



SASC NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SYDNEY AMATEUR SAILING CLUB



FEBRUARY 2025

SYDNEY AMATEUR SAILING CLUB

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The SASC News is published six times per year.

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COMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY
2025

SATURDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2025

Point score race for Super 30 Division, Classic Division, Cruiser Racer Division and Cavalier 28 Division

SUNDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2025

Point score race for Sunday Non-spinnaker Divisions

SATURDAY 1 MARCH 2025

Sydney Harbour Regatta, Day 1. Windward/leeward races for Super 30s

SUNDAY 2 MARCH 2025

Sydney Harbour Regatta, Day 2. Windward/leeward races for Super 30s

FRIDAY 7 MARCH 2025

Friday Twilight race — Early start at 1730

SATURDAY 8 MARCH 2025

Point score race for Super 30 Division, Classic Division, Cruiser Racer Division and Cavalier 28 Division

SUNDAY 9 MARCH 2025

Point score race for Sunday Non-spinnaker Divisions. Karoo Trophy race for Classic Division

SATURDAY 15 MARCH 2025

Point score race for Classic Division, Mixed Fleet Division and Commodores Cup

SATURDAY 22 MARCH 2025

Point score race for Super 30 Division, Classic Division, Cruiser Racer Division and Cavalier 28 Division. Summer Trophy Day

SUNDAY 23 MARCH 2025

Point score race for Sunday Non-spinnaker Divisions
Summer Trophy Day

SATURDAY 29 MARCH 2025

Club Championship — Kelly Cup

SUNDAY 30 MARCH 2025

Ranger, Couta and Folkboat Sprints

**NEED THE
TENDER?**

Call

Nancy K
on

0418 678 690

or

Jack Millard
on

0418 678 819

(race days)



Welcome back from holidays,

We are already well into racing and I wish you all a safe and successful time on the water. Since Christmas there have been three races abandoned due to storm warnings, so when we do manage to start a race we should be truly thankful. I just wanted to share this letter of appreciation to all of us at the Club from one of our members.

“I found the SASC nine years ago by accident and, as a result have had some great sailing experiences and made some wonderful friends. When we are out on the water, I often say to Bill (*Isabella*) what a wonderful club the SASC is and, just as often, he says the same to me. Sunday’s sprint races were just amazing, one of the most memorable sailing experiences I’ve ever had. Close, competitive racing in perfect conditions, in beautiful boats, in the best of the Corinthian tradition. Afterwards, back at the Club, the atmosphere was simply electrifying.”

Best wishes to all,

David Jones

As David notes, when we get it right it is wonderful, however, we are the Amateurs and sometimes things don’t go to plan. Two recent issues which we are looking to improve upon are the rubbish management at the Green Shed and the booking of food/tables for après Twilight racing. These are both responsibilities shared between members and the Club staff, and it works well when we talk to each other. Please let us know if you are coming to dinner and if it’s time to swap out the bin!

After 50+ years sailing on the harbour I sometimes catch myself feeling a little blasé about going out for another race. That is until I notice a new face at the Club or hear someone like David just relishing the wonder of it all. They take me back to my first days at the Club over 20 years ago. Waiting on the pontoon for the tender, rigging and setting sails, turning off the engine and without a word spoken the miracle is there again.

There’s plenty of racing ahead of us with the Sydney Harbour Regatta and the various divisions of the Club races leading in to the pointy end of the season. Be mindful of the rules whilst sailing and test your crew’s knowledge regularly. Everyone on board should have a basic understanding of right of way and keeping awareness of other boats a priority. After Summer racing winds up there will be cruises and parties so reach out to senior members who know where the fun is.

If you are enjoying your sailing and time spent at the clubhouse let your friends know about us. Louise Macauley (Crew Concierge) with help from Philip Brown has done a great job at finding places on boats for people to get a first taste or reacquaint themselves with the joy of



sailing. We get at least four inquiries a week and the Club membership is all the healthier for this. If anyone has an hour a week to help Louise please contact the Office or Racing. Jim Paskalis is out of action for a month, so our tender drivers and volunteer drivers will be stretched. Wishing Jim a speedy recovery and if anyone can step up to help with the tenders I know it will be appreciated.

Looking forward to all that the Club offers and catching up with old and new friends.

Peter Scott
Commodore



Photo John Jeremy

Isabella sailing in the Sprints on 19 January

Article by
Martin van der
Wal

Many of you would know that the indefatigable Fred Bevis has spent the last decade or more undertaking the Herculean task of researching the club's history, creating order out of chaos, and making it available to all on the club website. Our knowledge base has expanded well beyond what many, including myself, thought possible.

Since my last epistle to the newsletter was published, which drew attention to Hoana's centenarian status and the obscurity of her actual launch date, Fred embarked on a perilous journey into the dark cave of Trove; wrestling with the fuzzy script dragon and the beasts of choppy microfiche to emerge triumphant, holding aloft the Grail itself. Back in the days of genuine newspapers, the Sydney Morning Herald published sports results on the back pages. The earliest mention of *Hoana* is her entry as the scratch boat in the Handicap A Class SASC in October 1925, helmed by A. Buckle. We know that a Sydney stockbroker, Lex Buckle, commissioned her construction, and indeed, his name appears on the helm of subsequent races until 25th February -1926. With Fred's research establishing the launch date and a refined list of SASC owners, the puzzle pieces I have assembled over the years regarding the mystery of the two Hoana's have fallen into place.

A photograph and article in 'The Australian Motor Boat and Yachting Monthly,' dated 1st February 1926, show her sailing under the A5 sail number, accompanied by the text, "*Hoana*, the latest addition to the Sydney Amateurs Club's register, is the type of cruiser that would make the eyes of any genuine boat lover glisten." A lengthy gap then occurred before she reappeared in November 1926 under the same ownership. This *Hoana*, however, is not the original; two Hoana's were built by the same boatbuilder for the same owner. Henceforth, we shall refer to them as *Hoana I* and *Hoana II*. How confusing is that? Over the years, and amidst the confusion between the two boats, the launch dates of both boats have become the subject of Chinese whispers. When I purchased *Hoana I*, old-timers were certain she had been launched in 1920, while others proposed 1924, and many were adamant that it was 1926.

How did it happen, you ask? Given that February 25, 1926, marks her last recorded race and she had raced every weekend until then, and with the season still young, we can roughly date the next part of the saga. Shortly after that final race, gale-force winds drove *Hoana I* from her mooring in Sirius Cove. She ended up port-side to, in what was described as a rocky cave. Despite her owner's best efforts, she sustained severe damage, with the port side ground away. She was written off by her insurer, but Charles Hayes, the builder, accepted the wreck as part payment for her replacement.

Charlie and his sons were regarded as premier boat builders on Sydney Harbour; they certainly proved it by having Hoana I's replacement compete in her first race on November 8, 1926.

The new boat took just seven months to build. Using the same moulds as *Hoana I*, she had one distinction: with longer than-ordered Kauri planking arriving from New Zealand, it was possible to spread the moulds apart slightly.

Hoana II ended up being LOD 33ft, (her official measured length for the Brisbane to Gladstone), compared to *Hoana I* at LOD 30ft. *Hoana II* was raced successfully at the SASC by owners Lex Buckle (1926-1930), Oscar Backhouse (1930-1934) and R.E Hughes (1934-1940), until her sale to George Pickers, a well-known Brisbane Sailmaker in 1949. Pickers purchased *Hoana II* for the express purpose of entering her into the inaugural Brisbane to Gladstone Race, Easter 1949. This was the first offshore event Pickers had attempted in. She came across the finish line in first position, setting a race record that lasted until 1955.

Hoana I was rebuilt by Hayes and Sons and relaunched in 1926, around the same time as *Hoana II*. She served as the Hayes family boat. The Hayes family were members of the Club, but *Hoana I* was not raced during this time. Hayes and his sons were hotshot competitors in the 18 footers, designing, building and racing these extreme machines for high wagers. The only mention of *Hoana I* is that over the Christmas break 1928, she stood by to assist Stan Spain's '*Mischief*', as he had got her into trouble cutting the corner at the Barrenjoey Headland, and she was on the rocks. Recounted to me by an old-timer many years ago, Charlie Hayes and his son repeatedly sailed in under the headland to try and pass a rope; it was blowing a stiff Nor-Easter, you can imagine the scene! During a gybe to run back one more time, Charlie was knocked unconscious by the boom. His son, realising that it had now turned into a rescue rather than a salvage, quickly sailed around the corner to Station Beach and hailed a work launch from the boatyard. The launch made its way out, rescuing the crew of '*Mischief*', which by that time was being pounded to pieces.

Hayes sold her to Charles Maclurcan Snr in 1940. The Maclurcan family brought *Hoana I* back onto the SASC racing register until selling her to Harry West, a well-known sailmaker, in 1947. He got her back into full racing trim, replacing the Bermudian Rig Hayes had tried on her with a short gaff setup. In 1950 he sold her to another exemplary sailmaker, Keith Brown. Between these two owners, she racked up an impressive array of trophies, including the Kelly Cup. Brown sold her to a Mr Cook in 1958, and he sold her to Joe Adams in 1959. Joe and Anne Adams owned the boat for 18 years. Under their stewardship, she accomplished a return voyage to New Zealand and a world circumnavigation.



On their return, Joe and Anne lived aboard *Hoana I* on a mooring near Towlers Bay for several years.

I have it on the authority of Hank Kauffman, that *Hoana I* influenced Joe and his then-partner, Bob Miller (Ben Lexcen), when they collaborated in drawing the lines for *Apollo I*—1969. As Hank says, “With her deep sharp entry, long waterline, and flat, broad run aft, she was in sharp contrast to the balanced hull shapes that were popular in that era.” Hank also states that this input from *Hoana I* informed many of their subsequent designs.

Hank owned *Hoana I* from 1977 until 1982. He built a new mast, gaff and boom, converting her back to gaff rig. Joe had bought the boat from Keith Brown as a hybrid, gaff / Bermudian. A very high aspect ratio Bermudian could be flown or a short gaff main could be hoisted, a main that looked very similar to today’s square tops. Joe and Ann did all their voyaging with her rigged as a Bermudian cutter, Joe told me that her current gaff rig was her best for racing around the cans. However, for voyaging, he would prefer the high-aspect Bermudian due to the chaff issue.

In 1982, Hank sold *Hoana I* to William Chadwick. William then sold the boat to me in 1987. William had been a sixteen-year-old foredeck hand on *Hoana I* at some time in her history and had always vowed to own the boat one day. The day came, but Bill was now an old man; she was too much of a handful for him. Bill is fondly remembered for his habit of arriving at the club from his sheep station out past Bathurst clutching a large tin of boiled ham, a flagon of sherry, and his shotgun (?). *Hoana I* was moored right in front of the club. Staying onboard, he used the club’s facilities until both the ham and the sherry had all been consumed, usually a week or two. Climbing back into his old Mercedes Estate wagon, he would disappear until the next time.

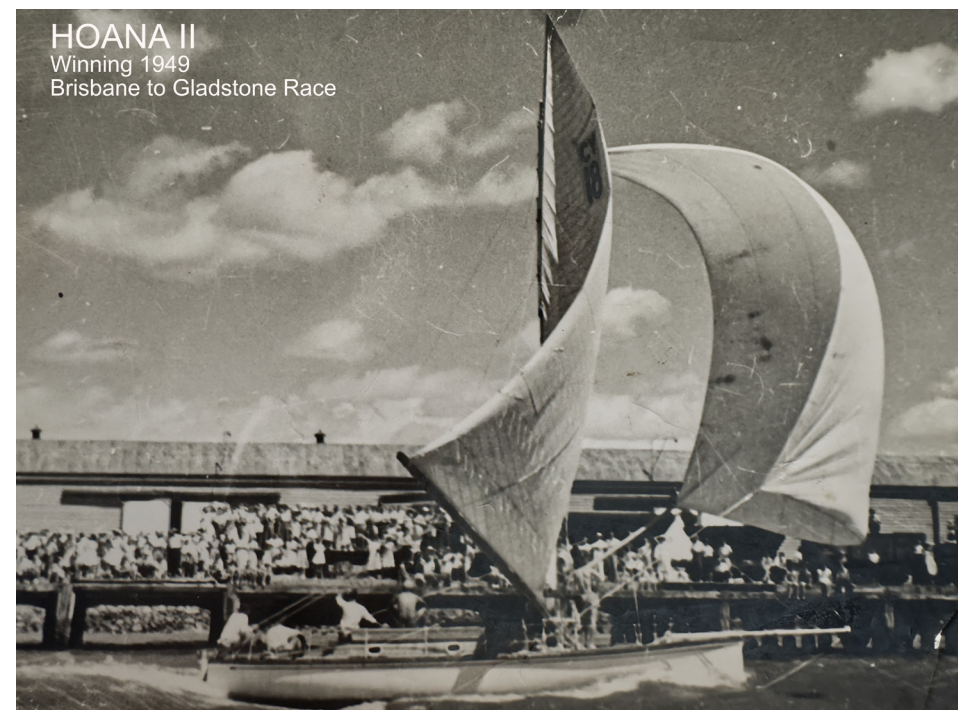
Around 2008, I engaged in some Sherlocking, attempting to track down *Hoana II*. Denis Drouyn, a historian at the Queensland Yacht Club, came back with a lot of information. *Hoana II*, by establishing a race record for the first Brisbane to Gladstone, was a bit of a legend at the club. Denis had witnessed the start and the finish of the race and knew all about her history over the years. She had been a club boat from 1949-1964. Over that time, three owners had kept her going on the race register. In one of the letters I had exchanged with Joe Adams, he mentioned he had checked her out in Brisbane as they had sailed up the coast on the first part of their circumnavigation in the early sixties. He did “not think she was as good as the original”, but he didn’t elaborate further. So we know she was still around in the mid-60s, but then she vanished.



Denis Drouyn came up with the answer. During the preparations for the 50th Brisbane to Gladstone race in 1999, the club received a letter from a chap named Bob Burnett of Perth; Bob had gone west but had previously been the owner of *Sari Marais*, a QYC yacht, An old crew member of his, Ray Barrett, a well-known Australian actor of the time, had contacted him out of the blue. With the 50th coming up, Ray’s memory had been jogged, and he thought it the right thing to pass on what he knew of the fate of *Hoana II*.

Between gigs as a radio announcer and actor, Ray had been obliged to earn a crust as a Correctional Officer in the 70’s. A couple of young drug smugglers were locked in the WA prison where he worked. They had been caught entering Australian waters near Port Hedland with a yacht full of marihuana from Indonesia. The yacht’s name was *Hoana*!

The boat was impounded beached high and dry, with a rope attaching her to a tree. Her ultimate fate is unknown; what we do know is that Customs generally burnt boats like this when evidence was no longer required, with the metals sold as scrap. Failing a trip to the Perth Archives, where I’ve been told the microfiche files are available to me for inspection, we will never know. What we do know is that our *Hoana*, the original, who, I think I can safely say, is the only one still afloat, is officially 100 years old in October of this year. Mystery solved.



CLASSIC HALF-MODELS DONATED TO THE SASC

David Salter introduces the two exquisite half-models recently added to the Club's heritage collection

For those of us now well past our "three score years and ten" allotted lifespan (Psalm 90; Verse 10), the personal ownership of treasured objects tends to lose much of its appeal. We become more concerned that they should outlive us in good condition and continue to be valued for their inherent qualities and place in history.

Long friendships can yield wonderful rewards. I have known Max Whitnall for more than 40 years. Max was a remarkably good sailor whose record is largely unrecognised. As a youngster he was almost impossible to beat racing VJs on the Parramatta River. He won state and national titles in the Moth class and skippered his own 16-footer aged just 16.

But it was his achievements as a for'd hand that really impress. Max sailed 'up front' for Jim Hardy when they won the World 505 Championships in 1966, defeating Paul Elvstrom in the process. They placed third in the World Tempests at Falmouth in 1971. Max also crewed for Craig Whitworth and Richard Coxon in the FDs. He then competed at a high level in the Soling and Etchells classes.

Aged 59, Max bought the beautiful 41-foot Sparkman & Stephens sloop *Vittoria*. A love affair with S&S had begun. He sailed it solo on Sydney Harbour three or four times a week, often to watch his talented son Matt race with success in the Dragons and Etchells. In 2004 he generously let me borrow *Vittoria* for the BBQ cruise to Lord Howe Island. My crew was Jim Hardy, Colin Betts and Norm Hyett – the quintessential 'old and bold' brigade. We often sailed together with Jim on *Nerida*, outings that Max always enjoyed.

Max was a successful businessman and had the resources to pursue his special interests. He commissioned beautiful half-models, not only of *Vittoria*, but of three great S&S classics: *Dorada*, *Stormy Weather* and *Bolero*. He also acquired half-models of Eric Hiscock's double-circumnavigator *Wanderer III* and of a classic *Couta*. Worried that he might fall off the boat — or run over some kid in a dinghy — Max sold *Vittoria* after 20 years of happy ownership.

Matt Whitnall is now "de-cluttering" his parents' home and I was delighted when he asked me if I could help distribute some of the wonderful sailing artefacts his father had collected over the years. *Dorada* won Gaffers Day when she visited Australia in 2017 and the *Coutas* are part of SASC heritage. So, it seemed fitting that those two half-models should be added to our collection and displayed at the club.



The *Dorada* model was made in 2010 by Scott Chambers of Half-Hull Classics in Seattle



The *Couta* model was made in 2009 by Australian craftsman Alan Black

VALE MIKE POWER

Michael Power, 1940 – December 2024.

Mike was honoured for his service as the Club's tender driver, with a presentation of the burgee in 2019, 'in recognition and appreciation for 15 years outstanding service to the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club 2004 – 2019'.





Member of the Order of Australia
Ian Roderick Macintosh AM

SASC member Ian Macintosh AM was honoured as a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to the media and broadcast industry in the 2025 Australia Day Honours List.

Ian is one of the driving forces behind the Reflections Project which has captured interviews with around 40 SASC Members. You can listen to the first 16 podcasts here [Podcasts - Sydney Amateur Sailing Club](#).

Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the General Division
Mr Ian Roderick Macintosh, NSW

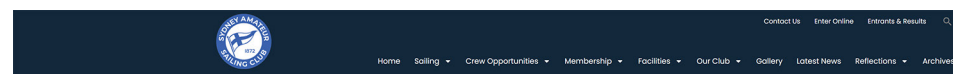
For significant service to the media and broadcast industry.

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

- Reporter, Radio, Port Moresby, and TDT, Perth.
- Foreign Correspondent, North Asia (Tokyo), North America (New York), South East Asia (Singapore and Jakarta).
- Chief Correspondent, Europe, London.
- General Manager, Asia, Singapore.
- Editor, National TV News, Sydney.
- Acting International Editor, The National, and Executive Producer, Four Corners, Sydney.
- Head, International Operations, Sydney.
- Employee, 1970-1996.

- Former Director and Vice President, Turner International Asia Pacific.
- Former Senior Vice President, Asia Pacific.
- Former Consultant. • Employee, 1997-2017. Media - Other
- Independent Journalist Member, Australian Press Council, since 2022.
- Steering Committee Member, Australia Asia Pacific Media Initiative, since 2018.
- International Media Consultant, since 2017. Other
- Founding Member, Old Asia Hands, since 2018.

REFLECTIONS



Reflections



Reflections | Podcasts | The Crew

This oral history collection records the stories of generations of Amateur members, among them flag officers, notable achievers, perennial volunteers and inveterate raconteurs.

The podcasts are an enduring legacy for our club in the wake of its 150th anniversary in 2022.

In keeping with the SASC's long and proud tradition of self-help, the interviews were recorded and produced by fellow members of 'the best kept secret on Sydney Harbour'. To them, and their clubmates who generously agreed to tell their stories, provided photographs, or assisted with background research, our gratitude.

We also pay our respects to the families and friends of those Amateurs who've 'crossed the bar' since sharing their memories.

The Reflections crew recently added three more podcasts to the club's growing oral history collection.

The latest additions feature two former Commodores, Tony Clarkson and John Crawford, and the SASC's legendary 'chief engineer', Trevor Cosh.

These bring to 15 the number of podcasts now online at <https://sasc.com.au/reflections>

Currently in production are Jack Earl OAM, Robert Evans, Guy Irwin and John Jeremy AM.

More of the 40 interviews recorded to mark the Club's 150th anniversary will be added to the Reflections site in coming months.





Kismet chasing *Cocody* at the start of the Rolex Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, 25 December 2024



Kismet at the start of the Rolex Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, 25 December 2024



Orotan at the start of the Rolex Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, 25 December 2024



Vanity and crew heading out to join the SASC Ranger, Couta and Folkboat Sprints on January 19, 2025.



Etrenne following Vanity in the SASC Ranger, Couta and Folkboat Sprints on January 19, 2025.



Windermere and Isabella chasing Beowulf and Ronja in the SASC Ranger, Couta and Folkboat Sprints on January 19, 2025.



Cherub flying past Clark Island in the SASC Ranger, Couta and Folkboat Sprints on January 19, 2025.



Cherub, Ranger and Etenne chasing the *Couta* boat in the SASC Ranger, Couta and Folkboat Sprints on January 19, 2025.



Taking time for a photograph on *Vanity* in the SASC Ranger, Couta and Folkboat Sprints on January 19, 2025.



Ronja, Windermere, Isabella, Vivienne Marie and Beowulf compete in the SASC Ranger, Couta and Folkboat Sprints on January 19, 2025.



Volunteer and Etenne in the SASC Ranger, Couta and Folkboat Sprints on January 19, 2025.



Spinnakers up on *Ranger* and *Cherub* in the run past Point Piper in the SASC Ranger, Cousta and Folkboat Sprints on January 19, 2025



Anitra V and *Solveigh* at the Halvorsen Centenary Flotill at the ANMM, Sydney on January 14 2024

WHAT TEMPERATURE WILL IT BE TODAY?

FEBRUARY

2025

Article by
Stuart Anderson

What will the temperature be today? While this may seem like a simple question, the answer is far from straightforward. The temperature measured by a standard dry-bulb thermometer in a shaded, wind-free area might read 20°C. However, this only reflects the actual air temperature. At the same location, the apparent temperature—how it feels to a person—can vary significantly based on factors like wind and humidity. For instance, the apparent temperature could feel as cool as 12°C in windy conditions or as warm as 28°C in humid, still air. This variation in perceived temperature greatly influences comfort, especially during outdoor activities like sailing.

The human body generates heat at approximately 170 watts on average, with the circulatory system distributing it throughout the body. Enzymes function optimally within a narrow temperature range, requiring the brain to tightly regulate core temperature, typically between 36.7°C and 37.2°C. To maintain this balance, the body exchanges heat with its environment through mechanisms like the dilation or contraction of blood vessels and the activation of sweat glands.

Heat flows naturally from higher to lower temperatures. While skin may temporarily tolerate extremes between 25°C and 49°C, 33°C is considered normal and comfortable. Shivering begins when skin temperature drops to around 30°C. If the air temperature is 20°C, the temperature difference creates a heat transfer driving force of 13°C. In still air, the rate of heat transfer is proportional to this temperature difference and the heat transfer coefficient, typically around 5 watts per square metre per degree Celsius (W/m²·°C).

Wind significantly enhances heat transfer by replacing the warm air layer near the skin with cooler air, maintaining a steep temperature gradient. At wind speeds of 10 m/s (~20 knots), the heat transfer coefficient can increase to around 75 W/m²·°C. Similarly, air, a poor conductor, acts as an insulator when trapped, as in a down jacket. In contrast, water conducts heat over 20 times more efficiently than air, explaining why an 80°C sauna is tolerable, but an 80°C bath is not.

These principles are critical when sailing. Wet clothing in windy conditions accelerates cooling due to water's high heat transfer rate and wind's ability to remove heat, potentially leading to hypothermia even at mild temperatures. The skin's cooling mechanisms also play a role. When skin temperature reaches 35°C, sweat glands activate,

releasing sweat composed of 99% water. Evaporation absorbs energy from the skin, removing 2260 joules of heat per gram of sweat, creating a cooling effect.

Wind enhances this process by replacing moisture-saturated air near the skin with drier air, allowing evaporation to continue.

The air's capacity to carry water vapour depends on temperature and pressure. For example, at sea level, air at 20°C can hold up to 17.3 grams of water vapour per cubic metre, while air at 40°C can hold 51.1 grams. Relative humidity compares the actual water vapour content to this maximum. At 50% humidity and 20°C, the air will contain only 8.65 grams of water vapour per cubic metre. High humidity reduces evaporation, making the air feel hotter and limiting the body's cooling ability.

Interestingly, drinking warm fluids in hot weather can enhance cooling. Warm drinks elevate core body temperature slightly, promoting sweating and increasing the cooling effect. Conversely, cold drinks lower core temperature, reducing sweating and cooling efficiency. Another curious phenomenon is related to body size: smaller individuals lose heat more readily due to their higher surface area-to-volume ratio compared to larger individuals.

To quantify how temperature feels, the Australian Bureau of Meteorology uses the Steadman model to calculate apparent temperature. This model accounts for temperature, humidity, and wind but excludes solar radiation:

$$\text{Apparent Temperature} = Ta + 0.33 \times \rho - 0.70 \times \omega - 4.00$$

Where:

- Ta = dry bulb temperature (°C),
- ρ = water vapor pressure (hPa), calculated as: $\rho = (\text{relative humidity} / 100) \times 6.105 \times e^{(17.27 \times Ta / (237.7 + Ta))}$,
- ω = wind speed (m/s) at 10 metres elevation.

For example, if Ta is 20°C, wind speed (ω) is 5 m/s (~10 knots), and relative humidity is 50%, water vapor pressure (ρ) is: $\rho = (50 / 100) \times 6.105 \times e^{(17.27 \times 20 / (237.7 + 20))} = 11.7 \text{ hPa}$.

Substituting values: **Apparent Temperature = 20 + 0.33 × 11.7 - 0.70 × 5 - 4 = 16.3°C.**

Thus, while the dry bulb temperature is 20°C, the apparent temperature feels closer to 16.3°C due to wind and humidity. Doubling the wind speed to 10 m/s (~20 knots) lowers the apparent temperature to 12.8°C. Sydney's mean apparent temperature is 16.2°C, near Earth's average surface temperature of 15°C.

Understanding how the air temperature, wind and humidity will influence the perceived temperature can help sailors prepare for the likely conditions and create a more enjoyable sailing experience.



*Extreme high tide of 1.62m at 8:48AM, followed by a low of 0.23m at 3:31 on 18 January 2025.
Photo
David Salter*



DON'T HITCH A LIFT ON A TUG

Article by
David Jones

In my article *The Capsized Tug – A Postscript* (SASC News April 2023) I mentioned the steam tug Harrington, which was pulled over and sunk in Swansea docks while acting as stern tug on the tanker Stanmore. This was in 1954, and I saw the tug after she had been raised. Fast forward 70 years, and the UK's Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MIAB) has recently produced yet another report into the sinking of a stern tug, entitled – Report on the investigation of the capsize and sinking of the tug Biter with the loss of two lives while assisting the passenger vessel Hebridean Princess off Greenock, Scotland on 24 February 2023. The report refers to a further five MAIB investigations into tug sinking, the earliest (1998) entitled – Girting, capsize and sinking of workboat/tug Trijnie, while assisting petroleum products tanker Tillerman, with loss of life. The following diagrams show what is going on (they are taken from the above MAIB reports, are Crown Copyright, and are permitted to be reproduced here).

Figure 1 shows what is meant by Girting. This is the capsize moment caused by the tension in the tow-rope and is equal to the lateral resistance of the hull.

Figure 2 shows the situation with Trijnie. She had come alongside the moving tanker to pass up her tow-rope rope, then peeled-off to starboard to end up stern-to-stern aft of the tanker. But before she was half-way round, she stalled the turn. The tanker pulled her sideways through the water, and she girted and capsized.

Had the towing hook been located above the transom (Figure 3) this would not have happened. The towing hooks on tugs tend to be positioned well forward of the transom. One cure is to use a Gog-rope. This is fastened to the tow-rope and used to move the effective position of the hook aft.

Figure 4 shows the effect that a gog-rope would have had. Trijnie does not stall the turn during the peel-off manoeuvre. In the Biter incident a gog-rope was being used. However, Hebridean Princess was making 4.6 knots. This was above the limits recommended by the port authority: "When making fast and letting go a conventional tug, speed and the orientation of the tug are critical factors. The Pilot is to ensure that speed is through the water NOT speed over the ground. It is generally accepted that 2 to 3 knots is appropriate for conventional tugs but the pilot should check with the tug master on a case by case basis."



As Figure 5 shows, the lateral resistance of a hull increases as the square of the lateral speed. If the speed had been 3 knots, the heeling force would have been more than halved. At 2 knots, the heeling force would have been five times less. Clearly, peel-off is a critical manoeuvre and has to be carried out with appropriate preparation and care. I had my first ride on a working tug as a small child. I might think twice before doing that again!

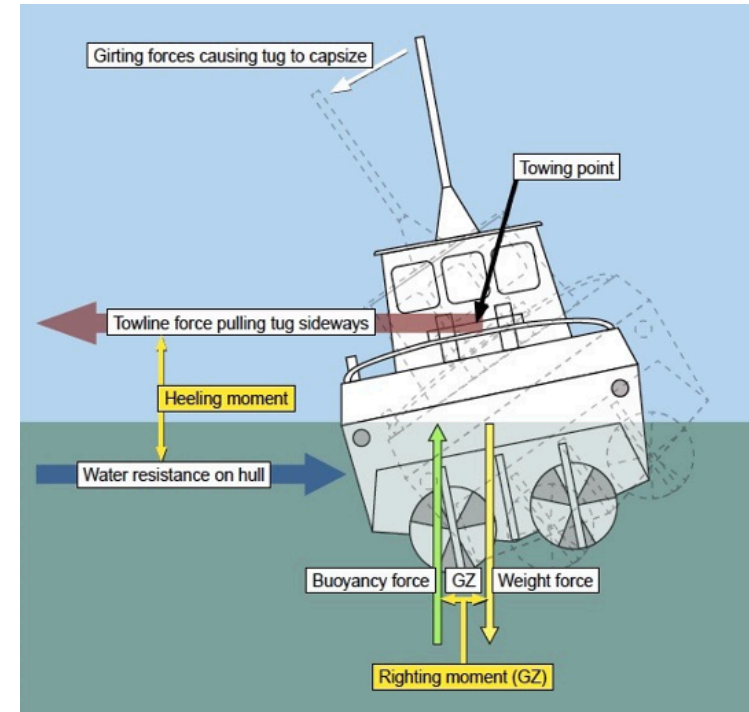


Figure 1

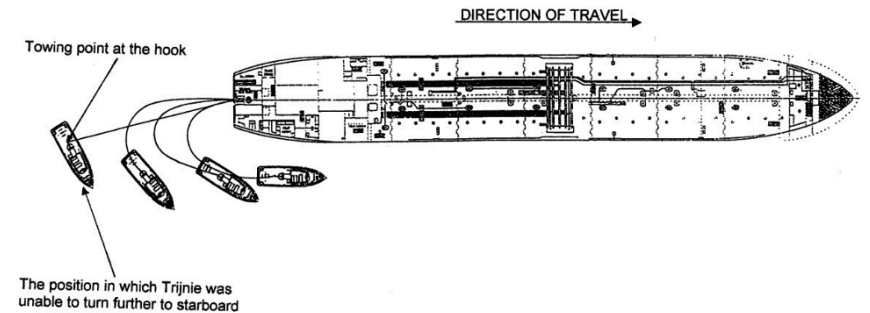


Figure 2

Trijnie making her peel-off manoeuvre to starboard without a gog rope (Tug and ship to scale)

The movement of the towing point towards the tug's stern causes the bow to swing to starboard and prevents the tug being towed sideways and girting

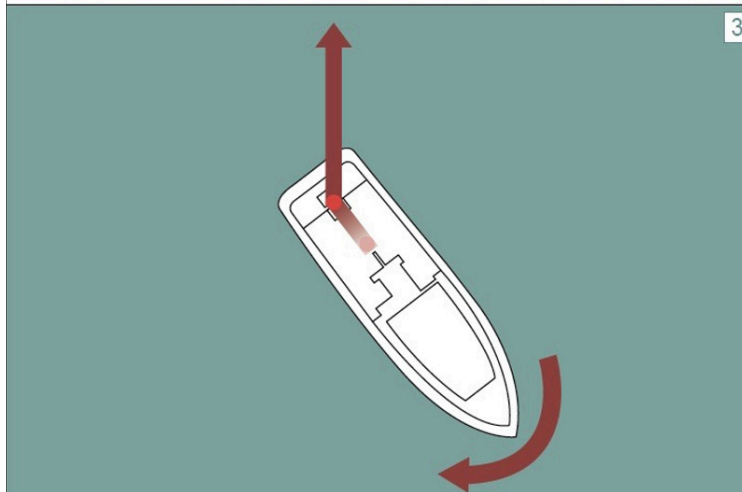


Figure 3

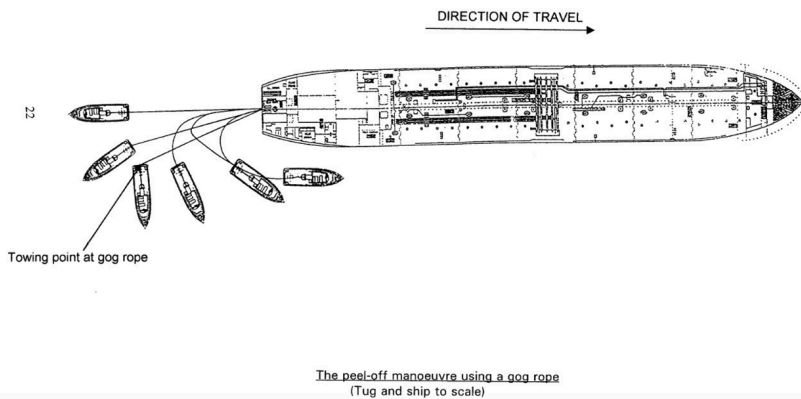


Figure 4

Towing speed (V)	Factor affecting resultant heeling force (V ²)
2	4
3	9
4	16
4.6	21.2

Table 3: Towing speed vs factor affecting resultant heeling force

Figure 5



FLIP isn't your typical ship. At 355 feet long, it was designed to do the unthinkable: flip from a horizontal floating position to a vertical one, submerging 300 feet of its length below the ocean surface. This unique capability allowed it to become an exceptionally stable platform, unaffected by surface waves—a perfect sentinel for studying acoustics, wave dynamics, and marine life.

Reproduced from articles by Baird Maritime, John Grady and Mike Schuler.

The vessel was designed, built, and operated by Scripps' Marine Physical Laboratory in the late 1950s, developed as a cost-effective alternative to using submarines for accessing the water column below the surface, which was highly sought after by oceanographers.

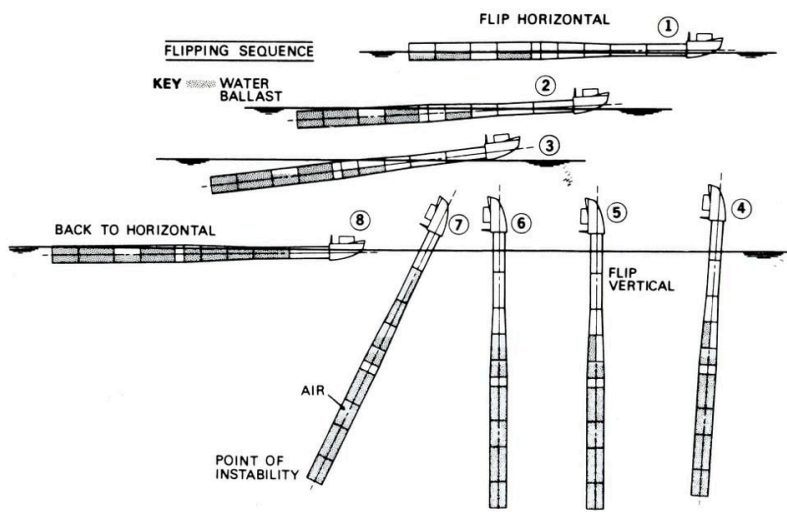
After the flip is complete, the 'boat' section perches above the water surface. This section contains most of the usable space and sleeping quarters, which meet the comfort standards that satisfied a 1960s era Navy sailor—the word spartan comes to mind.





Copyright Scripps Institution of Oceanography / UC San Diego

FLIP's crew also had to receive special training for the unconventional operation of the vessel. The full transition from horizontal to vertical took 30 minutes, but the final 49 seconds were said to be the most gut-wrenching as it settled into its new orientation.



All the interior scientific laboratory space, a galley, and other workspaces are connected by a network of exterior steel ladders and grates. Together with three foldable booms, they give the platform the appearance of a giant mechanical cephalopod or perhaps the treehouse of Peter Pan's Lost Boys reimagined for the movie Waterworld."



Over its 50-year service life, FLIP helped advance society's understanding of ocean currents, ocean acoustics, air-sea interactions, marine mammals and more.

"R/P FLIP has existed for more than half the length of the institution's entire history," said Scripps Oceanography Director Margaret Leinen. "It was an engineering marvel constructed during an important phase of new technology for ocean exploration following World War II. The many discoveries from FLIP help set the stage for ongoing cutting-edge science to understand our ocean.

FLIP operated for years without incident. However, in 1969 it had to be abandoned by its crew after losing power when it experienced ocean swells exceeding 80 feet. The incident required a rescue operation where crew members had to jump into the water to be picked up by boats. It was finally retired in 2021 but has remained remembered for its unusual design and invaluable contributions to science.

A twist befitting a maritime thriller

In a quiet corner of the Pacific last August, 2024, a vessel unlike any other was making what many thought was its final voyage. R/P FLIP (Floating Instrument Platform), the U.S. Navy's legendary research vessel that could stand on end like a floating skyscraper, was being towed to Mexico to be scrapped.

For well over half a century, FLIP had been an icon of oceanographic research, a testament to audacious engineering and the human thirst for discovery. Its decommissioning, announced last year, marked the end of an era—or so it seemed.

But then, a twist befitting a maritime thriller unfolded. It looks like she has been saved!

The Call That Changed Everything

Giulio Maresca was sitting in his London office at DEEP, the subsea design firm with ambitions to pioneer underwater human habitats, when the news crossed his desk: FLIP was headed for dismantlement. To Maresca and his colleagues, FLIP was more than metal and machinery; it was a symbol of what could be achieved when imagination met engineering.

"The directive from our founder was quite clear," Maresca recalls with a smile. "'Save her. Don't come back without her.'"

Within 48 hours, a DEEP team was en route to Mexico, racing against time to intercept the vessel before it met an ignoble end. It was a mission as quixotic as it was urgent.

Commissioned in 1962, FLIP was a collaborative effort between the U.S. Navy's Office of Naval Research and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Over decades, it facilitated groundbreaking research that deepened our understanding of the ocean's mysteries.

Shaped like a giant baseball bat, the 700-ton FLIP is technically not a ship but a barge. It has no propellers, propulsion, or engine room, and requires towing by a tugboat when conducting scientific missions.

"FLIP was from a time when bold engineering met boundless optimism," says Kristen Tertoole, CEO of DEEP. "An ethos we share and seek to embody."

The Journey Across Oceans

After tense negotiations and a flurry of logistical hurdles, DEEP secured ownership of FLIP. The vessel began a new journey—from Mexico, through the Panama Canal, and across the Atlantic to the Mediterranean.

It was a voyage that mirrored its original mission: bridging gaps and breaking boundaries.

Now docked in France, FLIP is slated for a 12 to 18-month refit at MB92, a shipyard in Barcelona renowned for refurbishing superyachts and handling unusual projects. "Modernizing FLIP to further our understanding of the ocean is what's in our DNA," says Rob Papworth, MB92 Group Managing Director. "We're exceptionally proud to be involved in this historic endeavor."

A Bold Vision for the Future

DEEP's ambitions for FLIP go beyond restoration. The company envisions the vessel as a cornerstone in their mission to "make humans aquatic," enabling people to live, work, and thrive underwater.

"FLIP will play a key role in our fleet, providing a one-of-a-kind platform for ocean research," Tertoole explains. "She's not just a ship; she's a bridge to the next frontier."

The refitted FLIP will support DEEP's Sentinel habitat deployments, underwater living spaces designed for extended research missions. Interest from the global scientific community has been immediate and enthusiastic.

"I'm thrilled to confirm that many oceanographic and research groups are already in contact to ensure access," Tertoole says.

A Legacy Continued

News of FLIP's salvation has reached those who knew her best.

"I'm delighted by DEEP's decision to revitalize and modernize the R/P FLIP," says Dr. Tom Drake of the Office of Naval Research. "This modernization will significantly expand her capabilities in ocean science, breathing new life into a vessel that has been vital to our mission."

For Maresca, the rescue of FLIP is both professional and deeply personal.

"Everyone in maritime research has a FLIP story," he says. "She's inspired generations of scientists and engineers. To be part of her next chapter is beyond rewarding."

Turning Tides

As FLIP prepares for her relaunch in early 2026, she carries with her not just instruments and equipment, but the weight of history and the promise of future discoveries.

"She's a vessel born from audacity," Tertoole reflects. "And that's exactly what we need now—to be bold in our pursuit of understanding our oceans."



The *Kathleen Gillette* departure from the SASC, with *A1 Ranger* in the background.

Setting out from Sydney Harbour with four shipmates in June 1947, [Jack] Earl created the logs so he could share the adventures of the 18-month long journey with his family and friends back home in Sydney. They became an extended love letter to his wife, the original Kathleen for whom the yacht was named.

A copy of the beautiful log of the voyage is permanently displayed in the SASC foyer.

Read more at the State Library of NSW here:

<https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/stories/kathleens-voyage-love-story>



The *Kathleen Gillette* (CYC29) at SASC Gaffers Day on 20 October 2024

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members:

Luke Bowden	Jochen Deuse
Marlon Freeman	Mark Hoekman
Florian Kaiser	Meng Wang

SASC SHOP

New stock available — all sizes!

SASC Branded Merchandise Racing ‘A’ Flag	\$35.00
Burgee (Medium – 30 cm x 54 cm)	\$41.00
Club Tie	\$25.00
Club Wide-Brimmed Hat	\$36.00
Polo Shirt (short sleeve)	
— white and navy	\$75.00
Polo Shirt Quick Dry (long sleeve)	
— white and navy	\$60.00
Rugby Shirts	\$82.00
SASC Caps	\$35.00



TENDER HOURS

Members are reminded that the normal hours of operation of the Club’s tenders are:
 Saturday/Sunday (EST) 0900–1700
 Saturday/Sunday (DST) 0900–1800

WEDNESDAY TENDER SERVICE

The tender service which has operated on Wednesdays since October last year has been popular and will continue, from 1000 to 1600.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The next SASC News will be the April 2025 edition. Contributions from members, which are always welcome, should be sent to news@sasc.com.au by Friday 4 April, 2025.

Articles and reports published in the SASC News reflect the views of the individuals who prepared them and, unless indicated expressly in the text, do not necessarily represent the views of the Club. The Club, its officers and members make no representation or warranty, expressed or implied, as to the accuracy, completeness or correctness of information in articles or reports and accept no responsibility for any loss, damage or other liability arising from any use of this publication or the information which it contains.

Clewless running towards Garden Island in the Summer Pointscore on 11 January 2025

Photograph by David Pryke

