



FORECAST

Newsletter from Lake Macquarie Yacht Club



Photo credit: Peter Mayo - Wednesday sailing

A MESSAGE FROM THE REAR COMMODORE

Welcome to the latest edition of the Forecast.

Winter Sailing is in full swing at LMYC with good fleets on a Wednesday and Sunday. We are currently being blessed with some great winter weather so why not enjoy the sunshine on the lake.

As we move toward the new summer season, the Sailing Committee has started to work on the program and structure of the 2023/24 Season. A draft program has been developed and this is being discussed with the other clubs. Our annual survey will help guide the Sailing Committee on the key areas of change and the things we need to keep in place.

Some initiatives currently being actioned are:

- The number of boats in Saturday Division 1. This year the number of boats in Division 1 has been as low as 3 and averaged around 5. We are looking at some options in conjunction with the other lake clubs to increase participation in Division 1 by running combined fleets every week. The finer details of this proposal are currently being worked through and I am in the process of discussing the plan with the Division 1 skippers. I expect discussions with the other clubs will be completed in the coming weeks and we will advise details in July.

- **Introduction of an additional fixed handicapping system.** Many yacht clubs have introduced the ORC Club handicapping system in addition to their traditional PHS and IRC systems. ORC Club is a fixed handicapping system based on theoretical comparative performance. Unlike PHS it doesn't move with ups and downs in performance. We received interest from several boats via the survey to learn more about ORC Club. We will hold an information session on ORC Club in July or early August.
- **Rules Briefing.** Damien Boldyrew will be doing a rules seminar prior to the start of the next season. We will finalise dates in the coming weeks and then advise our sailors.
- **Marine First Aid Training.** Dr Chris Cahil (a member of the LMYC Cruising Division) will do a seminar on Marine First Aid in November. Once we finalise the date we will advise our sailors.

I am honoured to be re-elected as Rear Commodore for a further two years and I would like to thank the Board, the Sailing Committee and our Sailors for your ongoing support.

We still have plenty to do at LMYC over the next two years and I am personally very keen to put initiatives in place to increase the participation of women and attract a younger demographic. Over the coming months we will be looking at several initiatives and ideas and developing a detailed plan to address these important matters.

I hope the weather gods treat you well and you have a great off-season.

Steven Ford
Rear Commodore



An example of a tether with snap hooks that are metallic with cast, forged or moulded side wall support.

Heading to Southport or Hobart this year?

The Special Regulations for snap hooks on safety lines and tethers have been amended.

On 13 June, Australian Sailing issued an amendment notice regarding snap hooks.

The new regulation gives boat owners more time to effect the change phasing out the flat place type.

More information can be found here

<https://www.sailingresources.org.au/news/snap-hooks-on-tethers2>



FROM THE CEO DESK By Mark Norden



Kitchen/Marina upgrade

As many of you would be aware we are giving the club kitchen a makeover. Work is proceeding on schedule and budget and we hope to be finished by late July. Crusoe's have launched a new delicious winter menu and the club is being well patronised. I encourage all members to come down and try the new menu.

Stage 2 of the Marina rectification also starts next week and will provide further protection from the south for moored boats inside the marina.

WIND WARRIORS

By Marshall Harper

Wind Warriors finished their yearly Pointscore at the end of May.

Skippers competed for four perpetual trophies.

Results:

Scratch Champion - tie Brad Quiggin and Dave Anstey
Handicap Champion - Clive Dutton
Orrell Cup Champion (pursuit racing) - Terry Farrell
Gun Boat Champion - Brad Quiggin

From June 2022, there was an

- average of 10 competitors per regatta
- 432 pointscore races
- 72 pursuit races
- 504 total races

Wind Warriors race all year round excluding public holidays on the Northern side of the Clubhouse on Thursday afternoons from 5.00 pm and Saturdays during April to August from 1:30pm.

For further information, please contact Ross Ahrens on 02 4945 0022 or email racing@lmyc.com.au

CONGRATULATIONS



To Hobart on "Defiance"...recalls Donny Johnson, LMYC member since 1954

By Janis Cummings

Imagine this. Hurling down the Tasmanian east coast on a 50ft yacht, tethered to the fore deck by a length of rope. This is just one of the images Donny Johnson (91) has in his mind as he recalls his first Sydney Hobart race as a nineteen year old on "Defiance" in 1954.

As a child growing up within a stones throw of Belmont foreshore, it was inevitable that Donny would be drawn to sailing. His sailing days began like many other young lads in the area as a "bailer boy". A "bailer boy" was a small kid who could fit into the bottom of a sailing skiff and bail out the bilge water during a race. A young "bailer" would hover around the "skiffy" crews with his mum's baking dish in hand in anticipation of being chosen to "bail" in the day's races. Many of these "bailers" went on to sail VJ's, VS and 16' skiffs of their own. Others, like Donny and his mate Noely Felton however, moved along the shore to sail at LMYC. Nelson Rundle recruited four young fit lads to sail on the fore deck of his ocean racer "Defiance". The enticement was an anticipated opportunity to sail in a Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.



"Defiance" making her way into Storm Bay with Hobart in sight.

"Defiance" registered on the LMYC register as M16 from 1954 to 1960 was owned by Newcastle businessman Nelson Rundle. She was a 50ft timber racing sloop designed and built by Ernest Olney Digby at Williamstown, Port Philip Bay. Launched in 1935 "Defiance" was the first yacht built in Australia to rate as an 8 metre under the International rule.

At age 16 Donny became one of four for'd hands who worked the fore deck on Defiance. The spinnaker was set on the end of a timber spinnaker pole. "It was a monster", he recalls, it took all four of us to manhandle it into position".

Apart from sailing races on Sundays, it was the skipper's expectation that all crew hands helped with boat maintenance. All hands on and below decks to keep the boat in racing trim. There was always jobs to do. Varnishing, cleaning, slipping, painting, repairing. Donny recalls it was hard work, but all part of the team effort involved. They had fun and enjoyed the camaraderie. It was in 1954 that his efforts were rewarded with an opportunity to sail in the 10th Annual Sydney to Hobart on "Defiance".

"When I close my eyes I can see them.....Noely Felton, Alex Young, and Lenny Caldwell, four of us working the foredeck", Donny recalls. "We were wet from race start to finish, no fancy wet weather gear back then, just an oil skin raincoat and sou'wester hat. It was rugged. We worked the fore deck, tied on by a length of rope attached to the mast, no life jacket, and mostly in bare feet. Sail changes were like a balancing and juggling act, but luckily, we lost no one overboard. We slept where we could down below, on sail bags and the floor. Food, which consisted of sandwiches were stored in an esky ice box. The sandwiches ran out after a few days, so we ate Sao biscuits for the remaining days. The journey took nearly 6 days. It was a relief to tie up at Constitution Dock Hobart for a hot feed and dry clothes."

Despite the hardships experienced in the race, he couldn't wait to make the trip again, wiser for the experience. Donny joined the crew of "Defiance" again in 1955.

Bessie, Donny's wife of 67 years added some snippets of her own, highlighting the wonderful years she and Donny had as members of LMYC. Despite Bessie's parents' warning "that young ladies didn't go to the yacht club, nor ride on a motor bike", a yacht club romance blossomed when she met Donny. Donny did both, rode a motor bike and hung out at the yacht club! They married in 1956.

They recalled, "the yacht club was the place to go for dances, balls and entertainment. Ron and Dora Kelly, both members of the club, played piano and sang. The entertainment was fantastic. There were also plenty of family events such as club picnics and regattas. The wives kept busy catering for events and fundraising. No restaurant back then".

Their two children Karen and Greg, grew up as yacht club kids. "Sundays was Yacht Club day which the whole family looked forward to. While the men sailed, the wives and children picnicked in Cullen Park and swam around the jetty or played in dinghys. Firm friends were forged for life. It was a time when there wasn't much money around, one wage families, setting up a house and home, and 'stay at home mums'. The yacht club provided something for the whole family and wonderful memories to treasure".

With Sydney to Hobart racing out of his system Donny sailed on a Star Class racing yacht for about 10 years. He later became a bow man on Keith Sharp's "Razor Sharp". "Always a bow man" he says "the one that gets yelled at!"

As Donny was a shift worker he volunteered his services to fill the club's need of a starter/finisher on Wednesday and Friday afternoons. Races started and finished from the Judge's box. He was a handicapper as well.

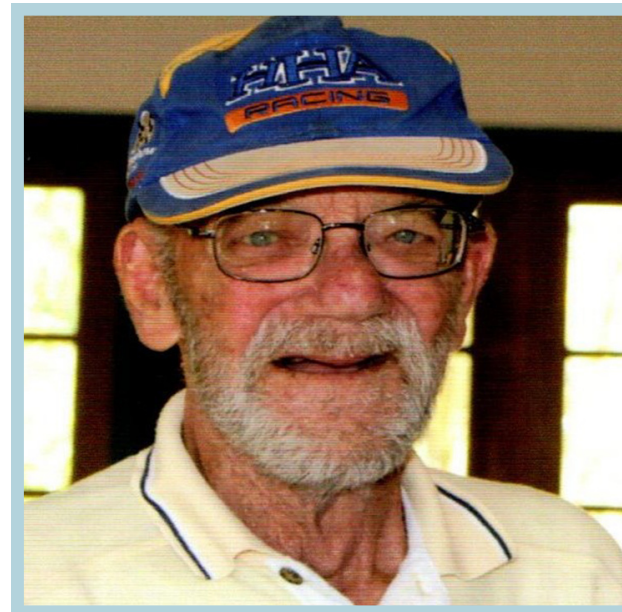
In their retirement, Donny and Bessie enjoyed exploring the lake in their cruiser. Donny also met religiously every Saturday morning with his long time sailing acquaintances for morning coffee at the club. His association with LMYC stretches back 70 years. He recalls those years with much affection and as an integral part in his family's life.

Thank you to Donny and Bessie for sharing their memories, they make a valuable contribution to yacht club life history records.

Photos are from the private collection of Donny and Bessie Johnson.



Donny and Bessie attend a LMYC Ball in 1954



Donny present day aged 91.

SWANSEA CHANNEL UPDATE By Geoff Edman

I recently attended a meeting with Transport for NSW (TfNSW) and Marine Infrastructure Delivery Office (MIDO) along with members of our Cruising Division. It was an information meeting to let us know what was happening with the dredging and for LMYC to give our view of the problems and confirm our needs of the channel to MIDO.

The meeting was attended by the MIDO Principal Manager – Dredging, a Senior Manager and a Community and Stakeholder Engagement Officer from the TfNSW. LMYC attendees were Geoff Edman, Carolanne and Mark Clement, Chris Cahill, Tony Austin, Trudi Butler, Gordon Butler.

The meeting was very positive and it is very clear the shortcomings over the last couple of years, both in project execution and communication have been recognised and attempts are being made to improve the situation.



A summary of the current situation follows.

- TfNSW intend to carry out two dredging operations, each of around 15,000m³. The first to occur ASAP and the second probably around autumn 2024.
- The dredging will provide a channel 30 m wide, rather than the historical 60m.
- The intention is for an operating depth of 2.6m.
- The priority since early 2023 has been to dredge as soon as possible.
- The fastest path for approvals limits the amount that can be dredged to 30,000m³ per year. Hence the decision to go with two smaller quantity operations, rather than take longer and dredge more.
- Money to fund the two stages of dredging is available.
- Tenders have been prepared, and tenders called. Tender review has commenced. A dredging contractor is yet to be chosen.
- Review of Environmental Factors has been completed, but the Department of Lands need to provide a license to dredge.
- It is hoped to award the contract around the end of June.
- Dredging should take around 8 weeks.

Final decisions about where to dredge have not been made, however, current surveys show that dredging the “Main” channel will require less dredging than dredging the Airforce channel. Dredging the “Main” channel would leave open the option for a second operation in autumn 2024, this may not be possible if the Airforce Channel is dredged. TfNSW will conduct another survey before dredging and make final decisions at that time.

The selection of dredging location was discussed at length. TfNSW are finding the extensive shallower area at the eastern end of the Airforce channel requires significant dredging meaning that the “Main” channel becomes the preferred option. Mark Clement talked at length about the history of the channel, and the stability that we are seeing in the Airforce channel. The final decisions will be driven by a new survey that will be completed prior to dredging.

SWANSEA CHANNEL UPDATE CONT'D

TfNSW are also working on a 10 year plan for the channel. The 10 year plan should be complete in 2024, and implemented during 2024 / 2025.

Options under consideration include;

- Which channel should be dredged? Where should sand be placed?
- Is a pipe line to Blacksmiths beach viable?
- Commercial arrangements. Can long term contracts be awarded? Can contracts covering multiple locations be awarded?

There is no current funding approval for dredging beyond the 2 x 15,000m³ operations.

What does all this mean to us?

Firstly, and most importantly, the signs are all good that we will be able to leave the lake from sometime in August. **However, while TfNSW are working on plans for a 10 year plan, there is currently no funding for that plan, and we ALL will need to advocate for funding.**

My thanks to members of our Cruising Division for their input at the meeting and especially to Gordon and Trudie Butler who took notes and produced the content of this update.

Geoff Edman
Commodore

Photos from Wednesday sailing - thanks to Peter Mayo



SOCIAL HIGHLIGHTS



NSW KEELBOAT INSTRUCTOR COURSE

Interested in sharing your love of sailing?

A Keelboat Instructor Course is being held at NCYC on 1/2 July, 2023.

Places are limited so please book early if you are keen.

Course cost \$415.

For more information including details of prerequisites, visit

https://www.sailing.org.au/events/191068/?fbclid=IwAR0Kml24IE_zRywao6YXQ1G6dA8n0Ub9n92-1sZ-tlgs-zdUBGcJjOomjvrQ

POINTSORES AS AT 20 JUNE 2023

WEDNESDAY WINTER POINTSCORE SPONSORED BY EMPIRE MARINA, LAKE MACQUARIE

Division 1

1. Pugsley - Len Lavers/David Brown
2. Dreadnaught - Ed Hillier
3. 2xcess - Steve McCloy

Division 2

1. Scaramouche - John Skillicorn
2. Reggae Beat - Denis Miller
3. Libertine - Geoff Donegan

WEDNESDAY SWEEPSTAKES

SPONSORED BY EMPIRE MARINA, LAKE MACQUARIE

Division 1

1. Give&Take - Russell Williams
2. Dreadnaught - Ed Hillier
3. 2xcess - Steve McCloy

Division 2

1. Libertine - Geoff Donegan
2. Reggae Beat - Denis Miller
3. Wedgewood - Roger Geary

SUNDAY WINTER SERIES

SPONSORED BY LAKE MACQUARIE MOORINGS

Up to Race 5

1. Wedgewood - Roger Geary
2. Jam - Brett Lewis
3. Midnight Special - Lachlan Hornsby

Sweepstake - 18 June

1. Midnight Special - Lachlan Hornsby
2. Tenacity - David Young
3. Wedgewood - Roger Geary

WE THANK OUR SPONSORS

