



## Optimist dinghy — 2013-14 National Championships at Mornington, Victoria

The Optimist dinghy has followed the National trend and taken off in Canberra this season! This year the Optimist program at the CYC is incorporating 24 boats in a program catering for 'Green Fleet' sailors new to competing through to sailors preparing for competition at the 2013-14 National Championships at Mornington, Victoria.

With the expansion of the Opti program this year the 'off season' was a particularly busy one. More than 8 new boats have recently been launched and the Opti program has had a rapid expansion requiring more volunteers, coaches and storage! The ongoing theme of the program this year has been heavily focussed on culture, particularly club culture and the spirit of competition.

With that in mind this year has seen the introduction of a 'Team agreement' that sailors commit to before participating in the program. We have introduced a buddy system within the group where older sailors take care of new sailors and we have also had some fantastic guest coaching appearances from Bruce Paine and Tracks Gordon.

From a coaches perspective, progress throughout the fleet has been pleasing. Several kids braved the cold water in the off season and trained as long as they could into winter in Canberra, gradually migrating north to winter regattas in Sydney and then QLD youth week when Canberra was unbearable.

This extra work and the programs heavy focus on fitness and nutrition has proven successful with sailors attention spans, concentration and skill levels benefiting. Some of the senior kids this year have become completely comfortable racing competitively in wind up to 20 knots and competent

in their boats having fun in wind conditions well over 25 knots.

From a management perspective we have been able to establish a great routine. This is tough to do with 24 kids with boats, covers, rigs, hats, water bottles, sailing gear, sunscreen and bouncing balls! Launching ribs, lifting boats out of racks and getting a Sunday session running to schedule is a challenge in itself. Sundays involve a fitness session at 11 sharp followed by a briefing and launching in pairs for a sailing session that generally involves focussing on one or two particular skills for the day. After the morning sail we return to the beach for a debrief with some kids staying and competing in the club race.

Racing this year has been highlighted by a Canberra Yacht Club trifecta at the recent Sprint Series in Canberra. More than 100 Optimists from Canberra and NSW competed at the regatta making the event a huge success. Many thanks goes to all of the sponsors including Capital Insurance Brokers and Zhik and parents and volunteers who supported the event. Reagan Minchen had a solid first day in fresh conditions to finish third overall, Mark Louis finished second by one point to Daniel Roos who won the Intermediate division. Racing was close and tough in very fresh conditions Saturday and light variable conditions Sunday meaning that consistency paid, this was highlighted by the fact that 5th place was a good keeper score.

Good luck to sailors competing at the SORS regatta in Sydney and best of luck to sailors competing in the 300 boat fleet at the Nationals. Please come say hello to the kids on Sunday mornings and thanks for keeping an eye out on the water.

Daryl Roos

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Mariner No. Yarralumla,  
PO Box 7169  
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## Commodores Report

As we approach the festive season, we have received an earlier Christmas present with the lake now at normal levels. The extra height has certainly made the task of launching and retrieving from the ramp a lot easier. From what I have heard the improvements to at least one side of the ramp has also improved the experience.

If that isn't enough, the club has won the Yachting Australia Sports Promotion Award at the latest YA Awards. Congratulations to Matt and his team in what is significant recognition of the success of the club in promoting sailing within the community.

The past 3 months have certainly seen some action on the lake ranging from drifting conditions to some very strong winds. We have also seen two trailables sunk over this period. Whilst both were successfully recovered it is an important reminder to all sailors irrespective of what type of boat you sail on that our sport can be dangerous. Equipment needs to be secured appropriately and you need to have a plan and again appropriate equipment to cut lines etc if this is required. If you haven't got the equipment, perhaps this could be a good Christmas present.

After a lot of work from Peter Forster and Stuart Allen a major part of the clubs archives have been digitised, with newsletters now available on the club website. On the 12th of December we officially

handed over 45 years of club newsletters in paper and digital for to the ACT Heritage Library. This became part of our contribution to the Canberra 100 celebration. This will allow anyone to view the collection through the ACT Heritage Library website. This not only reduces the handling of paper materials, but preserves it for future generations.

Since our last newsletter Matt Owen and Andrew Reed have taken out the ACT flying fifteen titles and have managed to achieve a 5th place at the Hong Kong flying fifteen worlds against very strong opposition. Well done guys and very pleasing to see the Canberra Yacht Club bibs at the front of the fleet! Well done also to the group of young sailors who just competed in Sail Melbourne.

Just a reminder to keep the first weekend in March free. The club is conducting an away regatta at Jindabyne. There will be more details out very soon, so keep an eye out and hopefully we can get as many boats as possible.

On behalf of the committee I would like to wish everyone a happy, safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year. If you are travelling away to a regatta, best of luck and enjoy, if you are planning a more relaxed time, have a great time and I will see in the New Year.

Hope to see you on the water  
**Howard**



## From the Hon. Historian by Peter Forster

Regrettably, most of my writings in recent years have included notes about members/former members of the CYC who have passed away. Over the past few months, I have accumulated a list of 7 former members who have contributed to the life of the CYC in various ways in by gone days. Here is a brief comment on each of them.

### Dudley Nichol

Dudley was the son of one of our founding members and second Commodore, Charlie Nichol and wife Joy. Dudley died on 30 August 2012 at age 66; obviously, he was a young lad when the club started sailing on Lake George; he sailed a VJ and was involved with the young social set at the club with people like Peter Harvey and his sister, Chris Parks.

### Bill Kilsby

Bill was an important part of our Race Support Unit (RSU) in the 1970s and early 1980s. He died on 17 October 2012 in his 83rd year. Bill retired from the Air Force as a Wing Commander; he was a regular driver of our rescue boats. Also in those days, the RSU personnel undertook most of the maintenance on the motor boats and took a very strong interest in the suitability of the boats we purchased. Bill was a leader in these roles.

### John Yarra

John was 'my' Vice Commodore in 1974-75. For some 10 years from about 1967, John sailed a succession of NS 14s, mostly with his son, David as crew. John built the six NS 14s that they raced, all carefully and beautifully crafted in timber. John died on 2 November 2012 at the age of 90. I was pleased to catch up with his son, David, at John's funeral service. John and his wife, Ruth, were very much a part of the social scene at the CYC, being among the usual group of us who attended the 3 or 4 formal balls we had each year as well as other money raising functions.

### John Graber

John was one of the group of 8 who introduced keel boats and trailer sailers to Lake Burley Griffin. The first such boat, a Bluebird, arrived in 1966; several followed soon after with John's Largs Bay joining the small fleet in 1972. He subsequently owned 5 other trailables until season 1977-78. He was President of the Canberra Cruising Yacht Association in 1974-75 and was a regular contributor to the life of the CYC. John passed away on 11 November 2012 at the age of 84.

### Stewart Richards

Stewart crewed for Rod Dalgleish in the Gwen 12s on Lake George, then progressed to skipper his own Gwen in Canberra in season 1965-66, sailing against Mrs P Owen (Matt's mother) and Teki Dalton among others. By season 1974-75 he was a pioneer of the Contender Class in Canberra competing for a couple of seasons in a general division for dinghies. Stewart is also remembered for setting up a 'ship chandlery' in the garage of his home in Torrens. Stewart died on 19 November 2012 at age 77.

### Teki Dalton

Most members would at least know of Teki Dalton who died in Sydney on 21 February 2013 in his 76th year. Teki was another one from the Lake George days, initially with a Moth, then a Gwen 12 and later, a Contender. He is perhaps best known for his involvement in ocean racing, starting out as a founding member of the CYC Offshore Division in 1979, and then in the Canberra Ocean Racing Club in 1984, with Meltemi as the initial yacht for the group. Subsequently, Teki bought Nadia IV (from the CORC) and sailed her with considerable success. Teki's involvement with this group is well summarised on pages 232 and 233 of Capital Sailing 1959 to 2009. Teki was also very much involved with sea safety matters with the CYCA and he conducted seamanship courses for TAFE in Canberra. John Hanrahan tells me that he gave Teki some of his early lessons in how to sail!

### James (Jim) Cullens

Jim was another important member of the Race Support Unit for a number of years especially in the 1970s and '80s and was often seen at the club lunching and socialising. He was a former officer in the Army; he died on 7 March 2013 in his 86th year. Terri Ebrill tells me that several of his former sailing colleagues from the CYC were at the funeral.

### OTHER MATTERS

A couple of matters on a more cheerful note:

- I recently took delivery of a copy of Team Wangi, The History of the Wangi RSL Amateur Sailing Club. Carol and Ross Wylde-Browne who moved to Fishing Point after many years in Canberra, were key contributors to the content of the book. Fortunately, it proved possible to stop the presses, as it were, to include in the book a photo of London Gold Medal winners from the Wangi Club, Iain Jensen and Nathan Outteridge. In the planning stages, Carol introduced me to the chair of the History Committee from Wangi who was interested in the process that I had gone through in producing our CYC history books.

- At the AGM of that other CYC club (in Rushcutters Bay), our long time member, Hamish Lindsay (a former Tasmanian, like me), was one of six members to receive recognition for 50 years as members. Syd Fisher was one of the others so Hamish was in distinguished company! Hamish owns the yellow Endeavour 24, Brindabella, moored in Lotus Bay.
- It is great to see the Tacker Optis with their multi coloured sails on week days at the CYC; the new program, Buoyed Up, designed for disadvantaged children aged 7 – 12 is worth supporting in my view. The program is funded by donations and Matt tells me that we now have 100 children from 5 different schools experiencing a fun and confidence building sailing experience through this program and that other clubs in Australia are looking to follow our example. I'm

sure too that our young instructors will benefit from the teaching experience over time. You can assist with financial support by going to <http://family-services.commsatwork.org/buoyed>.

- I recently took delivery of the final version of Peter Russell's wonderful book that records the history of the Mirror Dinghy in Australia, from its origins in 1962. It is basically a compilation of material collected by Peter and others from various sources but I am aware that Peter put in a huge amount of time in research, delving and talking with Mirror people around the country over a period of some 4 years to ensure that the record is as complete and accurate as possible. It contains more than 400 pages and includes everything you ever would want to know about the Mirror dinghy.



## My Cruising Dream and JAC — Part 1

### The development and realisation of the dream

Dreams are about the good life. The secret to a good life is, perhaps, someone to love, something to hope for and something to do. My dream of ocean cruising incorporated each of these.

Growing-up in England, plastic boats in the bathtub are amongst my earliest memories of boats. When about 7yrs old my interest in boating was nurtured by joining the Sea cubs/scouts. The troop's boats consisted of couple of clinker planked galleys and a whaler, together with heavy tarred rowing dinghies. The effort of rowing didn't appeal, but harnessing the wind's power in the heavy cotton sails did, greatly.

The best thing about my high school education? The school having a sailing club that promoted dinghy racing. I became 'hooked for life'. Around graduation time I had my first live-aboard experience: a week's holiday on a traditional Norfolk Broads flat-bottomed, gaff rigged cruiser.

I probably first dreamed of ocean cruising around that time, in my early teens. The dream then germinated in the background of life; overlaid by other dreams; everyday activities; and needs such as income, family and friends.

Much of my university years and my first year of teaching work focused on dinghy sailing and racing across the south of England. Then, while working in Jamaica between, aged 24-6, my sailing experience increased by crewing on yachts for harbour and short passage races.

Joining the Royal Navy enabled my combining sailing with a professional career. By 1980, when I emigrated to Australia, I had cruised from England to France a couple of times, sailed along the South Coast, chartered off Greece, and earned an Offshore Yachtmaster certificate of competency. In Australia, more chartering followed, first amongst the Whitsunday Islands, and then in New Zealand and Vanuatu. My RAN employment had no formal involvement with the Services' S111 yachts acquired in 1983-4, but through sport and adventurous training I raced and cruised them for nearly twenty years.

Ocean cruising consumes money and time. They who have the time usually don't have the money, and vice-versa. So, for decades, I saw retirement (the time when one works because one chooses to, rather than having to) as when I would have enough time and money to realise my dream. As retirement approached I also realised that dreams assume health and fitness, characteristics that decline with advancing years. Consequently, I determined that experiencing 'a life on the ocean wave' would best be achieved shortly after leaving full time employment in the Australian Navy.



Martin and his first boat, 48 years ago



Racing in Cowes Week '79 – just before 'that' Fastnet



Martin & his first Laser '79



On retiring from permanent RAN service, I had the time and money to pursue the tropical island cruising lifestyle dream. Unfortunately Sandy, my wife, didn't share the dream. She was involved with family issues and wanted to further her career. I therefore crewed aboard others' boats across the Indian Ocean and southern Caribbean. Together, we also pursued the idea of shared ownership/use with two like-minded couples here in Canberra. When timing issues thwarted this idea, my thoughts turned to owning my own yacht.

### Buying the Boat

For my own cruising yacht I wanted value for money, ease of sale, safety, reliability, ease of maintenance, comfort, and performance. I liked the idea of a catamaran, but with a minimum size of 40' for an ocean capable vessel, they were beyond my price range. More realistically, I would be looking for an older monohull with a respected design and build that had been well looked after.

Four reasons led to my searching the internet for boats in either the USA, the Caribbean or Europe: currency exchange rates favoured buying overseas, it was becoming a 'buyers market' in those areas, I wanted to sail the USA's east coast and cross the Pacific, and I had already cruised most of Australia's east coast. So, in 2008, when 1 \$A = about .90 \$, I flew to Florida with chequebook in hand, and started looking at boats.

Within days the Global Financial Crisis struck, causing the \$A to drop to about .66 \$US. My motivation to purchase was severely reduced. By late 2010, however, the \$A was back above .90 \$US, and I again travelled Florida and northwards looking at yachts. Not one of the twenty or so inspected 'grabbed me', but the process of chatting with like-minded folk and looking at boats was nonetheless greatly enjoyed.

In Oct 2010 a yacht broker sent an email describing a 'motivated vendor' with a Beneteau Oceanis 42cc for sale in Fort Lauderdale. The asking price was \$165k.

Being a 'production' rather than a 'quality' boat, it wasn't a type I'd been looking at, but it was bigger, newer, well equipped and well priced. Without great conviction I offered \$135k, and was somewhat surprised/shocked when the offer was accepted.

A trial sail and surveyor inspection were arranged and I flew to Fort Lauderdale with a heightened level of excitement and trepidation. Did I really want a yacht, did I really want this yacht? The trial and inspection went well, the boat was a bargain. I had three days to confirm my buying intent. BUT, what would purchase involve? Would I be able to manage the boat? Without Sandy's involvement, who would sail with me? What would be the implications to all the aspects of my wonderful home life? The three days were exceedingly STRESSFUL. I couldn't sleep.

At the last minute I decided against the purchase. Before advising the broker, though, I considered what, if any, purchase price would overcome my qualms. This led to my offering \$125k, an initial rejection, but ten days later when I was back in Canberra, a purchase agreement.

As the purchase progressed and as the implications of owning a boat located half the world away sunk-in my stress levels remained high. They peaked over a few days when I discovered and managed the fact that the purchase documentation differed in small details from the boat I had paid for. Was I the victim of fraud? Only when the Australian authorities registered my boat internationally as 'JAC' in Nov 2010 was I confident of being a boat owner.

### I had begun to live the dream.

**Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than the ones you did. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbor (sic). Catch the trade winds in your sails.**

**EXPLORE, DREAM, DISCOVER**



My yacht, first view, Fort Lauderdale, 2010

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## CYC Executive Members



### Commodore

Howard Faulks  
(m) 0438 216 130  
hfaulks@bigpond.net.au



### Vice Commodore

Sue Hart  
(m) 0419 995 724  
(h) 6285 2888  
sue.hart@iinet.net.au



### Rear Commodore Finance

Peter Barter  
(m) 0418 625 741  
pbarter@grapevine.com.au



### Rear Commodore Member Services

Ariane Malpas  
(m) 0411 142992  
azmalpas@hotmail.com



### Rear Commodore Sailing

Ian Brokenshire  
(m) 0407 186 447  
ianbrok@tpg.com.au

### Rear Commodore Communications

Duncan Hayward  
(m) 0478 116 850  
duncan.hayward@ozemail.com.au

### Rear Commodore Operations

Doug Witschi  
(m) 0419 482142  
dwitschi@gmail.com



### CYC Chief Executive Officer

Matthew Owen  
(w) 6273 4777  
matt.owen@  
canberrayachtclub.com.au

Please forward articles for future newsletters to matt.owen@canberrayachtclub.com.au or angela.cumming@act.gov.au

Designed by Angela Cumming

For advertising contact:  
matt.owen@canberrayachtclub.com.au  
If undeliverable return to  
Canberra Yacht Club,  
PO Box 7169,  
Yarralumla ACT 2600.



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