

LAKE MACQUARIE YACHT CLUB
CRUISING DIVISION



CRUISELETTER

June 2025 No. 420



GENERAL MEETING MONDAY 2ND JUNE

Content



Skippers Report	3
Meet Your New Committee	4
Replacing Standing Rigging	5
Safety Snippet—MOB Recovery	6
Vale—Noel Richardson & Ray Kiely	8
Calendar of Events - Next 3 months	9

Contacts

Cruising Division Executive

Skipper:	Tony Austin	0416 266 947
Secretary:	Richard Masson	0422 347 875
Treasurer:	Ralph Asquith	0409 318 230

Committee

Eleanor Cunningham (Board Rep)	0416258461
Ken Archer (Cruiseletter Editor)	0428785459
Phil Cunningham	0416078461
Marion Cotterill	0409982535
Mark Clements	0400716756
Angela Asquith	0408479228

Cruising Division Editor:

Any articles for the Cruiseletter can be sent to the Acting Cruiseletter Editor, Tony Austin, preferably in MS Word format to ausquack@gmail.com by 25th of each month.

Please address all letters for the Cruising Division to: LMYC CRUISING DIVISION, Ada Street, Belmont NSW 2280

Cover - *Migaloo* - Refuge Bay

Skipper's Report

Tony Austin



We are certainly living in 'Interesting Times'! With the conclusion of the CD committee elections we have four long-serving members standing down and are delighted to welcome four new faces. Fred and Maureen have stood down to take a very well earned break while Chris and Nikki have stood down in preparation for their return to the UK. All four have given many years of dedicated and enthusiastic support to the CD both behind the scenes and on the water. Ralph Asquith has elected to stand down from his role as Skipper but has graciously accepted the position of Treasurer and Safety Officer. I would like to thank him for his outstanding efforts in leading our group over the past two years and welcome his ongoing support on the committee. The committee welcomes Phil and Eleanor Cunningham, Mark Clements and Angela Asquith as new members. All are well known to the CD, have vast experience in cruising and are keen to hear from you how the committee can best serve your interests.

Last night the LMYC held its biennial Board Elections and we are delighted to see three very active CD members returned for another two years. Geoff Edman remains Commodore, Phil Cunningham is Rear Commodore and Eleanor is a Director (and CD Committee member representing the LMYC Board). LMYC has an excellent management team and the relationship between our committee and the Board has never been better.

While it is still early days, things are looking up for the health of the Swansea Channel. With Stage 3 of the recent localised dredging about to commence and every indication that the long term contract for a dredge and sand pumping system will be announced within weeks we can start to plan more coastal cruises into our sailing program. Trips to places like Newcastle, Port Stephens and Broughton Island are looking much more attractive as are longer trips up and down the coast. Hopefully the word will spread outside the lake and we will start to see more and more cruising boats visiting us.

With winter rapidly approaching I would like to see us make the most of our times when sailing is becoming less attractive by running a series of 'workshops ashore'. Topics could include things like use of emergency steering, maintenance and replacement of running rigging, use of DSC capability on VHF radios and AIS. I am sure that you can think of a few more topics.

This year marks the 40th Anniversary of the CD. We are keen to acknowledge this milestone and it is a great opportunity to explore some ways to 'freshen' the CD. Our annual Christmas Party is an ideal social event where we can celebrate our successes, tell a few tales and share a few photos of the past. Please wade through your old CD memorabilia to see if you have anything that you can share.

Finally, on a much sadder note, we have seen the recent passing of two iconic CD members - Noel Richardson and Ray Kiely. Both were very early members who helped make the CD what it is today. We acknowledge their contributions and extend a deepest condolences to their families.

Very best wishes and Safe Sailing,
Tony

Meet Your New Committee



CD Committee 2025 with Commodore Geoff Edman (Marion Cotterill absent)

The AGM in May saw quite a change in the CD Committee with four people (Fred and Maureen Seysener; Chris and Nikki Cahill) standing down after many, many years of dedicated service. Ralph has elected to move from Skipper to Treasurer while Ken Archer returns after a well earned break. We are delighted to welcome four new faces—Phil and Eleanor Cunningham, Mark Clements and Angela Asquith.

The Committee is appointed for a period of two years and we have the flexibility to appoint additional members at any time. If you would like to help run the CD please do not hesitate to contact one of us and have a chat. We are always seeking new ideas or constructive suggests on how we can enhance the CD experience.

One of the most important roles within the CD is that of Safety Officer. Chris Cahill has very kindly offered to continue in this role until he returns to the UK and will be joined by Ralph.

Meet Your New Cruiseletter Editor—Ken Archer

Ken has been an avid supporter of the CD for more years than he cares to remember. He and Libby have spent many years on the committee with Ken taking on the role of Skipper in 2017-19. Ken is also a passionate and accomplished photographer so it is no surprise that he finally relented and agreed to take over the role of Cruiseletter editor. To assist him in this role he has also agreed to re-join the committee.. Maureen has assured him that it is an easy task and who could deny that she has certainly made it look easy during her time at the helm. It will be a challenge to match the quality of her efforts but I am sure Ken is up to the task. Please take the time to send material Ken—we know that members really enjoy reading articles from their friends with the CD so don't be shy!



May Outing ... To Be or Not to Be

With the channel now navigable to most of our CD boats it seemed that it was about time we did another cruise up to Newcastle. The trip up last year had gone well with a great cruise up the Hunter River to the Hexham bridge. Ralph had planned the trip perfectly with berths at NCYC and dinners at the areas finest eateries. There was only one minor problem ... he forgot to get the weather Gods onside! The forecast was atrocious for the trip and he had no choice but to cancel at the last minute. It was a wise move and we will have to slide the trip to later in the year—perhaps with a trip to Port Stephens (or even Broughton Island!) thrown in for good measure.

Replacing Standing Rigging

Panel Discussion

At our last meeting we had a panel discussion on the practical issues associated with replacing the standing rigging on a yacht. This often becomes quite a complex logistic exercise and there are a few key learnings that can make everything run much smoother for all parties. The panel was chaired by Tony with Ralph and Geoff delivering short presentations. The outcomes are summarised below:

The standing rigging (shrouds and stays) is a vital part of the integrity of your boat. They support the mast(s) and transfer often enormous loads into the hull. A failure of this rigging could endanger the safety of the vessel and the safety of the crew—many sailors have died after being hit by a falling mast. As boat owners we know that many insurers are no longer accepting rigging inspections but now insist on rig replacement every 10 years. Whilst for some vessels this is overly conservative, for others it may be overly generous. It very much depends upon where you sail, how often you sail and the conditions in which you sail. Unfortunately rig failure can occur with no warning and most diligent visual inspection may not reveal the point of future failure.

Suffice to say all of us will, at some time, need to remove the mast from our boat to replace the standing rigging. While most will engage the services of a professional rigger, there is still much we as owners need to do to ensure that everything goes smoothly.

The following is a summary of the points that came up during the recent panel discussion:

- Confirm the original manufacturer/designer's rigging specifications for your boat (a previous owner may have re-rigged with thinner/weaker wire and fittings)
- Check your current rigging tensions, mast rake, mast bend etc & photograph/record. Re-tune rigging to designer specifications before it is removed.
- Check all fittings for corrosion, cracking, wear etc (don't forget chainplates and bow fittings)
- Remove all sails and battens. Ideally get a sailmaker to check wear and make any necessary repairs.
- Remove boom. Beware—it is heavy.! Topping lift and main halyard help control it.
- Remove all running rigging except two strong lines to get to the top of the mast
- Identify all electrical cables entering mast and find junctions . Separate and label all wires.
- Photograph all turnbuckles and mark thread positions.
- Immediately prior to the lift out straighten rigging split pins and remove ring clips.
- On instruction from rigger loosen stay turnbuckles.
- Get a group of friends to assist (4 is a good number)
- Ideally see if you can help remove someone else's mast before working on your own
- Get the rigger to brief everyone on their allocated task and make sure that they understand the task (and the risks).
- Empower everyone to call 'STOP' if they see anything of concern
- Whilst mast is out check everything very carefully—spreaders, boom goose neck, main-sheet and vang attachments, sheeves, lights, aerials, anemometers etc.
- End for end (or replace) any suspect running rigging
- Replace the mast and rigging as per instructions from rigger
- Do not over tighten stays—boats do bend (especially cats)
- Tune rig to match numbers you had prior to mast lift..

MOB Recovery

This topic was prompted by the publication of a Marine Accident Investigation Branch (UK) report in April 2025.

The report detailed the findings of the investigation into the tragic death of a 43year old woman who was taking part in keel boat racing as part of the crew of a 7m keel boat belonging to a disabled/able bodied sailing organisation in October 2022 in The Solent, UK. She was a large woman (127Kg) with asthma and anxiety but had been sailing regularly in the class of boat and with the same organisation. She was part of a crew of 4 – an experienced and appropriately qualified 39 year old skipper, a 23 year old with limited experience and a 70 year old with considerable experience but no formal qualifications.

The casualty fell overboard whilst helping hoist the spinnaker. The conditions were fine, temperature 17deg C, wind 12-15knts with occasional gust to 20knts, 0.5-1m seas and a water temperature of 16.5degC.

The skipper brought the boat back to the casualty and she was conscious with an inflated life jacket. Unfortunately, the remaining three crew onboard were unable to get her back onboard. They were forced to let go of her and she was unable to keep hold of the line that they gave her.

Following a Mayday call they got back to the casualty and several craft that heard the call arrived to help. She was brought back onboard with the help of two crew from one of the boats that came to assist. She was unconscious and not breathing. CPR was started and she was rapidly transported to shore. Despite prompt, appropriate resuscitation and professional care on arrival onshore she could not be revived.

The cause of death was drowning, despite only being in the water for 20 minutes with an inflated life jacket with adequate buoyancy.

Learning Points from the Report

Although wearing an appropriate size and specification auto PFD with a crotch strap, it appears it may not have been correctly adjusted as it was noted it had slipped up over her face before she was recovered. There was no spray hood to reduce splashes into her face.

There were deficiencies in risk assessment, planning for and training for such an event, especially considering her size.

The vessel did not carry any equipment to facilitate MOB recovery and 3 crew were unable to get her back onboard.

MOB Recovery (cont)

Chris Cahill

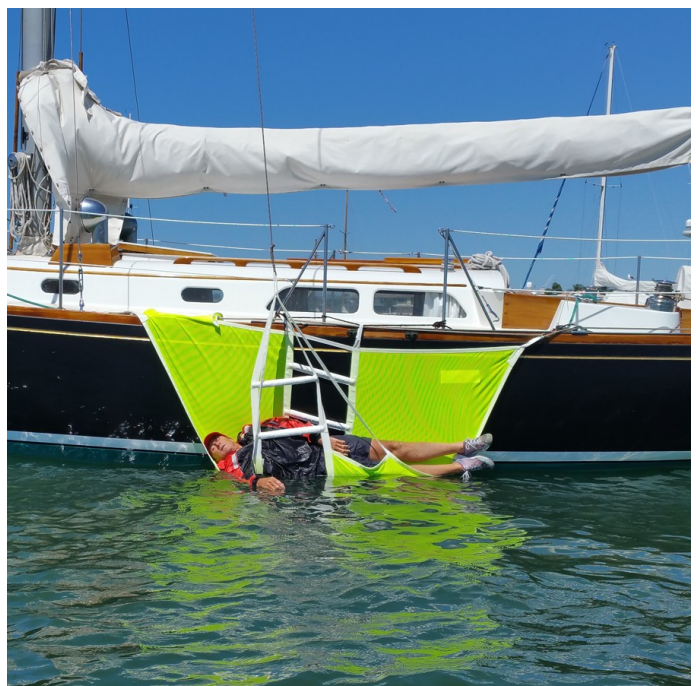
Take Home Messages

You need to consider what you would do to recover a MOB casualty. You need to have a plan, equipment (that you can use and is accessible) and practice if possible.

Life jackets need to be the correct specification and size. A crotch strap is essential, and the jacket straps need to be correctly adjusted. A spray hood is highly recommended in anything other than flat water.

MOB is an immediately life-threatening situation, and an immediate Mayday call is appropriate. You may well require help to get a casualty out of the water

Consider strategies you would/could use. For example – swim ladders, slings, nets, block and tackle, swim platforms, davits, dinghy, life raft.....

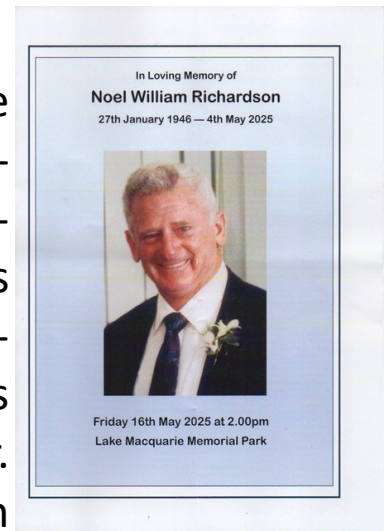


VALE

The month of May has not been a good one for the CD. We have lost two of our most respected members, both of whom made enormous contributions to the LMYC and the CD.

Noel Richardson passed on 4 May 2025.

Noel and Jan were very active members of the CD and together were awarded Life Membership in 2010. While Noel had given up the rigors of sailing some time ago for several years he ran an annual boating experience for people with disabilities. Many CD boat owners willingly supported him in this endeavour. Right up until his passing he was very active in supporting Sailability. A large number of LMYC and CD members attended his funeral and shared sailing stories with his family.



Ray Kiely passed on 22 May 2025. He was 97 years old.

Ray joined LMYC in 1948 and was the longest continuously serving member. He was an avid cruiser/racer who won several major ocean races before eventually purchasing 'Warialda' - his beloved motor cruiser. Ray was Commodore of LMYC in 1989—91 and made a Life Member in 1992. He was a very active member of the CD and anyone who shared in his hospitality aboard will never forget the experience. He and his best mate Bob could through a mean party! Ray was also a passionate historian of all things nautical and his legacy is the rich written history of our club.

For Your Calendar

June 7th **Soup Day—Location TBA, Co-ordinator Marion Cotterill**

July 18th-20th **On water Event**

August 15th-17th **On water Event**

General Meetings – Bridgedeck Room

The **June General Meeting (NB—One week early—Monday 2 June)** will start at 7pm in the Bridgedeck Room. A table will be booked for dinner from 5.30pm onwards for those wishing to share a meal prior to the meeting.

Guest Speaker: Leigh Spencer will be presenting on **Fibreglass and Boats**

Dates for 2025 General Meetings:-

July - **14th**

August - **11th**

September - **8th**

Membership Clarification

Several members have asked if they can remain as members of the CD after they sell their boat and no longer sail on the lake. The simple answer is—Yes they can! The CD Charter addresses this matter as follows: If a current Cruising member no longer owns a vessel (or no longer wish to participate in ‘on water’ activities of the Division) they can apply for Social Membership of the CD. Social membership entitlements will be limited to participation in social events, attendance at monthly meetings and receipt of the Cruiseletter. They cannot vote at CD meetings.

A CD Social member must be at least an Ordinary Member Social of LMYC and must pay the annual CD membership fee.

Thank you!

Our Cruiseletter is enriched by your contributions —

all items of interest or handy hints are always gratefully received! Ed.

Special thanks this month to: Ralph Asquith, Geoff Edman and Chris Cahill