



SASC NEWS

The Newsletter of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club



April 2020

SYDNEY AMATEUR SAILING CLUB

ABN 30 000 409 727

Green Street, Cremorne, NSW 2090

Telephone (Office)	(02) 9953 1433
Boatshed	(02) 9909 2185
Racing	(02) 9953 6597
Email: Office and enquiries	office@sasc.com.au
Racing	racing@sasc.com.au

Commodore	Bruce Dover
Vice Commodore	Sean Kelly
Rear Commodore	Peter Scott
Captain	Chris Manion
Honorary Treasurer	Charles Davis
Honorary Secretary	David Salter
Office Manager	Paula Morel
Executive Secretary	Karen Ewels
Racing Secretary	Alice Murphy

Cover:

Vanity and Cuttlefish beating to windward during the 184th Australia Day Regatta on 26 January

(Photo John Jeremy)

CONTENTS

Signals from the Commodore	3
Coming Events	5
Australia Day 2020	6
Sailing: The Way Ahead	10
A Furious Friday	12
The Rime of the Marinated Ancient	14
Stir Crazy	15
Friday Twilight Sailing	18
Reflections: Three Score Years	21
Around the Club	24
Sydney Harbour Regatta	25
SailGP	27
Gaffers Day	28
Saturday on Sunday	29
75 Years Young	31
Around the Port	32
New Members	34
From the Archives	35

The SASC News is published six times per year.

Editor: John Jeremy

email: news@sasc.com.au

Print Post Approved PP 255003/01708

Printed by Focus Print Group

SIGNALS FROM THE COMMODORE

April 2020

Like so many of us, with some unexpected time on my hands at present, I have taken to filling the spare hours, with a re-reading of Patrick O'Brian's classic Aubrey — Maturin series of sea novels set in the Royal Navy during the Napoleonic War.

Given our current predicament with the dreaded COVID-19 virus, it does feel a bit like being aboard the Captain Jack Aubrey's prized frigate, HMS *Surprise* — trapped against a lee shore in the teeth of a strengthening gale with all hands on deck in a desperate attempt to claw our way to windward in order to round the treacherous rocky headland to the safety of open water that lies beyond.

And a bit like the naïve landsmen who have been shanghaied aboard, we can all hear the ominous sound of the waves crashing onto the rocks, and pin all our hopes of survival on the navigational and sailing prowess of our commander — or in our case the government — to somehow get us out of this precarious predicament!

Who would have thought a month ago that our glorious summer of sailing would be like the Royal Navy's "dogwatch" — somewhat curtailed.

With the current restrictions on "social distancing" in place and the "stay-at-home" advice current and likely to continue for some weeks, it has been a confusing time for we sailors. Can we or can't we go for a sail? The messages from the authorities have certainly been mixed — the Office of Sport, NSW Health and NSW Marine Rescue advising that recreational boating was not deemed "an essential activity and therefore proscribed — only to be overturned by NSW Police Minister David Elliott declaring that fishing, sailing and paddling were defined as "passive exercise" and thereby permitted providing social distancing measures were adhered to...

Then, of course, there is the lack of a national consensus — sailing is banned in Queensland, Victoria, and New Zealand for that matter. Tasmania has taken the most rational approach in my view, recognising that a few hours out on the water provides a significant contribution to a person's "mental wellbeing" and permitting its residents to go sailing providing it is limited to two people or the immediate household, no overnights and the vessel must return to its home port each evening.

Certainly, if the self-isolation policy continues for weeks, or even months as is being touted, then one hopes the NSW Government recognises too, the mental wellbeing benefits of continuing to allow boaters out on the water. But don't be surprised if politics intervenes! There are already many questioning why "privileged boat-owners" are enjoying relative freedoms whilst others in the community confront



beaches, swimming pools, parks and playgrounds being closed — and policed.

If I can quote Captain Aubrey again “I am opposed to authority, that egg of misery and oppression; I am opposed to it largely for what it does to those who exercise it.”

As for the Club itself, once again we can compare ourselves to HMS *Surprise* — no ship-of-the line like the much bigger sailing clubs on the harbour with their massive financial firepower in fair winds, but certainly more nimble and agile in our ability to weather this storm. We are not reliant on over-the-bar sales of food and beverage. We don't operate restaurants or bars and our overheads are modest, although undoubtedly our revenues will take a significant hit as the recession begins to bite. Our cash reserves, like *Surprise's* gunpowder supplies, are more than adequate to see us safely to the other side of this battle and beyond.

That said, given the ever changing and challenging nature of the COVID-19 virus, the board may need to impose further restrictions on the use of the club and its facilities. We recognise that this may be an imposition for many members, but we ask for your understanding. It is the board's view that the Amateurs should be seen to be operating within the “spirit of the restrictions” not seeking loopholes to get around them.

The Government imposed isolation policy is structured to keep people at home, keep them safe and reduce the anticipated load on our health system. We owe compliance to the medicos and health staff who battle on the frontlines of this pandemic on a daily basis. The safety of our members, staff and community is our priority and the primary factor in all our decisions.

Remember too that, for many, sailing at the Amateurs offers a respite from work, from home, from the daily drudge. It was never just about the sailing but also the time in the cockpit after the race or back at the club, with a cold drink, the telling and (too often) re-telling of old stories, bold victories and sullen defeats. It has always been as much about camaraderie as the physical act of hoisting and trimming the sails. For some, isolation will mean just that and it is important we all make the effort to reach out and stay in touch with all of our crew. A telephone call, an email or a Zoom conference for the whole team is all it takes. These are indeed uncharted waters and it is essential that we do all that we can to look out for one another to ensure that we all come out the other side, fit, healthy and raring to go and man (person?) our ships once more!

As Aubrey says: “Never mind manoeuvres always go at them.”

Bruce Dover



COMING EVENTS

April 2020

At the time of the publication of this edition of the SASC News, all Club events are suspended until further notice due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Members will be advised when it is possible to resume normal sailing and social activities



NEED THE TENDER?

For the moment, normal tender services are suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic

In the meantime, a limited tender service may be available on weekends. Members will be advised by email and the website of the tender service plans as they develop in coming weeks.

We will advise when normal tender services resume. If you are coming down to the Club please call the Tender Driver in advance to check on availability. Please respect social distancing and hygiene policy.

THANK YOU INTERNATIONAL PAINT



The SASC would like to thank International Paint for their generous donation of Micron AP anti-fouling paint for the Club's starter's boat *Captain Amora*





Photos John Jeremy

James Craig passing Sydney Cove outbound on 26 January with HMAS *Canberra* at the Overseas Passenger Terminal prior to the start of Australia Day celebrations on the Harbour



The Ferrython was as popular as ever with a large number of power boats following the ferries as they made their way to the finish at the Bridge



Cherub arriving at the starting area for the 184th Australia Day Regatta



Josephine passing astern of the Regatta Flagship HMAS *Yarra*



Despite the light wind the Tall Ships Race provided the usual spectacle of traditional sail on Sydney Harbour



Double Dutch and Flying Brandy were both competitors in the Australia Day Regatta



Warana and Vanity on the way after the start



The start of Division 1 in the Regatta was the usual spectacle with the larger yachts like *Sydney* and *UBS Wild Thing* in the division

SAILING: THE WAY AHEAD

It's not often that one of the true international policy-makers of our sport is prepared to speak candidly, and on the record, about the current state of competition sailing and its likely future. So when Australian yachtsman Matt Allen talks, we listen.

Allen recently spoke as a guest at the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron. He is a former Commodore of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, member of the SOLAS Trust, was until recently president of Australian Sailing, is a member of the Australian Olympic Committee's Executive Board and currently vice-chair of World Sailing's oceanic and offshore committee.

Here are some of the more pertinent observations he made on contemporary issues:

The Olympic Games

“We’re now going to have for Paris 2024 three male events, three female events and — can you believe it — four mixed events. A couple of years ago you’d have never thought sailing would have mixed events in the Olympic Games. I think that’s a terrific thing.

“The mixed offshore event is not just a game-changer for the Olympics, I think it’s a game changer for our sport. We’re going to have two people on a boat — male and female. We’re probably going to start it at lunchtime and we’re going to sail for about 48 hours. No auto-helm, very little navigational aids apart from traditional chart plotter-type aids, no real communication so you’re not downloading new GRIB files or whatever. Just basic, pretty much old-fashioned, sailing.

“So, 48 hours later we’ll shorten the course, bring the fleet in and first boat across the line wins gold, second silver, third bronze. It’ll be the only event during the Olympic Games that’ll run through the 24-hour period. So, during the night time, if you’re in different time zones or you can’t sleep, the only live event over those two nights will be sailing. We’ll have onboard footage — I think it will be a fascinating concept.”

Foiling

“I think a lot of people have views on foiling boats. There’s no doubt foiling is coming into the sport. Certainly in reaching courses it would be pretty hard to beat a foiling boat today. There’s a lot of evolution going on there — it’s coming pretty quickly.

“But I worry a little bit about the expense of foiling in the sport. It’s certainly going to increase the costs. You can debate how effective it’s going to be on the East Coast where it’s generally going upwind/downwind. But as soon as you get a reaching course the foiling boats are dominant. It’s interesting, but it’s probably not going to make the sport any cheaper — but it’s not that cheap already, I suppose!”

“At a lot of these World Sailing meetings you spend four days talking about the Olympics. The Olympics are important — they’re the pinnacle of the sport — although we do have the America’s Cup. But the Olympics is not the whole sport. I think we need to get the right people making the decisions in the Olympic arena. That’s a challenge.

“The governance changes they’re trying to bring in are just to make the countries that have expertise in the Olympics focus on the Olympics. At the moment a lot of countries that get involved in basically re-designing the Olympic Games have very little Olympic experience. There are too many people in the room to have a sensible discussion.

“The changes that they’re trying to bring in London in a few month’s time would mean the countries that have got Olympic experience can decide on how the Olympics evolve – and also then have a separate group of people that are looking at non-Olympics issues: the development of sailing, safety and other areas that are so important.”

America’s Cup

“I was involved in the last America’s Cup on the Arbitration Tribunal, and I was getting involved at the very early stages on whether they were going to stick to multi- hulls or go to mono-hulls. The Italians won that argument in the end.

“I personally think foiling, like they’re doing, when they get a lot of air, at least when you come down on a multi-hull you’re probably not going to tip it in. Time will tell on these new boats. I’m sure they’ll get to sail them in the right way. They’re going to be really exciting boats, but personally I think it would have been easier to stay as a multi-hull. But there’s no doubt this is going to be an incredibly exciting America’s Cup — as it always is.”

Sailing and TV

“There are five divisions in the TV classification of the Olympics Games – A, B, C, D and E. Sailing is in D. There’s no doubt in my mind that sailing will be an Olympic sport right up to 2032 but we’ve got to keep changing the sport to get it up to Group C. I think that’s doable, but we’ve got to work hard to do it. The offshore event I think will be a game-changer in that. I probably should also mention that with windsurfing we’re also going to foiling, which will really change windsurfing.

“We’ve also got the kite boarding which will be really exciting to watch. But I haven’t seen it done properly on TV yet — you’ve got one person down here and another up there — I can never work out which is which! We need to get on top of that.

“The real question is how many medals [events] we can retain in the Olympics. Hopefully it’ll be 10 medals — that’s what we’ve got now — and hopefully that’s where we’ll stay as a sport. But you don’t want to rest on your laurels.”

Photo John Jeremy



Matt Allen is also President of the Australia Day Regatta

A FURIOUS FRIDAY

Three SASC boats and the Race Committee turned out on Friday 7 February and had the sail of the season.

Shambles, *Blue Peter* and *As You Do* enjoyed exclusive use of the harbour with no other boats or Clubs racing (that we could see).

With a consistent 15 to 20 knot easterly and NO rain, all three boats were round in very smart fashion, with *As You Do* getting the horn with a PB (personal best) of 41 minutes 20 seconds.

Salads, BBQ hotplate space and camaraderie were in abundance back at the Club.

Blue Peter scored the bottle of wine with a well-deserved first on handicap and *Shambles* also made it to the podium.

Our thanks to the starters for making the evening possible.

Ross Littlewood



The Friday evening stalwarts after the race on 7 February



Photo Catherine Baker

Saturday 8 February was a very windy and wet day on the harbour but the crew of *Shambles* took it in their stride

The weather was worse on Sunday 9 February with Mosman Bay receiving a thorough blast from the (mostly) easterly wind. John Griffin's ketch *Zara* had the misfortune to break away from her mooring and end up on the rocks



Photo Rod Phillips



Photo David Salter

Zara safe alongside at Woolwich for repairs

THE RIME OF THE MARINATED ANCIENT

By Samuel Taylor Salteridge

Argument:

In which is described a Short Voyage after a Great Deluge in the Sub-Tropical Latitudes; of Strange Things that befell; and in what manner the Marinated Ancient was returned to shore.

It came to pass, *après le* storm,
That member Jeremy J;
Resolved to check his bilges out,
And took the *Nancy K*.

He chose as bosun for this voyage,
His friend Maclurcan C;
To drive the tender in the Bay,
A role he filled with glee.

‘Let go for’d! Let go aft!’
And down the throttle went;
Alas! Alack! They had not checked,
The spring line still was bent.

Forward motion halted soon,
Remaining alongside;
While Jeremy pitched o’er the beam,
Into the swirling tide.

Water, water every where,
Nor any drop to drink;
But watch and mobile swiftly drowned,
With glasses quick to sink.

Roy was swiftly on the scene,
With stainless boarding ladder,
To hoist wet JJ from the brine,
A wiser man, but sadder.

The moral of this story then,
For those who put to sea:
Stay seated in the tender,
And ensure all lines run free.



STIR CRAZY

Life in the Virus Lane

A senior RUTUS member reflects on our new way of life

In Sydney we welcomed the New Year in a State beset with fire. From the Victorian boarder to the Gold Coast the State burned. Smoke shrouded the State. The press was full of amazing escapes and the amazing courage on the part of the volunteer Firemen. Then the rains came. Within a month we had parts of the State under water.

Now as we move into April we are part of a world-wide contagion. Not since the Spanish Flu of 1918–19 have we faced anything like this. The civil liberties we thought we had, have disappeared. Today you are breaking the law if you are sunbaking in the park or are a mother feeding her child. For the greater good of society we have surrendered much of our personal liberty.

Without recourse to any court in the land, but instead by the use of constabulary dictate, people are being locked up with no redress, banned from a walk in the park, moved on from our favorite beach and are told not to leave home. Will we, in a year's time, look back and say we did what we did because there was no other way.

In the meantime what do we do while we are locked up in our home? What can we do to fill in the time? If you are a member of the RUTUS [*Round up The Usual Suspects* — Ed.] you are probably past the stage of wanting to add to the forthcoming Christmas baby boom. There are other options:

1. You can read a book. If you haven't had time since high school it is about time you did. If you can't read anything that is not in Microsoft Excel or MYOB check with TAFE as to when they will be running their English-as-a-Second-Language course.
2. Sneak the boat home one small piece at a time and paint it in the kitchen. I say the kitchen as there is nothing quite like the smell of freshly-applied red lead to remind you of the bilge odour on the boat.
3. Buy yourself a 1000-piece jigsaw puzzle. The 1000-piece puzzle must be big enough to take up your entire card table so that, even if the better half wanted to restart the Bridge group, she couldn't. Completion of the 1000-piece puzzle can be delayed for months if required.
4. Try writing something. An autobiography is a very good place to start as no one else will ever bother to read it. You can say what you like with little chance of persecution, or prosecution for that matter.
5. You can get out the plans of the boat you never built and start dusting them off.

6. Buy an old car in need of restoration. Evict the wife's Mercedes from the garage and put in the street.
7. Get a proper size beer fridge. The under-counter fridge sold these days is useless as they rarely hold more than a couple of slabs. A real beer fridge has rounded shoulders, was made by Hallstrom and has a Silent Knight logo on it.
8. No working garage is complete without a couple of arm-chairs for your friends who come round to check out the fridge. The same friends will delight in giving erroneous advice as to how the car went together.
9. Take up a musical instrument. I recommend the bagpipes as a worthwhile investment as a well-played bagpipe in the back yard will bring tears of joy to the Scot who lives on one side and bring tears of rage to the musician on the other.
10. Take up Bridge, as you know it is a card game played by old women of either sex so it could be the perfect learning experience for the RUTUS declining years.

Further contributions from the RUTUS generation are compulsory.



Photos John Jeremy

The Flagship for the RUTUS expeditions is Rob Evans' commodious motor vessel *Sailfish*, seen here alongside the pontoon at the SASC being prepared for an expedition to Middle Harbour on 27 February



Sailfish moored alongside Roseville Bridge Marina during the Middle Harbour voyage of 27 February. Sadly, this will probably prove to be the last RUTUS expedition for some time as we battle the invading virus



The number of participants in the RUTUS expedition of 27 February was a little lower than usual, but those who could come enjoyed a great lunch with a drop or two of fine wine to wash it down. Those present were (L to R) Tony Clarkson, Ross Shaw, Rob Evans, Michal Tomaszewski, Charles Maclurcan, John Jeremy, Andre van Stom, Frank Walsh and Phillip Kinsella

FRIDAY TWILIGHT SAILING



Photos John Jeremy

There was some great sailing weather during the Summer Friday twilights, which were cut short by the viral troubles. The wind was fresh on 10 January, here *Spartacus* sets off at the start



Le Petit Mouton and *Morning Light* head for the first mark



With sails set for the conditions, *Shambles* speeds across the starting line



Clewless? was first to finish in Division 1 and took third place on handicap



Ariel was well reefed for the conditions and finished second in Division 3



Taylor Maid, winner of Division 2 on 10 January

REFLECTIONS: THREE SCORE YEARS

April 2020

David Salter ponders what a lifetime of sailing has meant — if anything

This is my 60th year of competitive sailing. I shall refrain from marking that arbitrary anniversary by wallowing in soggy nostalgia. There will be no sentimental reminiscences about racing VJs with cotton sails as a 12-year-old or the glory days of offshore sailing when we all bashed to windward in a pair of Volley OCs, King Gee shorts and a tattered rugby jersey. You've heard it all before.

Rather, it's an opportunity to reflect on what the sport has meant to one old codger, and where it might be going. When a single pastime has been such a constant in your life — and you've been lucky enough to have the time, health and resources to enjoy it for so long — then surely there's an obligation to extract some sense from all those miles and hours spent under sail.

First off, it helps to have a tolerant partner. When, aged just 17, I began courting the lovely girl who became my wife (and still is) I was arrogant enough to tell her there would only be one Golden Rule in our relationship: *Saturdays are for sailing*.

Incredibly, that simple understanding still holds. It would have been quite impossible for me to enjoy my chosen sport without that generous concession. (True, competing in the Hobart race, which I've done a dozen times, stretches the friendship somewhat, but we all have to make the occasional compromise, don't we dear...?)

And while we're pondering Fundamental Principles, there's one that has guided my approach from the time I first took the tiller: *the race is more important than the result*. In other words, compete with full intent — 'no guts, no glory' — but make sure you and your crew extract the maximum enjoyment from the day's sailing together.

Of course, we all have competitive instincts (otherwise why would we be racing) but in a club such as The Amateurs it's vital that the impulse to win is kept within reasonable proportions. It's only a boat race, and it should be fun. If you really need an outlet for your frustrations, take up boxing — or politics.

There is so much to like about sailing:

- * It demands a unique combination of skills — physical, tactical and technical.
- * It gets us out into the fresh air to meet the infinitely variable challenges of nature.
- * It provides the satisfaction of mastering the complex task of making a boat perform to its maximum.

SASC NEWS

* It offers a form of human endeavor in which knowledge, experience and instinct are properly rewarded.

* It can boast a long, rich history of extraordinary achievements and splendid traditions.

* It reminds us that our best efforts will often be undone by a single stroke of misfortune beyond our control, yet our worst performance might be saved by a moment of undeserved good luck.

* It is, indeed, the glorious unpredictability of sailing that helps keep us human.

So what's *not* to like about sailing in the 2020s? Regrettably — at least to my mind — a fair amount.

Few of my misgivings affect the way we sail at the SASC because this is still a club that operates on Corinthian principles. In that respect we are something of an anachronism, and long may we remain so. Money may not be the root of *all* evil, but in sport it can be a corrosive, even corrupting, force. It lies behind many of the aspects of contemporary sailing that some of us find so disappointing:

* In the centerboard world there are now way too many classes, and the boats are too complex and expensive for youngsters of modest means to build and maintain. We are making the sport even more elitist than our critics routinely maintain.

* Sponsorship has become a pervasive influence on the sport. Why do even the wealthiest clubs spend so much time and energy chasing corporate dollars they previously never needed to run even their largest events?

* Professionalism is an associated issue. There need to be far clearer distinctions drawn between true amateurs and the paid-to-sail brigade. Weekend pennant tennis players don't have to compete against Roger Federer.



* The pinnacles of sailing are grotesquely distorted and bear little relation to the mainstream. The Olympics will now be contested in a bizarre variety of classes: everything from foiling kite boards to mixed-gender 30-foot offshore racers. The America's Cup has become a competition between engineers and computer boffins.

* Civility and sportsmanship seem to be in decline. As with any competitive sport there have always been bullies and cheats in sailing, and there always will be. But hardly a Saturday goes by these days without an unsavoury on-water incident. Verbal abuse, overly aggressive tactics, defiance of the port-and-starboard rule, refusal to yield safe room at turning marks. Too many skippers are leaving their manners ashore. But despite all these concerns, Saturday is still the highlight of my week. The promise of a day's sailing never loses its appeal. Why? Because of the human factor.

The camaraderie, the shared experiences, the jokes, the oft-told yarns. The way we can draw on each others' talents and abilities. The way we share danger and exhilaration together. Sailing. There's nothing quite like it.



Photo Paul Connett

Cherub homeward bound on 9 March after the Pittwater Regatta. Peter Scott and Mark Pearse are reported to have caught five bonito on the voyage south



Photo Alice Murphy

The clubhouse was full on Wednesday 5 February when John Jeremy told the story of Sydney's Cockatoo Island and its contribution to the RAN and the maritime industry of Australia

Photo David Salter



Ian Anstee at work in the boatshed carefully refurbishing a somewhat neglected primary winch from *Mister Christian*



MHYC Photo

The SASC provided a team of nine people to assist the Middle Harbour Yacht Club with the conduct of racing during this year's Sydney Harbour Regatta. On Saturday 7 March Alice Murphy, Geraldine Wilkes and Gary Lucke assisted on the Course Area D starter's boat *Hugh George* with John Sturrock and Jim Paskalis in the mark boat *Jack Millard*



Photos John Jeremy

Ian Anstee and Gary Donovan crewed *Jack Millard* on Sunday with John Jeremy, Charles Maclurcan and Wendy Anstee helping out on *Hugh George*



Clewless? finishing a Super 30 race on Course Area E during the Sydney Harbour Regatta on Sunday 8 March



A Super 30 start on Sunday 8 March with *Very Tasty*, *Zest* and *Optimum* nearest the camera



Photos John Jeremy

SailGP returned to Sydney on 28-29 February providing a spectacle of speed on the water



The US and Australian catamarans showing their speed on 27 February, a practice day

GAFFERS DAY

Gaffers Day was scheduled for Sunday 18 October this year. The Gaffers Day committee chaired by Maurie Evans has been planning the event for some time, and Sir James Hardy has agreed to again be Patron of the event. Unfortunately, COVID-19 has intervened and it has been decided that Gaffers Day must be postponed indefinitely.

Meanwhile, Australia's premier marine artist, Ian Hansen, has contributed a striking pen-and-ink design for the Gaffers Day poster and merchandise. Featuring his elegant 1952 Alan Payne cutter *Karalee*, the images are in line and wash.

David Salter recently visited Hansen's studio in Hunter's Hill to collect the originals and found the artist hard at work with a young rainbow lorikeet perched on his shoulder in traditional 'Long John Silver' pose. Hansen rescued the exhausted bird during the violent February storms and it has stayed with him ever since.



Ian Hansen with friend

Photo David Salter



Photos John Jeremy

With SailGP occupying the harbour on Saturday 29 February, the usual Saturday races were sailed on Sunday 1 March. *Captain Amora* set course A for the day



The Super 30 start on Sunday 1 March



5 to 6 was sailed by guest skipper Captain Chris Manion on 1 March



Tamaris enjoying the beautiful Sydney north-easterly breeze

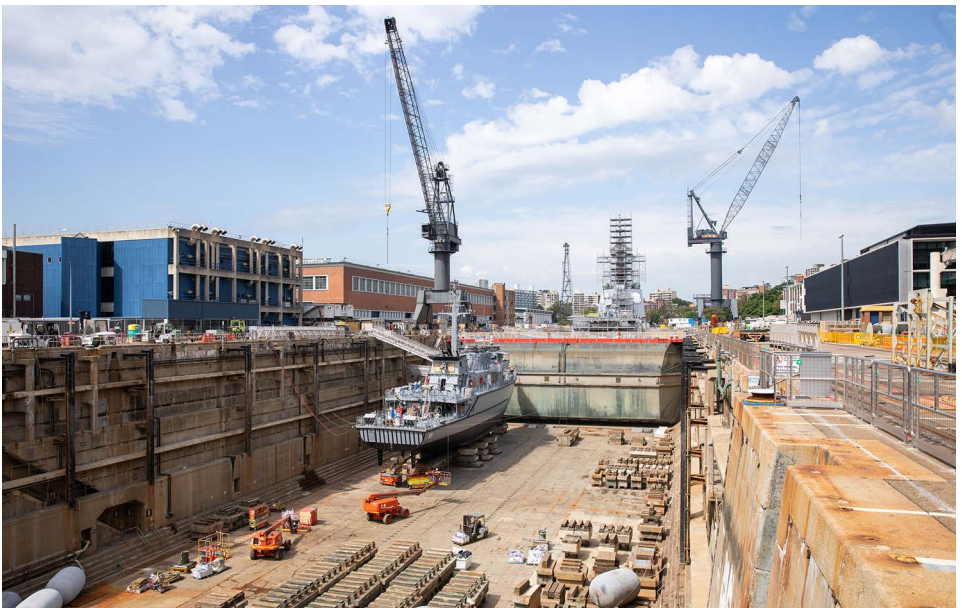
On 24 March the Captain Cook Graving Dock at Garden Island turned 75.

The need for a graving dock in Australia capable of docking large capital ships had been recognised since the end of World War I but approval to construct such a dock was not given until 1938 as another World War loomed. A number of sites for the dock were considered before the decision was made to build the dock between Garden Island and Potts Point in Sydney. To build the dock, the site was enclosed by two massive cofferdams and the drained harbour bed was excavated to accommodate the dock structure.

Work began in January 1941 and continued around the clock. At the peak of construction in July 1943 4,125 men were employed on the work. The dock was completed in early 1945 and the first ship to use the dock was the Royal Navy aircraft carrier HMS *Illustrious*, which needed urgent repairs, on 1 March 1945. The dock was officially opened by the Governor General, the Duke of Gloucester, on 24 March 1945. Since then over 2,000 dockings have been carried out ranging from battleships and aircraft carriers to destroyers, commercial vessels and small vessels like the RAN's yacht *Nirimba*.

The dock, which is 347 m long and 45 m wide, is one of the largest docks in the southern hemisphere and the only dock in Australia which can dock all the ships of the Royal Australian Navy and most of the commercial vessels which visit Australia. It is a major strategic defence asset.

To commemorate the 75th anniversary of the dock's opening, the Naval Historical Society of Australia has published a book describing its construction which can be purchased in hard or soft copy at www.navyhistory.org.au.



RAN photograph

The Captain Cook Graving Dock on 25 March 2020. HMAS *Gascoyne* in dwarfed by the massive dock and HMAS *Brisbane* can be seen behind in the inner dock the dividing caisson



Photo John Jeremy

Whilst itinerant and homeless cruise ships have received most attention in recent weeks, the business of the port continues. This is the Japanese icebreaker *Shirase* sailing home on 21 March after a summer resupply voyage to Antarctica



RAN photograph

The third and last of Australia's new air-warfare destroyers, *Sydney*, arrived in her home port for the first time on 27 March. She will be commissioned into the RAN in the near future



Photo John Jeremy

One of a number of cruise ships caught up in the COVID-19 crisis, the Royal Caribbean Cruises' *Spectrum of the Seas* became a familiar sight in Sydney Harbour during March. Completed in April 2019, this large ship would normally be based in China but was repositioned to Sydney as the pandemic developed. During her time here she conducted three complimentary cruises for bushfire first responders and their families. She has now left Australia for Bali, presumably to wait until the world returns to something resembling normal

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members:

Philip Bendeich	Kenneth (Tom) Elliott
Marius Fenger	Margaret Flockhart
Andrew Hannell	Gretchen Kellner
Victoria Lincoln	Maxime Merven
Baden Moore	Patrick O’Farrell
Berengere Poncheaux	Rory Pryde
Duncan Saville	Don Wood

TENDER HOURS

Members are reminded that the hours of operation of the Club’s tenders are:

Saturday (all year) 0900–1800
Friday Twilights 1600–2100 (approx)
Sunday DST 0900–1800
Sunday EST 0900–1700

SASC SHOP

Subject to availability

SASC Club Merchandise

Burgee – Medium 30 cm x 45 cm	\$36.50
Racing ‘A’ flag	\$20.50
Tie	\$25.00
Cap – White One Size Fits All	\$20.00
Wide Brimmed Canvas Hats	
— small, medium and large	\$30.00
Polo Shirt – Navy or white Short Sleeve S M L XL	\$40.00
Polo Shirt – Navy or white Long Sleeve S M L XL	\$45.00
Rugby Top – S, M, L, XL and XXL	\$55.00



NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The next *SASC News* will be the June 2020 edition. Contributions from members, which are always welcome, should reach the editor by Friday 29 May 2020. Contributions can be in hard copy or sent by email. Photographs are also very welcome.



Photo courtesy John Stanley

Face masks all round was the order of the day on Clark Island in 1918 for the spectators watching the 18-footers race during the 'Spanish' influenza pandemic

Lolita enjoying the beautiful sailing weather after the start of the Saturday pointscore race sailed on Sunday 1 March 2020
(Photo John Jeremy)

