



# SASC NEWS

**The Newsletter of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club**

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August 2010

**SYDNEY AMATEUR SAILING CLUB**

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Captain	Peter McCorquodale
Honorary Treasurer	Tony Clarkson
Honorary Secretary	Peter Chapman
Executive Secretary	Megan Keogh/Judy Wogowitsch
Racing Secretary	Maggie Stewart

**Cover:**

Fred Bevis and his crew proudly displaying the Kelly Cup, won in 2010 by *Warana*  
(Photo John Jeremy)

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## COMING EVENTS

August 2010

### SATURDAY 21 AND 28 AUGUST 2010

Safety audits and fire extinguisher service at the Club

### WEDNESDAY 25 AUGUST 2010

First compulsory briefing for 2010–11 season competitors

### THURSDAY 26 AUGUST 2010

Second compulsory briefing for 2010–11 season competitors

### SATURDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2010

Opening Regatta

### SATURDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2010

Lion Island race

### SATURDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2010

First point score race for the 2010–2011 season

### FRIDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2010

Flag Officers' Dinner

### SATURDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2010

Point score race for Super 30 Division, Division 2 and Classic Divisions

### SATURDAY 2 OCTOBER 2010

Idle Hour Race

### SATURDAY 9 OCTOBER 2010

Point score race for Super 30 Division (long and short series), Division 2 (long and short series), Classic Divisions and Cavalier 28 Division

**NEED  
THE TENDER?**

**Call Mike, Alan or Denis  
on  
0418 678 690**

Sat: 0900-1800  
Sun: 0900-1700

## SAFETY REQUIREMENTS 2010–2011 SEASON

Safety audits will be required for  
Category 7 Certification

**SAFETY AUDITS AND FIRE EXTINGUISHER  
SERVICE AT THE CLUB**

**Saturday 21 and 28 August 2010**



## SIGNALS FROM THE COMMODORE

Assuming that all has gone to plan, by the time you read this I will have the pleasure of being Commodore of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club. Whilst most members express the wish that the Club remains the same, we will always need improvements and repairs.

I am proposing that we reactivate some of our traditional committees and as such would welcome ordinary members to come forward to help on these committees. For example, the slipway committee which has done extensive and detailed work over the last year or so. The committee comprised three Flag Officers, the Honorary Secretary and three other members with suitable qualifications or interests — Fred Bevis, Trevor Cosh and Mike deBurca.

I will be working with your new Board to select different areas which will be of interest to different groups of members, for example we need a small band of workers to carry out minor repairs around the clubhouse. The clubhouse committee falls under the control of the Rear Commodore, Bruce Dover.

The boatshed committee's responsibilities could be split into two different areas, the Cremorne site and the Mosman boatshed. The boatshed committee will need to coordinate the requirements of these two facilities as we move forward. The boatshed is the domain of the Vice Commodore, Liam Timms.

I also see a need for a committee to look after the Club's three boats. Since Robbie has retired the Club's boats have missed the individual attention which they need — major works and services will still be carried out by the professionals but the routine cleaning, water and oil checks which we all do on our own boats are not always happening with the Club vessels. If you like messing about in boats and have a little spare time please let us know.

The financial management of the Club's affairs is, of course, one of the most important functions of the Club's operations — without judicious financial rigour we will not be able to achieve many of our goals. Indeed the Treasurer has suggested that some time throughout my term as Commodore he will be retiring and we will need a replacement.

Serving on these committees is a nice way to see if you want to serve the Club in an official role down the track. It is also a good way to meet more members — I am surprised how many I don't know.

Thank you for your confidence in electing me as your Commodore.

*Bill Hogan*





Commodore John Crawford presenting Vic Dibben with a clock and barometer in recognition of his outstanding service and dedication to the Club over many years

Fred Bevis accepting the Kelly Cup from the Commodore at the Prizegiving on 26 June

Photos John Jeremy





Photo Peter McCorquodale

At the prizegiving on 26 June presentations were made to the race management volunteers who were present. The photo shows Charles Maclurcan, Maggie Stewart, Andre Van Stom, John Jeremy and Tony Clarkson

The expectant crowd at the prizegiving (below)

Photo John Jeremy





Lunch in the Clubhouse after the prizegiving (above)

The sun made a welcome appearance warming the crowd on the wharf (below)

Photos John Jeremy



## CLOSEST THING TO SAILING

by  
*John Crawford*

“A Puffer...?” Sounds like a support device for asthma sufferers. Wrong, this Puffer isn’t a support device — it’s probably the cause!

That then was my part introduction to “Puffers” and in particular SLVIC 32. Yes that’s her name, stands for Steam Lighter Victualling Inshore Craft 32, VIC 32 to her friends.

She was built in 1943 in Yorkshire, commissioned by the Admiralty to a 1939 design as part of a fleet of 100 Victualling Inshore Craft which plied and supplied the West Coast of Scotland, the Highlands and the Islands with coal, tractors and necessities which were otherwise unavailable to these remote communities. VIC 32 is steam powered with steam also used to make the tea, power the anchor winch, operate the derrick and run a steam-powered 78 rpm gramophone — true. They are also known as Clyde Puffers and have been made quite well known through Neil Munro’s *Parahandy Tales*, describing life and times on the Clyde Puffers.

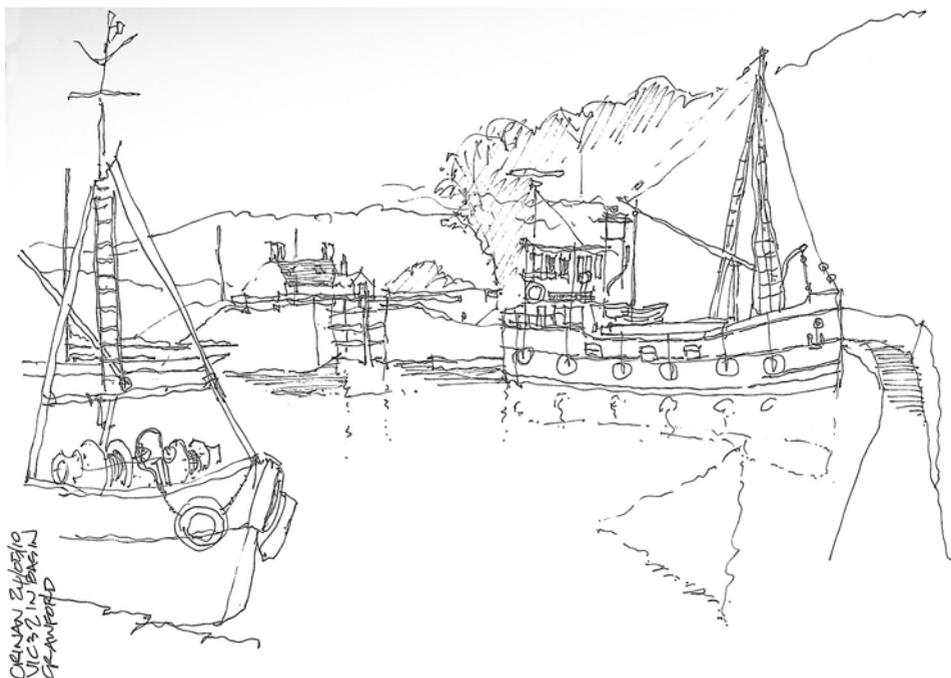
In case you’re wondering what this has to do with the SASC, I shall tell you. Your Commodore (me, now your Immediate Past Commodore) and the Immediate Past Commodore, (now the past Past Commodore — is there anything more passé than an Immediate Past Past Commodore) had decided to charter a vessel and explore the west coast of Scotland.

We briefly contemplated a yacht charter, but in the end there were ten of us, five couples and not all sailors so we chose the relative peace and

VIC 32 at rest

Images by John Crawford





VIC 32 at Crinan

stability of a fully-crewed and catered charter and with few alternatives available, opted for a week in VIC32. She offered more protection, more stability and more elbow room in the event of poor weather, a consideration on the west coast at any time. She also looked quirky and if you were looking for rolled gold luxury this wasn't going to be it, on the other hand it looked like fun and an unbeatable experience.

Kathryn and Rob Evans collected Lynn and me from Glasgow airport on Sunday 23 May for the drive to the western end of the Crinan Canal. The ten-mile long canal, built 200 years ago, connects Crinan with Loch Fyne across the Kynntire Peninsular cutting approximately 150 nautical miles off the original sea passage to Glasgow.

The drive from Glasgow to Crinan is about 60 miles via Loch Lomond and Loch Fyne. The weather was overcast but clearing and after a late seafood lunch of salmon at Lochgilphead we arrived at the Crinan Basin to find VIC32 moored on a mirror pond with a gentle plume of innocent coal smoke drifting skywards. We met our friends and had our first look at 'home' for the next week.

VIC32 is today run by a Trust comprising the skipper Nick Walker and his long suffering wife Rachel. Together in 1975 they discovered VIC32, bought her, put her back into working order (more or less) and sailed her from St Katherine's Dock in London to Crinan in 1978. She's been cruising Scottish waters for over 25 years with Nick in charge. Nick is a delightful and competent eccentric. Loves people, has the patience

of Job and a keen eye for anticipating wind and weather, along with a practiced ability of being in the right place at the right time to avoid problems and maximise everyone’s enjoyment of the voyage.

Alongside Nick for the past few years is the indispensable steam engineer, Lyle, who comes from a long family of steam engineers. He recounts that at his own wedding he was not allowed by his future mother-in-law to drive his new bride from the church in a steam traction engine! What was she thinking?

Lyle spends most of his time in the bowels of the engine room tending the boiler, shoveling coal, oiling moving parts and, at times, creating clouds of thick black coal smoke and steam. Invitations were extended to any guest to come on down and share the experience of Lyle’s world shoveling coal or ashes or just savoring that quixotic mixture of hot oil mixed with steam, water and the nostalgic smell of burning coal. Meanwhile he can watch the silent hiss and sigh of reciprocating machinery, turning a large four-bladed four-foot diameter propeller at a lazy 80 rpm, with no vibration and no noise — this is the magic of steam.

Lyle occupied the engineer’s cabin which is as far aft as you can get, accessed from the deck by a vertical ladder behind the engine room. He would only appear for meals, to operate the steam anchor winch or the derrick used to launch the traditional twelve-foot clinker dinghy stored on deck and used for rowing people ashore or sailing on quiet days.

In the galley we had Katherine, a part-time chef and art student and her assistant the quietly-efficient Joe. Together they formed a formidable team turning out three high-quality meals a day for ten guests and the

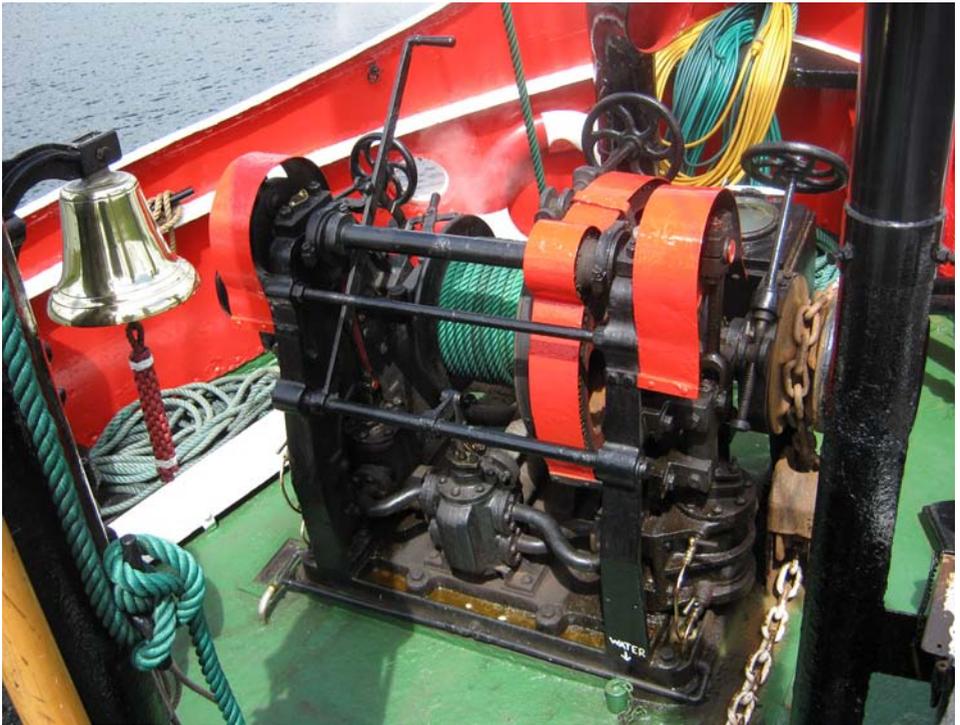
crew, plus morning and afternoon teas, all the while operating from a galley the size of a postage stamp and not a dishwasher in sight. Joe and Katherine occupied the small crew cabin in the bow with two bunks and no other facilities.

The layout of the Puffer is simple. The wheel house is directly behind the distinctive and large funnel which effectively blocks a good forty percent of any view forward. The ship’s wheel is naturally in the centre of the wheel house so that you have to keep dodging from port to starboard to see where you are going. This assumes that coal smoke belching from said funnel is not completely obscuring views in any direction!

Forward of the wheel house, extending to the crew’s quarters in the bow, is the former cargo hold ‘roofed’ with the original-style canvas-

Looking aft (yes aft) at the wheel-house





A proper winch

covered timber planks. Below this is located the ‘passenger accommodation’ comprising Main Saloon, Lounge and Dining (incorporating a peat-burning heater), Galley and Captain’s Cabin. A very-steep stair (ladder?) provides access to the cabins below, all of which had no port-holes, precious little ventilation and some feeble deck lights (natural) contained in a brick-sized shaft extending some four feet from the cabin ceiling to the deck above.

There were six two-berth bunk cabins and two double-berth cabins, none of which were larger than seven foot square. The Heads (two off) each contained WC, basin and shower. Apart from the fact that they looked as if they had been knocked up out of second-hand chipboard and had squeegee mops hanging behind the doors and electrical wiring snaking across the walls with exposed junction boxes next to the shower heads it was fine. As you might imagine on a steam vessel, running out of hot water is next to impossible and it didn’t happen. The facilities were OK, if basic. But who cares, we were there for the experience were we not? If claustrophobia is your thing, then the Puffer sleeping accommodation is not for you. Had the weather been poor and guests forced to contemplate reading and relaxing in their bunks, the lack of basic features such as a half reasonable light to read by may have become an issue. However goodwill and weather prevailed and none of us spent much time in our bunks.



VIC 32 alongside

Two past Commodores under the SASC colours



Early on Monday without even a shudder VIC32 edged into the sea lock, gates closed behind, paddles opened and she dropped gently down to sea level. The gates re-opened and we slipped silently into the Sound of Jura on a beautiful, clear, cool day with a light nor-westerly breeze behind us.

With the captain's permission, Rob and I hoisted the SASC burgee, the Commodore's pennant and the SASC Ensign, which we proudly flew for the next five days.

In the next *News* we discover some single-malted delights of the Western Isles and learn firsthand about climate change...

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

August 2010

The 2010 Annual General Meeting was held at the Clubhouse on Wednesday 4 August and was well attended with 67 members present.

After he opened the meeting Commodore John Crawford welcomed the new members who were at the meeting and presented them with a copy of *The Amateurs — The Second Century Begins*.

In his last report as Commodore, John paid tribute to the staff and volunteers who keep the Club working so well and who keep the spirit of the Amateurs alive. In particular he praised the work of the teams of members who had done so much to maintain the Clubhouse and the Mosman Boatshed during the year. John spoke warmly about the members of the Club and thanked them for giving him the privilege of serving as Commodore for the last three years — a role he had enjoyed enormously.

The Vice and Rear Commodores reported on the activities in the Boatshed and Clubhouse. Unfortunately Captain Peter McCorquodale could not be present as he was recovering from a personal refit in hospital the previous day. The Treasurer presented the financial report for the year ended 31 May 2010 which was accepted by the members.

No ballot for directors was required as there were no nominations in excess of the number of positions on the Board to be filled. Elected unopposed for the coming year were Commodore Bill Hogan, Vice Commodore Liam Timms, Rear Commodore Bruce Dover, Captain Peter McCorquodale, Honorary Treasurer Tony Clarkson and Honorary Secretary Peter Chapman. John Crawford continues on the Board as Immediate Past Commodore.

The directors elected unopposed were John Jeremy, Sean Kelly, Peter Scott, Chris Sligar, Herschel Smith, Greg Sproule, Garth Stewart and John Sturrock.

After thanking the members for electing him as Commodore, Bill Hogan advised the meeting that the Board wished to recommend that past Commodore Robert Evans be made an Honorary Life Member of the Club, which was approved by acclamation.

At the Extraordinary General Meeting which followed the AGM, the new slipway project was discussed and the motion to approve the proposed slipway development was approved by an overwhelming majority.

Photo John Jeremy



John Crawford presenting Bill Hogan with his Commodore's burgee

# FOR SALE

## S80 CLASS YACHT

### *Riff Raff*

*Riff Raff* has been actively raced with the SASC (most recently in Division 2) and is in full racing trim. She is being offered for sale fitted out to Category 7 and ready to step onboard and race.

Her standing rigging was fully renewed in September 2009 and she has a full sail wardrobe, with four headsails to cover all wind ranges. Unlike many of the early S80s *Riff Raff* has been fitted out with the “new” interior and offers bunks for sleeping four.

Her hull was Salstripped and fully reconditioned in 2005. No osmosis has ever been detected in the hull.

*Riff Raff* has a “pop-top”, which allows the top of the main cabin to be raised to give full, standing head room when not sailing.

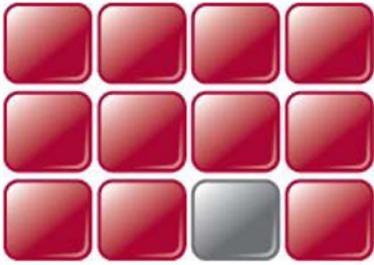
She has given her current owner years of fun sailing and has many more left in her. She is only going on the market because the owner has suffered a brain snap and bought a bigger boat.

**Price: \$25,000**

### **For more details contact**

Jim Chambers  
(02) 9420 0834  
[jim.chambers@bigpond.com](mailto:jim.chambers@bigpond.com)





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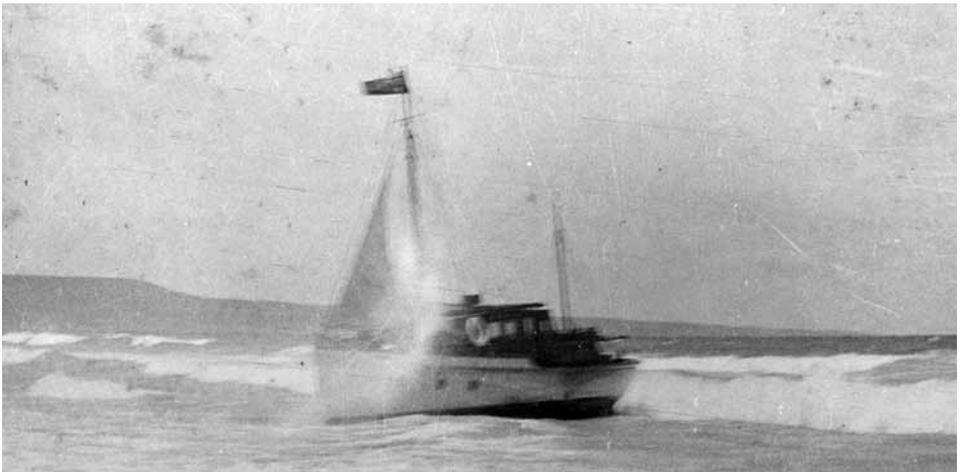
## ACCURACY AND RELIABILITY OF CHARTS

Mike Prince, Director of Charting, Australian Hydrographic Service, has recently published an article which discusses the accuracy of modern charts. His article, *Accuracy and Reliability of Charts*, is a very good read and recommended for close attention for everyone who uses paper or electronic charts. In his summary he says:

“All charts consist of a jigsaw of separate surveys which are combined to form the final chart. These surveys vary in age and quality, particularly due to changes in technology. However, one fundamental truth remains — a hydrographic surveyor can typically only physically see a very small percentage of their survey area — the parts which rise above the sea surface; for the remainder they must have confidence in their systems and long-standing practices to accurately and confidently chart the seabed. Because priority for surveying is given to the major shipping routes, an essential skill for mariners venturing into unfamiliar waters away from these routes is the ability to interpret the various quality indicators that are, or should be, on every chart. These are the best guides available to mariners, whether on commercial vessels or cruising yachts, to help them decide how much confidence should be had in past and current surveyors and the technology available to them when surveying the different areas of each chart. Indeed, a prudent mariner should be wary of any chart that does not show these indicators, irrespective of whether it is a traditional paper chart, a Raster Nautical Chart or one of the new Electronic Navigational Charts. Finally, if in doubt, post a lookout, make your approach in daylight and good conditions, or go somewhere else — there is no such thing as a good grounding.”

“There is no such thing as a good grounding”

The full paper is available at [http://www.hydro.gov.au/important-info/accuracy\\_and\\_reliability\\_of\\_charts.pdf](http://www.hydro.gov.au/important-info/accuracy_and_reliability_of_charts.pdf)



Many of us will remember Reg, a Life Member who joined in 1969, and his Top Hat *Kalinda* (A81).

He purchased *Kalinda* new in 1970 having previously sailed dinghies on Lake Macquarie in his youth. It was always his dream to own a yacht but couldn't afford it until he was in his fifties.

Reg raced the whole time with the Amateurs, for many years in Division 2, and won a great number of plaques in his time.

Reg rarely came back to the club and was one of those members we met on the water, waved to and cheered when appropriate.

Reg stopped racing in the early 2000s due to failing eyesight and *Kalinda* is now with his son and is, I understand, moored at Manly.

*Tony Saunders*

SASC Life Member Frank recently passed away aged 93 years. For many years he raced the Top Hat *Kalinda* in an exemplary fashion. For some years he came to my Hunters Hill house for *Kalinda's* safety inspections — this was always a pleasure, the equipment was laid out in orderly fashion and I really enjoyed his company.

In his last years of racing he joined our Classic fleet (long keel) as he preferred the time-at-start system which he felt was safer and less traumatic. Frank was a quiet person and respected by all who knew him, a first-class Amateurs man.

*Southerly*

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## VOLUNTEERS LUNCH



A lunch was held at the Club on Sunday 25 July to thank all race management volunteers for their efforts during the last season

## DON'T WASTE THAT BOTTLE

A most unusual sailing vessel arrived in Sydney on 26 August. *Plastiki*, an 18.2 m (60 foot) catamaran built from approximately 12,500 reclaimed plastic bottles and srPET, a fully- and uniquely-recyclable material, set sail from San Francisco in March to sail 8,000 nautical miles to Sydney to raise awareness about plastic waste in our oceans. After generally light winds for much of the 128-day voyage, strong winds from the SSE as she approached Sydney tested the boat's innovative construction in the toughest conditions encountered during the voyage.

"Gusts over 60 knots are a fair amount of wind for any boat but *Plastiki* handled it well," skipper Jo Royle, the only female on board, said.

Other crew members on board *Plastiki* included the expedition leader and Adventure Ecology founder, David de Rothschild, co-skipper David Thomson, Matthew Grey, Max Jourdan and Vern Moen.

"It's been an amazing voyage seeing firsthand the impact of plastic on our oceans and visiting island communities adversely affected by the waste we all generate. We know that Australians are deeply concerned about minimising their plastic waste — their actions to embrace reusable shopping bags and even ban plastic water bottles in some communities underscore this, but there's much more we can all do," David de Rothschild said.

*Plastiki* arriving in Sydney

Made from about 12,500 reclaimed plastic PET bottles and featuring

[www.plastiki.com](http://www.plastiki.com)



the latest in sustainable design technology, *Plastiki* is a wonder of engineering and innovation. “It’s about recognising that waste is fundamentally a design flaw. If we apply cyclical ‘cradle-to-cradle’ philosophies rather than linear thinking we can illuminate waste at source,” David de Rothschild said.

*Plastiki* is on public display at the Australian National Maritime Museum, Darling Harbour for one month. More information about this unusual craft can be found at [www.theplastiki.com](http://www.theplastiki.com).

Photo John Jeremy

*Plastiki* at the ANMM in Darling Harbour



## REWRITE OF THE NAVIGATION ACT

The Department for Transport and Infrastructure has been seeking the views of stakeholders for the rewriting of the Navigation Act 1912. The re-write will create a modern framework for maritime safety and marine environment regulation. It will introduce greater flexibility to allow amendments to international treaties to be readily adopted; and provide confidence and certainty for industry.

The current objectives of the rewrite are to:

- recast the Act in modern plain language;
- reflect contemporary conditions and practices of the shipping industry;
- remove unnecessary and out-dated provisions;
- enhance ship safety and protection of the marine environment;
- introduce greater flexibility to allow regulation to remain contemporary with national and international standards; and
- provide confidence and certainty for industry.

Other problems that have been identified with the current regulatory framework include:

- the need to legislate national standards for smaller vessels not subject to international conventions;
- outdated offence provisions which make it difficult to prosecute offences;
- changes to corporate structures in the shipping industry which affect accountabilities and responsibilities;
- uncertain operational interface between the Act and the Seafarers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1992, the Occupational Health and Safety (Maritime Industry) Act 1992 and the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006; and
- AMSA's limited jurisdiction to inspect vessels servicing the offshore industry in Australian waters.

Comments on the discussion paper, available at:

[http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/maritime/paper/files/Navigation\\_Act\\_Final.pdf](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/maritime/paper/files/Navigation_Act_Final.pdf),

were requested by 30 July, but it may be possible for late submissions to be received from those who wish to comment. The response template at the following web address gives you an opportunity to provide comments and feedback:

<http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/maritime/paper/index.aspx>

If you have any queries or wish to provide comments please email them to [navactrewrite@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:navactrewrite@infrastructure.gov.au) or contact Mr Murray Lembit, Section Head, Navigation Act Re-write team on 6274 6714.

# THE LAWHILL BELL

August 2010

The SASC now has three ship's bells hanging in the clubhouse — sufficient to attract the attention of the noisiest Saturday afternoon sailors. The latest, the *Lawhill* bell, was presented to the Club at the Annual General Meeting on 4 August by Charles Maclurcan.

*Lawhill* was a steel-hulled four-masted barque built by the Caledon Shipbuilding & Engineering Company in Dundee, Scotland. Launched on 24 August 1894, she displaced 6,400 tons and was 382 feet (116.4 m) long overall with a beam of 45 feet (13.7 m). Manned by 25–30 men, she could carry 30 sails and had a maximum speed of about 17 knots.

During the 1890s and the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, *Lawhill* carried kerosene and oil until sold to new owners in 1911. Sold again to Finnish owners in 1914, she carried wheat from Australia to Europe until she was impounded by the French at Brest in 1917. She was sold again, to Gustaf Erikson, escaped conversion to a motor ship and returned to trade in 1919 carrying wheat from Argentina and Australia as well as other cargoes.

*Lawhill* was seized in South Africa in 1942 and completed several voyages to Argentina with coal, returning with wheat. Showing her age, she was sold again in 1948 when she sailed her last voyage to Lourenço Marques. Her new owners could not afford the necessary repairs to keep her trading and, after a long period rotting at anchor, she was broken up for scrap in the late 1950s.

Charles found the bell, believed to be *Lawhill's* half-deck bell, many years ago in a street market in Rotterdam.

State Library of Tasmania

*Lawhill* in Tas-  
manian waters in  
1943



## A VISIT TO THE GALAPAGOS

by  
Michal  
Tomaszewski

I thought that Patagonia was at the bottom end of the world. Well, Galapagos is at the other end but in more ways than one. It also is in a time warp. Less than a two-hour flight from Quito, the capital of Ecuador, you arrive millennia back in time, landing on what used to be an important World War II US Air Force base on the tiny island of Baltra. It is all very agricultural. Here and there concrete remains of military buildings are all that is left of the base. The vegetation there is somewhat like the Australian inland scrub.

It is in Baltra that all those years ago in 1947, during my father-in-law Jack Earl's circumnavigation, the yacht *Kathleen Gillett* spent weeks as a guest of US military doctors with a gravely-ill crew member. After paying a National Park tax in US dollars, you take a bus and punt to Puerto Ayerta, the Galapagos main town on Isla Santa Cruz. The paved roads, shops, bars, two-storey boutique hotels and an anchorage with a dozen or more tour boats is a surprise and a bit of a shock.

You leave Santa Cruz and go into time warp — giant turtles, sea and land iguanas, sea lions and colonies of blue-footed boobies, huge striped albatrosses, giant frigate birds, swarms of colourful, pink flamingos and, of course, hundreds of sea lions. They are not tame, all just totally unafraid of human beings. To them we are just another animal and not a predatory one that they know. That is how it was before Darwin came and fortunately still is.

The next five or so days were spent on board the yacht *Encantada*, a seventy-foot purpose-built schooner-rigged steel motor sailer with accommodation for a dozen tourists in double cabins (each with ensuite) and a crew of five. Overnight passages between islands made it possible for maximum time to be spent ashore trekking, snorkelling and diving under the guidance of Emanuel, an excellent multilingual Ecuadorian guide.

Each of the islands visited had its own endemic animals as well as

*Encantada*  
anchored in  
company





All photos by Michal Tomaszewski

*Encantada*



A Galapagos local  
keeping an eye  
on the tourists

native and introduced ones. Not being a botanist I will not go into the specifics. The whole archipelago is a strictly-controlled National Park, a Marine Reserve and United Nations Heritage site. The marine life was also fascinating. The endemic, beautiful, white-tipped sharks were just cruising along minding their own business. Giant butterfly rays gracefully floating, tortoises and huge schools of multicoloured fish. The sea grasses were also island specific to feed its own particular fauna.

No story of the Galapagos can be complete without mentioning Isla Isabela. It's a two-hour, 35+ knot speed boat ride from Puerto Ayora and is by far the biggest of the islands. There are no paved roads or two storey hotels — just loads of volcanoes. The main village, Puerto Villami, is a delightful little settlement with one sand “paved” main street, two or three restaurants, a police cum customs office and a good, but sting-ray infested, body surf beach.

For me, the highlight of the Galapagos was Isabela and its volcanoes. We left early in the morning — a young German couple, a Polish girl, the guide and me — and trekked up to the rim of the Sierra Negra volcano,



Galapagos sunset

some 1,200 m above sea level. The crater, dormant for thousands of years, is reputedly the second biggest in the world — 11 km in diameter!

We climbed in mud and cloud and then descended to the Chico (child) volcano at some 800 m which has been active only recently and is still warm and steaming in places. It really was like walking on the moon. When weather cleared we had a beautiful panoramic view of the blue Pacific before again climbing up to 1,200 m then descending back to the village.

The people I met came from all corners of the globe and all walks of life. We had a budding academic political scientist, a couple of women oncologists, an agricultural scientist, one or two financial gurus, an IT executive, a sixty-odd-years old surveyor-cum-surfie from up Byron Bay way and of course me, a sailor and almost-retired architect. We all had two things in common — all could communicate in English and all were basically just born vagabonds.

Another local resident



## STARTING SHENANIGANS

On Saturday 19 June the Classic Division was due for a flying start at 11:35 am. The west wind was about ten knots and at least two yachts were approaching the line on a starboard tack and if allowed would have made a near perfect start. The rest of the larger fleet reached to the line at the committee boat end at a fast rate.

The mass of boats miraculously avoided collision but terrified the starting crew — there was a great deal of shouting such as ‘up — up — up’. One of the close-hauled boats powered up and reached away from the charging fleet and proceeded slowly for some time as she was top leeward of the closely-bunched bargers. Failure to run away would have resulted in damage or a sinking.

At the prizegiving at the SASC later in the afternoon the Race Officer expressed his dismay with so many boats doing a Charlie Barr start in flagrant breach of the rules. He told the assembled yachties that it was dangerous, illegal and not funny and could easily have lead to damage or loss to vessels and crew. The Race Officer made an impassioned plea for the practice to cease in future. Applause by clapping emanated from within the clubhouse and spread to those on the wharf. The majority were too stunned to clap.

Charlie Barr was a Scot employed as helmsman of very large yachts for American owners in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. He always made what he styled as his ‘famous eagle swoop start’ and very often prejudiced yachts starting legally. It has always amazed me that he was allowed to get away with it — it was extremely difficult to catch such a wizard once he was ahead and to windward. Barging starts have been illegal for over a century.

*Southerly*

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

### 2010–2011 SAILING SEASON

Continuing a practice introduced last year, all skippers or at least one member of their crews, will be required to attend a briefing at the SASC prior to the start of the new season. The briefing covers the conduct of SASC events, safety issues, Harbour regulations and incident reporting requirements.

Attendance at a briefing will be mandatory. Yachts will not be accepted as entrants in SASC series without evidence that the skipper or at least one of the crew has attended a briefing. Evidence of attendance at a similar pre-season briefing conducted by another Harbour club will, however, be accepted.

It is expected that there will be at least two briefing sessions to provide skippers alternative opportunities to attend. The dates will be well advertised at the Club and to as many members as possible by email.

# A GREAT BATTLE REMEMBERED

August 2010

by  
*David Coleman*

Around Mosman and Cremorne we have almost grown used to the presence of naval historical items on our shores but I wonder if *SASC News* readers with an interest in naval matters will remember Boyd's Barbers Shop on the Military Road in Mosman? It was quite a famous establishment serving the community during and after World War II. Like all barbers' shops they displayed some sporting memorabilia but they also displayed a painting of the now-famous naval engagement between the destroyer HMS *Glowworm* and the German heavy cruiser *Admiral Hipper*. The following notes tell the story of this engagement and the Victoria Cross which was awarded posthumously to the skipper of *Glowworm*, LCDR G. B. Roope.

On 7 April 1940 the battle cruiser HMS *Renown* was steaming north in the Norwegian Sea in a rising gale when one of her four escorting destroyers, HMS *Glowworm*, reported a man overboard and asked permission to turn aside and search. Roope spent almost two hours searching unsuccessfully for the missing sailor and in doing so lost contact with *Renown*. During the following night the weather deteriorated and *Glowworm* reduced speed dropping further behind *Renown*. Just after daybreak on 8 April she sighted an unknown destroyer to the north, at first she identified herself as Swedish but then opened fire on *Glowworm*. She was, in fact, the German destroyer *Bernd Von Arnim*, which was loaded with troops. *Glowworm* replied with several salvos when another German destroyer, *Paul Jakobi*, joined the engagement. With their

The famous painting of HMS *Glowworm* ramming *Admiral Hipper*





HMS *Glowworm*  
before the war

human cargo the Germans broke off the engagement and retired into a rainsquall. By this time Roope felt certain that the enemy was trying to lure him into a trap with a more powerful force but he elected to follow, simply to observe which big German ships were then at sea. By this time *Glowworm* had suffered some damage and two more sailors had been lost overboard.

Shortly after the initial battle a much larger enemy ship appeared five miles to the north — it was the heavy cruiser *Admiral Hipper* which engaged *Glowworm*. The German gunnery was excellent and her first salvo seriously damaged *Glowworm* and the poor weather made escape or evasive shadowing almost impossible. Roope reported the sighting to his C-in-C and closed his enemy. The destroyer displaced 1,345 tons and was armed with four 4.7 inch guns. *Admiral Hipper* displaced 10,000 tons with eight 8 inch guns — the resultant one-sided battle

left *Glowworm* seriously damaged although she was able to make several torpedo attacks without success. Suffering yet more damage, Roope decided that the best form of attack would be to ram his enemy and *Glowworm* struck the cruiser amidships damaging some armour plating and puncturing several freshwater tanks.

After the collision *Glowworm* drew clear but by then she was losing way and settling by the bows with a major fire raging amidships. At this point Roope ordered the ships company to abandon ship while he stayed on the bridge finishing his cigarette. *Admiral Hipper* stayed on the scene to pick up survivors and Roope was last seen in the water assisting his

LCDR G. B.  
Roope RN





men with their life jackets — later he was reported alongside *Hipper* but too exhausted to cling to a rope thrown to recover him.

The commanding officer of *Admiral Hipper*, Captain Helmuth Heye, was so impressed by the gallant battle put up by the little destroyer that he sent a message to Britain via the International Red Cross recommending that her commander be awarded the VC, the only occasion that such an award has been recommended by the enemy.

After the war the surviving crew of HMS *Glowworm* who were prisoners of war was freed and the full story of HMS *Glowworm's* final battle became public. LCDR Roope was awarded his posthumous Victoria Cross on 10 July 1945. The artist Tim Carew painted the *Stand-by to Ram* scene for the Sunday Express newspaper and a print of this painting made its way to Boyd's Barbers Shop to remind Mosman youth of a great naval engagement of World War II.

Reference: Winton, John, *The Victoria Cross at Sea*, Michael Joseph, 1978.

*Glowworm* under fire early in the action

*Glowworm* astern of *Hipper* after the collision



## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members:

Wayne Markman  
Peter Smith  
Graeme Wood

## THOSE OLD FLARES

In the April *SASC News* we reported that NSW Maritime was collecting out-of-date flares for a trial period until July 2011.

Apparently the invitation to deliver old flares to NSW Maritime offices has proved to be irresistible to boat owners (recreational and commercial) and Maritime has been swamped with flares for disposal. The amount handed in has prompted Maritime to limit deposits to four per recreational boat owner, as your editor discovered when he visited Rozelle with a bag full collected over many years (all out-of-date but in excellent condition and probably useable). Helpfully, they were all accepted but members should be aware of the present situation when they check their safety equipment before the new season.

Clearly, a permanent, accessible and safe system is needed in NSW for the disposal of out-of-date pyrotechnics. Talk to your local MP!

## SASC SHOP

*(AKA The Office)*

The following items are available in stock:

Racing 'A' Flag	\$10.00
Burgee – Small – 25 cm x 42.5 cm	\$21.00
Burgee – Medium – 30 cm x 54 cm	\$25.00
Burgee – Large – 60 cm x 90 cm	\$60.00
Burgee – X Large – 160 cm x 290 cm	\$132.00
YA Blue Book (2009–2012)	\$37.50
Laminated Course Map	\$5.00
SASC Patch	\$6.00
Club Tie	\$25.00
Tee Shirt	\$25.00
Polo Shirt	\$36.00
Rugby Top	\$49.00
Sweat Shirt	\$40.00



## NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The next *SASC News* will be the October 2010 edition. Contributions from members, which are always welcome, should reach the editor by Friday 24 September 2010. Contributions can be in hard copy or sent by email. Photographs are also very welcome.



The photo of *Culwulla IV* in the last edition of the SASC News showed her with a modern rig. This photo was taken a few years earlier (around 1930) when her rig was, as Bill Gale might say, more normal



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