



# SASC NEWS

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

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August 2007

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Honorary Treasurer	Tony Clarkson
Honorary Secretary	Peter Chapman
Executive Secretary	Megan Keogh

**Cover:**

The proud crew of *Very Tasty*, winners of the Kelly Cup, displaying the trophy on the lawn after the prizegiving at the Club on 30 June  
 (Photo John Jeremy)

**CONTENTS**

Coming Events	3
Signals from the Commodore	4
June Storms	5
Refloating <i>Nerida</i>	6
What Sank <i>Nerida</i> ?	12
LHI BBQ Plans	13
Annual Prizegiving 2007	14
Letters to the Editor	16
Annual General Meeting	19
Clipper Round the World Race	20
Sydney to Southport Race	25
New Members	26
From the Archives	27

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# COMING EVENTS

August 2007

## SATURDAY 18 AND 25 AUGUST 2007

Safety audits and fire extinguisher service at the Club

## SATURDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2007

Opening regatta for the 2007/2008 Season

## SATURDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2007

Lion Island race

## SATURDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2007

First point score race for the 2007/2008 Season — all divisions except Cavalier 28s

## SATURDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2007

Point score race for Super 30 Division, Division 2, Classic Divisions and Cavalier 28 Division

## SATURDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2007

Idle Hour Race

## SATURDAY 6 OCTOBER 2007

Pointscore race for Super 30 Division (main and short series), Division 2 (main and short series), Classic Divisions and Cavalier 28 Division

## SUNDAY 7 OCTOBER 2007

First point score race for Division 6 and Gaffers Division

## SATURDAY 13 OCTOBER 2007

Point score race for Super 30 Division, Division 2 and Classic Divisions. Combined Clubs race for Division 1

## FRIDAY 19 OCTOBER 2007

First twilight race

### **SAFETY REQUIREMENTS 2007-2008 SEASON**

Safety audits will be required  
for Category 7 Safety Certification

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

**Saturday 18 and 25 August 2007**

**NEED  
THE TEN-  
DER?**

**Call Mike or  
Allan on  
0418 678 690**

Sat: 0900-1800  
Sun: 0900-1700



A week or so ago I had the pleasure of being presented with the Commodore's Burgee (no balls..!) at the Annual General Meeting of the SASC. I have to tell you that I regard this as a singular honour, so thank you one and all, I will do my best.

As it does for the majority of members, the SASC holds a special place in my affection. It has become over time a significant part of my life. For most of us the Amateurs is an anchor of sorts, a sanctuary that imbues us with special feelings as soon as we walk through the doors..... into that other world. It is a place apart and so it should remain.

This is an important reason why firstly we should recognise and appreciate what we have and secondly, we should ensure we protect ourselves from any attempts to change or diminish the essence of what make us what we are. What we have at the Amateurs is something that many sailing clubs would give their eye teeth to have, strive to emulate and will never achieve. It is an eclectic mix of history, tradition, lethargy, DIY, suspicion, stubbornness plus the input of a wide range of members all with skills and talents that they are happy to share. Bind this together with what I call Amateurs Glue and you have what we have.

Often in life, we are only able to recognise the true significance of things we value after they have gone, so I urge you all to appreciate what you have and value it and enjoy it while you can. For my part I intend to preserve what we have while keeping a weather eye out for anything that threatens our collective enjoyment of sailing and of the SASC.

The sport we enjoy is under constant attack from bureaucracies who are hell bent on controlling our every move. That they can't enforce half the things they seek to control doesn't seem to temper their ambition, nor does the fact they continue to try and legislate to assume responsibility on our behalf for the actions we take on the water. We are each responsible for what we do, you cannot legislate responsible behaviour — it is an individual trait, a combination of common sense and experience.

That said I'm very much aware that one the most important responsibilities the board undertakes on your behalf is to be involved in the debates about our sport and our waterways and to be aware of the issues that arise and the impact they may have. In this, the SASC is fortunate in having hundreds of years of experience amongst our directors and our members. The opinion of the SASC and its reputation is well regarded in the sailing community so we will continue to be vigilant.

My congratulations to Trevor Cosh and Bruce Dover on their recent election and my thanks to Peter Horn for his time on the board and his invaluable contribution, particularly in evaluating potential race management software. We are lucky to have this abundance of talent.

Finally thank you all for making this such a great club. I wish you fair winds and good sailing in the rapidly approaching season of 2007/08.

*John Crawford*



# JUNE STORMS

August 2007



Considerable damage was done to boats and moorings in Mosman Bay during the storms in the first half of June. The worst had passed when the photo of *Eudoria* (John Sturrock) in near-horizontal rain was taken (above). *Pinchgut* (Garth Stewart) ended up emulating a submarine in Neutral Bay (below) but was soon raised for repair

Photos John Jeremy



## REFLOATING NERIDA

*Sir James Hardy's classic 1933 gaff cutter Nerida sank at her mooring in Sydney during the mid-June storms. David Salter supervised the yacht's recovery.*

It never ceases to amaze me how precious SASC friendships can be in times of crisis. The call came early on the Sunday morning. "Dave? John Sturrock here. I don't want to alarm you mate, but I've just been phoned by a bloke who lives overlooking Neutral Bay and he reckons *Nerida* sank in that big blow last night." John had contacted me because he knew Sir James was in Valencia for the America's Cup and that I was the yacht's unofficial but longstanding bo'sun.

My initial reaction was disbelief. "Do we know for sure?" "No, Dave, but it doesn't sound good." Even for the ever-laconic Johnno, that was a mighty understatement.

Within minutes I was in the car and trying to keep to the speed limit during the 20-minute drive to the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron at Kirribilli. As I jumped out of the car into persistent drizzle one look across the bay told me it was true. *Nerida's* distinctive topside profile, bowsprit and blue boat covers were nowhere to be seen. In their place I could just make out the cross-trees and top 12 feet of her mast poking above the water. At least she'd gone down straight!

It wasn't hard to locate the sunken yacht



Motoring out in the Squadron tender to confirm the sinking was like being asked to identify the body of a relative at the morgue. My fears for the damage already done to the engine, interior and electrics were the stuff of nightmares. I asked the RSYS driver to circle the mast so we could check for trailing lines that might foul a passing prop. The rain strengthened and there was nothing more to do other than to ask that someone come back out and tie a few brightly-coloured objects to the cross-trees as a hazard warning.

But the comfort and support of Amateurs mateship is never far away on Sydney Harbour. The *Azzurro* boys happened to be having an anti-foul weekend at the Squadron and Trevor Cosh was soon jolting me out of my shock with a host of invaluable hints



and suggestions about the salvage I'd have to supervise the following day. 'Snake' and Sherro cheered me up with a few salvos of gallows humour and within minutes I'd recovered enough sense of purpose to start making the first of many phone calls. Time is the enemy of effective salvage. Every hour a yacht remains submerged is an additional threat to its recovery. Compounding the situation was news on the radio that another big East Coast Low had formed in the Tasman and that Sydney could expect a SW blow of up to 70 knots within the next 36 hours. Nice!

Polaris Marine could give us a 40-ton tug, 180-ton barge and 10-ton crane. The Diving Co would bring their punt and a three-man dive team. We agreed to assemble at *Nerida's* mooring as soon as possible after first light the next morning. A brief text message was sent to Sir James in Europe alerting him to the sinking. Next, a call to Sean Langman — another SASC comrade — to ask if he could help with a lift-out and temporary hardstand space at the Noakes yard in North Sydney once we'd raised *Nerida*. Sean, who has a very large soft spot for classic yachts, agreed without hesitation. Then I reached Norm Hyett, the Mosman Bay shipwright who's yet another old friend. Norm has looked after the yacht for decades and kept her in splendid trim. He was away on holidays, but gave me some valuable advice about the many problems I would now be facing.

The job required some serious lifting grunt

All photos by David Salter



## SASC NEWS

During this blizzard of phone calls I learned from the insurance company that *Nerida* had already been quite badly damaged when a runaway yacht collided with her during a storm the previous weekend. Could this have contributed to her sinking? There was no time to speculate. Overnight, an email arrived from Sir James authorising me to act as his “owner’s representative” during the salvage. To be frank, it was a responsibility that I was not terribly keen to assume and I spent a restless night contemplating the task ahead.

Monday morning. The first problem was to keep the 180-ton barge stationary above the yacht. The lads from Polaris solved this by using their crane to drop a temporary 5-ton mooring block off the bow. The diver then took a second stabilising line from the stern down to *Nerida*’s mooring – a neat trick. We were lucky that the yacht was on an ‘outside’ mooring that allowed us enough swinging room to establish a steady platform.

The positioning of fore and aft recovery slings from the crane was going to be difficult. *Nerida* is huge and deep below the waterline. And, being a gaffer, she carries no permanent backstay so the counter sections are relatively weak. A sling under the stern might well break her back.

I drew a rough sketch of the yacht’s hull profile for the dive master and suggested that they try to thread the aft sling through the propeller aperture. That’s an immensely strong part of the boat and the sling would, at least, be held firmly in position. The forward sling could then go beneath the bobstay fitting, which is just below the waterline. In case that forward sling wanted to slip forward as the crane began taking the load, we agreed to tie the slings together on each side with extra fore-and-aft lines. Developing that plan took us no more than a few minutes, but putting it into effect consumed the next two hours. As feared, the diver reported on the two-way that *Nerida*’s nose was stuck in the mud. He would have to dig out a path under the bow by hand for the forward sling. Then came the laborious process of lowering the slings, bringing them around the keel and finally shackling their upper loops to the lift chains.

The author’s  
sketched recovery  
plan



With the whole rig in position the crane driver slowly took up the slack while we waited for the diver to report from below on how *Nerida* was ‘hanging’. The news wasn’t good. The slings were compressing the upper topside strakes and threatened to crack the bulwarks at the deck join once the crane lifted the hull clear of the bottom. The obvious solution was to reconfigure the rig with athwartships spacer bars. There were only two difficulties with that approach.





First, we had no spacers – but they could be fetched from the Polaris yard. Second, it is illegal to use lateral spacers without first suspending them from a longitudinal beam. But that arrangement would consume so much of our crane’s lift height that it would be impossible to get *Nerida* to the surface. Stalemate. Meanwhile, the BoM was confirming that the big Southerly blow they’d predicted was definitely on its way. We just had to get the old girl up and safe by the end of this day. It was a sickening feeling to give the order to lift, knowing that we risked doing the boat some damage. The crane’s deep-throated diesel picked up revs...

...and up she came. Suspended beside the massive steel barge poor *Nerida* looked drowned, dirty and pathetic. The bobstay dangled from the end of the bowsprit. The timber cross-trees were split and bent forward. The flaked mainsail bulged with tons of water trapped between the gaskets. The lift seemed to have caused no real damage beyond a split running between the scuppers on the starboard side. The first thing that floated up through the for’d hatch as the crane slowly lifted *Nerida* to the surface was a half-drunk bottle of Hardy’s Black Bottle pot-still brandy. That symbolic little moment of larrikin defiance gave me my first laugh for more than 30 hours.

*Nerida* was held in the slings so that her decks stayed level with the water. Two big pumps were rigged and the scene was soon dominated by the sound of petrol motors straining to lift thousands of litres from inside the hull. Inch by inch, the topsides began to appear. Nobody

*Nerida* surfaces after 30 hours on the bottom of Neutral Bay



Lifting force cracked the bulwarks (above)

The slimy, foul-smelling chaos below (below)



needed a degree in physics to understand that if the pumps could keep ahead of the leak that had sunk her *Nerida* might yet live to fight another day. My impatience soon got the better of me and I clambered aboard to take a look below. This is a boat I've sailed regularly for more than 25 years and the gorgeous old saloon has become part of my own emotional fabric. The scene that greeted me now was one of total disorder. Internal planking lay everywhere at bizarre angles. Lockers and drawers had either burst open or swollen shut. Wet weather gear and sails swirled around my feet. Everything was tainted with the stench and slime of diesel and engine oil.

The pumps chugged on. Eighty minutes after her boom first broke the surface, *Nerida* was again floating on her marks. We shut down the pump motors as a smaller tug came alongside and secured the yacht for the gunnel-to-gunnel tow down the Harbour to Berry's Bay. As a precaution, we left the pumps and their motors on board just in case moving the yacht aggravated the leak. The light was already beginning to fade as *Nerida* was manoeuvred into the dock. Sean Langman operated the travel lift himself as the yacht was gently raised until her deck was level with the hard stand. Two engineers scrambled aboard to see what they could do to save the Perkins diesel. The boat was a mess, but at least she was safe.

Safe but not yet  
sound on the hard  
at Noakes

It had been a long day and there was now not much more we could do. Sean and I stood beside the yacht chatting about the salvage and the best way to now handle the long repair job that lay ahead. An insurance assessor chose that moment to appear out of the gloom. "You know, this boat could well be written off completely," he declared. "It mightn't be fixable." I stared at him, so taken aback by that horrible prospect that no sensible response would form in my weary brain. "Wha...!?" But Langman is made of sterner stuff. He just fixed the assessor with a steely frown and declared: "Let me tell you something, fella. This boat *will* be fixed."



## WHAT SANK NERIDA?



Lower bobstay bolts pulled out (above)

*Nerida* filled through the damaged stem plate (below)



All it needs to sink even the most well-found boat is a sequence of bad luck. Not until the yacht was drained and propped up on the hardstand did a thorough inspection reveal the cause of the disaster.

During the first big Sydney winter storm on June 10 *Irish*, another boat moored nearby in Neutral Bay, broke away from her mooring and tangled with *Nerida*. That collision caused some major damage at deck level – the port runner was snapped, stanchions were ripped out, lifelines broken, a bulwark cracked and the toe-rail badly mangled.

But, not noticed among all that damage, was a major whack to the headfoil a few inches above the furler. The upward force of that blow was transferred down the bobstay and loosened the two bolts that secure the bottom end. Those bolts pass through a V-plate set into the stem, just below the waterline.

During the next storm, on the night of June 16, a steep chop was whipped up in the bay. *Nerida's* heavy pitching at her mooring slowly loosened the bobstay bolts and they eventually pulled out, fracturing part of the V-plate and leaving two holes as they left the stem. Water then entered through those holes and the yacht filled through the chain locker as the storm continued.

### ZULU – A168 - HAS LOST ITS SPINNAKER POLE

Earlier this year *Zulu* was involved in a serious accident which required complete re-rigging and a new mast.

During a six week period we stowed the spinnaker pole on the rafters in the boat shed. In early July when refitting the boat we found the spinnaker pole was gone. It was well marked as *Zulu* using "artline" pen.

Has any one seen or borrowed a spinnaker pole from the shed? If so please contact John Punch and/or return the pole.

With thanks

**JOHN PUNCH Phone 9969 4769**



# LHI BBQ PLANS

August 2007

It's possible this year's fleet for the annual 'BBQ Cruise-in-Company' to Lord Howe may outnumber the yachts that will race to the Island in the official Gosford-LHI event which starts a fortnight earlier.

The 2007 running of the informal rally will be the fifth such cruise. The BBQ fleet has grown every year from the initial four starters in 2003. Yachts make their own way to Lord Howe to arrive in time for a Tuesday night BBQ at Ned's Beach which raises funds for the local public school.

The traditional 'quite little drink' in Sydney for interested owners and crew was held at the Orient Hotel in early June. While the cruise has no formal organisation, a list taken of yachts intending to make the round trip to the Island in November quickly reached a total of fifteen entrants.

Intending SASC participants range from Sean Langman's giant-killing little 1935 Ranger *Maluka* to Nigel Stoke's elegant 61-foot classic sloop *Fidelis*. Tony Purkiss again hopes to make the trip in *Etosha*.

David Champtaloup, skipper of the legendary *Caprice of Huon*, expressed a common sentiment when he told the gathering he believed the BBQ cruise keeps growing in popularity because it has two unique qualities.

"The first is the notion of a designated arrival time, not a departure time," he said. "That means we can pick our weather. The second is that there's a socially worthwhile event at the other end. So, unlike a lot of other holiday destinations, the locals are actually glad to see you."

The tradition of the BBQ Cruise has now established itself well beyond its Sydney origins. Boats this year will also come from Brisbane, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and Wollongong to rendezvous in the LHI lagoon.

Some yachts, such as *Fidelis* and Carl Scriber's *Suraya*, have participated in every running of the cruise-in-company. But many in the 2007 fleet will be making their first passage to Lord Howe.

An information evening will be held in late September for skippers and crew wishing to familiarise themselves with radio procedures and the unique mooring arrangements and protocols for sailing visitors to the island.

## **FLAG OFFICERS' DINNER**

The Flag Officers' Dinner this year will be held at the Clubhouse on Friday  
21 September

This is always an outstanding evening and an opportunity to welcome Flag  
Officers from other Sydney Clubs to the SASC

*Numbers are limited — book early — telephone Megan at the Club on 9953 1433*

Cost \$60.00 per head (incl. GST)

## ANNUAL PRIZEGIVING 2007



The annual prizegiving was held at the Club on a perfect winter's day on 30 June. As usual, the arrayed trophies (being admired by Ian Kortlang, above) looked magnificent

All photos by John Jeremy

An excellent buffet lunch was enjoyed by all present (below)







Chris Sligar (centre) and his crew in *Very Tasty* won the Kelly Cup (above)

Maggie Stewart, whose efforts managing all the sailing activities made it all possible, celebrating a great season with a well-deserved sip from the Currawong Cup (below)



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

I am interested in David Payne's article in the June *SASC News* with his story of E. G. Ulm for many reasons.

I spent my first eighteen years in Mosman where my parent's home was on the north side of Middle Head from where we overlooked Balmoral Beach (three minutes run down through the bush) and out past Manly to the Tasman Sea.

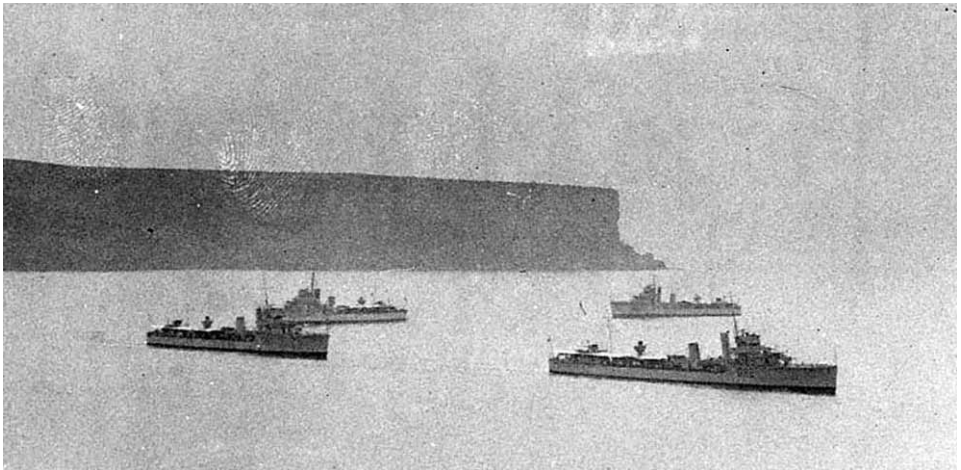
Early one morning in 1933 I was taken by my father along the bush track to Bradleys head to watch the arrival of the five destroyers which were, much later, to be known as the Scrap-iron Flotilla. As we skirted Taylor Bay we could see a lovely, green-hulled yawl, about thirty feet or so in length, moored in the bay. I recall my father saying that she was *Nereid* and that her owner's name was Ulm.

Another memory I have from my childhood is of being on the now-removed ferry wharf at Balmoral (our popular fishing throne) when I may have been ten years old. There I watched a crew rigging a 21-foot yacht which had a very tall Marconi mast. The yacht was held upright against the wharf and I have a hazy recollection which suggests that one crewman replied to an onlooker's question that the yacht was being readied to compete in some interstate championship. Perhaps this yacht was *NSW II*?

And now a question — was *San Pan* in the last line of David Payne's article the same *Sampan* in the photo on page 31 of the April *SASC News*? I know that the latter was a chine-hulled craft as I once observed her close by Bradleys Head during a SASC race. [Yes, the original photo caption of that photo was incorrect, see the photo of San Pan opposite — Ed.]

SLNSW 07980h

This photo from the State Library of NSW is believed to show the future Scrap-iron Flotilla arriving in 1933



A photo of *San Pan* from the SASC archives



Let me explain the reasons for my interest. I was accepted into the SASC in 1939 (the committee then met in a hotel room in the city). I was sailing then in Mervyn Davey's 22 square metre *Jeanette* (sail number A3) through the 1938–39 season (we nearly won the pointscore — see page 42 of *The Amateurs*).

The outbreak of World War II led me to six years in the RAAF followed by a period of extended university study when, for a few times in 1950 or 1951, the Club allowed racing by Payne-Mortlock sliding seat canoes. I sailed *Snark*, the prototype of that design.

After 1952 my employment with the Aeronautical Research Laboratories confined my existence to Melbourne where I still reside. Nevertheless I retain a deep interest in the state of my birth, the suburb of Mosman and appreciate the generosity of the SASC in holding me as a Life member and continuing to post, for my information and enjoyment, the newsletter.

Although I am beyond the age (now 88), ability and means to take part in the sport, I can look back on periods of enjoyable, sometimes scary, sailing, discussions with exports such as Tanner and his student Marchaz and numerable others, as well as participation in the Technical Committee and research for one challenger for the America's Cup, *Dame Pattie*.

*Tom Trimble*

A Payne-Mortlock canoe sailing with the SASC. The yacht in the background is *Ranger*



Dear Sir,

In the June edition of the *SASC News* there was a photograph on page 26 of a small unidentified yacht with sail number A109. Simon Sadubin has researched a late-1930s SASC yacht register and identified her as *Ho-Kai*, belonging to Alec Mitchell. Alec was a well-known boatbuilder and in his later years owned the Church Point marina at Pittwater.

*Southerly*

## TRANSIT ZONE UNDER SYDNEY HARBOUR BRIDGE

NSW Maritime has installed a 'transit zone' (no stopping or drifting) and 15 knot speed restriction under the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

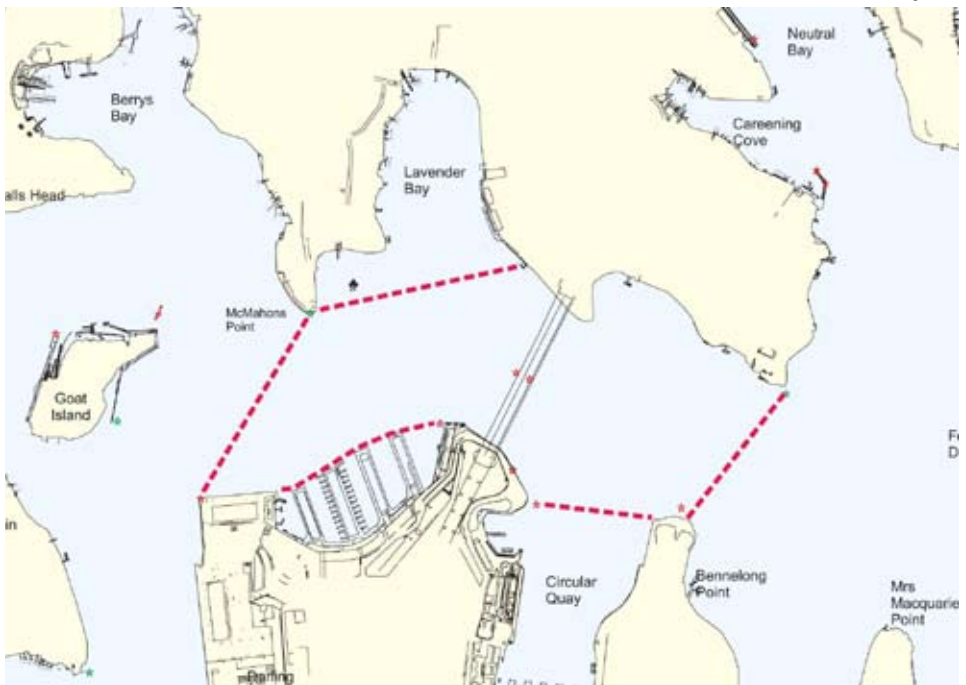
The zone is between Millers Point and Blues Point in the west and to between Kirribilli Point and Bennelong Point in the east.

The waters south of Sydney Cove are excluded and are defined by a line commencing on the eastern extremity of Dawes Point in a easterly direction to the western extremity of Bennelong Point.

In the transit zone which is marked by signage, vessel masters/skippers are not permitted to stop or drift, and must not exceed 15 knots. Masters of vessels breaching the restrictions may be fined up to \$550.

The Transit Zone between Kirribilli Point and Blues Point

NSW Maritime chart from [www.maritime.nsw.gov.au](http://www.maritime.nsw.gov.au)



# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

August 2007

The Annual General Meeting of the SASC held at the clubhouse on the evening of 25 July was attended by 57 members in person and 33 by proxy. The Commodore and other Club officers reported on the activities of the Club in the past year and the meeting adopted the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 May 2007.

The Commodore, Robert Evans, retired at the meeting and was presented with his past Commodore's burgee by the incoming Commodore, John Crawford, who was elected unopposed. The retiring Immediate Past Commodore, Charles Maclurcan was also recognised with a presentation for his long contribution to the Club over many years.

Also elected unopposed for the coming year were Vice Commodore Bill Hogan, Rear Commodore Liam Timms, Honorary Treasurer Tony Clarkson, Honorary Secretary Peter Chapman and Chairman of Racing Guy Irwin. Robert Evans continues on the Board as Immediate Past Commodore.

Ten nominations were received for the eight positions as directors. Elected at the meeting were Trevor Cosh, Val deBurca, Bruce Dover, John Jeremy, Philip Kinsella, Herschel Smith, Garth Stewart, and John Sturrock.

Commodore John Crawford presenting Immediate Past Commodore Rob Evans with his burgee

Photo Liam Timms





# CLIPPER ROUND THE WORLD RACE

## New York to Jersey and Jersey to Holy Head

by  
Richard Falk

Having covered over 32,000 miles in our race around the world we were all aware as we motored out of New York that our adventure of a lifetime was rapidly drawing to a close. The crew was unusually quiet as we cast off our lines and made our way out past the now familiar landmarks of New York. It was a grey and overcast day with heavy rain showers “dampening” spirits. Our last views through the mist and rain were of the Statue of Liberty and the Manhattan skyline as we made our way to sea once again.

We headed downstream, retracing our inbound course, and made our way back to Ambrose light. With little or no wind forecast for the next 24 hours it was again decided to start the race some 100 miles off the coast. Before we knew it we were off and racing again, this time on our last ocean crossing.

We chose a more southerly route along with *Durban*, *Cardiff* and *Glasgow*. The rest of the fleet headed further north hoping for the stronger winds off Newfoundland. We had elected to try and again utilise the more steady and reliable winds of the high pressure system. Initially the weather did as it was forecast. We hooked into some steady breeze and were making good speed towards Jersey and holding the rest of the fleet.

However our good fortunes were short lived and before long the breeze

Photos courtesy Richard Falk

Powering across  
the Atlantic





abated leaving all the southern boats (of which we were one) bobbing on a flat sea with not a breath of wind. To the north the other six boats were picking up steady breeze and as one radio sched after another came and went we had to listen to their leads over us increasing day by day. This was a tough couple of days and unfortunately really determined the outcome of the race only about 15% of the way across the Atlantic.

Eventually the wind built for us and we were able to pull away from *Glasgow*, *Cardiff* and *Durban* making good speed for Jersey. As we approached the Grand Banks off Newfoundland we sailed into some of the thickest fog we had experienced anywhere in the world. With full radar watch we sliced through still water at 10 to 12 knots under spinnaker with the crew poised to douse the kite at a moment's notice if required. We listened on VHF to the strange and haunting accents of the Newfoundland fishing boats. We chuckled as they chatted to each other about the "bizarre radar" signature they could see on their screens. Clearly they were tracking us on radar but had no idea who or what we were.

Late one afternoon, not long after we crossed the western edge of the Grand Banks (site of the infamous Perfect Storm) in light fog, I noticed a dorsal fin alongside us. Upon closer inspection it turned out to be a great white shark. I have dived with many sharks over the years and sighted many whilst sailing but this one at close to 20 feet was certainly one of the biggest. You can imagine my surprise when just a few minutes later we spotted another and then another, all of similar size. In all we spotted about 15 great whites, none of them under 15 feet and all of them feeding. It was a truly amazing sight and one I don't ever expect to see repeated.

As we made our way east we were all painfully aware that our adventure of a lifetime was drawing to an end. In less than a few weeks we would say goodbye to one another and start life ashore again where we had left off almost a year earlier. Conversations became reflective. We talked about our adventures along the way and inevitably about what our plans were for the future. For those of us who had been on the boat since the start of the race it was very evident that we had all changed. Our physical appearance, our attitudes and personalities and our views of the future were all very different to how they had been prior to our departure the previous year. For the first time as we crossed the Atlantic we realised that we were all very different people in many ways to those who had set off from Liverpool at race start.

The mood was buoyant as we reflected on many happy memories. The fact that we were locked into what was at this point a forgone conclusion as far as racing was concerned on this leg meant that we chatted perhaps a little more openly than we may have on previous legs.

As we drew towards the eastern side of the Atlantic we "tied the knot". A nautical term indicating that we had crossed our outbound path and had in fact now officially circumnavigated the planet. We celebrated the event with cigars and relaxed and enjoyed the moment. Unfortunately we also marked the event by sailing into a col — an area of no wind positioned between two high-pressure systems and two low-pressure systems. There we sat for 36 hours whilst we listened on the position reporting scheds to the six boats to the north increasing their lead by more miles every day.

## SASC NEWS

The course was ultimately shortened with a forecast of three days of literally not a breath of wind for the entire length of the English Channel. With *New York Clipper* finishing first another five boats finished ahead of us and arrived in Jersey before we made it in for the obligatory celebrations. Everyone was delighted with *Jersey Clipper's* fifth place result — the best of the entire race to date.

As the last three boats trickled in over the next two days those already in port lived it up and celebrated being “almost” all the way home. With its proximity to the UK many crew members’ families were able to make the short hop over to the island to spend the few days with their “loved ones”. For some of the crew it was the first time they had seen family and friends for almost a year.

With a prize giving and party in a 600-year old castle on the eastern side of Jersey and a cocktail party at a zoo established and run by Gerald Durrell we had a wonderful time sampling the delights of the island. However, after a few days, we were all eager to be off and to complete the two short races still ahead of us.

The race start was again overcast, wet and cursed with light winds. This was definitely becoming a recurring theme. Our race this time was a short one taking us north west from the Channel Islands, around Lands End on the south western end of England before heading northwards up the Irish Sea and into the port of Holyhead in Wales. We coaxed our boats through the challenging tidal conditions of the Channel Islands before once again heading into the western section of the English Channel and making for Lands End.

Tying the Knot



For us on board *Uniquely Singapore* the next two races were crucial. Provided we could stay ahead of *Victoria Clipper* we would move into and retain our fifth-place overall position for the race series. The same obviously applied to them. We could do no better than fifth and no worse than sixth overall at this point. The battle at the top of the leader board was similar with *Western Australia Clipper* and *Durban Clipper* also on virtually equal points.

With this race being so important to our overall standings in the series we were all the more frustrated by the exceedingly light airs presented to us as we worked our way down the English Channel. With about 36 hours of light wind forecast reaching and rounding the tidal gate of Lands End became the all consuming focus aboard *Uniquely Singapore*. Having been within close contact of most of the fleet and sitting around sixth place for the first half of the race we managed to find some extra legs and reached Lands End well ahead of the last four boats. We were delighted to learn that *Victoria* was in last place.

Dodging large volumes of shipping in very light winds kept us all on our toes for hours on end as we approached Lands End. A constant radar watch and non-stop calls on sail trim made this one of the most exhausting races we had experienced to date.

As we sailed up the west coast of Cornwall we elected to go offshore and run the risk of a little more adverse tide in favour of some expected stronger wind. Our gamble paid off and we slowly crept ahead of boats four and five. In the distance as we approached our second last tidal gate we could see boats *Liverpool*, *Western Australia* and *Durban* ahead of us. We were slowly but surely gaining.

Eighteen hours later in the early hours of Friday morning we were within sight of the finish — the Welsh port of Holyhead and still within sight of *Durban* (the boat, not the city). Unfortunately we didn't quite have the legs to catch them but we were only two miles behind as they crossed the line. A characteristic "bullet" off the peak known as Holyhead blew *Durban's* "well used" mid-weight kite to pieces but she was close enough to be able to carry over the line. We finished in fourth place — delighted to have been able to secure our fifth place in the race overall.

We were quickly tied up on the dock and the world seemingly went mad. Holyhead is approximately 60 miles by sea to our final finishing point — Liverpool. This stop was literally to be only half a day — just long enough for the boats to regroup for a short sprint for half points to the finish. Unfortunately after such a close run and hard fought race from Jersey to Holyhead we were all quite spent. Neither I nor most of my crew had slept for the best part of 60 hours and we were well and truly shattered. As we stepped onto the dock we were besieged by Singapore media who were all requiring attention. After a solid two hours of interviews I finally managed to sneak away to my bunk for about 90 minutes sleep.

Through out the afternoon the last six boats arrived in with *Victoria* arriving just two hours prior to the start of the next race. *Western Australia*, in a cunning strategy, had covered *Durban* for the entire duration of the race ensuring that *Durban* had no opportunity to get by them. This secured the overall race lead for them and meant that, with one race still up their sleeve, they could not be beaten for the overall race series.

Stay tuned for the next instalment that sees us race the final sprint to Liverpool.

Safe sailing, *Richard Falk*



Photo John Jeremy

A very successful lunch was hosted by the Flag Officers at the Club on 11 July for past Commodores and honorary life members of the Club.

Attending were (left to right) Laurie Schneider, Charles Maclurcan, Vic Dibben, John Jackson, Bill Merrington, Fred Bevis, Bob Skinner, John Crawford, Nick Cassim, John Morris, Bill Gale, Rob Evans, Peter Garrow, Tony Clarkson, Bill Hogan, Tony Saunders, Bob Lawler, Brian Woods, David Willis and John Jeremy

## **REFLECTIONS OF AN ANCIENT MARINER**

Having been sail boat racing for seventy years I have seen many fashions come and go. Thirty-five years ago people who did not have tiny mains, massive genoas, symmetrical spinnakers and trim tabs were considered very old hat and non-progressive. These days many of the above have gone out of use. We are seeing an increasing use of asymmetrical spinnakers — all yachts in the recent America's Cup races used them.

By using a gaff rig we can set more sail area on a given mast height with more area high up and a more vertical leach. It appears to me that the profile of the America's Cup yachts in Valencia was the same as a high-aspect ratio gaff sail with a spar-less top sail. As it is virtually universally believed that a triangular Bermudan rig is much faster than gaff rig I am at a total loss to explain why all America's Cup contenders used a quadrilateral mainsail.

My late father Cliff Gale maintained, contrary to all contemporary opinion, that the fastest rig of all is the gaff topsail sloop, with the possible exception of a similar cat mainsail. In view of the above could this lone voice have been right?

*Southerly*

# SYDNEY TO SOUTHPORT RACE

August 2007



Photos by John Jeremy

The south-westerly wind ensured a colourful start for the 2007 Sydney to Southport race on Saturday 28 July. SASC Yachts *Azzurro*, *Apres Vous* and *Impi* were amongst the fleet (above)

*Impi* and escort on the way to sea (below)





We welcome the following new members:

Michael Birrell  
Garry Kirkman  
John Macleod  
Ian Marsh  
Rodney Sheehan  
Yvonne Spencer

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## **NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

The next SASC News will be the October 2007 edition. Contributions from members, which are always welcome, should reach the editor by Friday 28 September 2007. Contributions can be in hard copy or sent by email. Photographs are also very welcome.



**PROGRAMME OF EVENTS.**

<p>1921—</p> <p>(1) OCL 22—<i>Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron</i>. Race open to Club Boats. No entrance fee.</p> <p>1st <i>Adelphi</i> 2nd <i>Mini fresh</i> 3rd .....</p> <p>(2) NOV. 15—<i>"A" Class General Handicap</i>. Course No. 1. Prizes—The Commodore's Trophy—1st, £3 3s; 2nd, £2 2s; 3rd, Mr. W. L. Brady's Trophy, £1 1s.</p> <p>1st <i>Matang</i> 2nd <i>Michieff Gumleaf</i> 3rd .....</p> <p>(3) NOV. 22—<i>"B" Class General Handicap</i>. Course No. 2. Prizes—Mr. A. H. Goldsmith's Trophy—1st, £2 2s; 2nd, £1 1s; 3rd, The Club's Trophy, 10s 6d.</p> <p>1st ..... 2nd ..... 3rd .....</p> <p>(4) NOV. 29—<i>Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club</i>. Race open to Club Boats. No entrance fee.</p> <p>1st <i>Gumleaf</i> 2nd <i>Buenaer</i> 3rd <i>Athene</i> .....</p> <p>(5) NOV. 26—<i>"A" Class General Handicap</i>. Course No. 3. Prizes—Mr. F. L. Brown's Trophy—1st, £3 3s; 2nd, £2 2s; 3rd, Mr. W. L. Brady's Trophy, £1 1s.</p> <p>1st <i>Scabird</i> 2nd <i>Matang</i> 3rd <i>Triez</i> .....</p> <p>(6) NOV. 27—<i>"B" Class General Handicap</i>. Course No. 3. Prizes—Mr. E. M. Moore's Trophy—1st, £2 2s; 2nd, £1 1s; 3rd, 10s 6d.</p> <p>1st ..... 2nd ..... 3rd .....</p> <p>(7) DEC 10—<i>"A" Class General Handicap</i>. Course No. 1. Prizes—1st, Trophy £3 3s, presented by Capt. F. G. Waley, C.B.E.; Mr. H. Beaton's Trophy—2nd, £2 2s; 3rd, £1 1s.</p> <p>1st <i>Michieff</i> 2nd <i>Scabird</i> 3rd <i>dead heat</i> .....</p> <p>(8) DEC 17—<i>"B" Class General Handicap</i>. Course No. 6. Prizes—Mr. Paul Ross' Trophy—1st, £2 2s; 2nd, £1 1s; 3rd, The Club's Trophy, 10s 6d.</p> <p>1st ..... 2nd ..... 3rd .....</p> <p>DEC 24—<i>Pittwater Regatta</i>. Race open to Club Boats.</p> <p>1st <i>Corella</i> 2nd <i>Boomerang</i> 3rd <i>Gumleaf</i> .....</p> <p>(9) JAN. 7—<i>Handicap</i> (No entrance). Open to "A" Class and 21ft. Restricted Class Boats. Course No. 4 (Winter). Prizes—Mr. J. J. Davie's Trophy—1st, £3 3s; Mr. C. H. S. Brady's Trophy—2nd, £3 3s; 3rd, £2 2s.</p> <p>1st ..... 2nd ..... 3rd .....</p>	<p>1922—</p> <p><i>Inez</i> 2nd <i>Boomerang</i></p> <p>(10) JAN. 14—<i>Anniversary Regatta</i>. Race open to Club Boats.</p> <p>(11) JAN. 21—<i>Championship</i>. Handicap on all area and overall results. Course No. 1. Prizes—1st, the Kelly Cup for one year and the Vice-Commodore's Trophy, £2 2s; 2nd, Mr. Jas. George's Trophy, £2 2s; 3rd, Mr. Jas. Alderton's Trophy, £1 1s. Total allowance at finish. Entrance fee, 2s.</p> <p>1st <i>Inez</i> 2nd <i>Gumleaf</i> 3rd <i>Corella</i> .....</p> <p>(12) FEB. 4—<i>Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron</i>. Race open to Club Boats. No entrance fee.</p> <p>1st <i>Matang</i> 2nd <i>Adelphi</i> 3rd <i>Scabird</i> .....</p> <p>(13) FEB. 11—<i>Junior's Race</i>. General Handicap. Boats to be sailed by members under the age of 21 years. Course No. 2. Prizes—1st, winning whippers—Mr. F. J. Davy Macarthur's Trophy—1st, £3 3s; 2nd, £2 2s; 3rd, Mr. Jas. Alderton's Trophy, £1 1s. No Entrance fee.</p> <p>1st ..... 2nd ..... 3rd .....</p> <p>(14) FEB. 18—<i>"A" Class General Handicap</i>. Course No. 4 (Winter). Prizes—Mr. H. M. Shirley's Trophy—1st, £3 3s; 2nd, £2 2s; 3rd, £1 1s.</p> <p>1st ..... 2nd ..... 3rd .....</p> <p>(15) MAR. 4—<i>"A" Class General Handicap</i>. Course No. 1. Prizes—1st, Mr. F. L. Carter's Trophy, £3 3s; 2nd, Mr. A. Bowen's Trophy, £2 2s; 3rd, Mr. R. A. McDonald's Trophy, £1 1s.</p> <p>1st ..... 2nd ..... 3rd .....</p> <p>(16) MAR. 11—<i>"B" Class General Handicap</i>. Course No. 3. Prizes—The Club's Trophy—1st, £2 2s; 2nd, £1 1s; 3rd, 10s 6d.</p> <p>1st ..... 2nd ..... 3rd .....</p> <p>(17) MAR. 18—<i>"A" Class General Handicap</i>. Course No. 1. Prizes—Mr. S. M. Deagarter's Trophy—1st, £3 3s; 2nd, £2 2s; 3rd, Mr. R. A. McDonald's Trophy, £1 1s.</p> <p>1st ..... 2nd ..... 3rd .....</p> <p>(18) MAR. 25—<i>Closing Day</i>.</p> <p>1st <i>Corella</i> 2nd <i>Cherryfoot</i> 3rd <i>Gumleaf</i> .....</p>
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The sailing programme for the year 1921–22 lists, amongst others, James Alderton as a member of the Committee of the SASC. My father told me that James was a successful business man who was a very admirable gentleman, well mannered and dressed, with his shoes usually spatted. He raced his 21-foot restricted-class boat *Gumleaf* with the SASC and RSYS at that time.

His son Jimmy, a very capable seaman and sailor, won many championships in Cadet dinghies and 18-footers, notably the 18-footer *Dee Why*. Jim sailed *Dee Why* out of our Cremorne premises which was then a commercial boatshed in the 1930s. Brian Gale was his for'ard hand.

Jimmy's grandson Orion is a SASC member and keeps his gaffer *Gumleaf* on a Club mooring and, being a boat builder, is going to build a replica of *Dee Why*. With the help of famous skiffie Jimmy O'Rourke, Orion is at present drawing a lines plan of *Dee Why*. Orion has passed to me the 1921–22 programme, with some of the placings filled in by his great grandfather, to be lodged with the SASC archives.

*Southerly*



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