



ISSUE No.19 | JANUARY ~ JUNE 2026

SOUNDINGS

THE BI ANNUAL MAGAZINE of SOUTH of PERTH YACHT CLUB



LEN RANDELL OAM *Still Making Waves at 100*

+ PLUS ...

- Four Days, Seven Hours, One Unforgettable Race:
The Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race
- The Fab 4 serenades on the Swan
- Cruising to Mandurah





SOUNDINGS

THE BI ANNUAL MAGAZINE of SOUTH of PERTH YACHT CLUB



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MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2025/2026

COMMODORE
Brian Cross



VICE COMMODORE
Amanda Watson



REAR COMMODORES
Nikki Kukura – Regatta
Sandy Dunn – Centreboards



HON. TREASURER
Bradley Abbott

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Nick Chernoff
Ashley Hicks
David Luketina
Carl Petterssen
Mathew Selby
Iain Somerville

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Life Member & Past Commodore
Colin Cowden

VICE PATRONS

Kim Giddens MLA
Katy Mair, Mayor, City of Melville
Past Commodore / Life Member Rupert Leslie
Mr Len Randell OAM

NOONGAR ELDER IN RESIDENCE

Marie Taylor



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Denis Jones.....	OWG Manager
Matt Doyle.....	Sailing Administrator
Conor Nicholas.....	Senior Coach

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**Advertising and article submission deadline for
the next issue of Soundings is November 2, 2026.**



COMMODORE'S REPORT

Brian Cross | *Commodore*

THE MANY FORMS *of* VOLUNTEERING *in a* MODERN YACHT CLUB

A yacht club is a complex organisation. Members see the racing, the camaraderie, the social events, and the familiar rhythm of life around the Club. What is less visible – but absolutely fundamental – is the network of volunteers who make all of this possible. Even in a club supported by professional staff, it is volunteers who carry the culture, the continuity, and the longterm stewardship of the organisation. Their contribution takes many forms, each essential in its own way, and together they form the backbone of who we are.

On Water Volunteers: The Operational Core of Competition

Every race / time trial day depends on a coordinated team of trained volunteers who deliver the racing experience our members enjoy. These include Race Officers applying the Racing Rules with fairness and sound judgement; Starters and Timekeepers ensuring clean, timely starts; Mark Layers setting accurate and tactical courses in all conditions; and Safety and Checkpoint Boats monitoring fleets and responding when needed. These roles require skill, teamwork, and resilience. They also offer a unique sense of purpose – the knowledge that competition simply cannot happen without them.

Behind the Scenes: The Volunteers Members Rarely See

Alongside our staff, volunteers contribute in ways that are often invisible but always vital. They support social functions, regattas, and community events. They assist with junior and youth programs, coaching, and mentoring. They help with administration, scoring, communications, and logistics. Others contribute to grounds, maintenance, and even to this publication that you are reading. These volunteers add capacity, continuity, and community connection – the elements that turn a facility into a Club.

Governance Volunteers: Stewardship at the Highest Level

Even in a club with professional staff, governance is – and must remain – a volunteer responsibility. Governance is not about running operations; it is about oversight, accountability, and longterm stewardship. The Management Committee carries responsibility for financial oversight, legal and regulatory compliance, safety and risk management, strategic planning, and representing the Club to government, partners, and the community. These roles require judgement, integrity, and a willingness to make decisions that protect the Club's future, not just its present.

At the top of this structure sits the Commodore, who carries the ultimate responsibility for the Club's governance,

culture, and reputation. It is a volunteer role that demands leadership, resilience, and a deep commitment to the Club's longterm wellbeing. The weight of that responsibility is significant – and it is carried on behalf of every member.

How Our New Governance Structure Supports Volunteers

Our new governance structure has been designed with one clear purpose: to strengthen the volunteer ecosystem that makes this Club possible. A modern yacht club requires clarity of roles, transparent decisionmaking, and a structure that allows staff and volunteers to work together effectively. The new model achieves this by defining clear lines of responsibility, ensuring volunteers understand where their role sits and who supports them. It strengthens support for onwater and event volunteers by providing consistent standards, clearer reporting lines, and better coordination with staff.

*Their contribution
takes many forms, each
essential in its own way,
and together [volunteers]
form the backbone of
who we are.*

The structure also ensures governance volunteers can lead effectively. By reducing operational interference and strengthening risk management, the Board can focus on stewardship, strategy, and culture. It reinforces the Commodore's role as the guardian of governance and the custodian of the Club's longterm direction, ensuring leadership responsibilities are shared appropriately and sustainably.

Ultimately, the new structure creates a model that future volunteers can step into confidently – one that protects the Club, supports our people, and ensures our volunteers can continue contributing safely and effectively.

An Invitation to Be Part of It

If you have ever considered getting involved, there is a place for you. Whether you can offer an hour a month or a regular commitment, your contribution will make a meaningful difference. Volunteering is not only rewarding; it strengthens the Club we all value and ensures its future for the next generation.



VICE COMMODORE'S REPORT

Amanda Watson | *Vice Commodore*

Engaging with Members New and Old

Membership Update

The Pens and Hardstand Marina are now at full capacity, driven by the Club's strengthened and highly efficient onboarding process for new members. Our expanded online membership application now invites applicants to share more about what they hope to gain from Club life and how they plan to contribute to our community.

In line with the Associations Incorporation Act, all nominated applicants' names are displayed for a minimum of 14 days, giving members the opportunity to raise any concerns regarding suitability before the Management Committee considers the application. Our Club Rules clearly outline this process, and I remind members that these rights exist to protect the integrity and culture of our Club.

The applicant list and pen-allocation request list are available on the main noticeboard in the Administration foyer for your review. Once nominees are accepted as members and those requesting pen allocations approved, a handy online marina guide is a quick reference available on the Club App. The guide is custom prepared by experienced SoPYC on-water volunteers to answer frequently asked questions, DoT

and Club rules and general hints for boating on the Swan and Canning Rivers right there on your phone.

To support new members after acceptance, we have introduced an automated induction checklist, accessible 24/7. This ensures a smooth and consistent onboarding experience, particularly for FIFO workers and those unable to attend in-person inductions.

With these improvements in place, we are now planning quarterly welcome events— a more relaxed and contemporary alternative to the former formal New Members' Cocktail Party. These gatherings will provide an opportunity for new members to meet volunteers, section leaders, and fellow members in a warm, inclusive setting.

Functions, Food & Beverage

Member events are well and truly back. You asked for more music and concerts, more casual free band nights, refreshed Quarterdeck menus with great specials, Friday night soloists to set the tone, the return of Chase the Ace on Thursdays, and the revival of hosted Fine Wine Dinners. The Food & Beverage teams and volunteer groups have delivered all of it.

These offerings now sit alongside the Club's regular social pillars: the monthly Ladies Lunch, the weekly Bosuns Club shed gatherings, St

Ayles Skiff rowing, and Sailability volunteering. There is genuinely something for every member to enjoy, connect with, and get full value from their membership.

The F&B team powered through a demanding Christmas corporate season, rolled straight into New Year's Eve and Australia Day, and continued hosting large groups of members, local residents, and friends. Megan is reinvigorating the corporate and external events calendar, and members will have noticed the regeneration of the front lawn following the removal of the Beachside Marquee.

After the Covid shutdown, Club social events were unbudgeted and struggled to attract major sponsorship. To reinstate the original Concert on the Swan format, more than \$50,000 is required to secure interstate artists. Past performers have included Casey



(Left) The SoPYC Club App
(Above right) Member
Engagement Ambassador
Anne McCluskey
(Right) Concert on the
Swan, 2026.



Chambers, Kate Ceberano, The Black Sorrows, and James Morrison– just a few of the names who have graced the lawns since the late 1990s.

Members have been asking for the return of this signature event, and Member Engagement Ambassador Ann McCluskey knew exactly what would resonate. Having been involved in many of the earlier Concerts on the Swan, she recognised that a Beatles-themed tribute band would be the perfect way to bring back a member favourite. The response was outstanding, with more than 400 tickets sold across lawn and seated dinner options.

Ann is far more than a regular volunteer. Over the past 20 years she has held management portfolios and committee roles across functions and membership. Recently retired from a career as a legal secretary, she brings exceptional organisational skills and deep knowledge of Club events and traditions. She is now working alongside F&B to reintroduce and coordinate member events including

Fine Wine Dinners and quiz nights, while developing new ideas for members for the upcoming Power Yacht Time Trialing Season.

Ann welcomes your suggestions and contacts for guest speakers, themed evenings, or open mic nights. Her articles in *Soundings* are well worth reading – they're packed with opportunities for members to get involved and stay connected.

Publications

This magazine, along with our other printed publications that are mailed to members and often shared with friends and family, is thoughtfully coordinated and produced by Cally Browning and the Publications Team. Their dedication ensures our Club's stories, achievements, and history are beautifully presented and preserved. Member and sailor Shelley Tamsitt is a welcome addition to the team bringing her experience in print advertising and marketing.

The Annual Year Book, which includes the Club's financial and operational records, is scheduled

for release ahead of the AGM in September. The final documents to be signed off before the presses roll come from the Treasurer and auditor.

The team also works closely with Archives administration and the OWG to maintain and update the Almanac – a remarkable record available through the Members' Portal. The Almanac lists every winner and office bearer since the Club's founding in 1945, providing members with an invaluable reference to our shared history. Rick Steuart coordinates the annual updating.

From welcoming new members and enhancing the Yacht Club experience to delivering vibrant social events and preserving our rich history through publications and archives, the Club continues to evolve while staying true to its values. None of this would be possible without the dedication of our volunteers, staff, and members whose contributions strengthen our community every day. Together, we are building a Club that is connected, inclusive, and well positioned for the future.



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REAR COMMODORE'S REPORT

Nikki Kukura | *Rear Commodore Regatta*

Never a dull moment on (and off) the water!

Wednesday Sailability participation is going strong; however, volunteers are still required to assist with on-water and on-shore duties. Please advise Mark Popham or David Stanniforth-Smith if you can spend three hours of your time on a Wednesday morning.

The Cruising Butterflies day was a complete success with 65 boats volunteering to give those who are enduring illness or disability to experience not only boating but a variety of hands-on activities. The face-painting area was extremely busy! Thank you to our tireless volunteers and organisers.

The last few months have consisted of mainly Keelboat and Off the Beach events. The OTB Prize Night was held on Friday, May 15th. By the time you read this, Keelboat Prize Night and the Ocean Racing Prize Night would have been held on May 22 and 23 respectively.

Major ocean events represented by SoPYC yachts included Pot of Gold Race in January with Matt Rose's *King Canute* achieving 1st in Division 2 PHS overall. The Fremantle to Bunbury and Return in February saw *King Canute* participating once again along with SoPYC's Chris Hind skippering *Sagacious IV*. Both boats were prominent in the various categories for Division 2. Once again, they both participated in the Halls Head return race in March. *Sagacious IV* achieved 3rd in Division 2 IRC. Geographe Bay Race Week in February had quite a few SoPYC keelboats participating: *King Canute*, Zac Mellor's *Liberty*, Gordon and Di Dunbar's *Spritzig 2*, Richard Evans' *Wicked* (1st overall in Premier Cruising), *Murphy's Law* (2nd IRC and 3rd Consistency, overall, in Division 1). SoPYC also had 4 Vipers (Graeme Monkhouse's *Good Viperations* 3rd place overall) and three Flying 15s competing (overall winner, Brad Sheridan's *Bluebottle*).

The Billy Run/D'Arcy Cup held in March and run in conjunction with East Fremantle Yacht Club, had 18 competing yachts. The whole event was a success and many 'tales' told! David Mickels' *Mele Bilo III* won the combined event. Other SoPYC competitors were *Murphy's Law*, Greg Munt's *Good Act*, David Cowden's *Ballina*, *Liberty* and *Sagacious IV*.

**Note: Although Sagacious IV is registered at Fremantle, SoPYC still claims Chris Hind and crew as "ours"!*

Our Club racing still thrives with many eventful sailing experiences. As you can imagine I cannot list all of the winner grinners here; however, Keelboat Prize Night will reveal all for the various divisions and classes.

We are now in our Power Yacht Time Trialling season with many boats vying for the cherished 400 and 401 numbers. Once again, I have to thank our volunteers who assist with making Saturday time trialling a success.

At this point I would like to acknowledge our Captains and Vice Captains representing their sections for being 'the glue that holds everything together.' Whether it be Sailing, Cruising, Off the Beach, or Power, you are very

much appreciated. This show of gratitude also applies to our Sailability and Cruising Butterflies committee members and volunteers.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Race Officers for their commitment to ensuring we have racing and results. My great appreciation goes to the ever reliable and diligent RO John Rooke, followed by our regular ROs, Phillip Draber, Lynne Newton, Mark Abercromby and Martyn Compton. Our ROs and their teams are invaluable as are all our volunteers.

Upcoming events to look forward to:

- SoPYC's Fremantle to Geraldton and Return ocean racing event will be held on Saturday, October 24th and Friday October 30th, 2026, respectively
- SailGP (January 2027)
- Discover Sailing Day (February 2027)
- Pieces of Eight Ocean Race (April 2027)

Once again, I wish everyone fair winds and following seas. However, for those of you who are a little more adventurous, make sure your insurance cover is up to date!





REAR COMMODORE (CENTREBOARDS) REPORT

Sandy Dunn | *Rear Commodore*

Off-the-Beach Summer Series Wrap-Up

As we wrap up another successful summer series, it's a great opportunity to reflect on what our club and Off-the-Beach sailors have achieved over the past six months— and to look ahead to what we aim to build in the year ahead.

Across the 2025–2026 summer series, we saw an impressive 80 boats on the water, including 22 Flying Fifteens, 10 ILCA 4s, 6 ILCA 6s, 6 ILCA 7s, 11 LT Windsurfers, 9 Open Skiffs, 6 Optimists, 2 125s, 4 29ers, and 4 Vipers. While this is a strong turnout, our focus over the next 12 months will be on continuing to grow participation across all fleets.

Encouragingly, our junior fleets are rebuilding, following a decline last year. At the grassroots level, participation is particularly strong, with 34 Optimists currently sailing in the non-competing Bronze and Green fleets, along with four sailors in the Bronze Open Skiff fleet. These sailors represent the future of our racing fleets, and we expect many will transition into competition over the next 12–24 months, helping restore numbers to long-term levels.

Our performance fleets continue to thrive, with the ILCA and 29er classes among the strongest in the State— both in participation and results— highlighting the strength of our sailing pathway.

A Busy Championship Season

The club has also been extremely active on the regatta front, proudly hosting a number of State Championships throughout the season, including:

- Vipers (December)
- Flying Fifteens (Christmas period)
- Pelicans (January)
- LT Windsurfers (March)
- ILCAs (March)

These events attracted strong fleets, including 52 ILCAs and 41 Flying Fifteens, and showcased the club's ability to deliver high-quality racing.

Goolugatup Sailing Carnival Returns

A highlight of the season was the return of the Goolugatup Sailing Carnival in 2025. After a year's break, the event came back stronger than ever, reinforcing its reputation as one of the most sailor-friendly regattas on the calendar.

This year featured exciting new racing formats, including freestyle events, high-speed foil slalom, and SailGP-style downwind courses. Sailors were tested in a wide range of conditions – from steady breezes to challenging 25-knot winds— rising to the occasion with outstanding performances.

The junior and youth fleets demonstrated remarkable

resilience, while the Foiling and 29er classes delivered thrilling racing, reaching speeds of nearly 30 knots.

With 104 entries, the event was a tremendous success and a clear reflection of the energy and enthusiasm within our sailing community.

Volunteers at the Heart of Our Success

None of this would be possible without the dedication of our On Water Group staff and volunteers, who have worked tirelessly throughout the season. Feedback from competitors has been overwhelmingly positive, and we thank everyone involved for their commitment.

Special recognition goes to:

- Martyn Compton and Phil Draber for their outstanding work as Race Officers
- John Rooke for his continued support as coach and mentor
- Doug Cowie and Rita Nesdale for their tireless efforts maintaining and laying our race marks each week.

Like many clubs across the country, we continue to face challenges in recruiting volunteers for key on-water roles, including start boat crew, mark laying, and rescue operations. In February, we trialled a volunteer information evening to encourage new participation. While attendance was lower than hoped, we remain committed to building and supporting our volunteer community.

If you've ever considered getting involved, we'd love to hear from you— after all, a day on the water beats a day doing chores at home!

SailGP Connection Drives Growth

One of the standout achievements this season was the club's involvement in the SailGP event in Fremantle. Through this partnership:

- Our coaches supported launch and retrieval operations
- The Club provided five RIBs and seven volunteers to manage the Exclusion Zone
- 25 junior sailors gained behind-the-scenes access through Tech Site passes
- Denis Jones joined the SailGP broadcast team aboard Chase 1.

This opportunity has already had a measurable impact, with increased interest in our sailing programs. The Sailing Academy has responded by expanding course offerings and participant capacity.

Combined with a strong focus on cost management, this growth has seen the Academy perform exceptionally well, currently tracking approximately \$80,000 ahead of last year.

As we look ahead, the foundations are strong. With growing junior participation, thriving performance fleets, and continued investment in events and development pathways, we are well positioned for another outstanding season on the water.



GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

John Pedretti | *General Manager*

The past 6 months has been one of steady progress, consolidation, and strong teamwork across South of Perth Yacht Club. While there have been challenges along the way, the collective effort of our staff, volunteers, and members has ensured the Club continues to operate reliably and position itself well for the future.

A year of stabilisation and strengthening

Over the past six months, our focus has remained on strengthening the core foundations of our operations. Significant work has gone into improving operational efficiency, refining systems, and embedding clearer processes across the Club. The introduction of stronger business improvement practices and standard operating procedures has helped create more consistency and resilience in day-to-day operations, even during periods of staff change.

Recognising the efforts of our people

Our staff are the backbone of the Club, and their efforts this year deserve genuine recognition. Many team members have taken on additional responsibilities, embraced training opportunities, and supported one another through change. Cross-training and clearer role structures are already improving flexibility and helping to build a capable and engaged workforce for the long term.

Continued delivery for members

Throughout the year, member-facing activities remained a priority. Events, on-water operations, facilities, and administration continued to run, and several major functions demonstrated the Club's ability to deliver high-quality experiences. Marketing and digital initiatives also helped broaden engagement and introduce new people to the Club.

The new SoPYC App has been very well received by members, providing easy access to account details and key Club information, all in one place and at members' fingertips.

We are pleased to welcome Ann McCluskey to the team. Ann will work on strengthening engagement with members and support the delivery of more member-focused events, helping build a more connected and vibrant Club community.

None of this would be possible without the ongoing support of our members. Your patience, understanding, and constructive feedback play an important role in helping the Club improve and evolve.

Looking ahead with confidence

The year ahead is a positive one. With stronger systems in place, clearer financial discipline, and a growing focus on people and culture, the Club is well positioned to continue improving. Key priorities include further strengthening Food and Beverage operations, building staff capability and retention and leveraging proven events and revenue opportunities all while maintaining a strong member experience.

Work is also underway on a new Club website, planned for completion over winter. The refreshed site will strengthen our ongoing marketing efforts, improve how we communicate with members, and better showcase the Club to prospective members and visitors.

By continuing to work together members, staff, and volunteers we can build on the progress made this year. Continuous improvement, collaboration, and mutual respect will remain central to how we operate as a Club.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed their time, energy, and support over the past year.



PENS & MOORINGS REPORT

By Ash Hicks

The Pens and Moorings Committee has recently initiated a procedural change to speed up the process for pen allocations and relocations for existing and new members. This has in most cases reduced turnaround times by a couple of weeks and improved member satisfaction, particularly for members who are in the process of purchasing a new boat.

Our water and land pens are now at effective 100% occupancy, with only a few of the smaller jetty 7 pens vacant. This is great news for the club in terms of facilities utilisation and revenue, and we are in the process of re-instating additional swing moorings to provide us with some flexibility to accommodate more boats. However, it does mean that members wishing to purchase a new boat whilst selling their old boat should contact the

Pens & Moorings Administrator for guidance as to pen availability before committing to a purchase.

Shore power lead re-tagging time is an important annual safety requirement and was required to be undertaken by Doug and Lou at Coffee Point Marine Services by 31st May. Members who are yet to undertake this should ensure that it is actioned as soon as possible.

When taking your boat out on the water, please store your lead on your

boat, not on the jetty.

Finally, a couple of safety reminders:

- Please do not transfer fuel from jerry cans to your boat in the pen – do this at the fuel jetty;
- Please check your mooring lines (and weights if appropriate) for chafing so that you are prepared for the inevitable winter storms; and
- Please ensure that your three yearly Marina Safety Compliance inspection is up to date.

Happy boating.



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Rest in Peace

to our Members who have recently passed

Judy Cowden (*August 2025*)
Barry Stewart (*February 2026*)

OUR MEMBERS

WELCOME TO ALL OUR NEW MEMBERS WHO HAVE JOINED THE CLUB FROM JANUARY ~ MAY 2026

ORDINARY

Xavier Matier
 Joseph Malekin
 Stephen Grahame
 Anthony Caputo
 Russell Trowbridge
 Lee Wilkins
 Leon Gaglia
 Bob Shier
 Ian White
 David Proctor
 Daniel Hayton
 Brooke Dunning
 Timothy Lynch
 Nicholas Hughes
 Gary Buchanan
 Bianca Zito
 Lucas Allum

FAMILY ASSOCIATE

Karen Herbert
 Dylan Herbert
 Liam Herbert
 Marcelle Caputo
 Hollie Caputo
 Ben Murphy
 Joshua Murphy
 Samuel Murphy
 Daisynie Andrews
 Avery Andrews
 Atticus Andrews
 Tam Christie
 Manpreet Dilandli
 Evelyn Bhinder
 Donna Thomas
 Alexander Thomas
 Jacob Thomas
 Jodie Clark
 Hayley Abbiss
 Johanna Sibly
 Sam Sibly

Amelia Gummer
 David Salmeri
 Patrick Salmeri
 Tina Large
 Braxson Large
 Mila Large
 Maura Williams
 Miller Williams
 Fletcher Williams
 Cassie Verlinden
 Rylee Mccrum
 James Mccrum
 Joanne Johnson

FAMILY

Troy Herbert
 Anthony Caputo
 Victoria Murphy
 Brett Andrews
 Mark Christie
 Kavalbir Singh Bhinder
 Matthew Thomas
 Mr Gary Clark
 Joel Gummer
 Adam Sibly
 Michelle Juan
 Barry John Large
 Paul Williams
 Ben Mccrum

ASSOCIATE

Marnie Pascoe

SOCIAL

James Konsolis
 Graeme Martin
 Chris Beath
 Rebecca Kaukau
 Philip Trueman
 Margaret Trueman
 Judith Ann Hurst

Colin Dyer
 Joel Devenish
 Simon Ferrier
 Lyn Sampey
 David O'Brien
 Maria Caroline Van Beelan
 Diane Stewart
 Elizabeth Stewart

CREW

Enfys Jerwood
 Darryn Ragless
 John Mathieson
 Judith Doverty

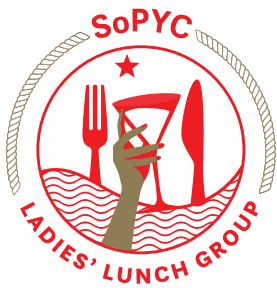
INTRO CREW

Pia-Maria Turcinov
 Christopher Hiscock

JUNIOR

Lewis Hayes
 Arnaud Laroche
 Jayden Aung
 Mitchell Mannion
 Oliver Shipp
 Lewin Brownbill
 Findlay Bell
 Connor Grant
 Sophie Berden
 Georgia Berden
 Leo Wrobel
 Hudson McRobb
 Billie McCracken





LADIES' LUNCHEON REPORT

By ANN McCLUSKEY



December's Christmas lunch combined the usual uplifting camaraderie with a touch of early festive shopping. Six tables featured everything from jewellery and candles to food and artwork. The afternoon took a magical turn when the 'One Achor'd Choir' appeared as a surprise flash mob, providing beautiful harmonies and Christmas carols. Following the tasty Christmas lunch provided by Chef Damian and his team, we danced the afternoon away to the cool hits provided by DJ Di.

In February, we were charmed by the talent of four-time WA Society of Magicians Champion Steve Silk. Steve won us over with his tricks, witty stories and sense of humour. Taking the time to visit every table, Steve also performed a special dedication for our lovely Norma, a 40 plus year attendee of the ladies' lunches who celebrated her 100th birthday in March.

The flag officers opened the March lunch, with the Commodore providing a beautiful speech for Norma's 100th birthday and presented her with a special name badge, free membership and a cake marking her 100 years.

Fashion then took centre stage, with Kings Park Fashion providing a varied and attractive collection of their clothes. Six of our regular attendees stepped onto the catwalk, parading the collection with such self-confidence, you might think some of them had done this before.

April marked the second time that the men have been invited to join us for lunch. We were honoured to host motivational speaker Tony Mowbray, who shared his harrowing experience fighting for survival during the tragic 1998 Sydney to Hobart yacht race, that claimed six lives. It was a gripping and, at times, moving presentation. You could have heard a pin drop as he shared exciting tales of trips to Antarctica and beyond, and of his solo, unassisted circumnavigation of the world. What an inspirational man; he captivated us all from start to end. Tony's book *Never Ever Give In* was a sell-out with extras ordered as supplies ran short. If you weren't able to attend the lunch, Tony features in many documentaries which can be found

online. What a fascinating man.

It has to be said that throwing the ladies' lunches requires not only a lot of work on the part of the dedicated committee, but also by the staff who set up, serve us and always wear a smile. Thanks to them and to the chef and his crew for serving up a treat each month.

If you would like to come and join us, we meet on the second Thursday of every month. Whether held upstairs in the wardroom or in the ballroom, our lunches always offer stunning views of the beautiful Swan River. Come along and enjoy a drink on arrival, two-course meal, interesting guest speakers and a monthly raffle, with delicious food hampers generously supplied by the Good Grocer.





GALLERY – CHASE THE ACE: *Forever popular*

Thursday nights at the Club have become a favourite fixture on the social calendar thanks to the ever-popular Chase the Ace. Members gather for a relaxed evening of drinks, good company, and the excitement of seeing if their ticket will be drawn. Lucky participants get to select a card from the deck, with a range of cash prizes generously provided by our sponsors, whose ongoing support is greatly appreciated. The biggest prize of all is linked to the elusive Ace of Spades, with the jackpot growing each week it remains hidden in the pack. It's a fun and friendly tradition that brings members together, with plenty of anticipation and the possibility of taking home a welcome prize!





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Doing it Right!

THE BOSUNS' CLUB REPORT

By RICK STEUART

The Bosuns' Club Christmas Barbecue



The skiffie painters at work

No-one said it would be easy

Before Christmas, we had been establishing the tiedowns for the trailer yachts on the Western Hardstand. The Centreboard bathrooms were given a freshen up with the frames and doors given a good seeing to, amongst other items. And we managed to fit in a Christmas BBQ for the volunteers and Club bosuns as well.

Let me remind you again of that special group of volunteers who prepare and refuel the Club rescue and mark laying boats. Every week during the summer season, they ensure that they are topped up and ready to go. I might also point out that these people as just as busy in other aspects of the Club; from mark laying, starters, St Ayles skiff captains and other fancy stuff. What would we do without them?

The delivery of a couple of extra containers for our use and for OWG has had the team hard at work, painting them and eventually we will finish the last of the containers and put a protective 'lid' on top of it. Apart from putting up a cover for the Skiffs out the back of the Club and many thanks to Club sponsors John Fenton and Ray Gullotto for their help, we have been busy establishing good relationships with the Sailing On crew.

It started as an invitation to join us for a coffee around 10.30 for two or three of them and it's grown to encompass up to seven of them at a time. The kettle has never worked so hard delivering the hot water for

cups of tea and coffee with the supply of ginger nuts and Tim Tams never ending to keep the lads happy.

The Bosuns Club will be servicing the Club PFDs in June and you can have yours done as well for \$20 and costs. (generally, we look at it, assess what has to be done and tell you what should be needed) If it's a self-inflating model, we do recommend that you purchase the specific replacement pack and we will fit it for you. In on a Monday morning and ready by Friday midday. We will service most models, but there are older ones we may not be able to care for. In this case we will recommend that you buy new ones.

Then we begin to prepare for our winter tasks along with the Club's requests for assistance in laying the new decking for the jetties on the

southern side of the Club. The decking is reaching the end of its life and the plan is to get a big working party to get take the current decking up and the new surfaces down. Hopefully it won't affect the inhabitants of the jetties overly. Your help will be asked for.

Here is a list of the volunteer bosuns in no particular order. Doug Cowie, Dave Roberts, Bruce Cadée, Bob Harrap, Theo Berden, John Midolo, Campbell Stewart, Rick Steuart, Mark Abercrombie, Bob Motteram, Kevin Doig, Alan Sharpe, Phil Draber, Nick Sharples, Gordon Roe, Peter Brown and the odd helper who has been popping in and out of the shed.

If you've got nothing to do on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, feel free to join us. Coffee is at 10.30 and all are welcome.



Nothing's as precious as a hole in the ground



Another lease of life for the container

FEATURE | RODNEY NOTT AWARD RECIPIENT - BRUCE UREN

By AMANDA WATSON



The Rodney Nott award is offered to the Club member who has put his time and effort into the club on a continuous basis, not seeking glory, but helping the Club at every level as a volunteer.

This year it was awarded to Bruce Uren. Whether as a sailor, a representative of the Club or on committees, Bruce

always has a rational well thought out approach to the job at hand and many of us have benefited from his experience.

But that's not all. Bruce is in charge of the recycling project that takes all the empty cans and bottles that we produce and divvies them up with the scouts to ensure that both they and junior sailing are helped. He runs the Crew Finder program that ensures that new people are placed with boats and gives them a chance to fit in.

Bruce also has time to go sailing with his SS22 *Wildfire* in the Midweeks, Saturday, Frostbite and even the Twilight races and is seen on the podium more often than not. He is a regular at Cockburn Sound each year and takes other members of the SS22 fraternity on board for an exhilarating ride over the four days of the regatta. All this and he still manages to find the time to work with the OWG in getting the trophy results sorted and helps prepare the participation plaques requested by the sailing fraternity.

The Rodney Nott award was presented to Bruce Uren to recognise his participation in the Club and the tireless effort that he has put in. He is a worthy recipient of the honour.

ANYMORE
LOCAL
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LIVING
ROOM



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The recent celebrations of Len Randell's 100th birthday had an interesting side bar.

One of the attendees was the daughter of one of our earlier Commodores Mert Gray. Ann Carroll, nee Gray, mentioned that there was a commemorative plaque to her father on the wall at the entrance to the Club. Of course, we checked the place near the sail at the front of the Club and there was nothing to be found. Fallen off, souvenired, used to patch a fence line... does anyone know where that plaque has gone? There are thoughts of replacing the plaque, but it would be nice to have the original.

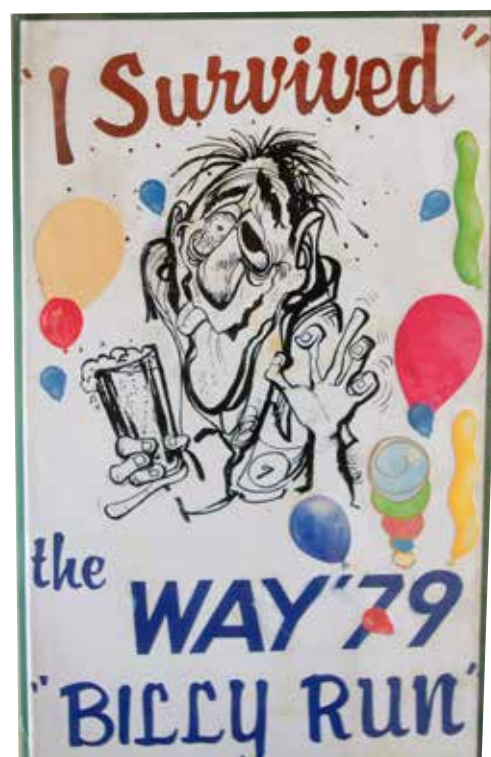
As ever, we are looking for old Newsletters and *Soundings* magazines as they help understand previous goings on in the Club; for example, the copy of the financial statements for 1946 (published in 1995 in the November issue of *Soundings*). Wouldn't the current treasurer like to have such a simple set of figures to produce?

One of our earliest Commodores and Life Members, Mel Peacock,



served as Commodore from 1950 to 1952 and was elected a Life Member in 1958. Mel was a State and National Champion on See-Bee in the Senior VJs in the late 1940s, and was also the progenitor of the race to Rottneest which morphed into the popular Billy Run that has been running over the past 50 years or so.

Above, The old Clubhouse at the Olive Groves in the 1950s, donated by past Commodore and Life Member Mel Peacock (below left).
Below, The 1979 Billy Run poster.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Keep your copy of the 1994/95 Statements handy when reading this from 1946 the currency is Pounds, shillings & pence).

South Perth Yacht Club
N N Groom
13 South Terrace, South Perth
Tel. No. MU1572

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ABOVE CLUB
WILL BE HELD IN THE CLUB HOUSE ON WEDNESDAY, 28TH. AUGUST, 1946, AT 8P.M.

BUSINESS

1. To receive Financial Statements.
2. To receive the Commodore's and Secretary's Report.
3. Election of Officers for the ensuing year.
4. General.

As this is our first Annual General Meeting, we would appreciate your special effort to attend.

N N Groom
Hon. Secretary

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES. AS AT 30TH. JUNE, 1946.

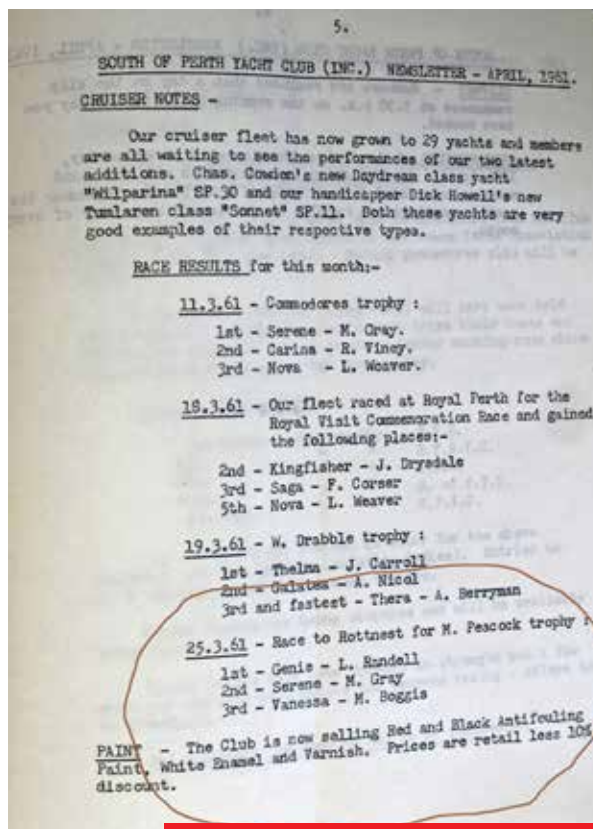
Liabilities		Assets	
Accumulated Funds	95. 1. 11.	Building	495.18. 2.
Trophy Money	20. 0. 0.		
Bank of New South Wales	380.16. 3.		
	495. 18. 2		495.18.2

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

Expenditure		Income	
Sundry Expenses		Race Fees	15.17.9
Rent of hall/postage, petty cash etc	9. 5. 7.	Membership Fees	77.19. 0.
Trophies in excess of Money received.	9.10.0	Registration of boats	1. 7. 6.
Excess of Income and Expenditure	95. 1.11	Proceeds of Sweeps	1. 0. 3.
		Proceeds of Afternoon teas	4.11.0
		Donations	12. 2. 0
	113.17. 6		113.17.6

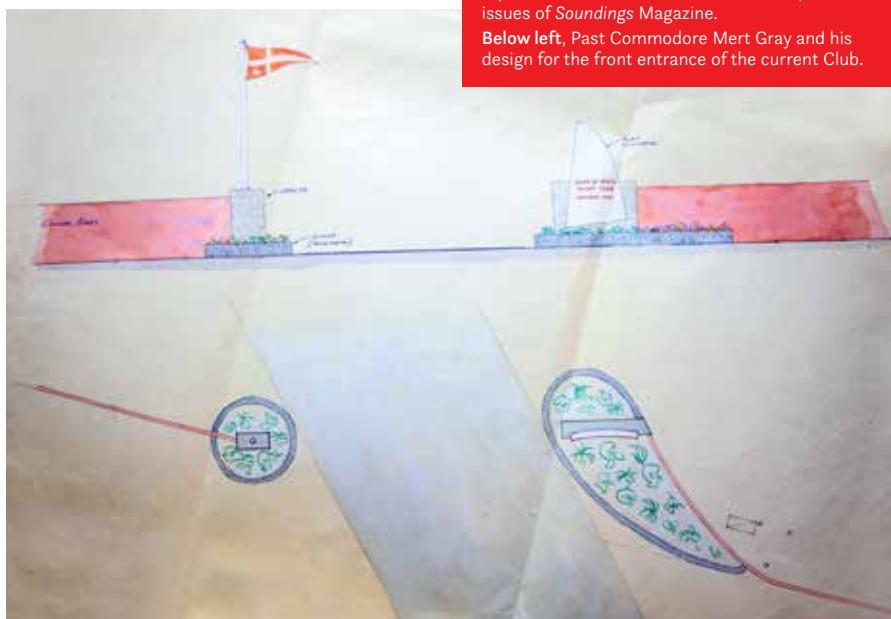
I hereby certify that I have Examined the book, vouchers etc. of the South of Perth Yacht Club and that the above Balance Sheet and statements represent the true and correct position of the Club's Finances as at 30th June, 1946. 19th July 1946 (signed) R Clair Mattiske, Dip Comm AFIA, Hon Auditor SPYC

5



Above, Important information such as financial reports and race results can be found in past issues of *Soundings* Magazine.

Below left, Past Commodore Mert Gray and his design for the front entrance of the current Club.



Again, there was a trophy for it, but somewhere in the last half century the trophy has disappeared. Perhaps the most memorable images we have are from the Way 1979 event that is aptly summed up by the Billy Run 1979 Poster.

Fortunately, Mel Peacock also donated a painting of the old Clubhouse at the Olive Groves and there you see a fine interpretation of the Clubhouse as it stood in the 1950s.

It was found in a cupboard in the committee room and now resides in the Heritage Room alongside a number of other selections of our Clubhouses.

The Archives and History group has recently finished the update of the *Almanac* for 2025-6 and will endeavour to continue this amazing ready reckoner for the Club. It can be found on the Club website under the members' tab.

Member can use the *Almanac* to review major winners from former years. It's also available on the Club app under Documents. Mind you, it's still a work-in-progress and members are welcome to help us update the *Almanac* with any information or feedback they may have.

Please contact the Archives at archives@sopyc.com.au



FEATURE – SYDNEY TO HOBART YACHT RACE

By MATT ROSE, *Ocean Racing Captain*

Helming *Wyuna* during the race

MANY RACES WITHIN A RACE

The 80th Sydney to Hobart

THE SYDNEY TO HOBART IS NOT A RACE THAT LENDS ITSELF EASILY TO BREVITY. ATTEMPTING TO CAPTURE BOTH THE PREPARATION AND THE RACE ITSELF INEVITABLY REQUIRES A LITTLE MORE EXPLANATION THAN USUAL.

The Road to the Start

My involvement in the 80th running of the Sydney to Hobart followed several offshore events closer to home, including the Ocean Racing Western Australia series of offshore races. At the time they felt significant enough. In hindsight, they were very much part of the preparation.

The campaign began with the qualifying races off Sydney. On the eve of the Bird Island Race, *Wyuna* was alongside at the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia with the usual collection of tools, spare gear and unfinished jobs still being attended to. Todd Back

and I had re-battened the mainsail and installed it, making sure all three reefing lines were good to go.

Bird Island – Finding Rhythm

The *Bird Island Race* provided an ideal introduction. There were enough sail changes to keep the crew busy, and *Wyuna* showed her capability, reaching speeds of up to 16 knots, matching *King Canute's* all-time top speed, albeit with considerably less effort and a lot less displacement.

Back in Western Australia, *King Canute* was competing in the RPYC Island Race around Rottnest under the

capable command of Zachary Mellor and trusty KC crew. I was immensely proud of how they sailed in my absence.

Keeping the WA Campaign Alive

Between Bird and Cabbage Tree Islands, attention briefly returned west. On 29 November, South of Perth Yacht Club ran the *Pieces of Eight* Race - another successful event that kept the WA offshore series alive.

Cabbage Tree – A Step Up

The *Cabbage Tree Island Race* was a more serious undertaking. After a long beat north, *Wyuna* surged downwind reaching speeds of 17 knots.

A lightning storm developed offshore, and unstable winds near the Heads required careful navigation before finishing just after midnight.

Christmas in Sydney

The race briefing confirmed

Continued on page 22 /...



Wyuna in full flight, Sydney



The Bird Island Race

/... Continued from page 21

expectations of a tough start. One preview described it as “smash, bash and crash,” which proved accurate.

Preparing over Christmas meant discussing weather systems rather than festivities.

The Race Begins

Wyuna started on the busiest start line with the largest fleet. The water was choppy from the ferries and spectator boats, challenging the crew to focus on maintaining boat speed.

The early stages were a sustained upwind grind with heavy seas from Sydney Heads for the next 48 hours. We cycled through sail combinations including survival mode with three reefs in the main and the smallest jib. Sleep was deprived and conditions tough. It was exactly the “smash, bash and crash” we had been warned about.

Across Bass Strait

The long-awaited wind change brought relief. Under AO and A2 sails, Wyuna came alive, and a squid landing on deck provided some unexpected humour. For the first time in days, the boat felt free again – fast, balanced, and doing what it was designed to do.

Tasmania and the Final Miles

The run down the coast brought rhythm back, as bird life and ships signaled land. As predicted, the weather soon swung in favor of the smaller yachts, including the increasingly competitive double-handed fleet, as they closed in on Tasmania.

At Tasman Island we headed for the finish, only for the breeze to die in Storm Bay; an ironic final challenge.

Wyuna crossed the finish line after four days, seven hours, 27 minutes and five seconds, placing 11th in IRC Division Five. After docking the first item the crew were offered were sea-salt flavoured potato chips – which felt slightly redundant at that point. The crew bypassed showers and walked directly to Customs House for the customary beverages and exchange of stories.

Reflections

Looking back, the Sydney to Hobart is less a single race and more a sequence of experiences.

For me, it felt fitting that in this 80th edition of the great race, the smallest boats with the smallest crews quietly stole the show.

~ MATT ROSE

A total of 35 boats retired, highlighting how demanding the race was. Finishing felt like an achievement. It also reinforced that in offshore racing, simply finishing is never something to take for granted.

I am incredibly grateful to Wyuna’s owner and skipper, Hilary Arthure, for the opportunity she has given me and many others to be part of this campaign and for the pathways she creates, particularly for young sailors to pursue their ambitions.

Conclusion

What an epic adventure. Words, photos, and videos do not do it justice. It is something that must be experienced in the moments and then

carried forward in memory and the bond with the people with whom you accomplished it.

As commentator Gordon Bray observed: “I think you will all agree that for the 80th edition of the Rolex Sydney to Hobart the full force of mother nature was thrown at the 128 starters, but we all agree it was a race for the ages”

No wonder people do this repeatedly despite the challenges. Each edition tells its own story. It is “Many Races Within a Race”.

For me, it felt fitting that in this 80th edition of the great race, the smallest boats with the smallest crews quietly stole the show. I look forward to the next edition.



RACE STATISTICS (2025)

628 Nautical miles

128 Starters

6 100-foot maxis

First female overall winner
Jiang Lin

First double-handed overall winner
Min River



Above, Storm Bay
Below, Wyuna inside
Constitution Dock

By AMANDA WATSON, *Vice Commodore*



Premier's Visit Showcases Community Collaboration *at* SoPYC

PREMIER ROGER COOK AND
LOCAL MLA KIM GIDDENS PAID
A BRIEF BUT MEANINGFUL VISIT
TO THE CLUB ON A SUNNY
APRIL AFTERNOON.

Following a media stop at the new Applecross ferry jetty site, the Premier and his group boarded *Waylen Bay*, the Club's support vessel proudly funded through grant assistance from Kim Giddens. Their trip from the Raffles jetty traced the proposed ferry route along the eastern shoreline, passing the Sea Scouts assembly halls and sheds before crossing the river to our western hardstand jetty, where

volunteer groups gathered on the lawns to welcome them.

Representatives from several community programs were present, including our dedicated **Sailability** volunteers, the **Cruising Butterflies** team in collaboration with **Kiind** and the **Rotary Clubs** of Applecross and Melville, and the **Sailing On** organisers and ambassador, who shared the remarkable story and book documenting the yacht restoration and renaming of the *James Thomas Martin*. Our junior sailors also took the opportunity to proudly demonstrate their rigging skills ahead of afternoon training.

The Premier showed genuine interest as he moved between

groups, enjoying refreshments while speaking with volunteers, participants, and organisers to gain a firsthand understanding of the Club's community partnerships and the impact of their work.

Under the stewardship of Commodore Brian Cross and the Management Committee, the Club continues to foster a respectful and constructive relationship with government and legislators. By engaging in working groups and open dialogue, SoPYC is helping to shape solutions that meet the needs of a growing city while honouring our responsibility to care for the precious Swan River shoreline.

By RICK STEUART



ONLY ONCE *in your* LIFETIME!

Born in 1926 on the 1st of March and joined SoPYC in 1951 as one of the fabled “Other Siders” Len has kept his head and hands busy ever since. By this time, he was already building and designing all types of boats and in 1952 he was awarded associate membership of the Royal Institute of Naval Architects in London. His reputation was built on designing and sailing racing and cruising yachts, but his fishing boat designs made his commercial career.

To celebrate his 100th birthday, he simply invited a few people down to the club for Sunday lunch on the 1st of March and the afternoon was a celebration of his friends from all over Perth. From the Leeuwin Foundation, his gliding friends, his devoted crew from The Avenue, a couple of Geraldton friends who were able to come down and shipwright and sailor, Steve Ward managed to tear himself away from his beloved boats to attend.

The club lifted in response to the challenge of a simple cold collation and the lunch was served buffet style with

both kitchen and floor staff working to present a magnificent afternoon. Even the weather was kind with a comfortable 25 degrees on the day.

Vice Commodore and friend, Amanda Watson had worked in with the family to ensure that the day was simple but well set out and once lunch was finished, the guests were invited into the Ballroom to hear a few words from Len himself and he was presented by the only gift that managed to sneak its way on board on the day. The Australian Wooden Boat festival organisers had heard of his Centenary and sent a set of Huon pine tongs to be presented to him on the day.

Len cut the cake, which was then served up by the younger members of the family and the afternoon made its way to the end of the day as people realised that

they had just experienced a once in a life time event. Len mingled with other well-wishers who had come down to join in the event after the ceremony and the afternoon came to a well deserved final.

Len Randell &
John Fitzharding





Len with the ladies...
Christina, Nikki,
Ann, Pam and Lynne



Peter and Ann Carroll
(nee Grey) with Len.



Len with Madeleine Rennie



By ANN McCLUSKEY



Norma with fellow centenarian Len Randell



NORMA 'BUNNY' TEFFER RECENTLY CELEBRATED HER 100TH BIRTHDAY, AND WE WERE DELIGHTED TO SHARE THE OCCASION WITH HER AT THE MARCH LADIES' LUNCH. TO MARK THIS VERY SPECIAL MILESTONE, THE FLAG OFFICERS ATTENDED IN FULL UNIFORM AS A SIGN OF RESPECT AND CELEBRATION. BELOW IS THE COMMODORE'S SPEECH FROM THE DAY:

"Today we have the privilege of recognising someone truly remarkable in the life of our Club – Norma 'Bunny' Teffer, who will be celebrating her 100th birthday on the 17th. Norma is only the second person in the entire history of South of Perth Yacht Club to reach this extraordinary milestone, and it is an honour for us to acknowledge her today.

Some of you will remember her late husband, Phil Teffer, who joined the Club in 1994 and was a familiar presence here for many years. Phil and Norma came to Australia from the United Kingdom, and they built their life together on the river. After Phil's passing in 2015, Norma joined the Club in her own right and has been a valued part of our Ladies Lunch group ever since. Her involvement goes back even further – her name appears in our records as one of the Ladies Lunch organisers in the early 2000s, showing just how long her connection to this community and this particular event has been.

Reaching 100 years is an extraordinary achievement – one that speaks to resilience, perspective, and a lifetime of stories. It is a privilege for our Club to stand with Norma as she marks this moment.

As a mark of respect for this rare milestone, I have asked our Flag Officers to present in full uniform today. Their presence reflects the esteem in which Norma is held and the significance of this occasion in the life of our Club.

Today, I have the honour of presenting Norma with a special Centenarian Badge. This badge has only ever been awarded once before in our history. It recognises not only her milestone, but the place she holds within our Club community.

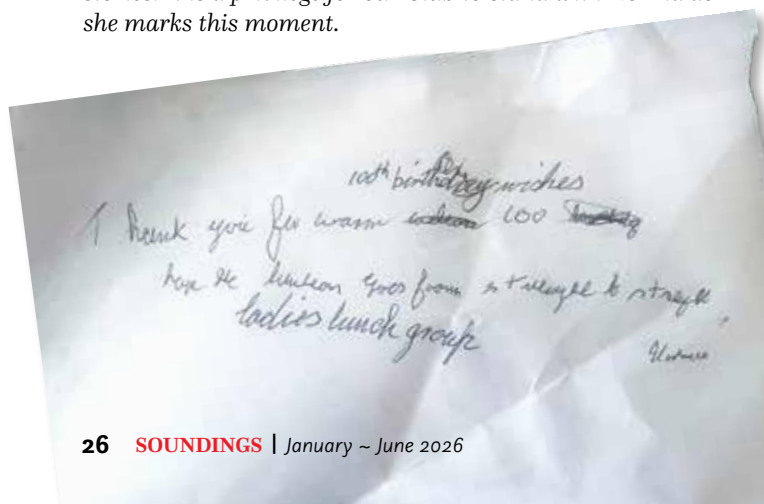
And I am pleased to say that the small 'H' on the badge carries a very special meaning:

South of Perth Yacht Club will honour Norma as a member for the rest of her life, and the Club will cover her membership fees moving forward.

It is a simple gesture, but one that reflects the respect and affection we have for her.

On behalf of the Management Committee, our Flag Officers, and all members of South of Perth Yacht Club, it is my great pleasure to congratulate Norma Teffer on her centenary and to present her with this badge in recognition of a truly remarkable milestone."

Reaching 100 years is an extraordinary achievement – one that speaks to resilience, perspective, and a lifetime of stories.



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stroke
-One Owner

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FEATURE

By ANN McCLUSKEY



WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, SO MUCH YOUNGER THAN TODAY
I SAW THE AWESOME FABFOUR AT THE YACHT CLUB PLAY...

CONCERT on the SWAN

PICTURE THIS – TOP LOCATION, BEST CITY VIEWS, BALMY EVENING, GREAT FOOD AND GREAT COMPANY. FRIDAY 20 MARCH HAD ALL THE ABOVE, ALONG WITH THE MAIN INGREDIENT – THE SENSATIONAL FABFOUR, PERTH'S VERY OWN BEATLES TRIBUTE BAND. THE EVENT WAS A COMPLETE SELL OUT.



The highly anticipated return of Concert on the Swan was an absolute smash hit from start to finish. The Fabfour were the band of choice and fab they were. Bursting onto the stage starting the set off with *I saw her standing there* and then onto all the familiar Beatles hits we all know, from *Do you want to know a secret*, to *Hey Jude*, *Twist and Shout*, *Love me do* and so on The hits just kept on coming all night long. The Fabfour were as polished and authentic as a cover band could be including Paul's left handed bass guitar, mop top hairdos, three outfit changes including Sgt Peppers, all whilst covering the Beatles

hits spanning the years 1962 to 1969.

The band's stage was set up on the back lawn with the City of Perth as its backdrop. Following on from one of the Club's typical outstanding sunsets, once the cloud cover had cleared, we were treated to beautiful reflections of the City, across the Swan River.

The dance floor on the lawn was packed all night long. I've since be advised by a lot of the male members in attendance (who don't usually dance), that they did so for much of the night. You just could not stop dancing (and singing along) to such great songs that most of us grew up with or grew to love as music from one of

the world's most famous bands. The Fabfour did them justice.

I must say a big thank you to our wonderful employees, firstly to Gaspar in indulging me and helping me to re-create the Abbey Road scene, extending the crosswalk to the ground to make the backdrop and carpet appear as one. Secondly,



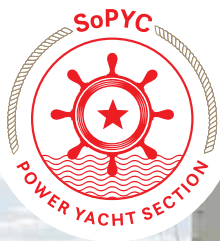
I'd like to commend the staff who worked so hard all night. When approximately 460 people all arrived at once, they remained calm in pouring us drinks, serving us food, setting up and cleaning up, all in a friendly and professional manner. That's what you call a Hard Day's Night.



KEELBOAT PRIZE NIGHT 2026







POWER TORQUE

By JUSTINE BARRON



POWER OPENING DAY 2026

The Power Section closed out 2025 in festive style with the much-loved Jetty 6 Christmas Party, transforming both the jetty and the fleet into a dazzling Christmas wonderland. Members and guests gathered to celebrate, with some dancing well into the evening to a live band performing on the jetty, while others enjoyed a more relaxed atmosphere socialising aboard boats and along the waterfront. It was a fitting end to a vibrant year.

While the warmer months are traditionally a quieter period for section events, there was still plenty of activity behind the scenes. The section co-hosted alongside the Sailing Section the popular C U @ Sunset – Sail to Power Handover and delivered an Introduction to Time Trialing course led by current Club Champion, PC Troy Dalglish. Both events attracted strong participation, with 14 members taking part in the training day, gaining valuable hands-on and on-water experience in the art of time trialing.

The new season is now well underway, officially launched with the 65th Power Yacht Time Trialing Season and Winter Opening Day on Saturday, 2 May 2026. The occasion brought together Flag Officers, guests, Past Commodores and members in the ballroom for the traditional opening ceremony and ceremonial firing of the cannon. From there, attendees made their way either to their boats or to the jetty for the much-anticipated sail-past, where Commodore Brian Cross led the salute to a proud display of participating vessels.

The competitive spirit was evident from the outset, with 18 power yachts contesting the Commodore's Trophy. *Dalusional* took top honours, closely followed by *Lone Star* in second place and *The Pickled Tickle* in third. Creativity and presentation were also on display, with *Crystal C* claiming Best Dressed Boat and *Reef Runner* awarded Best Themed Boat for Opening Day.

The section is also pleased to welcome newly appointed Power Captain Neil Howie to the committee. He joins returning Vice-Captain Robin Wilcockson and a dedicated team of committee members, all working behind the scenes to deliver a smooth and successful season. The Power Section continues to foster a welcoming environment and actively encourages new members to get involved, promoting strong participation and engagement across the Club.

Finally, the section extends its sincere thanks to its valued sponsors, whose ongoing support helps make the season possible. These include Specialised Marine Group (SMS), Capital Demolition Civil and Concrete Recycling, Wilson Marine, Jennings Plumbing and Gas, Advanced Business Abilities, Century 21 River Residential, Metal West, MPS, Auscon Metals and Machinery, and Collins Recycling. With their continued backing, the Power Section looks ahead with confidence, committed to growing the sport and delivering rewarding experiences for its members.





SAILING SECTION REPORT

By VICTORIA BLANCKENSEE

Champagne Sailing for the 3rd D'Arcy Race Billy Run to Rottnest

Saturday March 7 saw sailors take to the water for the third running of the D'Arcy Race Billy Run to Rottnest, with a fleet of 18 boats enjoying near-perfect conditions for the popular offshore dash.

Competitors were greeted with stunningly warm and sunny weather, setting the tone for a memorable day on the water. While the breeze was slow to arrive and made for a gentle start, race officials were eager to get the fleet underway so crews could make the most of the day – and arrive in time for the celebrations waiting on the other side.

Once the wind filled in, the race quickly turned into champagne sailing as the fleet settled into their respective courses. Boats made steady progress across the sparkling waters, exchanging friendly waves with the Power Support boats along the way. By just after 3pm, the entire fleet had safely crossed the 'fishing boat' finish line and gathered in the calm waters of Thompson Bay.

The festivities continued ashore with the presentation of results at the Sunset Lounge at the newly refurbished Rottnest Lodge. The event was well attended by crews from both clubs, along with support crews and race supporters, rounding out a fantastic day of sailing and camaraderie.

South of Perth Yacht Club claimed all three divisional honours, with *Sagacious 4* taking out Division 1, *Good Act* winning Division 2, and *Mele Bilo III* securing victory in Division 3.

The coveted Billy Run Trophy, awarded for the standout performance of the race, went to David Mickle and his crew aboard *Mele Bilo III* after an impressive showing on the water.

A huge thank you goes to all the South of Perth Yacht Club competitors and crews, as well as our friends from East Fremantle Yacht Club, who helped make the race such a fun and memorable event both on and off the water.

The day would not have been possible without the dedication of our volunteers and the generous support of our sponsors, Nail Brewing and The Good Grocer, along with the volunteers and sponsors from EFYC getting behind the event.



Good Act



Ballina



Mele Bilo III

By RICK STEUART

Oh, my word! THE BILLY RUN

IT'S A TAME AFFAIR THESE DAYS COMPARED WITH WHAT THE FELLOWS USED TO GET UP TO, BUT THE IMPULSE IS STILL THERE.

The concept was started and promoted by Commodore Mel Peacock, who in his day was the 1947/48 National VJ champion. The original event occurred on the river with everybody departing to a destination on the river and, amongst other entertainment, made a billy tea with an open fire and a kero tin of water (*who can remember what a kero tin was?!).*

Mel offered a trophy for the annual race to Rottnest with a barbecue and pleasant afternoon at the Quokka Arms. Participants would then sail back from Rotto the next day, often nursing sore heads and other self-inflicted injuries.

The catering varied from barbecues and beef on a spit, to meals at local eateries and it remained a traditional male preserve; the presence of women was severely frowned upon. The venue also evolved over time. Initially, the boats gathered at Thomsons Bay because of its proximity to the pub. As the event grew in popularity, the meeting point shifted first to Parkers Point and later to Longreach, where boats could anchor offshore before crews made their way to the beach for pre-planned barbecues and organised bar setups.

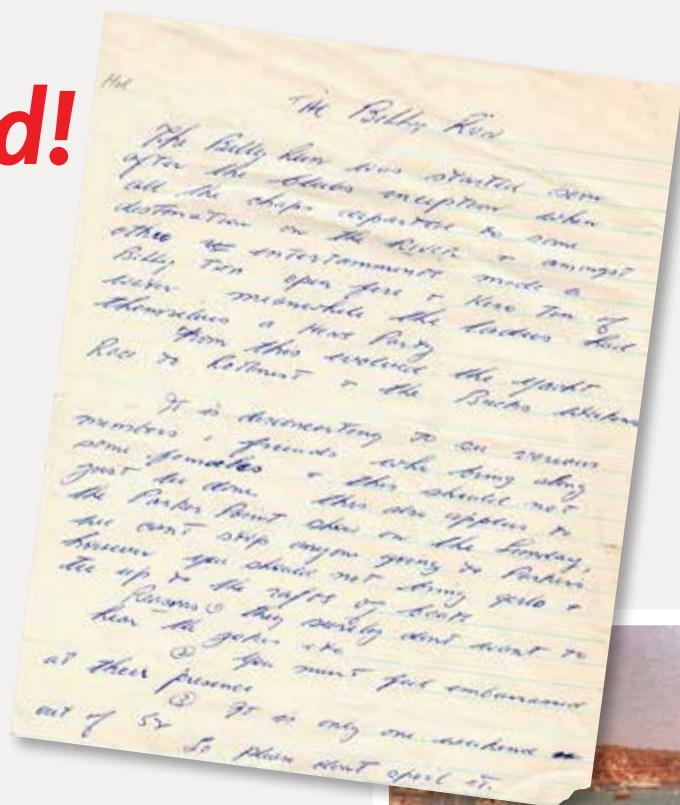
But it didn't start here.

There are records kept in clubs around the river and on the coast going back to the 1920s with Billy Runs telling of trips over to Garden Island for overnight camping. A couple of men would head to the island the day before and catch a couple of young goats to prepare a meal for the arrivals. The main group would then arrive with barrels of beer and sufficient cheese and bread to keep them fed if the early arrivals had failed to provide the necessary meat. Again, it

was a male reserve and very much 'a weekend away with the boys'.

The most notorious event was probably the WAY 79 Billy Run, (pictured right), but each one of the events had memories attached to them such as the common occurrence of waking up the next day on someone else's boat.

David Pearce wrote a lovely article that was posted in Coffee Pointers in 2026 which helped define the event as it was. The Billy Run is still sailed yearly, nowadays in company with East Fremantle Yacht Club and their D'Arcy Cup and blokes still go to Rotto with the intent of having a good time on the island.





DIVISION ONE RAMBLINGS

By DAVID THOMS



The Wednesday Fleet continues to thrive with ten boats regularly competing, but our Saturday Fleet continues to struggle with numbers. The Wednesday Spring Series enjoyed traditional Southwest breezes which favoured the low handicappers with *K-Factor* easily winning the series followed by *Mistress Quickly* and *Wicked* in third. The Wednesday Summer Series had a mixture of light breezes which helped the light and fast *Tora Tobu* take out the series very closely followed by *Wicked* and *Mistress Quickly* in third.

The Saturday Series has been poorly represented with only three regular competitors and a couple of others joining at different times through the season. Credit to *Tapestry*, *Freo Doctor* and *K-Factor* for consistently turning up and keeping the flag flying. Unfortunately, the Club Championship is a disappointment as it is run on the ORC rating system which further restricts the number of competitors. Despite this we successfully tried the Combine Fleet racing with RPYC and will continue again next year with a few improvements from lessons learnt. Congratulations to *Tapestry* who dominated all the races during the Saturday Summer.

As usual there are numerous rumblings and rumours around the bar about boats entering and leaving the Division. We are happy to have the additions of *Haywire* and *Courtesan* to the fleet, the possibility of *Eu Na Mara* returning and there are rumours of another Melges 32 joining our fleet. Great to see Tim Harrison bring *Courtesan* back to the Club, it has a long successful history at SoPYC before it spent a hiatus down at Bunbury.

We have again had a successful time at the Regattas for some of our fleet who have ventured out under the bridges. Congratulations to *K-Factor*

who defended the Division 2 title at the Cockburn Regatta which was a lead into the great success of the SoPYC yachts who competed at the Geographe Bay Regatta. April and her crew on *Murphy's Law* came close to defending their title in Division 1, *Spritzig II* built on their amazing record of continued attendance and *Wicked* had a great regatta taking home the trophy in Premier Division. The Diggers Cup was very well represented by SoPYC with 12 boats competing out of a fleet of 69 starters but it was *Wicked* who showed their class coming 5th in a very competitive race.

We also need to recognise the

contribution of our skippers and crew who compete in the blue water events on the ocean. Although we struggle to have many SoPYC boats go under the bridges there are large numbers of people who venture out in the blue on the ocean racers. The recently completed Fremantle to Albany Race had 11 starters of which nine completed the race. On those boats we had SOPYC members on *Sagacious IV*, *Wyuna* and *Alfresco* to whom we pass on our congratulations for completing this gruelling race and proudly flying the SoPYC burgee.

The task for us all as we move forward is to encourage participation and develop interesting racing that will attract more competitors out on the river. As the world changes we must also find ways to reinvent ourselves to ensure sailing continues into the future.

The final comment must go to our centenarian Len Randell. It is an absolute honour to sail against Len. Seeing him continue to do what he loves is an inspiration to all of us and a reminder that there are no limits to pursuing our passion. At SoPYC we have a young 18-year-old skipper sailing *Liberty* (SS27) and Len at the age of 100 sailing in Division 1, how many sports in the world are able to offer this?



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Getting to the end of a busy and enjoyable sailing season. Terrific and tight sailing from start to finish, with great social events mixed like a Friday casual catch up, jetty drinks and our sausage sizzle results gatherings. Plenty of social chat on the S80 WhatsApp channel.

For those wanting the challenge of close one design keelboat racing we have some different and terrific S80 boat opportunities available for any keen sailors at SoPYC. If you are interested in owning an S80 or just sailing in the fleet, contact Mark Gooding 0419921095 or email markgooding@bigpond.com

Wednesday J&M Sailing

An active group of S80s sailed regularly in the Club's Wednesday J&M series. *Fair Game* helmed by Sue Game capped off some great post-Christmas sailing with a convincing win in the Summer Series. *Shadowfax* (Mark and Jim Gooding) was a consistent performer and *Vintage Red* was sailed up the front of the fleet at times by Dean Picot and Dave Spencer. New owner Dave Roberts started sailing his boat *Abbey Road* on Wednesdays with great success straight off the bat. Well done all!

S80 Metropolitan Championship Series

As always, an early start to the S80 Class season on 28th September, with the start of the Metropolitan Championship series, where we sail the opening days of all the major river clubs. The first race of the series was at EFYC's opening

day. Subsequent opening day races were held at SoPYC, RPYC and RFBYC in varying conditions and with a variety of race winners. The winner of the Metro Championship was *Shadowfax*, helmed by Mark Gooding, followed by *Rum Runner* (John Ghul) in second, and *Don't Panic!!* (Mat Selby) third; with only a few points separating all three boats.

SoPYC S80 Club Champion – *Don't Panic!!*

Our club series was conducted over six races during the season and whilst only a small number of boats turned out, the racing was close. *Don't Panic!!* (Mat Selby) and crew led the series convincingly from the get go and finished in first by two points from *ShadowFax* (Jim & Mark Gooding), with *Fair Game* (Sue Game) in third place.

Many thanks to our S80 wine sponsor for the year WA Electrical Project Services and Jim Gooding.

South West Championships

A very successful South West Championship regatta was held at Koombana Bay Sailing Club over the Australia Day long weekend. After two days and seven races, *Shadowfax* helmed by Mark Gooding took out the win by the smallest of





margins, just one point, with the deciding race going down to literally a just a few centimetres at the finish line! The first metropolitan S8o to take out the South West title in its eight year history.

The Southern Buccaneers (KBSC) took out the coveted S8o Teams Trophy and in convincing fashion by 10 points, retaining the mug and the bragging rights for another 12 months.

Swan River Championships

The 29th running of the SoP Swan River Championships was sailed over two Saturday afternoons with windward-leewards as part of our normal fleet sequence (four races in total). This format was a change in timing from previous years to avoid lack of wind in the mornings. We had more than enough sea breezes at times with some exciting spinnaker runs. Mark Gooding and his crew on *Shadowfax* won the Swan River Championship OTL on a tie-break from Christian Christiansen on *Fusion* in some very tight racing.

S80 State Champion - *Shadowfax*

The S8o States trophy again remains firmly at SoPYC with *Shadowfax* helmed by Jim Gooding taking out the 2026 S8o State Championship held over the long weekend in Cockburn Sound. In tight racing, the final day produced a superb come-from-behind victory for the *Shadowfax* crew of Peter Botman, Mark Gooding, Jim Gooding, Simon Griffiths, and Duncan Parker.

Just two SoPYC boats ventured down for the series but both had terrific results. *Don't Panic!!* (Mat Selby) and crew came in second by just a few points, having led at the end of Day two. KBSC's *Escape* (Darrin Tinley) finished in third place.

S80 New Owners Open Day

We conducted an S8o New Owners Open Day on Sunday November 9th for those sailors interested in owning and racing an S8o, either experienced sailors looking for exciting one design racing or those wanting to get started in sailing keelboats. There were experienced S8o owners available to talk about racing an S8o, our fleet and its racing and social programs, boat ownership, costs and training and support programs.

2026 S80 Legends Race

Wednesday 15th April saw RPYC host the 2026 S8o Association Legends Race with 12 boats and crews from RPYC and SoPYC hitting the water. The aim of the S8o Legends event is to connect our current community of S8o sailors with past S8o sailors and celebrate the Class. Our Club S8os that competed with their skippers (owners) were:

- **Abbey Road** | John Hassen (Dave Roberts)
- **Vintage Red** | John Greeves (Assoc)
- **Don't Panic!!** | Andre Linthorne (Mat Selby)
- **Fair Game** | Dean Picot (Sue Game)
- **Shadowfax** | Geoff Bishop (Mark & Jim Gooding)

The event kicked off with a luncheon in the River Room where everyone was able to catch up with old friends and have a beer before getting out on the water, in true legend fashion.

Congratulations to Simon Cunningham for his third Legends win on *Fusion*. Andre Linthorne on *Don't Panic!!* finished a very close second and Geoff Bishop on *Shadowfax* close behind in third. John Hassen on *Abbey Road* finished fourth and *Balancing Act* (Dean Motteram) was fifth (and winner of the President's Drive of the Day).

Overall, the S8o Association Legends Race was a terrific event that brought together past sailors and "legends" of the S8o fleet for a chance to catch up with old friends and enjoy a race on the beautiful Swan River.

S80 Teams Race – South Perth "Pirates" defeat the Royal Perth "Catalinas"

The second S8o Teams Race of the season saw the holders of the cup RPYC's Catalinas team facing off again the SoPYC's Pirates team. The race saw plenty of boat-on-boat tactics throughout, all within the RRS and common sense.

Whilst RPYC turned out in force, it was the SoPYC Pirates that took out the win convincingly with 30 points, from the RP Catalinas with 25 points, and of course the all-important winner's end of season bragging rights. The Teams Race format kept everyone on their toes for the entire race and was another great way to enjoy our sailing.





H28 Fleet



Corella



End of a Frostbite



The 2025/2026 sailing season saw a total of 8 yachts out of 13 H28s on the Club's register regularly participating. Additionally, Jim Spittle sailed in one consistency race and in the closing day Commodore's Cup pursuit race, but as he has recently retired, his intention now is to have *Napea of Carrick* regularly sailing in the next Summer Saturday series. Rupert Ledger has returned to the metro area and is currently working on Georgina to also race during the Frostbite and the next season Saturday series. As Chairman of the Division, the writer has taken ownership of *Jindarra*, in a final attempt to get someone else to continue her long and successful sailing record in our unique and historic class fleet. Ever the optimist, I am therefore hopeful we can have those three described H28s regularly sailing again soon, bringing our active fleet back up to eleven participating yachts.

Across all the season competitions, the fleet is maintaining its reputation of enjoyable and competitive sailing. David Locke, *Corella* and Brian Cross *Mariner* generally lead our fleet over the finish line, but Ralph

Newton, *Alma* is rapidly improving his performance and promises to be a force to be reckoned with next season. Les Brooker on *Nerrima* is also regularly near the front end of the fleet. And last, but not always... *Aloha* has shown on occasions a dash of brilliance.

The summaries below cover the period 1st October 2025 to the 13th May 2026.

Saturday Consistency Series

There were a total of 18 consistency races and four pursuit races conducted over the summer period. From a total of 22 races, five yachts competed in eight races, four in 10 races, three in two races, and two in two races. We need to increase our participation rate in this series, with only eight races out of 22 races meeting the minimum requirement of five vessels in a class competition.

Wynella sailed 21 races, *Aloha* sailed 19 races, *Swift Sure Saga* sailed 17 races, *Nerrima* sailed 14 races, *Alma* sailed seven races, *Corella* sailed six races, *Napea of Carrick* sailed two races and *Mariner* sailed one race only.

Midweek Season Series

There were a total of 30 midweek races sailed, including three pursuit races. seven yachts competed in seven races, six yachts in 15 races, five yachts in five races, three yachts in two races, and on one occasion, only two yachts sailed. In essence 27 races met the minimum required participation of five yachts for the class competition. *Swiftsure Saga* sailed all 30 races, *Wynella* sailed 29, *Alma* sailed 26, *Corella* and *Mariner* both sailed 24, *Nerrima* sailed 22, and *Anna* sailed 17.

Frostbite Season Series

The H28 Division is combined with Division 3 in this series. A total of 13 yachts competed including *Wynella* and *Swiftsure Saga* in five races, *Aloha* in four, *Alma* in three and *Mariner* in two. There were eight races scheduled in the series, but three were abandoned owing to inclement weather.

2025/2026 H28 Sailing competition winners as announced on Prize night

Loyal Weaver Mem. Trophy: *Corella* David Locke
Ray Kelt Perp Trophy Season: *Aloha* Andrew Minto
Loyal Weaver Consistency Trophy: *Aloha* Andrew Minto
Swiftsure Saga Summer Series Trophy: *Wynella* Ernie Little
Colin Burnell Tiller: *Corella* David Locke and *Swiftsure Saga* Bill Richards/Mark Wimshurst
Robert Colquhoun Mem Trophy: *Nerrima* Les Brooker
Don Bourne Mem Trophy: *Wynella* Glen Stanley
Lyn Reu Davey Perp Trophy: *Nerrima* Les Brooker

Across all the season competitions, the fleet is maintaining its reputation of enjoyable and competitive sailing

Jim Leach Mem Trophy: *Nerrima* Les Brooker

Crew Member of the Year: Hayden Shenton

Andrew Munro Mem Trophy: *Aloha* Andrew Minto

Crew Medallions: Steven Hill, Mike Laughton Smith, Martin Levy, Allan Wilson

Midweek Winter Consistency: *Swiftsure Saga* Bill Richards

Midweek Spring Consistency: *Nerrima* Les Brooker

Midweek Summer Consistency:

Swiftsure Saga Bill Richards/Mark Wimshurst

Midweek Autumn Consistency: *Swiftsure Saga* Bill Richards

Frostbite Series Consistency: *Wynella* Ernie Little

Congratulations to all the H28 skippers and crews who continue to provide an enjoyable sailing competition and contribute to the camaraderie of our Division.

And special thanks to all our Club volunteers in SoPYC who respond when called upon to meet our needs, both on the land and on the water. Thank you all!

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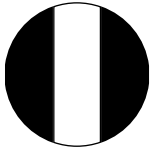
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SS22 REPORT

By BRUCE UREN



Eutopia



Wildfire

The summer season has been another great one for the SS22 fleet. Despite the small fleet there has been brilliant competition and friendly interaction between the boats. David Mickle's *Mele Bilo III* improved markedly compared to previously which David puts partly down to stripping about 80kg worth of unnecessary junk out of the boat. The improved performance, especially upwind, resulted in him winning both the Club Championship & Consistency series. *Finovola* also improved markedly no doubt due to the highly experienced tutorship of long-time

class stalwart Peter Lewis.

Matt Worley's *Eutopia* continues to improve with more time on the water whilst *Wildfire's* performance seems to have slumped. The highlight Championship Series where we join with EFYC & CYC for a round of seven races at six venues around the river. *Mele Bilo III* finished second in the State Championship Series and won the Consistency Series.

Wildfire has been a regular participant in Wednesday afternoon sailing and finished second in Division 2 at the Cockburn Sound Regatta, hosted by the Cruising Yacht Club in

Rockingham between Christmas and New Year. This is a brilliant event which would benefit hugely with greater participation from the Club.

The fleet enjoyed two training sessions with the Club Head Coach, Olympian Conor Nicholas. Much was learned by all participants.

These sessions are considered a key function of the Club which help develop skills, enthusiasm and increased participation. Three such sessions are planned for next season along with a reintroduction of informative "topic nights".



Mele Bilo III



Finovola



SS27 REPORT

By GARRICK ABERLE



Karina



Carrageen II

The ANZAC Day long weekend marked the close of another successful Saturday afternoon racing season for the Spacesailer 27 fleet. We enjoyed a range of conditions from the robust pre-Christmas south westerlies to the gentle, but often fickle, champagne sailing afternoons of Autumn; all while maintaining a healthy level of competition.

At the Association level, our racing fleet has held steady numbers and the stalwarts have remained committed. Our 2025-26 championship series enjoyed consistent, competitive racing. Despite the majority of Spacesailer 27s being domiciled at SoPYC, this year's State Championship was again taken out by *Carrageen II* [RF190] skippered by Elise Stevenson. A hearty congratulations goes to Elise and her skilled and committed crew on their third consecutive State Championship win.

As can be seen in the results below, Brian Saleeba's *Abeelas*, Paul Rees' *Karina* and Greg Northover's *Chain Reaction* reaffirmed their competitiveness in the State Championship competition.

State Championship Results 2025-26 Season

Outright Placings

1st *Carrageen II* [RF190] Elise Stevenson
2nd *Karina* [SP191] Paul Rees
3rd *Abeelas* [SP20] Brian Saleeba

Consistency Series

1st *Chain Reaction* [SP124] Greg Northover
2nd *Karina* [SP191] Paul Rees
3rd *Carrageen II* [RF190] Elise Stevenson



Chain Reaction



Abeelas

The 'Most Improved' Trophy was awarded to Brian Easterbrook and his crew on *Lady Claire* [SP541].

Racing was equally competitive in the Club Championship series. With an average of six to seven yachts starting each race, *Abeelas*, *Vision* and *Karina* remained closely matched throughout the competition.

Club Championship Results 2025-26 Season

Championship

1st *Karina* [SP191] Paul Rees
2nd *Abeelas* [SP20] Brian Saleeba
3rd *Vision* [SP292] Tim Harrison

Consistency

1st *Abeelas* [SP20] Brian Saleeba
2nd *Lady Claire* [SP541] Brian Easterbrook
3rd *Random Times* [SP163] David Hanham

Midweek racing has again enjoyed strong support from our fleet, with an average of 4 to 5 Spacesailer 27s competing each Wednesday afternoon in Division 3. *Lady Claire* and *Random Times* have consistently claimed podium results.

February also saw us again hosting the Annual Parkinsons' Association Twilight Cruise. Nine of our fleet from across all Swan River clubs hosted about 40 guests for another very pleasant evening sail, followed by dinner at the Club.

Well done everyone and keep up the good work.



Lady Claire



FLYING FIFTEEN REPORT

By RUSSELL DAWES



The Easter celebration gets into full swing around Perth's churches but this is less evident around the Yacht Club! The sailing season is entering it's final stage and the power boat fleet has either headed to Rottnest or is making final preparations for the time trial season.

This all worked in favour for the Flying Fifteen fleet with the running of the 2026 State Championship, seven races spread over three days. A near record fleet of 41 boats assembled with a lot of the usual suspects from Geraldton, Esperance and our down-river cousins from Royal Freshwater Bay. This year we also welcomed 5 boats from Port Bouvard Yacht Club and they didn't take long to get into the swing of some very busy fleet racing. To further sweeten the deal, four sailors from Salt Springs Island off the west coast of Canada made the trip and sailed boats kindly loaned by South of Perth members. The Canadian connection is a result of the work John Hassen did a couple of season ago when he did all the leg-work to transport four donated Flying Fifteens to Salt Springs Island to form a new sail training fleet. Assembling such a large fleet for one

of the premier Flying Fifteen events for the year gives new appreciation for our location on the river and the facilities we enjoy. The western hardstand, in particular, and the centreboard clubhouse are projects completed with no small amount of risk thanks to the vision of management committees of days gone so we have these assets to further our sport today.

The sailing conditions were typical of autumn in Perth, goldilocks weather, not too hot, not too cold! Winds varied sufficiently to see Race Officer John Rooke reaching for the Panadol and the U flag following a few overly enthusiastic starters in the early races.

As you would expect, seven races will give you a pretty good indication of how you sit in a hotly contested fleet of one design boats. South of Perth boats filled seven of the top ten positions which reflects the benefits of our intensive multiple race format on Sundays and, to a lesser degree, sailing at our end of the river.

After a series of widely publicised second places in Championship events, brothers Mike and Paul Dunbar



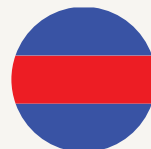


broke through to take the chocolates following a win in the deciding final race. Philippa Packer and Dean MacAulay from RFBYC were second and Greg Tonnison and Scott Fallows (also SoPYC members) were third. Comprehensive results are available on the event web page: sopyc.com.au/web/pages/flying-15-wa-state-championships.

While sailing Flying Fifteens brings us all together, the social program keeps us together and was a key feature in this Championship. The outlook from the centreboard club house, barbecued fish and hamburgers, George the barista preparing our Segafredo coffee pre-race and wheelbarrow loads of beer and wine post-race, the perfect recipe. This was all brought together by Mary-Anne Reid who also managed to compete with Fleet Captain David.

Our thanks to all the dedicated volunteers who made the regatta such a success and keep everyone accounted for and nourished.

We also had an army of photographers who just happened to be in the right place at the right time. Leading the way was Rick Steuart with Leanne Howell, Jen Walker, Kate Lammonby and Jill Oakes.



DIVISION THREE REPORT

By NICK MELIDONIS



The 25-26 season has been reasonably successful with around four yachts competing on and off for the season.

The season started with lots of hope with eight yachts on the start line at RPYC opening day however only four yachts have made regular appearances at SoPYC and RPYC start lines; *Hellas*, *Commotion*, *Argo* and *Martine*.

The competition has been good and enjoyed by all boats that have participated.

The course lengths have been different at the two Clubs; for example; course 1 at SoPYC is 13.65 nm while at RPYC it is only 8.7 nm so it was decided to run with shortened courses at SoPYC Saturday series until further notice. This has been welcome as the winds ease off at the end of the season.

At the time of writing, the close competition for SoPYC Consistency series between *Commotion* (Martyn Compton) and *Hellas* (Nick Melidonis) has both boats on equal points heading into the last race of the season (it was a similar close competition last year as well).

The good news is that SoPYC has had a couple of new quarter-tonners come into the Club recently so we are hoping to see them on the water at the start of next year.

I wish all boats and crew a fun and competitive Frostbite season and hope to see all the boats on the water for the 26-27 season ahead – good sailing and fair winds.

ST AYLES SKIFF REPORT

By LEANNE HOWELL, BRUCE CADEE & PETER BLACK



South of Perth skiff rowers have remained active over the past year, with at least one boat on the water twice a week. Our own Adrian Newy (aka Alan Sharpe, aka Plonky) has been busy with the evolution of the timber oar, with the aim of beating our second place in last year's Australia Five time trial. Things got serious as we stress tested oars, measured catch angles, took anthropometric measurements, raised seats and moved thole pins in an effort to perfect rowing technique and maximise efficiency.

However, while the blokes wanted to row for sheep stations, the ladies reminded them to stop and smell the coffee, that we are there for the simple fun and pleasure of being out on the water, self-propelled, exercising in the fresh air and enjoying the pelicans and dolphins.

Our rowers attended many events which, in addition to rowing, all seem to share a common theme of food and drink. They included:

- Christmas by the Swan where SoPYC skiffs took part in the "Skiffy Xmas" hosted by East Fremantle Skiff Association (EFSA) at the Swan Yacht Club. After a hearty BBQ breakfast, we rowed in company around the Swan River. SoPYC won the prize for Best Crew due to our magnificent Christmas costumes and Peter's tinsel wrapped oars.
- Veterans' Health Week which SoPYC Skiff group were again proud to support. We joined our EFSA friends at the Navy League HQ in January with several Veterans sharing work they do to support themselves and others in dealing with the ongoing impacts of serving our country in the Australian Defence Force. After a row in company around the river in North Fremantle, we were treated to Charlie's BBQ followed by a few tipples and the fellowship of our rowing friends on a beautiful summer morning at the Swan Yacht Club.
- A weekend in Margaret River where we sampled some local produce and joined Augusta and Nannup rowers on the pristine Blackwood river.
- HMAS Perth Memorial Regatta when, for the second consecutive year, SoPYC was represented by a team of St Ayles skiff rowers. Held at Nedlands Yacht Club in February, the event provided an opportunity to pay our respects to those who tragically lost their lives, and to the



survivors who became prisoners of war following the sinking of *HMAS Perth* by enemy fire during the Battle of Sundra Strait on 1 March 1942. After the formal proceedings, SoPYC and EFSA crews rowed in very fresh winds, showcasing St Ayles Skiff Community Rowing to regatta dignitaries and spectators.

- 'All the Rivers Run' in March was the highlight of the season, organised by the Albany Maritime Foundation to celebrate Albany's bicentenary. Eight SoPYC rowers travelled south with Ballina joining those from Albany, Denmark, Freshwater Bay, East Fremantle, Nannup and Augusta in a series of 'raids' across the Great Southern, on pristine rivers and inlets, amongst majestic tall timbers and virgin wilderness. We began with a challenging row across Princess Royal Harbour, with a picnic at secluded Vancouver beach. That night we were treated to an *Australia II* supper where the legendary John Longley regaled us with tales of the iconic 1983 America's Cup win. John built the first skiff in WA in 2016 and was a keen participant in the event. Over the week we clocked up 75km rowing the Kalgan, Denmark, Frankland and Donnelly Rivers. The event wrapped up in Augusta with a leisurely row up the Scott river and around Molloy Island, followed by a BBQ lunch where SoPYC rowers were awarded the 'Black Jack Sally' trophy for champion team.
- The Catalpa reenactment involved rowers travelling to Rockingham to take part in the reenactment of the infamous 1876 escape from Fremantle gaol of six Fenians, Irish political prisoners, who were repatriated to Boston on the American flagged whaling boat Catalpa. The role of the skiff was to take on six "Fenians" and complete several rows past the crowd gathered on the beach. The day concluded with the obligatory Guinness!
- 2026 Australia Five time trial saw a mixed crew rowing flat out into a stiff southerly for 5 km from Nedlands buoy to the SoPYC outer start mark and back, submitting a time of 35 minutes and two seconds for this virtual regatta.

While this was 45 seconds slower than last year, it was enough to keep our second place in Australia for a mixed crew using regulation (timber) oars.

Activities encompassed more than just rowing as we were recruited to paint roof trusses for the new Skiff shed being built by the Bosun's club. This provided more opportunity for fellowship and fostered a greater sense of ownership of the skiffs.

SoPYC owns two St Ayles Skiffs *Valkyrie* and *Ballina*. Designed in Scotland and produced in kit form, the skiffs were built by Bosun's club members. They are rowed regularly on Sunday and Tuesday mornings by people of all ages and abilities and are available any time for Club members. We welcome new rowers so we can get both boats on the water more regularly.

A fitting quote from John Longley is "Find something you enjoy doing and do it for as long as you can". We invite you to come and enjoy rowing St Ayles skiffs with us.

Contact Bruce: 0419 508 785 or Ann: 0426 724 810 for information.

***Find something
you enjoy doing
and do it for as
long as you can***

~ JOHN LONGLEY



Bucking Good Weekend *at* the Mandurah Offshore Fishing & Sailing Club



On the March long weekend five boats (*Detour*, *Holidaze*, *Reefrunner*, *Stillwater* and *Tikittyboo*) from SoPYC made the journey down to Mandurah Offshore Fishing & Sailing Club for their country themed Bucking Good Weekend.

Our hosts Drew and Heidi Kenny, from the Cruising Section created a weekend full of fun activities – tender pub crawl (five pubs in five in 5 hours) on Saturday and an amazing RHIB treasure hunt on Sunday, capped off by the Hoedown complete with BBQ and a bucking bull.

Lots of new friendships were made and plans to do more joint activities over the next year. Most importantly, the weather for cruising was perfect for the boats that made the 3-hour journey there and back.







The 2025–26 Sailability SoPYC season, running from October through to late May, has again shown just how important this program is to our Club and community. Across the season, we ran 30 sessions, delivering more than **700 individual sailing experiences** and supporting close to **900 participants and carers**.

A typical Wednesday has seen around **30 participants on the water**, with total numbers nearing 40 once carers are included. What stands out isn't just the numbers, but the consistency – a regular, welcoming environment where people of all abilities can get out on the river, whether they are actively sailing or simply enjoying being on the water.

What has really defined this season, however, is how we've learned to work with the conditions rather than be limited by them – and this comes back to our volunteers. Their experience and coordination have allowed us to respond more flexibly than ever before.

Fortunately, we were only stopped by conditions on four occasions, where sailing was cancelled due to wind, rain, high temperatures or thunderstorms. More importantly, on five other days when winds were too strong for the Hansa 303 dinghies, we adapted. By using the keelboats and *Waylen Bay*, we were still able to get participants out on the water. That shift – from cancelling to adapting – has been a real step forward for the program. It means that what used to be a lost day, full of disappointment, can now still be a meaningful experience.

As is often the case on the Swan, we've enjoyed frequent dolphin sightings which are always a highlight — drawing smiles and excitement from participants and volunteers alike. They and their effect on those who see them serve to remind us how special our stretch of river and what we're doing really is.

Off the water, our November Bunnings Sausage Sizzle again proved its worth, raising over \$2,400.

Those funds go straight back into the program, helping cover running costs, maintenance and equipment – all of which underpin a safe and enjoyable experience for participants.

We also had the opportunity to contribute to the Club's Cruising Butterflies event on April 19. Working alongside the broader SoPYC community, Rotary and Kiind,

We have also seen 20 new volunteers come into the program across the season, which has helped spread the workload and bring fresh energy. Some have assisted us in ad hoc capacities and others have stayed the course. Regardless, there is still more to do and new volunteers are always welcome.

Across the season, each Wednesday has relied on 30–40 volunteers supporting everything from rigging and crewing through to safety and participant assistance. Over 30 sessions, that translates to well over 3,000 hours of volunteer time, given willingly to make the program work.

At the moment, we estimate we are operating at around **55% of our potential capacity**. If we had more hands, for four hours on a Wednesday morning we could dramatically increase participant numbers, but that's dependent upon an increased volunteer base to deliver the depth we need – allowing people to take a break, manage holidays, and still maintain this level of adaptability and fun week in, week out.

Looking back, what stands out is not just what we delivered, but how we delivered it – consistently, safely, and increasingly flexibly with lots of fun for all involved. Looking ahead, the message is simple. What has made this season work – the commitment, experience and generosity of our volunteers – is exactly what will carry us into the next.

Hoping to see you in October for season 2026/27.



CRUISING BUTTERFLIES REPORT

By DAVID STANIFORTH-SMITH



Cruising Butterflies is an annual family fun day supporting families raising children living with disability, developmental delay, autism, genetic, rare, undiagnosed and/or chronic conditions.

The event is a South of Perth Yacht Club volunteer-led initiative, delivered in partnership with local Rotary Clubs and KIIND – an agency of Perth Children's Hospital that supports families facing significant health challenges.

The 2026 event, held on Sunday 19 April, saw 258 family members enjoy a 90-minute boat trip aboard SoPYC members' vessels. Every child, including siblings, received a Cruising Butterflies hat and t-shirt, along with a family portrait. The morning

concluded with a sausage sizzle and a range of fun activities including face painting, bubble play and games.

The Committee extends its sincere thanks to SoPYC members for supporting community events like this, and in particular to the 122 skippers and crew, along with the many members and their families who volunteered their time on the day. Significant effort goes into planning the event, and we acknowledge the dedication of our Committee – especially our newer members who would not have realised the work involved – as well as past Chairman Ralph Newton and his wife Lynne for handing over the event in such strong shape, and providing regular encouragement, advice and support.

We are also grateful to the Rotary Clubs of Applecross and Melville for their assistance with organisation, registration, catering and parking. Our thanks go to KIIND staff Kerry Harper, Helen Nys and their team for the many hours spent coordinating participating families. Fishability generously provided their fishing barge, enabling wheelchair access, and we thank Scout leader Nigel and his team for supplying over 100 lifejackets, ensuring the event could be conducted safely. We also acknowledge the valuable support of Club staff,

including General Manager John Pedretti, along with Sunnie, Megan, Damo and their teams.

Cruising Butterflies is largely made possible through donated goods and services, with the Committee working hard to keep the event as self-funded as possible. We are especially grateful for the generous \$5,000 contribution from the State Government, facilitated by Kim Giddens, a longstanding supporter of the Club. We also thank the following donors for their valued support:

- Mills Service Centre – Member Chantal & Anthony Miller
- Metal West – Member Mick Douthie
- Armadale Districts Surgery – Member Anne Knowles
- Bursons Automotive
- Coles Waterford
- SoPYC Supplier – Del Basso
- Good Grocer Applecross
- Gama Healthcare – Member Tim Rumac
- Soklitch & Co Jewellers
- Woolworths
- Veer Financial

We are always looking for more boats for this event, and would appreciate it if any skippers who are considering the event could note this in their calendars for April 2027 and to contact the club for details.





Interested in sponsorship opportunities at South of Perth Yacht Club?

Contact us on 9364 5844 or email marketing@sopyc.com.au

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