

## Chapter Three

### *The Clubhouse*

#### **Clubhouse refurbishment 1988**

Over many years various improvements to the Clubhouse's internal decorations, furniture and pictures had been made but a proposed refurbishment which involved replacing chairs and tables and other fittings was discussed by the Board. Refurbishment by a committee can be a dangerous exercise and a wise decision was made to have a plan prepared by an expert, Louise Sullivan.

Louise prepared coloured drawings of her plan for the internal alterations. It was simple and effective and included the suggestion that replicas of the original captains chairs be made. The cost at first seemed out of reach. By scheduling expenditure over a couple of years and the adoption of an idea of Peter Garrow to ask members to donate chairs acknowledged with a name-plate on the back, the project moved forward quickly. The value of the chair donations was \$10,000. Today we have a Clubhouse that is admired by visitors, acknowledged as a period piece and provides a pleasant ambience that all members proudly enjoy.

#### **Kitchen upgrade**

In November 1977 when Brian Woods was Commodore it was decided something should be done to improve the kitchen and its equipment. Graham McKinlay an architect and SASC member took on the job of designing the new layout.

After much discussion with the Board the design was approved with the architects' estimate of \$14,345. The Board at its meeting in September 1978 decided to proceed with the renovations in accordance with the architects' proposals but with a \$12,000 limit. The financial problem at the time was that a new Starter's boat was also required. There was no difficulty in obtaining a bank overdraft facility.

When the original lining of the walls in the kitchen were removed some of the supports were found to be in a far worse condition than was thought and substantial work had to be carried out to rectify the problems. One of the new items insisted on by the Commodore was an instant hot water system. This is still in operation today having served thousands of cups of tea and coffee.

#### **Fore and aft moorings**

##### **Victor Dibben**

In November 1986 the Government announced through a media release "there would be 1000 new moorings available to the Sydney boating community within six weeks and a further 1700 moorings will be made available in the next year which means everyone on the existing waiting list will have a mooring by the end of 1987."

This was the result of the introduction of new trot moorings.

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#### ***Boatshed Clutter***

*This is our FINAL REMINDER about the heterogeneous mass of seeming junk that litters the boatshed from floor to rafters. All items not clearly labelled with owner's name and boat number will be sold or burnt within a week.*

*Would all the members who ordered Christmas pudding from Legacy, please collect them from the Clubhouse this Saturday afternoon.*

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*Club accepted the invitation to identify ourselves with Sydney Yacht Racing Association and made application for affiliation with British Yacht Racing Association.*

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The SASC with only swing type moorings and a waiting list decided it had better look at this proposal rather than wait for a direction from the Maritime Services Board and invited Officers from the MSB to tour Mosman Bay with a committee from the SASC.

The changeover to trot moorings was not accepted by the boating fraternity in general and there were public meetings in many areas with standing room only. Finally in July 1988 the MSB instituted a comprehensive survey, the issue being whether the fore and aft (trot) moorings provided a safe and environmentally sound alternative to the swing moorings.

After the survey was published the furore that followed caused the Government to abandon the enforcement of trot moorings because in some areas they were not suitable.

However, while all this was going on, the SASC decided after careful deliberation, to co-operate with the MSB and change some swing moorings in Mosman Bay to trot type. In doing so the MSB would allow additional moorings in the space made available by the changeover. This meant that the moorings in the Eastern and North West areas would change to trot moorings as these were considered "safe" for this type of mooring. South of Old Cremorne Wharf and the Club would remain a swing type mooring area.

### **A new Starter's boat; The acquisition of the *Captain Amora***

In early 1978, The Race Committee decided that the existing Starter's boat, which had been bought by the Club in 1972, was too small for the needs of the Starter's crew. The boat was only 22 feet 6 inches long, and had a number of deficiencies. It had a petrol engine, and little in the way of facilities. The side decks were so narrow that two crew members had fallen overboard when going forward to raise the anchor, and the operation of the numeral boards was hazardous on the canopy top as the boat had a tendency to roll badly. The crew of the boat had also grown to six in order to handle the growing racing fleet, which had 140 entries for the 1977/78 season.

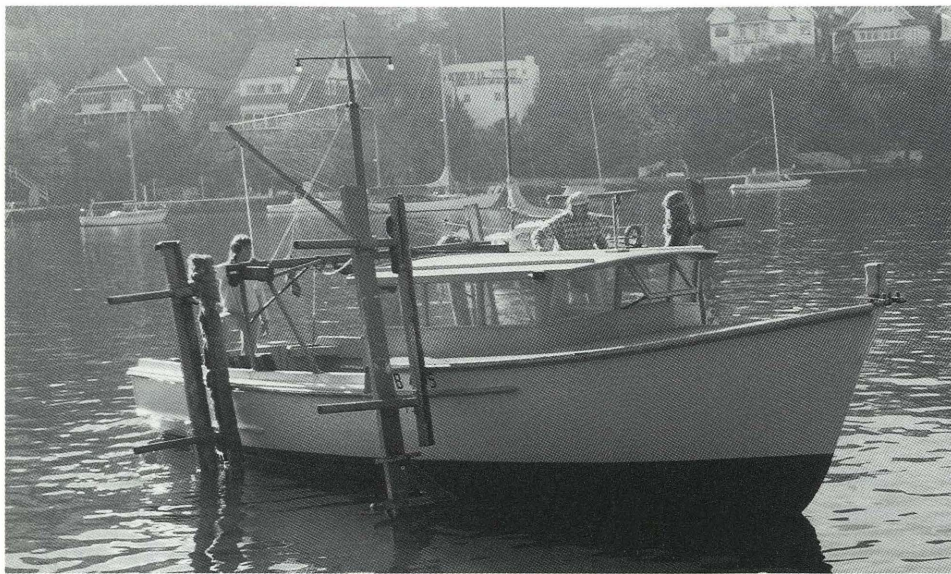
A sub-committee of the Race Committee was formed with John Jeremy as Chairman. The members included the Starter, Jack Millard, Peter Gregory, Peter Hamilton, Bill Lawler, and Bob Lawler. In April 1978 the committee presented a report to the Board, setting out requirements for a new boat, and recommending that a new boat be built or purchased in time for the 1978/79 season, if possible.

The new boat was planned to be diesel propelled, and about 30 feet long, with much improved facilities for the crew and improved anchor handling arrangements.

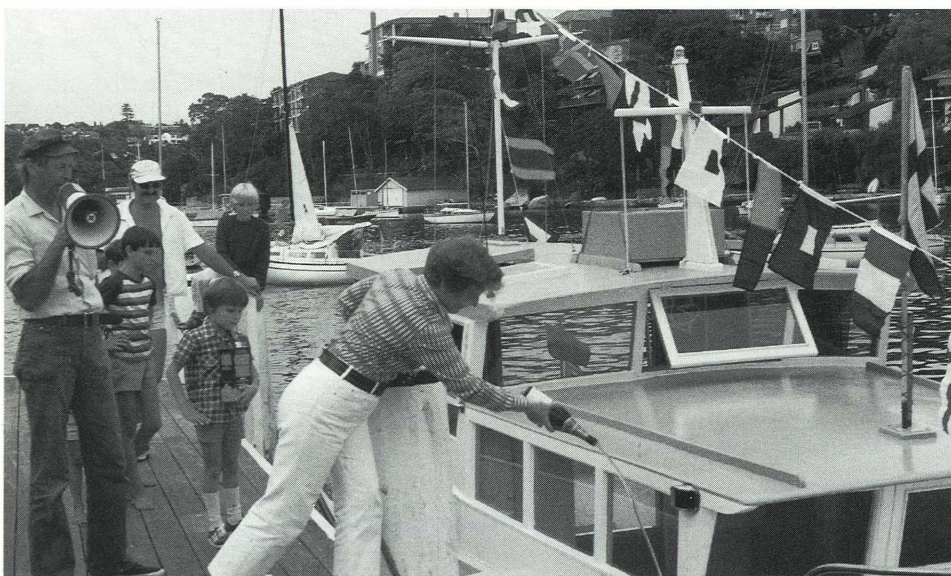
At the July meeting Commodore Colin Crisp reported that a number of suitable second hand boats appeared to be available. The sub committee was instructed to develop their designs and proceed with inspection of suitable existing boats, as it was felt that the conversion of an existing boat could be cheaper than the construction of a new boat, then estimated to cost about \$26,000.

During July, one boat was inspected that appeared to be ideal for the purpose. LFB 445 was a 30 feet long, round bilge fishing boat, which had been built by K Brown in August 1973. The hull was carvel planked in 1 1/8 inch oregon on spotted gum frames, and the engine was a hefty 90 HP BMC diesel, which had been factory reconditioned before installation in the boat. With current MSB survey certificate, LFB 445 passed survey on the SASC slip on 1 August 1978 with flying colours, and the Board, no doubt encouraged by Bill Lawler's sketch of the converted boat, approved its purchase for \$15,000 at the August Board meeting.

Design work was finished by the end of September and at the October Board meeting a budget of \$5,000 was approved. Shipwright David Moore was given the job to carry out the structural work.



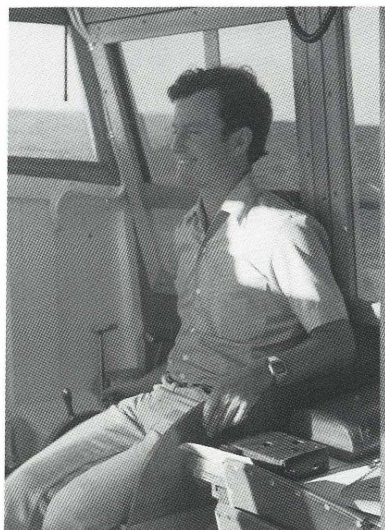
*Tony Ashleigh slipping LFB 445 at Mosman Bay for survey before the boat was bought by the Club for conversion to the Starter's boat Captain Amora. (Photo: John Jeremy)*



*With Commodore Colin Crisp providing the commentary on the megaphone, Connie Crisp names the new starter's boat Captain Amora after the first Commodore of the SASC (Photo: John Jeremy)*



*Captain Amora at Coasters Retreat on Good Friday 1979 (Photo: John Jeremy)*



Charles Maclurcan at the helm of Captain Amora at sea during passage to Pittwater to finish the Bob Brown Trophy Race at Easter 1979 (Photo: John Jeremy)

During the next three months, the new Starter's boat began to take shape. Bill Lawler prepared the detailed plans and sketches for the conversion, and supervised the work, a task made all the more difficult by the progression of a serious illness. Despite his disabilities, Bill spent many long hours on the task, coordinating the work of David Moore with the volunteers who did most of the painting. Bob Lawler took charge of the engine overhaul and the electrical installation. Sadly, Bill Lawler passed away before the work was completed.

In November the Board decided that the boat should be named after the first Commodore of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club, Captain JH Amora. Work continued over the Christmas holiday period, and after trials *Captain Amora* was placed in service for the first race of the 1979 summer series on 20 January 1979.

The *Captain Amora* was officially named by Connie Crisp on Closing Day, 7 April 1979. As then completed the boat was valued at \$30,000 – including about \$7,000 worth of voluntary labour used during the conversion. A replacement would cost much more today.

In 1979, *Captain Amora* was still a rather austere Starter's boat. Nevertheless, the improvement over the old boat, which was finally sold in April, was dramatic. The space and safety of the boat made the work of the Starters much easier – and there are no records of any falling over the side when going forward to raise the anchor!

There were, of course some incidents during the early weeks – like the day the whole 150 feet of the anchor chain disappeared over the bows in a rush into 16 metres of water off Clarke Island. After dragging with a grappling hook for an hour, the crew was about to give up, when the boat stopped suddenly as the chain was hooked. Naturally it had been hooked in the middle of its length, and the effort getting it up ensured that some people never again forgot to check that the bitter end of the cable was secured with something more substantial than a length of twine!

The *Captain Amora* is also big enough to go to sea, and at Easter 1979 John Jeremy and Charles Maclurcan took the boat to Pittwater to finish the Bob Brown Trophy Race. In those days, the race began at 8 pm, so she sailed north in mid afternoon.

After an easy run north on smooth seas under a clear sky, and a leisurely dinner ashore at Church Point, *Captain Amora* was on station in Coaster's Retreat to finish the fleet at about 2am. It was a short and uncomfortable night for the crew – the full extent of the *Captain's* accommodation then was two narrow plywood benches and an elderly toilet in the corner beside the engine. After breakfast in the *Captain Amora* and coffee in *Morag Bheag* the return to Sydney (with Frank Crisp as a passenger) was a perfect run on blue seas with a gentle north easterly.

*Captain Amora* has not been to Pittwater since, but the boat has given nearly twenty years of good service to the Club around Sydney Harbour. Gradually, the on board facilities have been improved, with a proper galley and other equipment. All this has been made possible by the continuing work of the members who volunteer their time on maintenance tasks or donate equipment. One day, the boat will be finished!

Despite the success of the project begun in early 1978, one deficiency of the old boat has never been overcome; the *Captain Amora* rolls!

### ***Nancy K. The Club tender***

12th July 1976

Mr R Tearne,

Custom Built Boats Pty Ltd.,

Bradly Avenue, Milsons Point 2061

Dear sir,

We are pleased to advise that the Club has decided to accept your quotation for the construction and delivery of a 22'0" (approx.) work boat and tender for the

sum of \$6,374.50 (six thousand three hundred and seventy four dollars and fifty cents.)

This letter confirms discussions held with Mr RL Skinner Vice Commodore of the Club and details the acceptance of alternatives proposed in your quotation and as later discussed.

Hull, 22'0" approximately long, as shown on drawings accompanying your quotation, but with frames increased to 1 1/2" thickness and the hull sheeted with 3/8" diagonal oregon planking fixed and bonded with recorcin glue and monel fastenings, screwed in stressed locations, with the following items supplied and fitted:

- Lister SW2, manual/electric start twin cylinder diesel engine;
- forward-reverse gear box integral with engine;
- stern gear, propellor and rudder assembly;
- Teleflex steering wheel and cable;
- 4" diameter rubber hose fender on gunwhale and stern.
- battery and exhaust system;
- hull primed on inside faces, finished with dynel and epoxy on exterior surfaces;
- hull fitted with floor boards, forward deck, splash board, forward bollard, heavy samson post fitted for towing, and full length seat on each side of boat and possibly on the transom;
- engine box of heavy construction, weatherproof and easily assembled and disassembled with only minimum use of screws, wing nuts, etc;
- rubbing battens fixed near bow and on the topsides near the transom.

Subject to the design of the engine it is preferred that the driving position be on the starboard side of the vessel at approximately amidship and that the exhaust shall be on the opposite side of the boat to the driving position. This is to avoid marking boats approached by the tender with exhaust smoke.

Your quotation includes the installation of a fuel tank and lines, and we understand this was intended to be of copper.

We require a stainless steel tank, stainless steel fuel lines and fittings and a water trap. Please advise any amendment of your quotation.

Painting of the boat except as included above will be carried out by the Club.

The acceptance is on the clear understanding that the boat is to be delivered prior to 31st August 1976 and that you accept a penalty of \$100.00 per week for any delays in delivery beyond that date.

You may if you wish place a neat permanent plaque on the boat in a position approved by the Club indicating the boatbuilder's name.

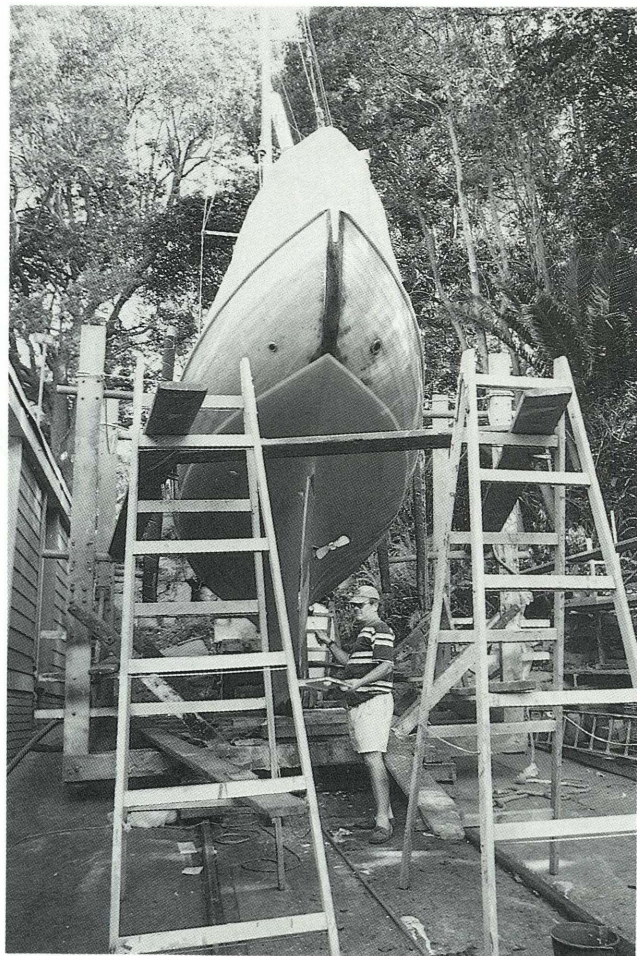
As you request, it is agreed that the Club will only be represented by the Vice Commodore during the building period.

The boat will be free of sales tax and we shall be pleased to meet reasonable requests for progress payments.

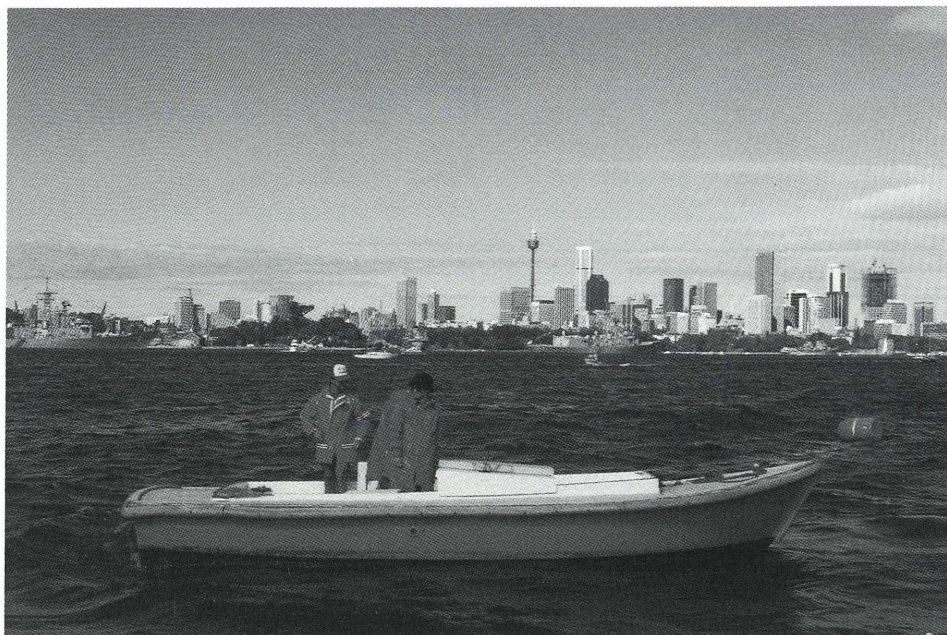
We look forward to receipt of a boat which you and the Club can both be proud of.

Yours Faithfully  
VW Dibben

*Rear Commodore Rob Evans completes restoration after Celeste sank at her mooring. A major feature of the Clubs facilities are the two slips with three cradles. The Club is also equipped with a workshop and chandlery for the use of members*



*The Nancy K has spent most of its time around Mosman Bay, but has also carried out many other duties. Here, under the command of Charles Maclurcan, Nancy K has been laying SASC marks to help with spectator boat control during the Fleet Review to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Royal Australian Navy in 1986 (Photo: John Jeremy)*



### Wharf extensions completed

Members who visited the Club regularly in 1990 would have noticed by November the work being carried out on the wharf during the previous months.

A major asset of the Club, the wharf had given excellent service over the previous twenty years, but had been showing its age. Major repairs were clearly needed to ensure its safe use until at least the end of this century.

The new pontoon had been very popular since it was installed some years before, and the Club's Development Committee had been considering a further pontoon off the wharf as part of a long term plan for the development of the Club. In May 1989, the SASC Board decided that the need to repair the slipways and the wharf would limit the funds available for more pontoon space, and that priority should be given to maintaining the fabric of the existing facilities. It was



*A willing crew of Amateur volunteers lay the planks for the deck extension. Nearly all maintenance work at the Club is carried out in this way*

also decided to investigate the possibility of improving the wharf whilst the repairs were being carried out. In November 1989 the Development Committee presented the Board with an outline plan to make the steps at the southern end of the wharf more usable. and to fill in the gap next to the slipways. The latter would also provide space for the stowage of another tender/rescue boat, with a half tonne crane for handling. Approval was given to prepare a detailed proposal for submission to the relevant authorities.

Early discussions were held with the MSB in February 1990, and by May detailed working drawings and plans were completed and submitted to the MSB for approval. It was hoped to have the repairs and extensions completed, at the latest, by Gaffers' Day on 28th October. By August our proposal was with local government for consideration, and it was obvious that the plan was tight. Approval was given to order long lead material items to ensure a quick start when MSB approval finally arrived.

By late September, approval was expected, but not yet forthcoming. The contractor was nevertheless given the go ahead for the repairs, and approval for the modifications was received from the MSB the day he started. Despite the usual problems with work of this nature, it was virtually complete by Gaffers' Day as we had hoped. We made it, just.

### **Working bee at the Club. Please support the Club in this event.**

SUNDAY 16TH FEBRUARY 1986

YOUR BOATSHED COMMITTEE HAS DECIDED TO REQUEST YOUR HELP IN THE FORM OF A "WORKING BEE" TO BURN OFF THE EXISTING VERY FLAKY PAINT AND UNDERCOAT THE SURFACE OF THE CLUBHOUSE AND PAINT THE DINGHY SHED WITH A FINISHED COAT.

THEY HAVE SET SUNDAY 16TH FEBRUARY 1985 AS THE DATE TO ALLOW YOU PLENTY OF TIME TO PLAN YOUR AVAILABILITY AND WOULD REQUEST YOUR SUPPORT IN THIS FUND-SAVING VENTURE!!!!

IF YOU HAVE BLOW TORCHES AND BRUSHES, PLEASE BRING THEM WITH YOU!

THE CLUB WILL SUPPLY A SAUSAGE SIZZLE AND LIQUID REFRESHMENTS TO MAINTAIN YOUR STRENGTH DURING WHAT WILL BE A REWARDING AND ENJOYABLE DAY.

PLEASE GIVE YOUR CLUB A HAND.

RING SUZIE ON 90 1433 RE YOUR AVAILABILITY!!!!

## **The day we nearly burnt the Clubhouse down**

Working bees are fine but sometimes they can get out of hand. This was the case with the working bee to strip back old paint on the Clubhouse. The enthusiasm of members with blow torches has to be guarded against. Work had been in progress for some time on burning off old paint on the front section when a member, who had been sitting inside, noticed that smoke was coming into the Clubhouse through an air vent just near the Commodores' Honour Board, and asked "Do you think it should be doing that?"

Quick action with a hose allowing water to run down between the walls put out the small fire which had started inside the wall and averted what may have become a major catastrophe. The memory of this among Board members may have been subconsciously a factor in the decision to install the sprinkler system some years later.

1922

*Quarantine Beach was re-opened to yachtsmen under conditions set down by Director-General of Health.*



*Faye Buckley, the Club's executive secretary, keeps the administration of the Club running smoothly, and tries to do the same with the Directors*

*Believe it or not, there is a pontoon in this picture. Its capacity for boats and people is tested to the limit on Gaffers Day 1988 (Photo: John Jeremy)*

## Back at the Office

One of the major contributors to the smooth working of the Club is the role of the office staff. Who could forget Nan Kartzoff who took no nonsense from anybody and without the aid of computers, kept the books, members register, racing results and dealt with the day to day needs and requests of members. Our boat the *Nancy K* is the continuing recognition of the outstanding contribution she made. She retired in 1977 but returned part time in the 1986 racing season to, as it said in the annual racing report "help tame the computer". If anyone could do that it was Mrs Kartzoff.

Since 1989 Faye Buckley has taken over this role. Faye has and is making an outstanding contribution to the Club and her professional approach to her job, attention to detail and follow up, (Board members know how persistent she can be) are the key to making things go smoothly.

## The Pontoon

The options considered in 1983 by the Development Committee, led by John Rickard, were the repair of the existing facility, a similar replacement or a larger development extending the wharf area north of the boatshed and installing an extended floating pontoon suitable for launching dinghies, operating and mooring *Nancy K*, pick-up facilities for members' yachts and a breakwater for the slipway. The latter was the favoured option.

During 1984 the financial aspects of the project were considered and application made to the then Maritime Services Board for approval. A project of this size produced vigorous debate among members about the capacity of the Club to



fund the project, the structural aspects and the change in the nature of the Club this facility would bring.

A General Meeting of members was held on the 20th November 1985 which listened to the presentation by John Rickard on the engineering and construction aspects of the project and by the Treasurer, Fred Bevis, on the financial and funding aspects of the project.

The project was approved and a contract was let to R. Jenkins Constructions Pty Ltd. The project was completed in July 1986. The loans to fund the project were repaid some two years ahead of schedule.

It has proved to be the most significant improvement made to the Club facilities in the past 25 years. It has, however, not been without its problems with early failure of hinges and problems securely fastening the frame to the concrete structure, but not withstanding these, it has been an outstanding success.

One could not imagine the operation of the Club today without the pontoon.

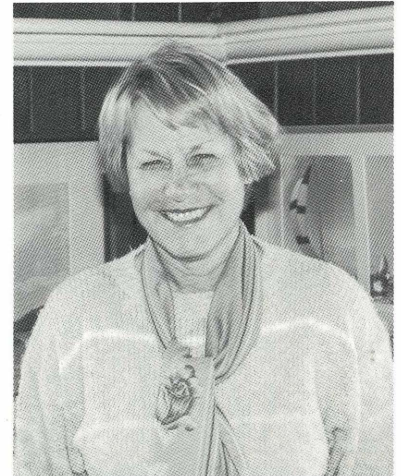
## What people will do for a BBQ and a keg of beer.

Over the years major structural work has been completed by volunteers, mostly members but also crew from members' boats.

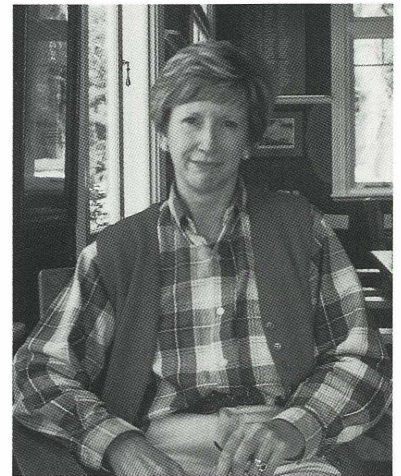
A number of memorable afternoons have been spent lifting old planking from the wharf deck, later used for garden retaining walls, and replacing them with new timbers. The late Paul Slocombe was, as usual, one of the volunteers, and he took charge of a huge electric drill that was beyond the capacity of all but the most burly members to handle.

Another of Bob Lawler's working "parties" was the construction of the replacement slipway rails. The new steel rails and cross members were assembled and painted on the wharf in about three sections over a few weekends. Of course, the appropriate BBQ and keg were provided. When finished, the contractor in charge of locating them arrived with a crane and, after taking up the old slipway rails, lifted the new ones from the wharf.

These works, along with many others over the years, helped save members many thousands of dollars in maintenance costs and provided the cement that binds the Club together.



*Maggie Stewart, assistant Racing secretary, joined in 1996*



*Denise Macintosh, wife of member Ian Macintosh, has always been on standby to help out with office duties*