

Chapter Two

The Spirit of the Amateurs

What makes the Club

Vic Dibben

It is the members and families associated with the SASC that makes it an outstanding Club. It does not matter what their profession or standing in the community, in the Club the members are sailors.

My first contact with the Club was in 1972 when I met Tony Ashleigh. I went to look at a Bluebird moored in Mosman Bay, with the idea of purchasing it. Tony worked on the slipway and after discussing the matter, he lent me his dinghy and said 'take your time'. Next were Laurie Schneider and Ern Slocombe who respectively nominated and seconded my application for membership. Stephen Lloyd was Commodore and Nan Kartzoff reigned supreme in the office.

Some of the members whom we do not see often now but who from 1972 were very helpful in running and improving the Club, were;

Hugh Jackson, who became Commodore in 1974.

Bob Skinner, a Vice Commodore – one of Bob's outstanding achievements was to design and supervise the building in 1977 of the *Nancy K*, our tender, still operating successfully.



50th Anniversary Sydney-Hobart
Yacht Race 1994 SASC entrants
Top Row: John Firth-Smith
Archina, Commodore John Morris
Phantom Middle row: Jim Lawler
Charisma, Peter Haliday
Silverado, James Davern All That
Jazz, Hugh O'Neill Mark Twain,
Rick Fitzgerald (Crew) Tactical
Response Bottom Row: Pat Wilde
Henry Kendall Akubra,
Mike deBurca Emma, Past
Commodore Bob Lawler Firetel,
John Kealy Tactical Response

George Brackenbury, Tom Selby and Frank Buckley, a medical man, and enthusiastic member of the Boatshed Committee.

Jack Millard and his team who started the races on Saturday and who used to call me to help start the Holden engine in the old starters' boat when I was getting my boat ready for racing.

I make special mention of Irene and Vic Barnes, Jan and Max Miller, Dawn and Tony Saunders (now Treasurer), who were exceptionally helpful and worked very hard to help ensure that our social functions were successful.

Arthur Prigge, a Life Member and Secretary of the Club 1979 to 1984, was a real sailor with the skills to go with it.

Jack Earl, an exceptional sailor and world renowned marine artist, well remembered in the SASC who has left his presence in Sydney Harbour with the *Kathleen Gillet*.

Colin Crisp became Commodore 1978-79, a consulting engineer who initially designed many features of the Club when the existing premises were acquired.

Geoff McCorquodale, very much involved in racing, protest committees and Northcott Childrens Day.

Carl Speers, a first class shipwright whose skills helped in making and maintaining the Clubhouse structurally sound and looking good.

There are so many members who have helped to develop the Club to what it is today that I cannot name them all. However, I assure you by just being a member of the SASC makes you a privileged citizen; I certainly consider myself privileged to be a member. It has also been my pleasure to have held many positions in the Club including Commodore on two occasions.

I firmly believe everyone from Commodore to Director to Committee to voluntary workers and staff, are only concerned with the continuing success of the SASC and its sailing activities.

The Search for *Pacific Breeze*

James Davern

The Tasman Sea has attitude. Well look at the parents; the smilingly placid Pacific, schizophrenic in cyclone driven fury, eating people, buildings, whole islands, and the Southern Ocean, marching relentlessly and endlessly around the world, pounding ships to matchsticks with sheer brute force. With parents like that, how's the kid going to turn out? Dangerous.

The Farr 11.6 *Pacific Breeze* left Sydney for New Plymouth, New Zealand, on Saturday 12th March, together with four other yachts, in the Trans-Tasman race run by the Short Handed Sailing Association. Weather was lousy with a big high in the Bight compressing the isobars against a sluggish low in the South Tasman. Nice time to sit under a tree.

Pacific Breeze had the usual two up, skipper Bruce Hitchman, 66, and crew, Paul Stanmore 35. Qualifications and experience? Bruce served his time in the four masted barque, *Pamir*, completing five voyages under sail. He possesses a Master's Ticket in Sail and a Master's Ticket in Steam. He was a Sydney pilot for years and competed successfully in the last Melbourne to Osaka two-handed race with Paul Stanmore as crew. I've raced against Bruce many times in two-handed series and always managed to come second.

By midnight on Sunday 13th March the Tasman was showing definite signs of a childish tantrum. The gusts were piping 45 knots and walls of water were swelling up from a lot of anger down south. 250 miles out, Bruce pulled down the doubled-reefed main and reached under No 4 jib at 7-8 knots. At 0300 on Monday 14th the Tasman had had enough of playing games. It picked up the five tonne *Pacific Breeze* and threw it sideways into a deep trough. The yacht landed on

1894

"Flying Fish" sailed with colours on her sail thus contravening a By-law. Mark Foy to be notified that he must conform to regulations.



At Lord Howe Island, from left:
David Willis, Bruce Hitchman,
James Davern, Lani Tomaszewski,
Liam Nicholls

its port side with its mast in the water. The mast bent, and held, but both port windows blew in and she half filled with water. Bruce, down below, struggled up hoping that Paul was still on board. His harness had held but his desperate grasp ripped both wheel and binnacle off their moorings and Paul ended up trapped under the mess. They sorted themselves out and began to fight for survival. The yacht's windows were made of polycarbonate, a fancy name for a material which goes brittle with age.

The situation which Bruce and Paul found themselves in was not good. The yacht was half full of water, the steering gone, the HF radio was drowned, and the gaping broken windows invited the sea in. There were no lights and the night was black. Bruce activated the satellite compatible EPIRB. Then they bailed for their lives with buckets. The mess down below had clogged the pumps. Bruce tried to repair the windows with scrap plywood and a bunk lee cloth. Paul was sick and starting to shiver with hypothermia. The Tasman howled around them.

Far overhead the SARSAT satellites heard the cry for help from the EPIRB and sent it on to the Marine Rescue Co-ordination Centre in Canberra. They moved fast.

By 0730 Bruce and Paul, almost totally fatigued, had an emergency tiller operating and the yacht nearly dry. But the Tasman wanted *Pacific Breeze*. It picked her up and threw her on her beam ends again, and again half filled her with the sea. The two exhausted men went back to fight and wearily started to bail.

That's how the first plane found them at 0900. But there was no communication. The HF radio was out and they had exhausted the battery of the hand-held VHF calling vainly for help on CH 16. The plane dropped two life rafts which blew away in the wind.

But at least it was daylight and Bruce had got the motor going. A second plane dropped a box containing a hand-held VHF and a spare battery. They'd just managed to reach it when a trailing line wrapped around the propeller.

All through Monday they bailed and tried to seal the broken windows. But the stress and the exhaustion was taking its toll. Paul started to shiver and couldn't stop. The wind was too strong and the range too great for a helicopter from Nowra. So the MRCC in Canberra sent HMAS *Sydney*. She arrived at 0130 on Tuesday morning and the Captain wasn't taking any crap from Bruce wanting to stay on board *Pacific Breeze*. By the time he managed to get to the bridge to remonstrate, the

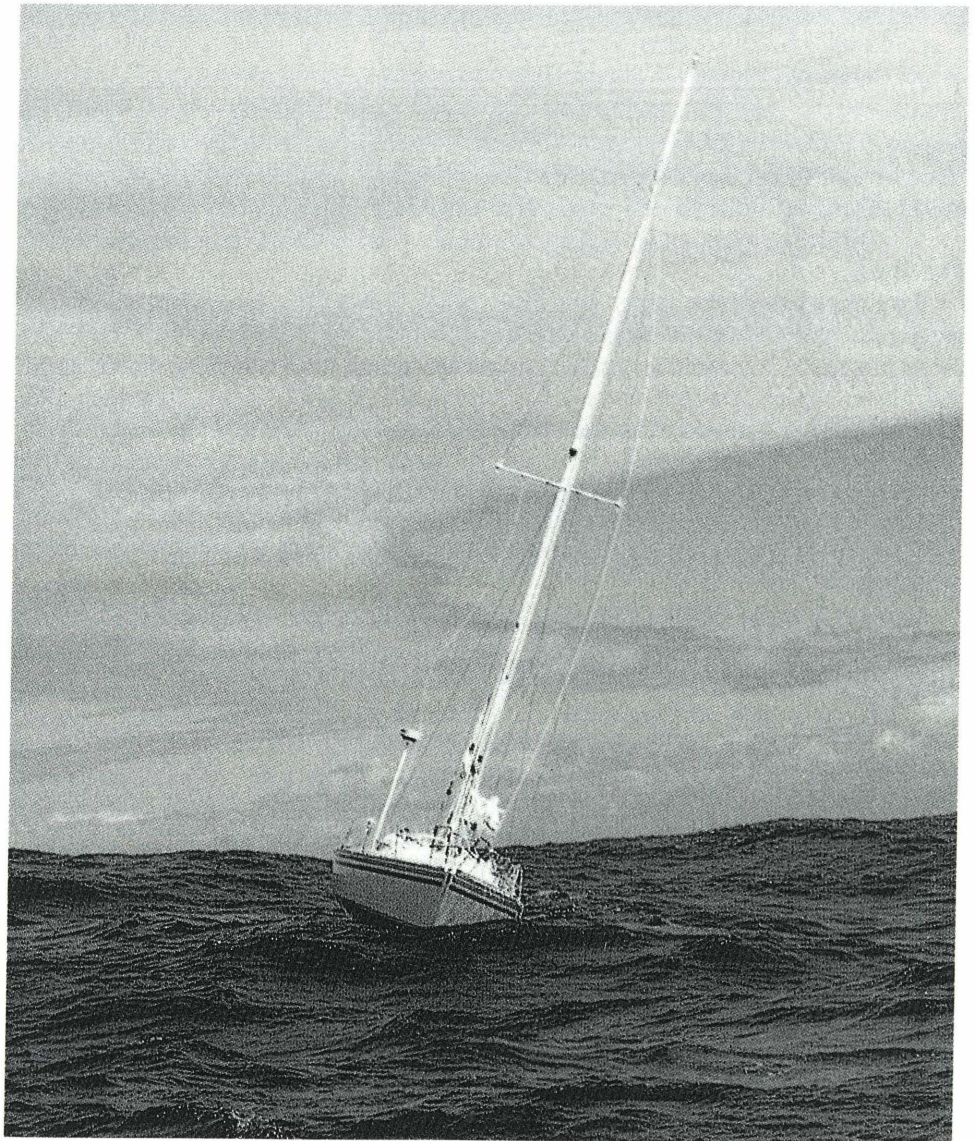
Captain very politely informed him that *Pacific Breeze* was ten miles behind, that he wasn't going back, that he wasn't in the business of letting brave men commit suicide, so please try some of our excellent food and go to bed.

So the Tasman Sea had claimed *Pacific Breeze*, and played with her and drew her away to the North East. But Bruce had one card to play. He'd left the EPIRB on.

I woke up to the 6 am news on Tuesday 15th to hear that *Pacific Breeze* was abandoned and that my friend Bruce Hitchman was safe and heading for Sydney, courtesy of the Navy. There was the usual inventive and creative news reporting on all stations about one man missing and the top of the mast being lost and whatever else they could dream up. After viewing in retrospect the media coverage of the Hobart race I confess I am ashamed of the behaviour and ignorance of some of my media colleagues.

I rang the Short Handed Sailing Association and volunteered to help if I could, then went to work.

At 10.00am on Wednesday 16th Bruce rang me. The satellites were still listening to the EPIRB. The MRCC had a position. Others were sniffing salvage. Planes were out from Lord Howe Island and a fishing boat was heading out from Eden. The salvage value of *Pacific Breeze* was about \$90,000. You have to catch a



*Pacific Breeze as she was found.
Where did the horizon go?*

lot of fish to make that sort of money. Would I help? I looked at Philippa. She nodded. Oh Boy, why don't I keep my big mouth shut. I told Bruce to get a couple of crew, each to bring five days' rations, and we'd leave the Sydney Amateur's wharf on *All That Jazz* at 1700. I thought that if an Amateurs' yacht was going out it ought to have a few Amateurs' crew. Phone calls.

David Willis "I'm sorry mate, I'm up to my ears in work, there's no way ... uh, I'll ring back."

Lani Tomaszewski "Would I like an adventure? Is the Pope Polish? I'll see you at five."

David Willis (after five minutes) "I've talked it over with my partners. Jenny says OK. I'll be in it."

According to the log, *All That Jazz* cleared Sydney Heads at 1840 on Wednesday 16th March on a compass course of 080 in an 8 knot south easterly looking for a yacht that by now was 330 miles out. Crew was James Davern, Bruce Hitchman, David Willis, Lani Tomaszewski, Liam Nicholls and Don Wood.

Our intentions were made clear to Derek and Janine Barnard at Pentacomstat and they established a line to the MRCC in Canberra who were still picking up signals from *Pacific Breeze*. But the EPIRB batteries were weakening. Estimated battery failure was Friday morning. We wouldn't be there by then. The entirely unlovable Tasman Sea sensed that it was in danger of losing its new toy. The wind began to freshen. By 0400 on Thursday 17th March we were 60 miles out in 25 knots from the S.E. The swells started to build. By noon that day we were running under double reefed main and a third of a jib, 30 knots and the swells hissing at us. Happy St. Patrick's Day! The log gets a little scatty after that because for the next 24 hours the bloody Tasman lashed us with 35 knots gusting to 40 and with enormous swells throwing us all over the place. But we'd survived the recent Hobart in *All that Jazz* without damage and we had confidence in the boat.

The EPIRB positions kept coming in from Canberra via Pentacomstat. Our Navstar XR4 G.P.S. Satnav quietly informed us that it was at present interrogating six satellites (altitude, azimuth, signal strength and signal to noise ratio available on request) and that it guaranteed position within 50 metres. Love that technology. We were getting closer.

The Tasman responded with bigger swells. I was on the helm when the Beneteau 405 gave a gallic shrug and seemed to say "I was designed to fight in the Bay of Biscay. Do you think your puny waves will worry me?" So the Tasman gusted to 45 knots and put a couple of metres on the swells and we rolled up the jib and ran under double-reefed main at 7 1/2 to 8 knots.

Friday afternoon and we were getting close. The EPIRB was weak but still going. *Pacific Breeze* had drifted 250 miles in nearly five days. We had calculated a range of drift angle and rates. At one stage she was doing 3 1/2 knots at 066 T. The unpredictable swirling currents for which the Tasman is notorious were pushing and pulling at her. Friday night and I knew we were going to pass her. A night as black as a handicapper's heart. But next morning we would go back and we'd have the rising sun behind us. Pentacomstat went silent at 2000. Nothing from the MRCC. I looked at Bruce. Here was a very tough man, still strong at 66, but exhausted now and worn. He loved that boat. We both exchanged what ifs? What if the batteries finally failed on the EPIRB? The last position we had would be ten hours old by morning. There's a lot of sea out there. What if we find her and she's under tow by that Eden fishing boat? We waited out the night and started back before dawn. We needed one last position from the satellites.

We waited. Pentacomstat waited. Then it came in. At 2104 Zulu on 18/3 she was at 33 06'S, 158 50'E. We were 15 miles to the NNE. Quickly we ran an intercept on the anticipated drift line and charged south. On the wind, of course. At the intercept, nothing, I didn't want to look at Bruce's face. We might be early, we might be late. We decided we're early. At 0845 we headed back up the drift

1902

Financially the Club was sound, having a surplus of £4 for the season and credit balance of £38.

 1911

Further strides forward—membership had risen to 122, boats to 58. Weekend camps had been a success for the last two years and were continued. Combined Opening Day again held with PAYC.

line. 230 on the compass. All crew on deck searching. Binoculars are useless, the motion too violent.

At 0930 I was down below at the chart table going over the figures again when there was a shout from Liam Nicholls. We scrambled around him and followed his pointing arm. There in the distance was the thin spine of *Pacific Breeze's* white mast, etched against the horizon by the early morning sun. I looked at Bruce. Must be very dusty up here, he's rubbing his eyes. We sailed up to her. It seemed to take a week. No fishing boat in sight. She was ours. But the Tasman hadn't finished with us yet. There was no way we could get near her. The sea was too violent and the thought of two masts entangled out there was mildly unpleasant.

I talked to Bruce. We agreed. We dropped sails. I started the Perkins 50 H.P. diesel, wound her up full bore because I needed all the control I could get in this sea and we charged down on *Pacific Breeze*, across her stern, getting within twenty feet or so. Liam and Bruce and Don Wood jumped in and swam for it, and made it. Liam helped Bruce Hitchman back on his boat.

At 1015 on Saturday 19th March at 33°00'S, 158°53'E the skipper once more resumed control of *Pacific Breeze*. Lani Tomaszewski and David Willis and I couldn't stop grinning. I reported to Pentacomstat who passed it on to Canberra. Then *Charisma* radioed in from Sydney Harbour yelling congratulations. The three on *Pacific Breeze* bailed her out and installed a tiller we had brought. They found one untorn sail on board, a No 3 headsail. At 11.30, *Pacific Breeze* and *All That Jazz* headed in company for Lord Howe Island, 80 miles away, and were brought into the lagoon by Clive Wilson at 0700 on Sunday, 20/3.

Without the great competence of the Marine Rescue Co-ordination Centre in Canberra, the unfailing help of Derek and Janine Barnard at Pentacomstat, and with our modern technology, the Tasman would still have *Pacific Breeze*.

A Christmas message from the Commodore , 1974

Hugh Jackson

The end of the calendar year appears to be one time when your elected Commodore is able to make a pronouncement of some consequence in his opinion, without precipitating a raging argument.

Such a theory in normal circumstances would perhaps be meaningless, but in this present day and age we are all rather preoccupied with the difficulties of life and what to do about them.

Never let us forget, we sail for relaxation and enjoyment and in order to pursue the sport we all belong to a very fine Club with wonderful traditions; these have to be nurtured and preserved, come what may, for our present need of them is perhaps greater than ever before.

To borrow a quotation from one of our members, "The next time you are passed by a seagull swimming in the same direction, don't be too depressed – in all probability a beautiful breeze is just around the corner."

A very happy Christmas to you all and let us hope that the New Year will bring a return to economic normality and substantial progress.

Rescue at Sea

Whilst proceeding from Sydney Harbour to Pittwater and several miles offshore, Tony Saunders, skipper of *Rapier*, sighted an object ahead in the water. Alerting the crew and sailing closer they observed a windsurfer exhausted and unable to get his new 'wave jumper' board upright. They managed to get him and his wave-jumper aboard *Rapier* where they gave him the necessary treatment, called up on the Radio to advise the Water Police. Following discussions, the Water

Police met *Rapier* at Pittwater where the windsurfer and his board were transferred to the Police boat. The windsurfer was drifting out to sea and no doubt would have disappeared forever if *Rapier* had not been there.

The Dismasting of the *Captain Amora*

John Jeremy

It is a considerable exaggeration to call this embarrassing incident a dismasting, but that tends to happen to stories of this kind over the years. I have always been very conscious of gun safety. It stems from the training I received in the School Cadets, where I learned how to safely handle the .303 rifle, the Bren and Owen guns, and even a 6 pounder anti-tank gun. As a result, I still cringe when I see an actor on television "palm" the bolt of a rifle!

As an occasional Starter in the *Captain Amora*, I have always tried to follow my own set of rules for handling the starter's gun. It must always remain unloaded until about one minute before discharge, the gun broken until about thirty seconds before discharge, cocked about fifteen seconds before discharge, and the muzzle pointed over the side whenever the gun is loaded. You can't be too careful, even with blanks.

Sometimes the ammunition can be particularly noisy and I like to keep the muzzle as high as possible to protect the ears of the rest of the boat's crew. This was in my mind one Sunday morning when we were starting a series of championships. The S80s were approaching the starting line, with several of them crowding at the starter's boat end — the distance mark was closer than our usual conservative distance from the stern of *Captain Amora*.

With consideration for the ears of the crew, I decided to point the gun up the hatch over the steering position completely forgetting the mast. The last seconds of the count down were accompanied by the usual flapping of luffing sails and shouts of "Up—up". In this case, the satisfying (and welcome) BANG of the gun coincided with a crash, shortly followed by splashing as pieces of shattered white painted timber rained down around the *Captain Amora* and those S80s in the immediate vicinity.

Apparently I had placed the muzzle of the gun immediately under the starboard yardarm, which was blown off by the discharge. It was hardly a dismasting. The beneficial effect was of course that the S80s kept a more respectable distance from the starter's boat for the rest of the series, but the moral of the story for all those who start yacht races is "Remember the safety firing arcs!"

Commodore Fred Bevis

Sydney Amateur Sailing Club
Green Street
Cremorne NSW 2090

Dear Fred,

You appear to have greater faith in my memory than most other people I know, however I'll do my best.

The "Supplement to the Amateurs" covers the Centenary pretty well. I remember the biggest problem about the dinner was finding a chair suitable for John Jackson who had a very bad back at the time through falling off his yacht whilst on the slips. We had a dry run before the dinner to approve or otherwise of the food which was thereby given the thumbs up.

We had a sailing treasure hunt around the harbour which was voted a great success except by one member who got into trouble. The day was won by Bob and Val Skinner.

1913

Notice of Motion by RHC Down, seconded by W Rayment, "that boats have numbers not flags as a means of identification and that a distinguishing number with the letters S. A. above it be carried on the sails" was carried by a large majority.

We had bronze medallions made to be issued to each member for the Centenary. The directors decided to make a presentation to the Club of a ship's wheel. This was purchased from Ian Morrison (decendant from the old firm Morrison & Sinclair). Ian was also president of my old battalion association. Now and again in the following years we put on a wine bottling in the boat shed to raise money for the Club; these occasions were a very happy success.

I think it was John Jackson who started the yearly gala day for handicapped children. We all had to work like hell but it was well worth it.

There are some people whose contribution to the Club's well being should also be recorded. The ones who come to my mind are Nan Kartzoff. She was CO (assist Sec) in the office and had a wonderful knowledge of all members, and woe betide any who stepped out of line. Tony Ashleigh: In charge of the boatshed until losing his foot in an accident whilst slipping a yacht. Carl Spiers: A wonderful man who came to the Club when he retired from Burns Philp. He could make or repair most things, including the railway clock in the Clubhouse. There used to be a window in the N.E. corner of the Clubhouse that we wanted converted to a doorway. Carl said 'I'll go down to Eatons and select the timber and make the double doors' He did up the ship's wheel for the directors as well. Carl was one in a thousand. Colin Crisp: Engineer. He designed the fitting out wharf and crane, the slipway cradles, the pontoon, and anything else of that nature.

Fred if you want further details of anything I have written I'll do my best, but 30 years is a long time. I suppose you know about the two members who decided to go to Pittwater for the weekend. However a Southerly front was forecast coming up the coast, so they put into Camp Cove for Friday night. Saturday morning they found themselves off Taronga. They had dropped the anchor into an old pram that had been dumped in the harbour!

Fred, five years ago I developed cancer of the spine and consequently mobility and writing are not very good so please excuse.

Sincerely
Hugh Jackson

*Past Commodore Peter Garrow
hoists the Club's burgee (Photo:
Martin Van der Wal)*



Rules of the Road

Under Sail

With the wind on the starboard, you hold sway,
The man on port tack must give way.
Hauling a wind or running free,
The weather ship luffs for one a-lee.

Under power

When two lights you see ahead,
Go to starboard — show your red.
If upon your port is seen, a steamer's starboard light of green,
There's nothing much for you to do
For green to port keeps clear of you.
But, if to your starboard red appear, it is your duty to keep clear.

And always!

To act as judgement says is proper,
Port or Starboard, back, or stop-er.
Green to green or red to red,
Perfect safety, go ahead.

Man (well, forward hand) Overboard!

Ron Royle, *Sanctuary*. 8.2.97

"Whatcha jump over for?" was my not unreasonable question.

"Well I wasn't going to cop the boom in the chops, was I."

Typical forward hand. No guts, no glory.

Yeah, yeah I know you are supposed to finish the race with the same crew that you started with. Damn. Suppose I better go back and get him.

15 knot Nor Easter, our kite a bit too big. Just ahead *Impala* is rolling all over the shop, we can do better, bit past it those guys. Now off Taylors Bay, there's the Committee boat anchored and finish line set up.

So how did it happen?

A two metre ebb tide convinced us to rock hop down the western shore, gybing in and out of the bays. Great theory. Just completed a gybe and the afore mentioned forward hand was casually strolling back from the foredeck when whack, a Chinese gybe. So what did our hero do?

Casually dived over the side.

Mind you a split second later he regretted that decision, something about Bronze Whalers taking chunks out of boats and things in Sydney Harbour.

Meanwhile on board it was getting a bit lonely and pretty busy, with only two of us left and a Chinese gybe to contend with. Drop the halyard, dump the brace, drag in by the sheet and a beat back to the deserter, now no more than a distant black dot.

No jib of course, and Hollands go nowhere without it but as the broach was so wild we could crawl back in one leg. Now to get him on board. Here the Bronze Whaler factor helped. A surge of adrenalin, a big heave and back on board. Kite up again and away.

Hell, *Impala* is just about disappearing over the horizon.

Big reception from the committee at the finish, at least we brightened up their day; hope they choked on their gin and tonics.

And guess who got to buy the beers (and lots of them) back at the Watto Bay Hotel?

Gentlemen Sailors

At the annual prize giving in 1984 a new award was made called the "T Bone Trophy." Thankfully it has not been awarded since. It was presented to the then Treasurer and skipper of *Brigadoon* for spectacular pre-start manoeuvres which were not quite successful.

The incident involved *Brigadoon* penetrating the hull of the then Commodore's boat *Tingari* on the port side and becoming lodged. The skipper of *Brigadoon* moved rapidly to the bow to inspect the damage and the following exchange occurred:

Skipper *Brigadoon* "John, I seem to have done considerable damage."

Skipper *Tingari* "That's all right Fred, but you understand that I will have to protest you."

Skipper *Brigadoon* "Of course, I understand perfectly."

The two boats parted with the sound of splintering fibreglass and the *Tingari* crew taped over the hole in the hull which fortunately was in the anchor well compartment.

A young Fred Bevis at the helm of *Brigadoon* during the 1980 Endeavour 26 Championships, which were conducted by the SASC (Photo: John Jeremy)



Another exchange took place shortly after.

Skipper *Tingari* "Fred, I believe that the collision took place before the preparatory signal for both our divisions."

Skipper *Brigadoon* "I believe you are correct, John."

Skipper *Tingari* "In that case we were not racing and I won't have to protest you."

Skipper *Brigadoon* "Thankyou and good luck."

Tingari went on to win her race in the Half Ton Division and *Brigadoon* came second in Division 4!

Grit and Determination S80 Championship. March 1990

Our congratulations to Bill Hogan and crew of *Hotspur*.

Bill entered the 2nd last race of the series placed in the No. 2 position and only a few points from the No. 1 spot. Things were going well, good start, boat pointing well, crew all in great spirits and obeying every command.

That is about the time the forestay wire parted from the masthead damaging the headsail foil. At this point the whole series looked like collapsing for *Hotspur*, together with the bit of wire as it crashed to the deck.

So a rather dejected skipper and crew turned back and headed for the clubhouse to see what could be done in the two hours remaining before the start of the last race.

By the time *Hotspur* reached the Club, "what if we could" plans were formulated.

Out went the phone calls. One crewman dispatched to the local sailmaker; hanks had to be fitted to three headsails, no time to muck about with the damaged foil.

The urgent calls to the mobile rigger were answered and *Hotspur* headed out for the last and deciding race with 10 minutes to spare. This time was utilised training new crew in the art of S80 sailing. You see, Bill also lost one of his crew during the two hours refit period through illness. In true SASC spirit, the boat and crew completed the series and were rewarded with 3rd place in the Championship.

Adams 10

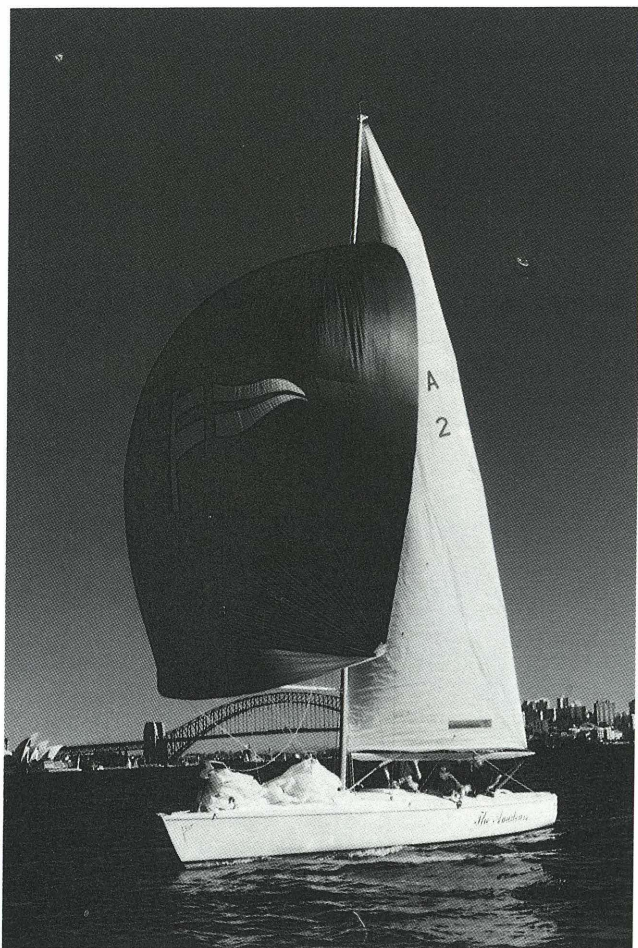
The association of Joe Adams with the Club goes back a long way and has many threads.

He joined the Club in 1956 and is a life member. His former boat, *Hoana*, in which he sailed around the world, has been restored and is now raced by Martin Van Der Wal. Joe has been to the Club to talk about his design philosophy and his thoughts about cruising boats. In 1980 a talk was given at a general meeting by a member, Graham Radford, about sailing an Adams 10 to Hobart!

The thread of association with Joe Adams continues with the donation to the Club of an Adams 10 by Ron Martin-Weber. This was an outstandingly generous act. His only conditions were the boat be well cared for and that it be used regularly.

Many members have now had the pleasure of sailing and crewing the boat. It's a regular participant in Twilights, SASC Winter Series, Idle Hour and for a season with the Metre division.

The Amateurs A2



Artillery Practice

The Les Ardouin cannon at the Club reminds me of two things. The happy good nature of Les and a picture of him, after discovering that a squash ball was the exact size of the bore, firing them from one of his cannon over the Gladesville bridge.

Apparently Les was walking past an auction one day, walked in, bid and departed with two ancient cannon. Not the usual purchase.

Saturday Salvage

In the course of a Friday Twilight race in 1996, *Tio Hai*, a very similar type of boat to the Victorian Couta boats, had a mishap and sank near Shark Island. Later, back at the Club, Jim Lawler was talking to the owner, John Buis, and asked about what he was able to arrange regarding recovery. It appeared that nothing could be done until Monday but he did have some tanks and thought that he would dive for watches and other valuables on Saturday and could he be of assistance. Jim Lawler said, in his usual quiet way, "...that he could help but Monday might be a bit late to recover the boat. I think that we will be able to organise something better".

Saturday morning saw a team of volunteers led by Jim, Trevor Cosh and young Jim Lawler. It appears they had "access" to air lift bags and plenty of dive tanks. The equipment was loaded onto the *Nancy K* and *Charisma*. *Charisma* was to be the Dive boat.

Tio Hai was located sitting upright on the bottom in the sand off Shark Island. The rig was removed under water and the boat partially raised with the air lift bags so that it would be towed, submerged, to Vacluse where a startled beach party of picnickers were pressed into service to help to dewater the boat.

Once afloat it was towed back to the Club and put up on the slips after removing a ton of lead ingots. No structural damage resulted from the recovery. Another member, Rob Evans then assisted when he observed that quick action was required to save the motor. It appeared that he had the same type of motor and a tool kit for it. He then assisted in dismantling the motor and clearing the water.

All was completed well in time to enjoy "a quiet drink" at the Club that afternoon.

Extract from Manners and Rules of Good Society, by a Member of the Aristocracy, 1912

Water-Parties.—There are many ways of arranging a water-party at yachting stations and at all riverside places. At yachting stations, for instance, a sailing yacht is hired to convey a party of from eighteen to twenty-five to some point of interest on the coast, in which case luncheon and tea are provided at an hotel in the vicinity of the place where the party have landed, and the expenses are equally divided. Not unfrequently, on the return journey, the yacht is becalmed, and does not reach its destination until between two and three the following morning. If it happens to be a fine moonlight night, this prolongation of a water-party is an additional source of enjoyment; but if there is no moon as well as no wind, and the calm betokens a storm, it is the reverse of pleasant. But these little *contretemps*, when they do occur, rather lend a zest to the day's pleasure, and are something to talk about afterwards.

Water-parties are often given by owners of yachts. These are invitation parties, and luncheon, tea, and sometimes dinner,

are served on board, and the party land and stroll about, but return to the yacht to be entertained.

Picnic and water-parties in general include as many gentlemen as ladies, whether they are invitation or contribution parties, although sometimes a majority of ladies is unavoidable. Ryde is a favourite station for water-parties, as the island itself, as well as the opposite coast, offer innumerable points of interest for picnicing, and many are able to combine the pleasures of the yacht with those of the steam-launch in one and the same water-party; thus a party sails from Ryde to Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, and then proceeds in a steam-launch to Alum Bay. Steam-launch parties are immensely popular, both on the river and on the coast, and parties are given by the owners of steam-launches, or a steam-launch can be hired by the day. Some picnic on board, and others on shore, as they feel disposed. When, however, a steam-launch is hired for the day, a good look-out should be kept upon the engineer, or he will insist on landing at the most undesirable spots.



Sean Langman in Vagrant 112, reckons a beer at the Clubhouse a better option (Photo: Rex Dupain)