers and was in service to Australia for thirty years following the gold rush of 1851.



## But wait: There's more, outside the station.



Across the road on the side street, there is a large round double-sided clock mounted high up on the wall. The first day I saw it, there was a man inside it cleaning the glass from inside the clock. The next day he was there again, then the next day he was painting the hands!! Other people were watching as well. It turns out that the clock mechanism had previously failed and rather than repair the movement, a video of the man was projected from inside onto the two faces of the sides. See picture.

## The animal's birthday party.

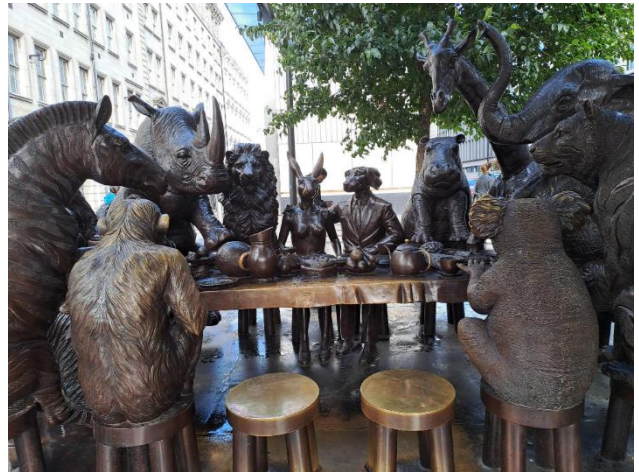
On the footpath on the station corner there was a large bronze statue of animals sitting down to a birthday party.

There was a giraffe, a tiger an elephant a hippopotamus and then extraordinarily a Koala!

All these animals were accompanied by the birthday party hosts Mr Dog and Rabbit Woman.

Had I not seen those two before? Aha yes, in Australia. The sculpture is another part of the famous "Dog and Rabbit" series of sculptures from the Australian artists **Gillie and Marc Schattner** who now live in Sydney.

Examples of their work were previously on display at Soldiers Point Marina.



## Then there was even more!

Hidden away at the end and behind the station and in the back street behind the hospital, was the canal and even more bronze public sculptures.

Left: A life-like walking man.



# The Canal

There are signs to the canal (somewhat concealed), at the back of the vast station complex.

There it is, with rows of canal boats, some for private living, some selling tours along the canal network, some selling coffee and meals and one operating as a radio station.

It was wonderful walking along the waterway under the car carrying bridges, the walkway all clean and surprisingly no graffiti.

If you ever get to London, have a look yourself.



# Dublin's fair city.

We flew next to Ireland for a few days. In the Fair City of Dublin, I wanted to see the statue of Molly Malone.

I was taught at school the Irish song we all loved so much about the fishmonger's daughter.

It starts: In Dublin's Fair City where the girls are so pretty

I first set my eyes on sweet Molly Malone.

As she wheeled her wheel barrow through streets broad and narrow  
crying Cockles and Mussels alive-alive oh!

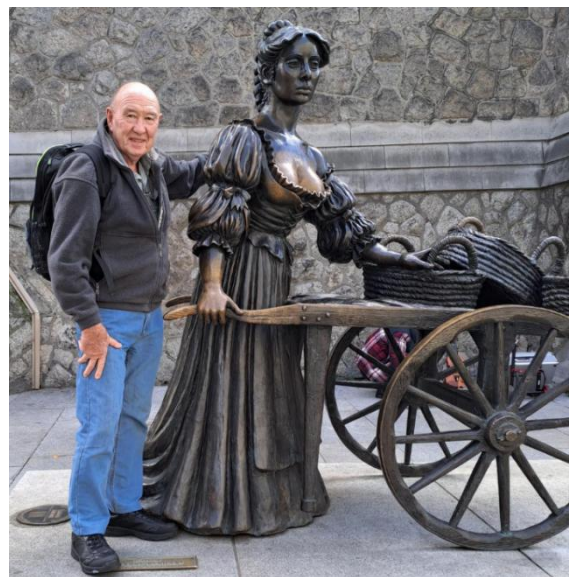
It was hard to find the bronze statue because the city fathers had moved it a few blocks away. We asked a number of pedestrians before being directed to the new instalment.

On arrival it was evident that a few wags had tried to enhance her beauty. (see picture). A few days later we spent the night in Limerick town.

Hence, I thought I would pen one of my own.

# My Limerick from Limerick

It was such a pity, with a girl so-so pretty.  
For with pigeons aloft, she needed a clean.  
So 'twas my honourable duty was to enhance her true beauty.  
So now you can see, that her beauty does sheen.



**John Grainger. 09/25**

# Bareboat Charters Overseas

Contributed by Peter and Lyn Ballard.

We have been fortunate over the past 15 years to be party to a specialized travel company who organizes and conducts bareboat sailing excursions to many locations throughout the world. Some of the locations have been pioneering for Sunsail, whilst others have offered exotic experiences and gained access to locations not visited by land-based touring.

Locations we have bareboat sailed include, Greek Islands in the South Aegean Sea; Turkish coast south of Boderum; Thailand (ex phuket) in the Andaman sea; Seychelles Islands in the Indian ocean; Balearic Islands (Majorca, Spain), Croatia (Dalmatian Coast, Adriatic Sea); and Vietnam (ex Na Trang). Other locations sailed by the group include: Caribbean Is, Ionian Islands (Greece), Tonga, New Zealand, Tahiti, Cuba, Sardinia/Corsica.

When asked to contribute to the quadrant we thought some readers may be interested in such adventures, some of which are, considering a lot of the locations can be steep learning curves with little in the way of local charts, safe anchoring, limited weather forecasts (assuming they are in English), and inadequate supplies of water. However we bareboat in a group of at least six boats and the travel organizers accompany us so there is safety in numbers, but it does not eliminate each skipper's responsibility to get from one anchorage to another, safely anchor, have adequate supplies, and keep everyone happy. The organizing company has no responsibility once each nominated skipper takes control of the boat and crew.

Except for our very first trip we have always arranged our own crew, mainly friends we have sailed with and know boats, who want to have a good time, are able to cope with close living for 14 days (6 to 8 crew depending on the size of the boat), eat anything and don't mind one minute showers.

We have selected the Seychelles Islands charter for this edition as this trip was exploratory being only the second season of operations by Sunsail at this location.

## Seychelles

The main Islands and the cruising area lie between 03.40S to 04.50S and 55.00E and 56.00E. The main Island is Mahe, with the outer Islands of Praslin and La Digue. Included in the cruising area was Silhouette and Frigate Islands but these were not visited due to distance, lack of suitable anchorage for yachts and environmental restraints.

The islands enjoy 28 to 32 degrees all year round. There are two monsoon seasons, from December to May with moist light winds from the north west, and June to November with stronger winds from the south east. Heavier rain is in Dec/Jan however weather conditions can be very localized with downpours on one side of the island and sunshine the other. Showers do not last long but can be rainy squalls from nowhere. During our cruise we experienced infrequent showers, beautiful sunshine, and a degree of humidity being so close to the equator.

Travel to the Seychelles was via air through Singapore, then Air Seychelles to Mahe. No hassles but it was amazing seeing this small speck in the middle of the Indian ocean slowly becoming bigger and then the runway next to the ocean with a great big granite mountain beside it. Not much room for error!

At the time we went, 1996, the Seychelles government limited tourist numbers to 3000 at any one time being fully aware of keeping the pristine environment. We understand this is not the case now.

On arrival, early morning, we are taken firstly to have breakfast and then to the yacht base for allocation of yachts. Ours was a Beneatu Oceanic 35 with forward vee berth and two double rear cabins (6 POB); condition was satisfactory as all vessels were sailed out from the Mediterranean the previous season.

## Provisioning



This is usually one of the main highlights enjoyed by female crew but only after deep discussion on working out a menu for the entire trip. In this case we were advised that certain items were not readily available in the islands and therefore between the crew we took from home three meals each, making 9 main meals, each couple looked after their own breakfast. We relied then on eating out on occasions and purchasing locally.

However, having dragged our provisions in our luggage, we found that most items were available in the supermarket and the fresh local market. The girls went off to restock fresh goods and the boys to organize the drinks (beer mainly) and water (heaps as we were unable to fill our tanks after leaving the base). This therefore limited showers to mainly off the back of the yacht following a swim. If we found a shower on shore, we took advantage every time (always take soap ashore).

By the time we were ready to leave, every hole and corner of the boat was filled either with, beer, drinking water, or provisions.

## Route planning/briefing.

We had our routine Sunsail briefing on the cruise area, the do/don'ts, anchoring, etc etc, plus the yacht briefing. It is always wise to have a minimum of two crew at these briefings as the skipper can rarely take it all in. It is also advantageous to allocate jobs to crew assuming they are experienced such as navigation, battery/water checks, provision checks, depth, GPS, bearings, and anchoring positions. On this trip we had a GPS and local charts (sort of), line of sight, and bearings.

Most important is to have a money kitty and a person in charge as all costs associated with the charter whilst on the water are shared. Not always workable if a crew member is a chocoholic.

The proposed cruise route is determined mainly by prevailing weather conditions at the time. As this was in the SE trades season it was proposed to go clockwise around Mahe Island before setting off to Praslin Island however, strong SE were predicted for the 2nd day and hence we went anti-clockwise, meaning we would have protected anchorage on the western side of Mahe Island.

## Sailing

The 1st night was spent in the marina having packed all provisions.

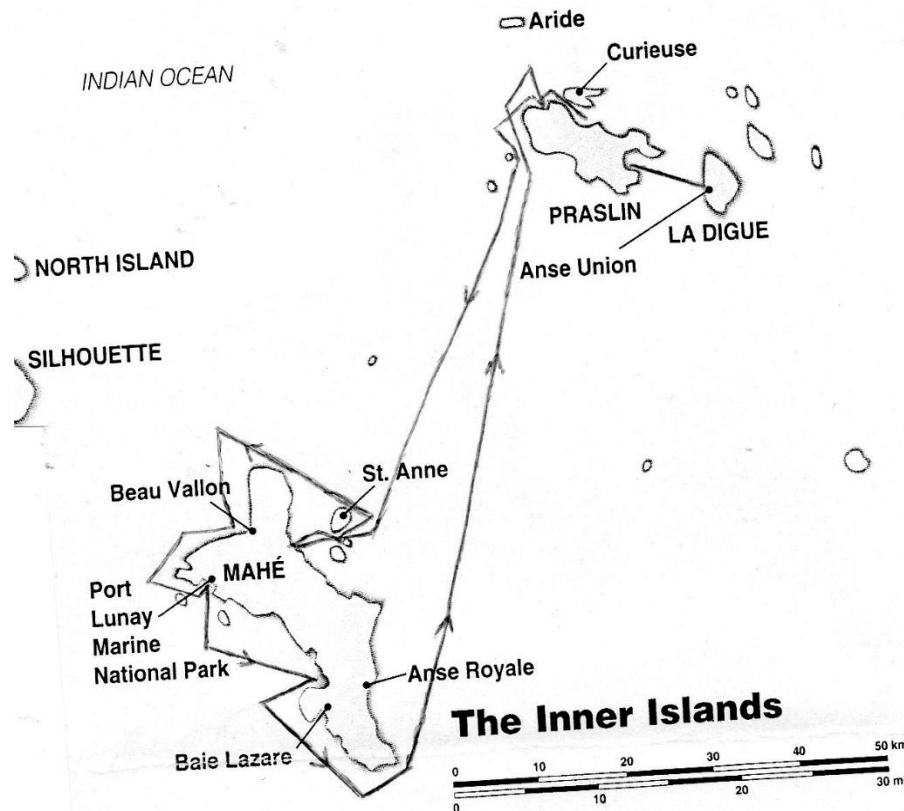
The 2nd day was a short course from Victoria Harbour to St Anne Marine Park navigating between marks and reefs. The local chart was a little confusing to say the least but it was a sublime spot to have lunch, swim, and snorkel. Overnight was pleasant but we experienced some tidal influence.

The 3rd day was a 20nm trip in fresh SE trades with a run and a reach to round the north point of Mahe and make for Baie Beau Vallon where we found that anchoring was not allowed and moved onto Anse Major which is a small beach with good snorkelling. We all anchored in line as we had to take a lot of care not

drop on any coral beds. In fact, a boat came with divers to inspect our anchorages, lucky we were all careful. A pleasant night after numerous sundowners and visits to various boats.

The next day we headed east to round Cap Matoopa to Port Launay careful to enter and leave the bay through the deeper water of the northern coastline taking care to avoid the shallow water marked on the map as being less than 5m in depth. A quite anchorage very protected with appealing scenery and a reef for snorkelling. Usual activity of happy hour, boat visitors and exotic cooking!

On the 5th Day it was a short sail of 15nm with two tacks in a SE 15 knots breeze. There was some urgency as all boats were to be there and anchored in time to go ashore to catch a bus to a unique restaurant at



Anse Bolleau a short distance to the north. This proved to be a highlight with bare feet in the sand eating local Cajun food, Creole music, and island beer. An early night was had to prepare for the 60nm sail to Praslin Island.

Set off early to cover the short distance down the western tip of Mahe Island but once around Pointe du Sud we were exposed to the SE trades at over 20kts. Being virtually a straight-line course we sailed a broad reach in reasonably rough seas for 10 hours. One crew member was sea sick for the duration as she missed her sea sickness pill the night before.

**N.B. The term "Anse" means cove.** Our destination was Anse Lazio in Chevalier Bay and we arrived late afternoon to what is described as being one of the most beautiful beaches in the world and I'm not kidding. We could not get to shore quick enough to experience the white sand, palm fringed beach, crystal clear water and an exquisite island style restaurant behind the palms. It was heaven after 10 hours of rough sailing however the restaurant did not open for dinner but a booking was quickly made for lunch the next day. Went to sleep looking forward to tomorrow's activities.

The 7th day did not disappoint; the beach is not accessible by public transport or vehicle. Locals and visitors have to walk in some distance but it was some sort of local holiday that day with probably more people than usual which was good to see the locals at play. Many sights to behold: dread locks galore and topless sun baking (bird watching quickly became a pastime). Lunch was to die for, feet in the sand, palm thatched tables, Creole music, any type of drink (mainly rum based), all served by locals in various forms of dress particularly with long dread locks. It was very peaceful on all boats that night.

The next day was a short motor to Curieuse Island for a visit to a turtle raising establishment. We anchored off Anse St. Jose and went ashore to a very educating morning learning about turtles from 1year old to the ancients. There was also a barracuda fish raising farm with ponds full of fish.

From this anchorage it was up to each skipper/boat to plan their own activities individually which could include further sailing to various bays or onto La Digue Island. The requirement was to be back to Mahe Island at a set anchorage on the final day.

We elected to anchor in a protected spot between Anse Possession and Anse Petite Cour being out of the channel with a very easy dinghy ride to the shore. This proved very good as the dinghy tie up spot was opposite a little local shop and the bus stop. We decided to explore Praslin by foot/bus and visit La Digue by local ferry seeing that there was limited room in the small harbour and all the anchorages were exposed. We ate ashore at a delightful local restaurant that night.

We spent the next three days exploring the Island by foot and bus as well as taking a day trip across to La Digue Island. This Island is so unique the local taxis were bullock driven carts. There is only about 15kms of road on the Island. Main form of transport is by bike which we hired and rode to some of the most pristine beaches available.

Another day was spent visiting the Valley De Mai on Praslin which is a world heritage listed ancient tropical palm forest only existing on this Island. The Coco De Mer is an ancient palm known only in this locally and is somewhat unique in its sexual propagation.

During this, we savoured the local cuisine on many occasions but always coming back to the boat to sleep. The crew at various times did their own thing and went different ways but whoever was on the boat with the dinghy had to have a lookout to pick up crew coming back to the boat.

Finally, our time was up and the sail back to Mahe was perfect reaching in 15kts of breeze but with slow moving 2.5 m swells in the same direction. We stayed the night at St.Anne Island and had a short sail/motor back to the Sunsail marina next morning. This allowed us to hire a Mini Moke and four of us explored the main island by road for the rest of the day. The final night was spent on the yacht at the marina and of course the whole group had a big party that final night. The marina was situated close to the local tuna fish factory which discharged a distinctive odour, hence we did not eat tuna for some time after.

Next day, crews went off to various destinations and we were off to Africa for a wildlife safari just to be different.

## **Sail Our Way Discover Sailing Program.**

Pictured (next page) are the last group of participants in the Discover Sailing Sessions being conducted on the sloop "Champagne on Ice" operated by Blue Water Sailing from the Anchorage Marina in Port Stephens. The three lessons were held on 21st Dec, 15th Feb, and 1st March.

Thanks to a substantial grant of \$1,330 from the Commonwealth Department of Health obtained by Cherylle Stone, this group of four women and two other groups of four Port Stephens Women have participated. They each received a two hour Discover Sailing Session being shown the ropes by Skipper and trainer, Steve Wright assisted by Shelley Wright.

Shelly Wright writes. "Champagne on Ice is a Beneteau Oceanis 46. Blue Water Sailing is owned and operated by Steve and me. We are passionate about getting women out sailing and were delighted to be involved in this program."

The purpose of the grant is to encourage more women to join their local clubs and increase the number of women participating in club racing.

We now have twelve women who have completed the sessions. I do hope we will see them in our Club in the near future. The program has been overseen by our She Sails representatives Margaux Everett and Peta Oliver. Perhaps we could have a special meeting to hear from some of these women about their experiences aboard.



Pictured are: Christine McDonald, Suzanne Oliver, Olivia Wicks and Jennifer McTaggart who were on the March 1<sup>st</sup> session this year.

## Port Stephens Yacht Club History

### The Max and Edna Berman Trophy

**Below is the Deed of Gift written by Past Commodore Peter Chappelow.**

When memories started to fade in 2004, he contacted the Berman's daughter and brought the history and meaning of the Trophy up to date.

It is now in the Trophy Cabinet for us all to refer too.

### Gift of Deed

Max and Edna Berman initiated a meeting to form the Soldiers Point Yacht Club at their East Maitland home on 31 March 1972, inviting 11 founding members to join them in building a

clubhouse. Max was a local builder and elected the Squadron's first Commodore. He did much of the ground work in obtaining a land lease, NSW Government grant and development approval for the clubhouse building. He was a charismatic and dynamic character who lived life to the full.

The Club's name was subsequently changed to Port Stephens Yacht Club but that business name had already been registered, so it became "Squadron" until 2003, when with a further name change to Port Stephens Yacht Club it regained its identity as the home of yachting on Port Stephens. Max and Edna would have been pleased.

Edna was a long-term editor of the Squadron magazine "Quadrant" and was well known for forceful editorial comment, usually ending with a comment that, if readers did not like her style, "feel free to take over". Her tactic did not work and she continued to produce Quadrant for about 15 years on an old

Gestetner machine in her lounge room. She was an extremely active and able lady, who was still adventuring (scuba diving trips to Vanuatu in her mid-80s).

Edna passed away in 1996 and instructed her daughter to provide a sum of \$1,500 to the Squadron, the interest from which was to be used to fund prizes for an annual sailing event.

Founding member, Henry Bremberger, made a beautiful wooden perpetual trophy and presented it to the Squadron for posterity.

**The criteria for the Max and Edna Berman Trophy, was developed around an event which they would have approved of, as follows:**

- While the event was to be a race, it was to be family oriented and preferably, a non-spinnaker social day. In accordance with custom, all entrants were to raft up at Fame Cove after the event to continue festivities to celebrate the sport of sailing.
- Prizes were to be awarded for first, second and third placings, with the winner's name to be inscribed on the perpetual trophy.
- The event was to be run on the day following the AGM, after the Commodore's sail-past. Failing this, it would be run on the first day of the new summer sailing season.
- The original principal of \$1500 was to be held in trust and not be reduced.

**Signed:** Peter Chappelow, Commodore, 18 June 2004.

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