

lot of time estimating costs and future needs. At a later meeting a levy was raised to augment club funds, but most of the electrical installation was done by expert volunteer labour with donated materials.

After 13 years of continuous effort on behalf of KMYC, the Cottage Point Progress Association, and the Mackellar County Council to get reticulated power, the great day approached, and the club worked on getting wiring and lighting up to approved standards.

In August 1974 many working bees were arranged over about six weeks to re-wire the clubhouse, lay underground conduit and cables, wire the houses now owned next door, the shop, caretaker's cottage, waterfront tavern/office, and the slipway. This was no small job for a dedicated group, ably led by qualified electrical trades members Wal Hannaford, Ron Youngman, and Frank and Bill Coker.

Ted Terry arranged the working bees under the control of Commodore Wal Hannaford (who supervised) and Bryan Inder. Frank and Bill Coker provided the necessary ballasts and power correction units for all the fluorescent

units and supervised their installation. Ron Youngman supplied the brackets and cable for the clubhouse and much labour and personal supervision to get the job passed. As well, the great majority of the electrical materials needed for the club's electrical work was supplied free.

Weekend working bees concentrated on fixing the wiring, positioning the meter box, re-wiring the light fittings and switches, laying cable and conduit in the club and the nextdoor cottages.

The clubhouse interior was painted by Youngset members and other volunteers, to brighten up the interior for the official switching-on ceremony, which took place on 7 September, 1974.

The swimming pool had been another part of the "icing". It was a job for specialist labour to transform the McCredie's tidal pool and one of the few early projects not done by the members. However, they contributed a total of £1250 towards the cost through the sale of glazed named tiles which were fixed around the rim of the pool.

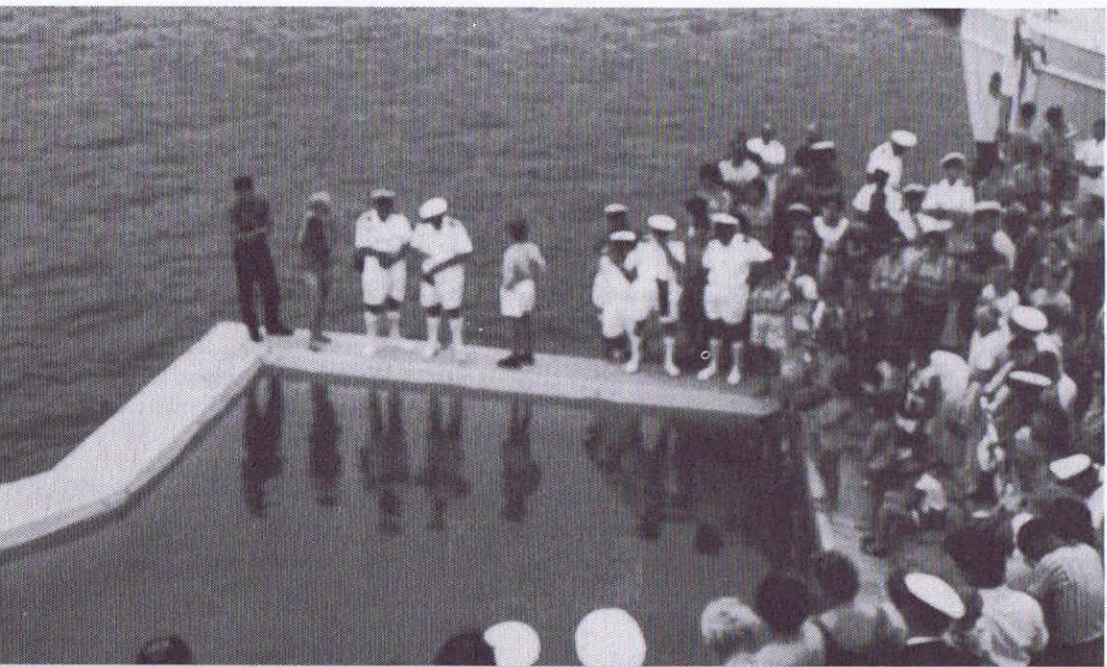
For this reason, Dick Harvey says it was known as "the cemetery" and new members are still told that the names represent those who have drowned in the pool.

Malcolm Davis recalls that a couple of dozen named tiles arrived too late and for years lay in a box gathering dust in a waterfront shed.

The pool was officially opened on New Year's Eve, 1962

*Left: Early Commodore A.E. Lloyd had been Roy Vaughan's "Rear" for two years, during these major projects.*

*Below: The official opening of the club's pool - a drawcard for young and old.*



# I give you.....The Ladies



It was sometimes hard to get a good Lady. In the busy 70s and 80s working wives in the club and mothers with young children did not have time spare to help the members of the Ladies Auxiliary in their fund-raising efforts for the club. Only a few stalwarts were on hand to keep up a proud tradition.

That tradition started some years after the inception of KMYC at Cottage Point.

In the beginning there had been no Auxiliary. Members' wives met socially, held mannequin parades and fashion shows at their homes (Betty Preston remembers Maggie Ekhardt as an 18-year-old model at the hat shows) and donated any proceeds to charity. Among those to benefit were the Dalwood Homes and the Deaf and Blind Children's Home. Then when the club finally obtained its "home" at Cottage Point, there was something else to work for. The charities still benefited, but there was always a little left over to help make life more comfortable at the new clubhouse.

Over a Berowra long weekend cruise Bert

Osborne suggested the formation of an Auxiliary which could provide - as it were - the icing on the cake, and raise money for extra club amenities. There being a good woman behind every good idea proposed by a male, it is odds-on that the notion was implanted by Bert's wife, Elma. Thelma Brooks, wife of commodore-to-be Ron (Dickie) Brooks, became first president, Leila Watts was secretary and Elma Osborne treasurer. These three women were re-elected year after year, and held their positions for 11 seasons, apart from a short period when Lavender Lorimer filled in for Thelma Brooks.

Most of the club wives joined the Auxiliary and took part in the fashion shows, theatre parties, Tupperware afternoons ... and the afternoon teas. For if the ladies were superlative as cake-makers they were a match



## WANTED

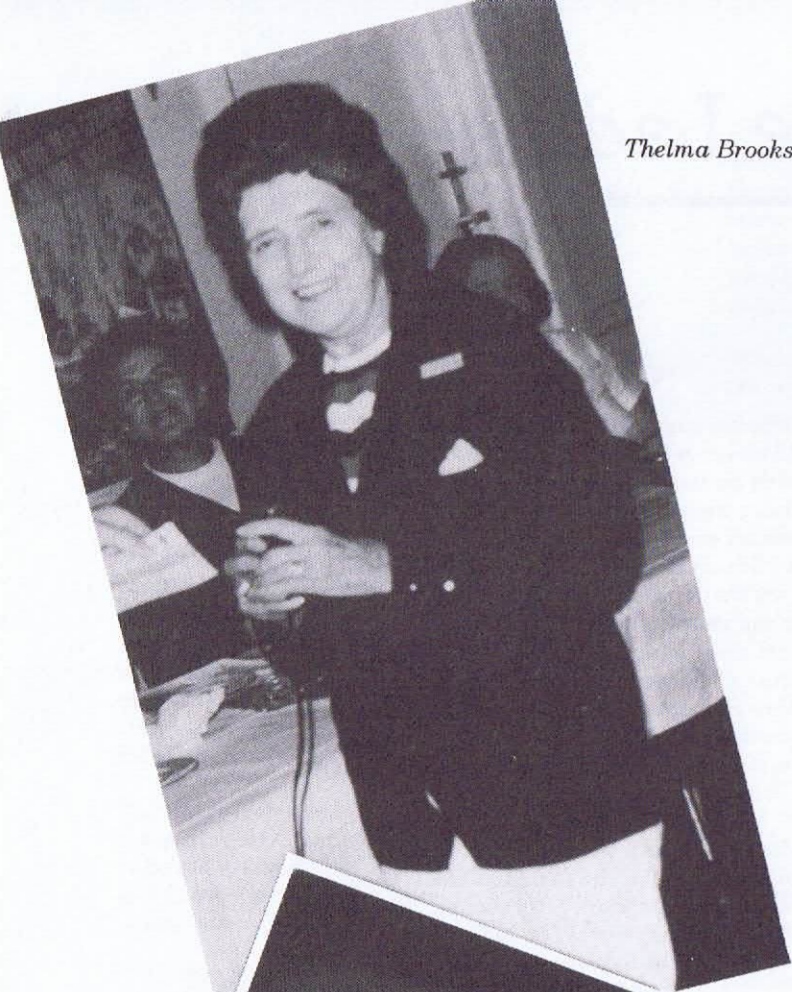
# LADIES Ladies LADIES



TALL, LEAN AND HUNGRY, FAT, SEXY, BUILT FOR COMFORT

(In fact, we'll take any lady at all)  
for participation in the activities of the  
LADIES SOCIAL CLUB

And its fund-raising activities for the Club.



Theilma Brooks

for anyone in those plates for small offerings that take 10 seconds in the mouth, 10 minutes in the tummy and 10 years around the waist. Every year, as the General Committee and the club executives grew steadily plumper, the Annual General Report recorded its thanks to the ladies for the contributions that came from raffles, functions, parties and special events that included a slap-up meal:

- £50 towards the cost of new lino for the clubhouse
- a piano plus the cost of its transport
- new chairs for the clubhouse
- engraved cutlery for social functions
- reconstruction of Ted's Tavern.

But, before chauvinism had a name, Ladies were born clutching a mixing bowl. In Information Circular 3/61, making arrangements for Opening Day, there is the terse instruction: "Ladies will assist enormously by bringing cakes." After that wifely duty was performed, the men were prepared to be enormously helpful. The circular continues: "At 8am a boat will be leaving Bobbin Head to convey lady helpers and cakes to the clubhouse, returning in ample time for all to join the review. Another boat, the CAKE SHIP, will leave at 12 noon, as it is most desirable to have all cakes etc. set on tables before the arrival of the fleet." It was comforting to know the priorities were fixed. Things could only improve. And they did.

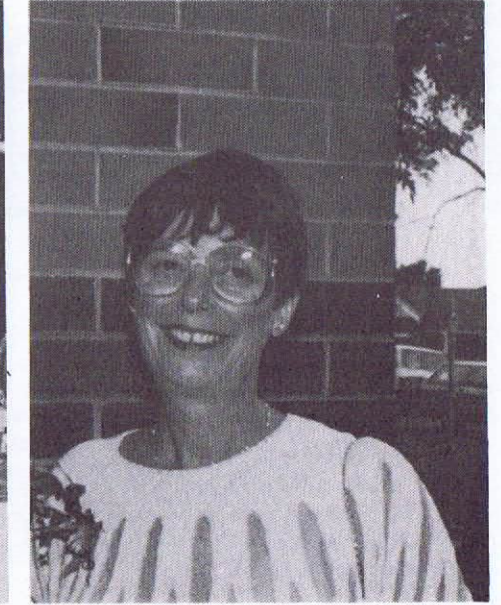
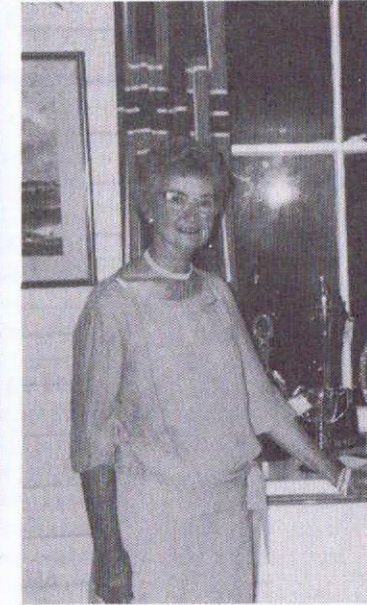
In the Annual Report of 1961 Commodore Brooks acknowledged:

"Our Ladies Auxiliary has done a great job in raising funds for the Peat and Milson Island Hospital for Brain Damaged Boys, and for the amenities and improvements to our clubhouse. Our thanks again to them for their untiring help and assistance in providing us with marvellous catering at the club. In my opinion we could not carry on without the ladies."

That year the Ladies Auxiliary had raised



Top: Jean Nicholson & Sheila Morton.  
Right: Pat Stuart.



Above: Artist Marilyn Peck. Her suggestion that an Art Show be staged at the clubhouse proved to be a winner for the Ladies.

£423. Of this, £288 had gone to the Milson Island children, and the club received an electric hot water urn, extra large teapots, and a 7cu.ft. gas refrigerator.

Perhaps the most expensive gift to the club from the Ladies Auxiliary was a new tender, named *Lady Auxiliary*, which gave service for many years.

The presidency was taken over in the 70s by Nancy Hardie (*Straitsman*).

She proved a tireless worker for club amenities. It was under her management that *Lady Auxiliary* was replaced by the more upmarket *Lady Kuring-gai* and given a rousing launching ceremony - so rousing in fact that Nancy lost a slice of big toe when the champagne bottle she cracked fell back on her foot. Unfortunately she had been wearing open toed sandals.

In the picture at the left, *Lady Kuring-gai* takes a victory lap after the launch with Nancy (at the tiller) Elma Osborne and Ted Terry, Sheila Morton and Alan Wood in the centre and Mollie Wood (obscured).

Among the names of those club wives to contribute to the strength of the Ladies Auxiliary were Rosalie Davis, Mollie Wood Elizabeth Harvey, Sheila Morton, Alison Powe and Berry Jackson. When Berry and Al retired to the North Coast, the Ladies worked as a co-operative and their reports were signed by anyone who was available at the time as "For the Ladies". This hardworking group included: Bonnie Prendergast, Elaine Jackson, Bubs Lynch, Joan Range, Peg Jolly, Pam Palmer, Beryl Chivas and Pat Stuart.

During these years one of the most popular functions was the Melbourne Cup Day celebration - and one of these occasions had a

special significance, as Jean Nicholson recalls.

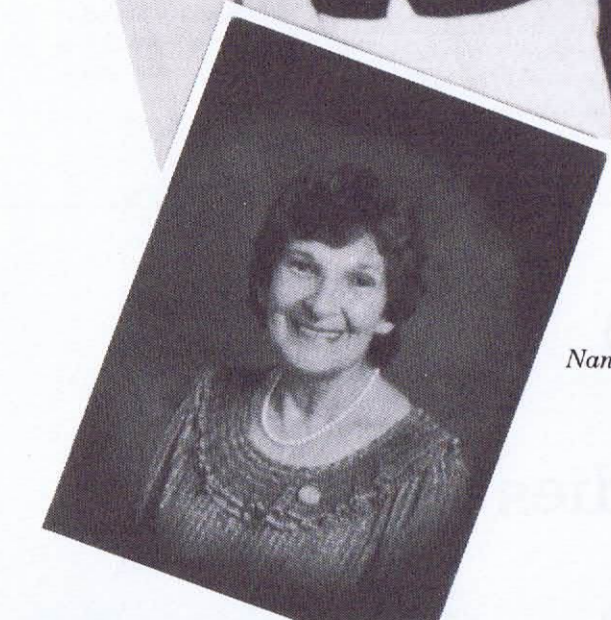
The clubhouse overflowed with gaily hatted ladies, champagne corks popped, and the TV set was strategically placed ready to be turned on for the big event. At the very last minute the dismayed organisers discovered that the screening of the Cup had been allocated to a channel which could not be received at Cottage Point.

In the early 70s electricity was at last switched on at the Point, and the members of the Auxiliary concentrated on upgrading the kitchen equipment and clubhouse amenities: new tables, chairs, microwave ovens, refrigerators, heaters and fans. But no matter what the other commitments were, there was always a sum left over to be handed to the Dalwood Homes.

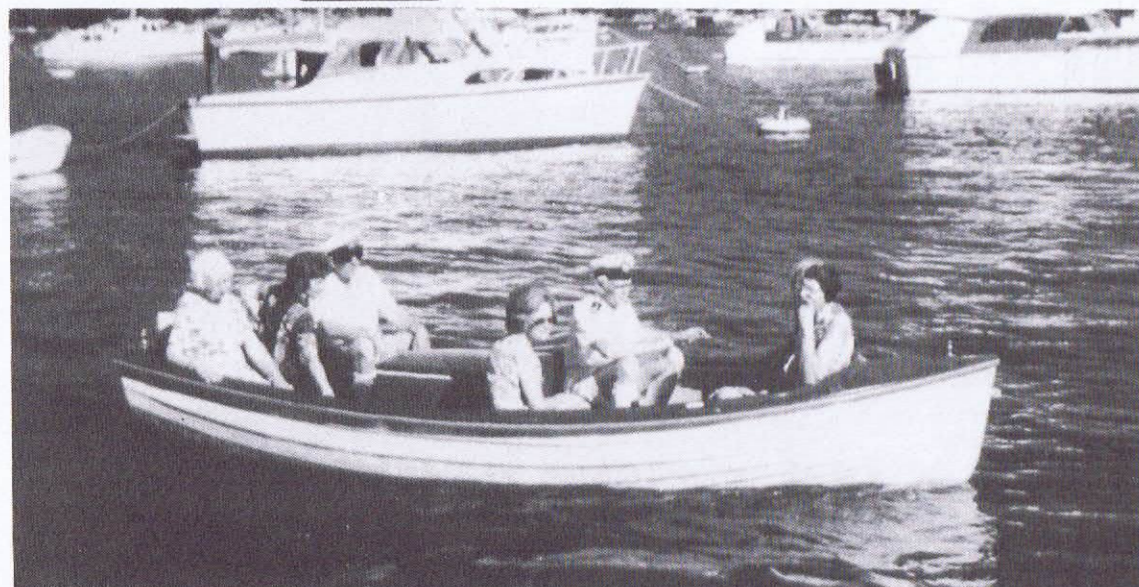
And there was one other special, one-off presentation. On Colo River trips, when club members attended the tiny church on Easter Sunday, the ladies noted that the communion wine was held in an old tomato sauce bottle. A special function was held, and the club made a gift of a crystal chalice and two ensigns, red and blue, to the church.

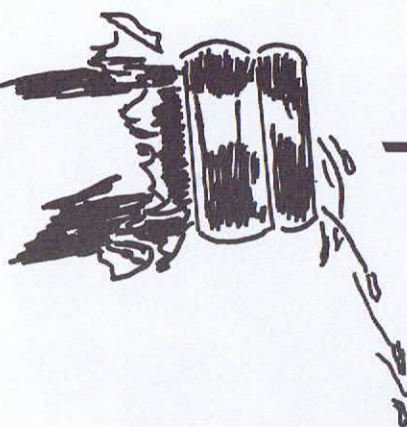
The shortage of Ladies in the late 70s and the 80s failed to dim the enthusiasm of the small band of auxiliary members. In fact it was accepted as some sort of challenge that all previous fund-raising efforts should be doubled and re-doubled to provide the best facilities possible for all to enjoy.

These efforts covered the days when Alison Powe was president. No matter where or when



Nancy Hardie





she encountered a likely target, she was always prepared with a raffle book or the question, "Are you coming to such-and-such a Day?" Only the stronghearted refused, and there were not many of them.

It was Alison who took the idea of the Dunks' Club and welded it into the fun fabric of club life. It was mandatory (Alison said so) for anyone who fell overboard to pay a \$2 fine/entry fee, with the option of buying a very superior Dunks' Club flag. Few could resist its design and quality and money poured in to the Ladies' coffers. There was no shortage of members taking an unscheduled swim and no shortage of members keen to Dob in a Dunk. Business was especially brisk after midnight, following club functions.

The results of the Ladies' fund-raising abilities speak for themselves:

**1977/78:** Recipe books compiled for sale. \$600 donated to the General Committee to help finance new showers and toilets at the waterfront.

**1978/79:** \$2000 towards slipway improvements (\$1000 raised from raffling a dinghy and outboard); 100 new chairs for clubhouse; new refrigerator for kitchen.

**1979/80:** Wall fan for club kitchen; new opening window for Ladies' Powder Room; new wallpaper, paint and labour for Powder Room.

**1980/81:** Louvred doors for clubhouse; TV antennae.

**1981/82:** Tiles laid in Ladies' toilet and entrance; new bar built in clubhouse; gas heater installed in bar area; green bridge chairs for bar area; new curtains for window in bar.

**1983/84:** Tiling of waterfront showers, toilets and tavern.

**1984/85:** Awning outside waterfront tavern; vacuum cleaner for use by members at the waterfront; two stoves for clubhouse; light fittings for clubhouse; \$3000 towards clubhouse roof reconstruction; \$1591 on appliances and equipment for clubhouse.

**1986/87:** New curtains for clubhouse windows.

**1987/88:** Velvet curtains for stage; marquee

purchased for outdoor activity.

**1988/89:** New refrigerator for waterfront tavern; microwave oven for kitchen.

**1990/91:** Blind for exterior of Rally Box.

**1991/92:** Refurbishment of waterfront tavern - wall panelling, floor tiles, new cupboards and sink, new ceiling and electrical re-wiring, \$7200.

**1992/93:** Garden improvements \$500; new clubhouse tables \$1500.

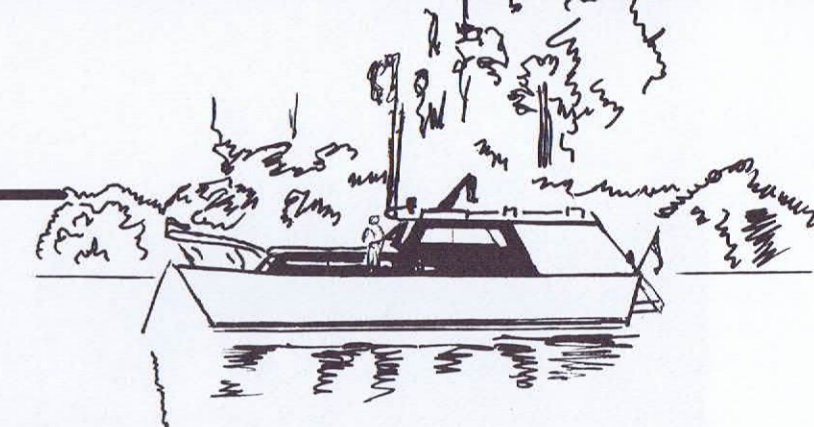
During the eighties artist Marilyn Peck, who was an active member of the Ladies Auxiliary, suggested staging an Art Show. This was held over a three-day weekend and was a huge success. The Auxiliary benefited by \$2000. Some years later another Art Show was held, again featuring Marilyn's paintings and it proved equally popular.

A spokeswoman said: "None of this would have been possible without the support of members and their friends. We suspect they regard the L.A. as a group of eccentrics who, with a wave of a magic wand, can come up with fun functions enjoyed by one and all, and who obviously enjoy their role as secondary fund-raisers.

"Hopefully, the L.A. will continue in the future in much the same vein as in the past, but with an injection of youthful enthusiasm and ideas that will continue to intrigue and please the membership of KMYC for many years to come."



# Up the Colo



Cruises and picnics began as a practical means of demonstrating the "family" concept of the club and at the same time of offering members something special for an enjoyable day or weekend boating activity.

Before the purchase of the Cottage Point property, one-day outings were mainly confined to Hallett's Beach, but regular cruises went further afield "subject to the availability of petrol". There was usually a long weekend cruise to Berowra, and a Christmas-New Year cruise to Pittwater so members could take part in the Pittwater Regatta on Boxing Day. At Easter there was a cruise to the Upper Hawkesbury. A 1947 club minute gives the timetable:

Friday: Leave Bobbin Head

Saturday: Carnival at Wiseman's Ferry

Sunday: Sackville Reach for Upper

Hawkesbury Club races

Monday: Return to Bobbin Head.

In the same year a proposed trip to Cattai Creek had this admonition for members: "Before starting on this long trip it is advisable for all our members to make sure their engine is in good running condition and it is also suggested they carry a spare condenser, coil and maybe a battery."

Later the club was to add to its list of cruise destinations - Brisbane Water, Lake Macquarie, Grafton (for the Jacaranda

*Reflections on the Colo.*



Festival), Port Stephens and the Myall Lakes, the Whitsundays ... and the Colo River.

"Up the Colo" is a phrase that is part of club folklore. Former club Honorary Secretary Graham Taylor wrote: "We went at Easter in 1957 for the first time, and 23 vessels took part. We all took 'eats' up to a nearby member Dr McGarrity's farm for a barbecue and 'pitchers'."

Jess Alchin may have found the solution to an unanswered question: why did the club forsake the upper reaches of the Hawkesbury and settle on the Colo for the annual Easter cruise? "I remember the boats used to go up to Sackville and Windsor," she said, "but it was sometimes a bit shallow. One visit, after we had moored and the tide went out, we found the boats sitting in individual puddles, with enough sand between them to walk from boat to boat without getting your feet wet. But it was all right when the tide came in."

Probably by that time several heart attacks had been treated, panic stations averted, and there was a mass exodus on the tide. Skippers may have been glad to know of a safe,



*Club boats heading up the coast.*

available anchorage, well away from the cosmopolitan delights of Windsor, where boats could anchor in about 20ft of water, with an open invitation to Dr McGarrity's property. The Upper Colo was also shallow and shoaled, but visits were managed by mooring boats in deep water near the present Colo Bridge, and completing the journey by dinghy. "There were not many outboards available at the time," Jess said, "so one powered dinghy might tow one or two others up the creek with the people and supplies for a picnic or night time barbecue.

"Dr McGarrity must have grown corn as well as oranges, because we always seemed to have a big copper boiled up for the corn cobs to add to the barbecue."

It was the beginning on an association with the Colo that has lasted 37 years to date and legends have grown up around happenings during the visits ... like the story of Pat Stuart and the carpet snake.

It was just past sun-up, with the moored boats silent and partly shrouded in the early

*Robeen and friends rafted up at Berowra.*



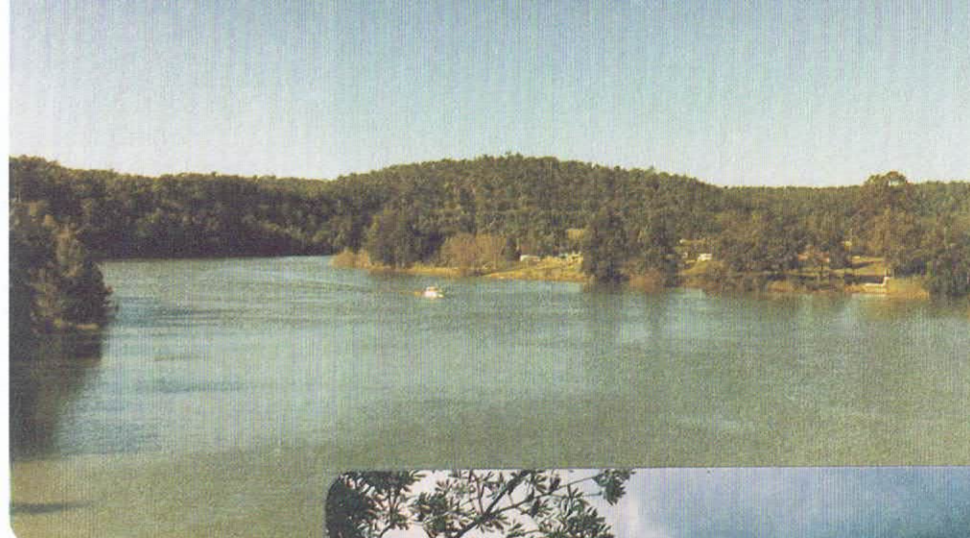
morning mist. Husband Jim roused, opened the back curtains of *Sea Dee* and walked for'ard barefoot, admiring the view, the empty spaces and the peace. What he saw made him leap a couple of feet in a vertical direction, turn without touching the ground, and run for the stern shouting for Pat to "get up here quick". A large carpet snake had come aboard during the night and was lying in the only bit of sunlight to fall on *Sea Dee's* decks, neat as a coil of rope.

Pat emerged from the stern. "What's the matter?" she called.

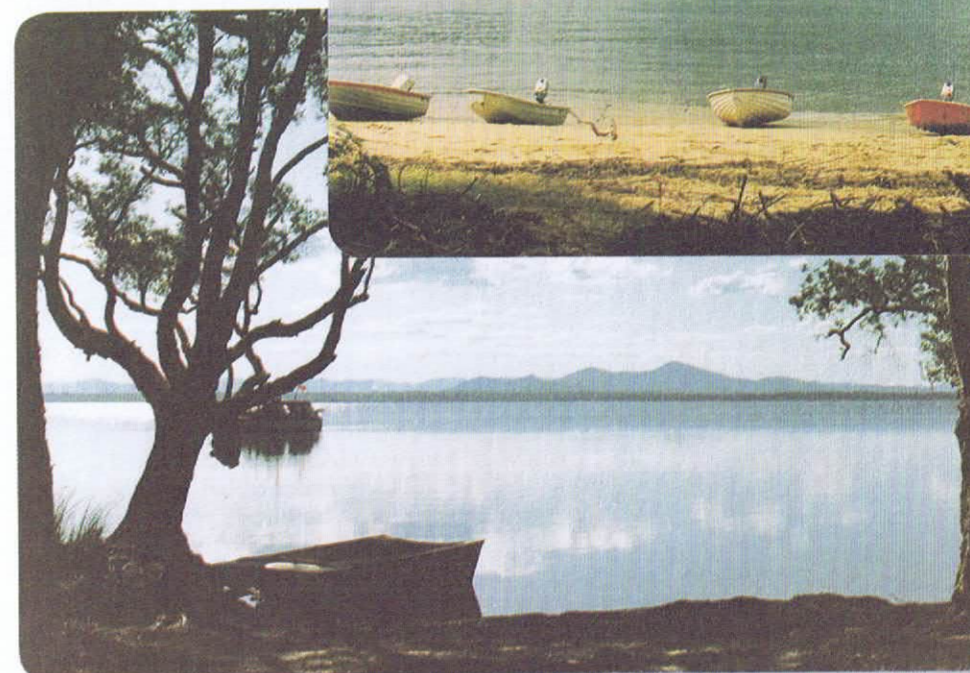
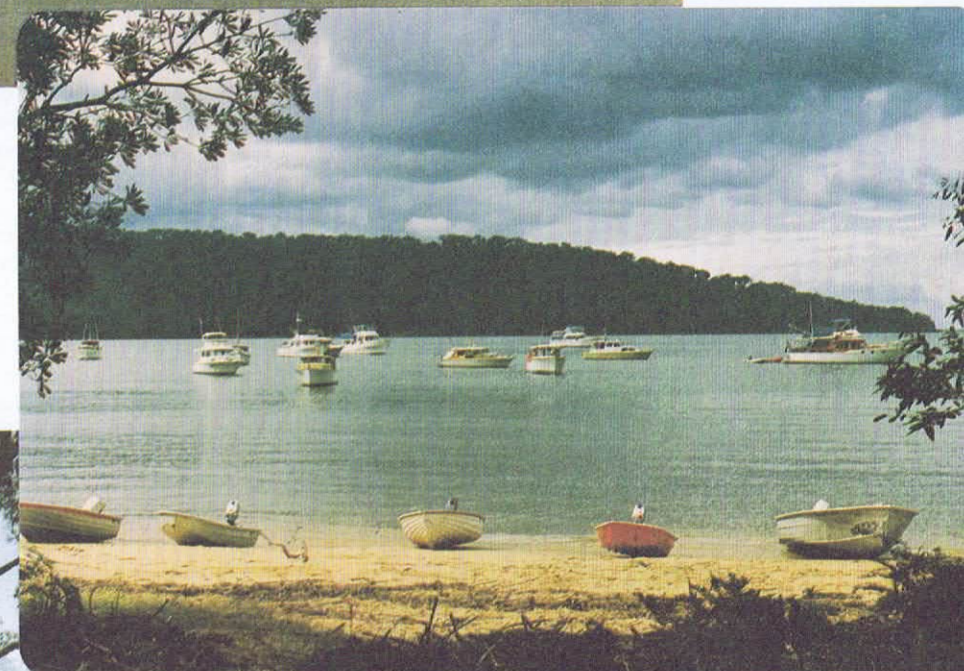
"Snake," Jim yelled back. "Watch it while I get an oar."

As Pat moved for'ard the snake reacted to the commotion and raised its head. Pat was coming up the starboard side, and Jim was hauling in the dinghy at the stern. The snake made to port, and halfway down, saw the engine vent and started to slide in, to find refuge in the bilge.

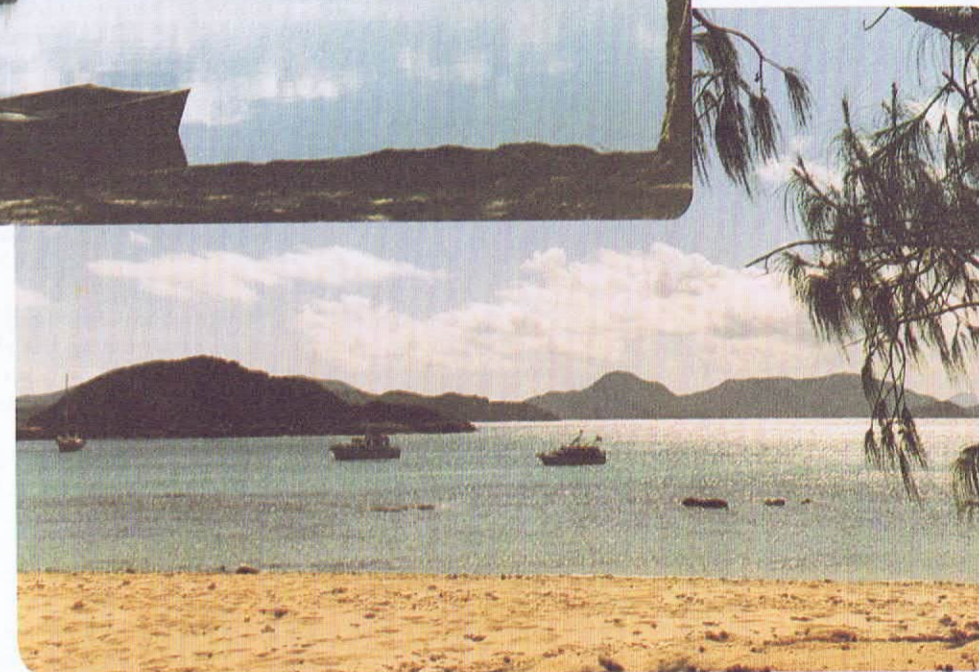
Jim gave a bellow of alarm. "Hold its tail!

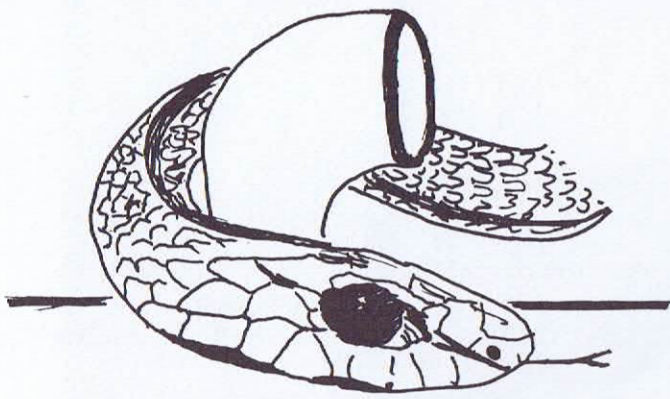


*Left: Up The Colo  
Below: Boats moored in  
Gunyah Bay for a picnic.*



*Left: Chunooma on the  
Myall Lakes off Mungo  
Brush. Below: At  
Thomas Is, Barrier Reef.*





Grab it by the tail until I get there!"

You know how voices carry over water. By the time Pat had grabbed the last two feet of disappearing tail and yelled, "Help, help me, Jim. It's too strong!" all the club boats were aroused. Voices came over the water: "What's the matter?" "Do you need help?" "What's happening?" And two dinghies were sculling rapidly towards *Sea Dee*, as Pat strained to hold the tail and prevent unauthorised entry to the engine room.

The tug-of-war between Pat and the snake ended abruptly. The snake probably thought "What the hell..." and relaxed its muscles. Abruptly Pat staggered backwards, the snake popped out of the vent like a cork out of a bottle, described an arc in the air and landed in the first of the rescue dinghies, with Peter Stanford to keep it company.

You could never say that club cruises weren't fun.

But they would be nothing without the Sailing Master, whose responsibility it is to explore the route, ensure the convoy gets off on time, gets safely to the destination and back home - apart from publicising the event and arranging the entertainment for the fleet during the stay.

The doyen of all KMYC Sailing Masters would have to be the late Wal Roots.

Wal was that rare bird, an old-fashioned gentleman. Club members called him the "gentleman of the waterways", partly because of his natural courtesy and partly because of his readiness to stop to give a helping hand to mariners in distress. (This was once called into question during an annual KMYC v. RMYC navigation race. Wal stopped to help an RMYC member who had fallen overboard when KMYC was in a winning position.)

He could boast (though he never would) of the longest-ever tow in the club - five days. It happened on the way up the Myall River, on one of the club's Christmas cruises. *Chunooma* and *Aramoana* had met a young man at Tea Gardens who had offered to help with a problem *Aramoana* was having with the engine.

A few days later Wal saw the man's boat broken down on the way up river, and took him in tow - through the Lakes, around to various anchorages where club boats had

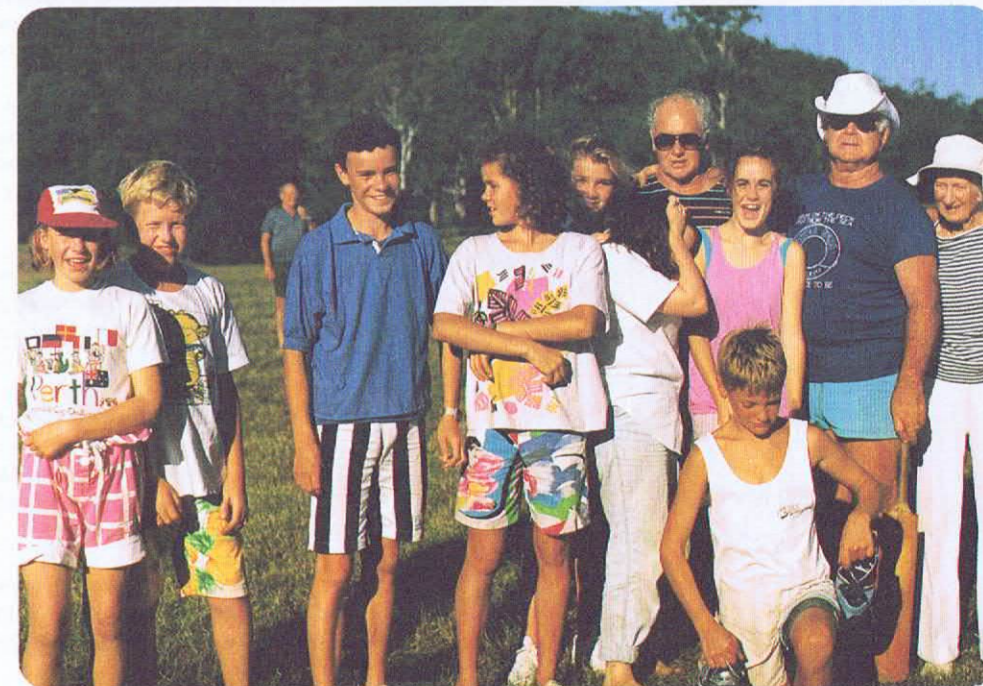


Wal Roots, gentleman of the waterways.

Picnic at Gunyah:  
Pat Meeks, Ken Powe,  
Ron Cameron,  
Una Whelters,  
Bill Prendergast,  
Don Jackson, Jill and  
John Arnott.



Left: *Chunooma* at Tamboy on the Myall.  
Below: Picnics weren't only for the "oldies" - there was always something on for the young.





gone, and then at the end of five days had towed him back to Tea Gardens. Kath and Ted Martin, of Davistown, were just two more friends for life.

Wal lived his earliest years inland from Broome, in Western Australia, but he must have been born with boats in his heart, for he had a lifelong love affair with the waterways.

"Just before he turned 60, he decided to build a boat that he could take to sea," his wife Mim said. "It was a Tidesong plan by Hartley, and he built it at home, in the front garden - one year for the hull, and two for the timber superstructure."

He called it *Chunooma* - in a Western Australian Aboriginal dialect "a small thing of great importance" - and together they went to sea: Lake Macquarie, Coffs Harbour, Grafton, the Whitsundays and, in 1973, as far as Cairns. Information and advice, gathered on his trips, was freely available for members wanting to make similar trips.

The Myall Lakes may have been Wal's favourite trip, but it was his Colo River Easter run that club members liked best.... especially after the Colo was declared a four-knot limit.

The Easter tides made it possible for a good run up the Hawkesbury, and Wal made sure no-one missed the convoy's departure. Half an hour before the time he had decreed for getting up, he would scull from boat to boat, rapping on the hull with: "Everyone awake here?" before going on to the next victim. Then, on time for the tide, *Chunooma* would proudly lead the fleet out for the Colo.

It was customary to raft up once the fleet reached the anchorage in the river. This made it easier to socialise, to share meals, to sit and talk. It also lessened the danger of return to your own boat after protracted socialising.

There was - still is - a magic about the Colo that has people saying as they return home down the reaches of the Hawkesbury, "Wasn't that GREAT!" But what was it, exactly, that made it so great?

Graham Taylor had an answer, which was published in a club circular printed in May, 1957. He wrote about that first Easter Colo gathering:

"What makes our cruises so popular?"

"It's the indefinable 'something' we are all so conscious of, when taking part in our club activities - the club spirit!"

"The trip to Colo River was a huge, happy family gathering helped by perfect weather and beautiful scenery. At times over Easter 20



boats shared the lovely anchorage. Everyone enjoyed the two picnics further up the river, reached by outboards, speedboats and dinghies.

"All those seemingly small things we take for granted in our club life were in evidence. Turning back in convoy to see if so-and-so needed help! Tackling a stubborn bit of engine. A cheerful grin from the bloke behind you in convoy and, at anchor, here and there a cluster of dinghies around someone's stern; cheerful laughter from within, the clink of glasses and a beer or a meal together to help further the friendships made.

"Together. That's the word."

Sailing Master Wal Roots tried to explain this "greatness" (March LOG, 1970) to those who had not been before on a club cruise to the Colo.

"Our practice is to go aboard on Thursday evening, provision the ship and bash the bunk early so as to be up bright and shiny at about zero four three zero. Then when the dulcet tones of the Sailing Master shatter the calm and tranquillity of the early morn, you spring to attention, salute, take the dog ashore, start the donk and prepare to depart.

"By departing before the cock has had time to crow, we ensure a following tide all the way to Colo, and a much quicker trip. We travel in convoy, of course, with the Rear as Tail-end Charlie to pick up any dinghies, dogs, demijohns and demijeans which or who become detached and float.

"When you arrive you pick your spot, drop a pick, hoist the mess flag, flake out, visit your neighbour, knock over a noggin, have a swim

*The annual cricket match was a highlight of every Colo cruise. The ladies were allowed to watch while the men tried to outdo the First Eleven. The watchers, above, from left: Debbie Spry, Chris Tyler, Ann Baker, Nea Wrench, Bonnie Prendergast, Noreen Forson, Pat Bleach and Beryl Chivas.*

*The cricketers from top left: Past Commodore Don Jackson (who suffered a hamstring injury minutes after the picture was taken), Alan Wrench, Don Chivas and Bob Whettlers.*



or indulge in other similar strenuous activities.

"On Saturday there is THE STALL, run for our special benefit by the local ladies. You can procure for a modest sum the most delectable cookies, preserves, cakes and whatnot. All highly nourishing but definitely not fattening (just look at my sylph-like figure). Then for lunch, the Dinghy Barbecue. We go by dinghy along what surely is the loveliest waterway in Australia, and have a heck of a good time, and a good feed.

"At night there is a party aboard two or three ships rafted together - a bottle and a plate will do where good fellowship and camaraderie reign supreme.

"In between all these activities is where you relax.

"On Sunday morning we take time off to give thanks. Sometimes it's in the intimate little church, sometimes under the blue dome of heaven in the churchyard. The open air service gives - to me - the greatest pleasure for, like Henry Kendall,

*'My psalm is the breeze in the lordly trees,  
and my dome is the broad blue sky.'*

"On Sunday afternoon you can relax - really and truly -

"And on Monday, when the old Sol has driven away the wispy mists of morn, you join the throng and wend your way homeward at a most leisurely pace with your nerves at peace with the world and once more ready for the rat race."

For some reason, that year Wal forgot to mention the cricket match - another hallowed institution of the Colo cruises. Usually on Sunday afternoon after church the fleet would gather ashore, stumps hammered into the open area that served as a (level) playing field and the Sailing Master, on account of age, wisdom, experience and clout, would have first choice of a cricket team. Someone else (perhaps the Commodore?) would captain the opposing side with what talent was left. But Wal's team won so often that year after year there were dark murmurs that "a swab orta be taken". Of someone.

Like the barbecues, cricket was men's work. Still, women were allowed to watch. And applaud. And get afternoon tea.

You can tell from the excerpts from the March 1970 LOG, Wal was basically a poet. It took only one quick phone call when a LOG issue was due ("Wal, can you write me a poem about what happened up the Myall - or Whitsundays or Berowra? Are you coming down to

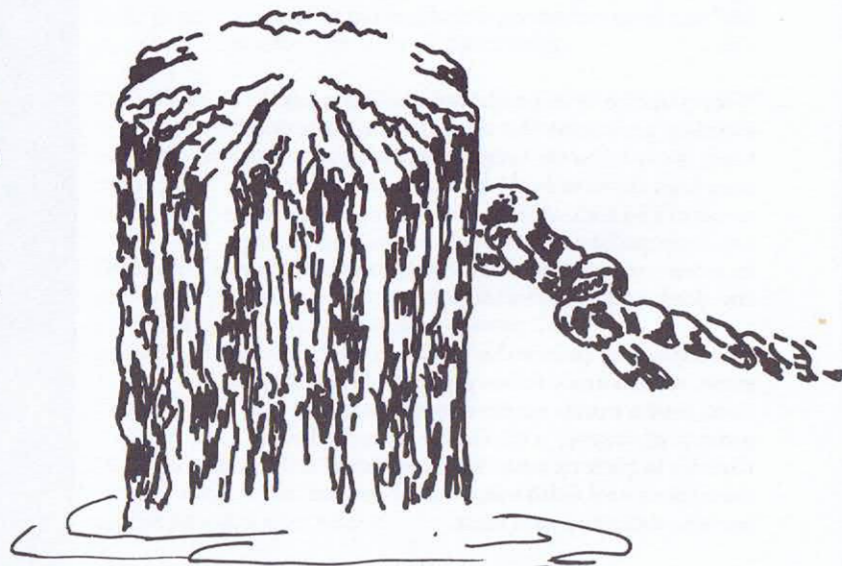
*Chunooma* tomorrow? Can you bring it then?") and a new poem would be ready for the LOG Editor, usually with artist Marilyn Peck (*Heldu*) standing by to do some quick sketches to go with it.

Wal's cruising guides were famous further than State-wide. Club members treasured them. The East Coast Cruising Club commissioned him to prepare cruising guides for a wider circle of boaties. And Wal talked to cruising strangers from all parts of the world once he was in the Whitsundays.

His "Exploring the Whitsundays and Thereabouts" started with a four-page general introduction to the area. This was followed by a suggested itinerary (from Sydney) detailing a projected departure day and date, destination, length of the course and the time it should reasonably take, for each leg of the trip. Then came a "Reef Workshop" detailing the preparations you would need to make on your boat (motors, hull, steering, winches, radio), the plans you would need, ground tackle and essential publications. Next there was a list of harbours and alternates in case of bad weather, where fuel and food was readily available, and maps of each harbour with discussions of bars and prevailing wind conditions. Second last came a guide to provisioning, and last of all, a list of medical supplies that should be on board.

Wal was a lover of solitude, particularly if it could be solitude on board *Chunooma*, with just the - mostly - even beat of her engine, and a prow pointed north towards the Barrier Reef.

He travelled with invincible faith, and it did not let him down in his lifetime.



## "Boat 1 to the Race Box"

In the beginning it really was "racing", whether the KMYC boats met at Hallett's for a day's social program, or at sea for a more adventurous day.

Foundation member Jack Bailey wrote: "A feature which distinguishes the Kuring-gai Motor Yacht Club is that its register consists of motor yachts entirely, thus establishing it as essentially a motor yacht club.

"The club is affiliated with the Australian Power Boat Association, which is the official Australian body (with international recognition) established to regulate and control Australian championship races and official trials of speed and endurance for all classes of power boats.

"Affiliated clubs take it in turn to conduct these races.

"During the 1948 season the club had the privilege of conducting the race for the cruiser championship of New South Wales, for which the Miramar Shield (donated by the late Cecil H. Doyle) is awarded.

"The club's representatives *Wanderer* (A.E. Morgan) and *Helena* (W.C. Loros) finished first and second respectively after a gruelling 12-mile ocean race.

"*Wanderer* was awarded the Miramar Shield again in 1949."

A.E. Morgan almost won again in 1950. He was so far in front in the race that when he broke down and had to make repairs at sea before continuing, he lost by only 38 seconds.

*Graceful ladies near the finish off Hallett's.*



*"It's from KMYC - they want us to go on the Race Committee this year."*

The Miramar Shield was for blue-water sailors only. It was open to any cruiser-owner from a club affiliated with the APBA, and boats raced a distance of not less than 20 miles and not more than 30, and had to be at sea on an ocean course for half of the race's distance.

For the club's smaller boats, and those who were not interested in ocean racing, all the action was at Hallett's where, by early 1947, the club had a registered racecourse, with the start-finish line off the flagpole on Commodore



Point. Declared race days were major social occasions, with dozens of women and children on-shore preparing the after-race party, and up to 40 boats in the bay, at anchor or ready to take their turn in a race heat. ("There were always special cakes," Frank Butcher remembered. "They had to be seen to be believed. And if it started to rain by afternoon tea time - and it often had - the ladies would serve under umbrellas. Ah, they were good times at Hallett's.")

Today's "racing" fraternity, who trial over our current registered course off Cottage Point against their own estimated time, would raise eyebrows over the suggestion of the then Race Secretary: "... introducing novelty cruiser races, such as releasing and recovering dinghies, which would be excellent practice in seamanship, knots, bends etc.", and the program for October, 1948:

KMYC SPORTS DAY  
4th October 1948  
HALLETT'S BEACH

- 11am Race for cruisers in reverse, two vessels at a time.  
Winner of each heat in final.
- 11.30 Cruiser Relay Race - two teams of boats.  
First vessel from each team to race to a marked buoy and return, pass flag to next boat in team and continue until all boats have raced and returned to start.

**Novelty Events**

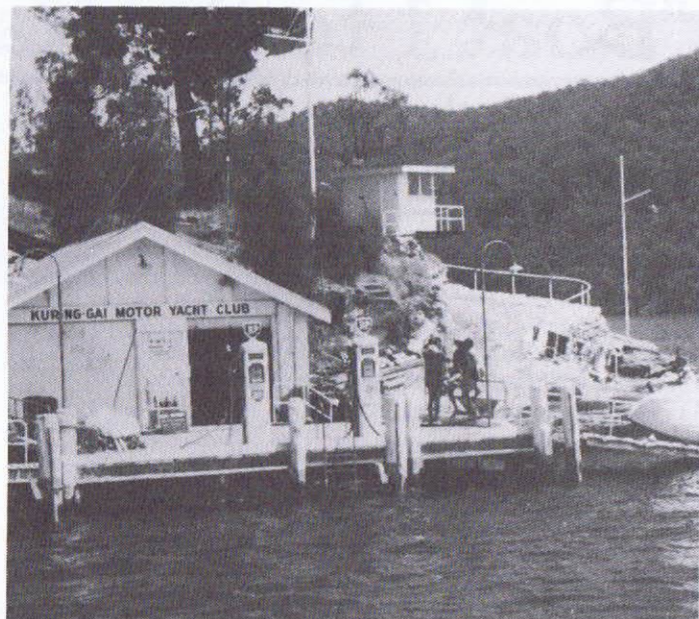
- 2.15 Men's Dinghy Race.  
Using only one oar. Any style.
- 2.45 Ladies' Dinghy Race.  
Backing Dinghy using two oars.
- 3.15 Juniors' Dinghy Race.  
Backing Dinghy using two oars and then returning to start sculling in orthodox manner.

**Beach Events**

- Egg and Spoon Race
- Tug-of-War
- Three-Legged Race.  
(Special Children's Race. Dependent on available time and number of starters.)

On normal race days the program was slightly different, according to Peter Stanford (Race Committee 1957-59, Race Secretary 1987-88).

"The course off Hallett's was a triangular one,



*The first Race Box was a very small affair. It sat over the internal road to the pontoons, and the race course had its start point directly opposite in Cowan Creek.*

with boats travelling anti-clockwise. Each Race Day started with junior members racing outboard dinghies up to the first mark and back. This was always well attended, and there would usually be about 10 dinghies competing. This was generally followed by speedboat races - two heats of three or four boats plus a final. The cruiser races were divided into, say, three heats, with the first and second cruiser from each heat taking part in the final.

"The men all wore whites, and it is interesting to look back on the old photographs and see most of the women in skirts and stockings. Dress generally was not nearly as casual as it is now.

"Only one time trial was allowed per season. You were allowed to break your time in a race by up to 1 ½% without being disqualified, but your faster time became your running time for the next race. So if you continued to run, say, 1% faster all the time, then you had to go faster and faster all season. You might start the season at 6 knots, and end up by doing 12 knots for the last race meeting."

Marshalling the boats and checking starts and finishes from Commodore Point in the days before 27MHz radio was not easy. Frank Delandro recalled in an interview in 1981: "I used to take two 12-volt batteries by car to Bobbin Head, put them on the boat, go down to Hallett's, transfer them to a skiff, go ashore and then lug them over the rocks to the flagpole so we could set up the loud-hailer system". Frank at the time was in his early nineties, and was frail and small, but his eyes

glowed. "Gee, I can remember lugging those batteries! Two at a time!"

Peter continued: "The course created some very exciting racing, because the last turn was approximately 135 degrees, and often the boats would be three and four deep rounding that mark. I recall that on one occasion at that turn our boat *Courier* took the ensign right off the stern of *Tiki*.

"There was excitement for the kids, too.

"One of our more colourful members was Alfie Walsh of *Lindy Lou* fame. He was great with children and with his speedboat *Lindy Lou* 11 he taught many of us to water-ski from Hallett's Beach - yes, in and out among the moored cruisers. Alf created much enjoyment for all, and there were some wonderful sights of people crashing back onto the beach."

After that, it was back to the waiting tables, with enormous appetites. There were often lean times for the resident goanna.

Boat owners needed a licence to race, and every season there was a reminder in the club's information sheet. In September, 1961, the reminder read: "Should you decide to race this year, and so far have not applied for a licence, do so NOW. The MSB requires that licences must be obtained from the Board (as provided by 'The Control of Navigable Waters Regulations') to participate in racing or water sports."

With the move to Cottage Point, a new official course was measured off and registered, with a start/finish point in Cowan Creek off the short access road down to the pontoons. Gradually a number of factors affected the way our races were run. Local speed restrictions, the disappearance of the speedboats, and insurance problems attached to boats involved in racing all led to changes in the race rules.

In the 1972/73 Annual Report, Commodore Alan Wood suggested two main reasons for the fall off in cruiser racing entries:

"The first was that many members, rightly or wrongly, felt that they had been unjustly treated by the Race Committee at some time or other, and had lost interest.

"The other reason was that in recent times a tendency had developed for contestants, particularly in large fast boats, to hold back their speed until the final stages of a race and then accelerate to maximum speed over the last few hundred yards, their washes producing a potentially dangerous situation, so frightening as to deter many members from entering future races." He foreshadowed changes in the racing rules.

Racing went into the doldrums for the next few years. Few boats were interested and there were problems manning the Race Box. Past Commodores Arthur Preston and Bert Osborne were pressed into service. Jim Wood was Race Secretary for a short time, then when Jim Stuart took over, the rules were amended again to return to the more exciting "simultaneous finish" system.

Finally, in the 80s, boats no longer "raced". They were engaged in a "rally", a trial against their own nominated speed and time to cover a given distance. The Race Box became the Rally Box, especially for new recruits to the events. Some of the "old hands" tend to suffer from memory loss in moments of excitement.

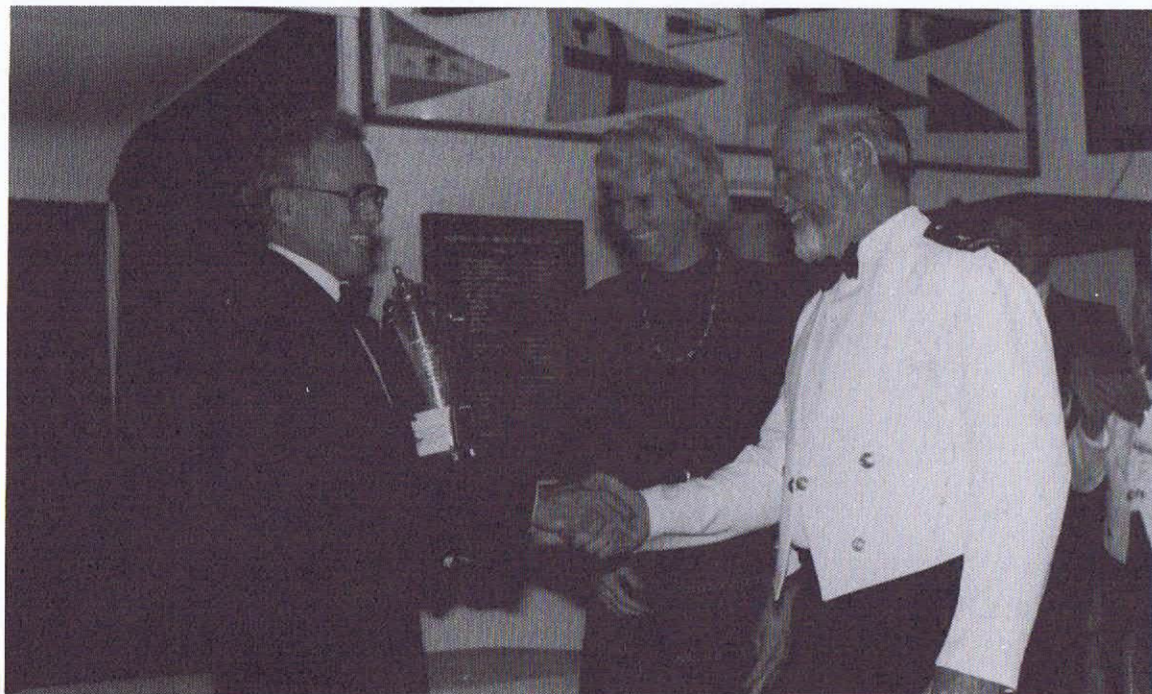
The change of name did not mean that complaints against Race/Rally Box rulings were any fewer. Nor did it mean that dissent from the Box was something new. From our earliest days members had dared to question the competence and lineage of the Race



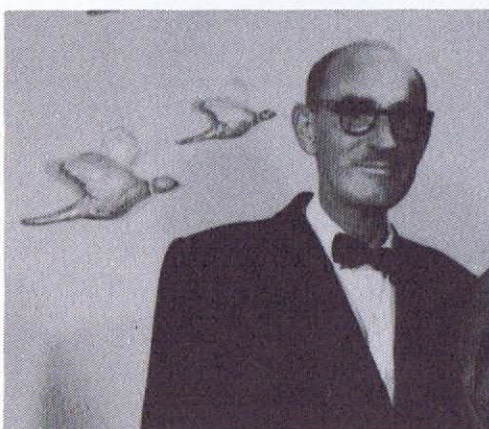
*Above: Col Peck, navigation racing champion.*

*A.C. Wooll donated a trophy for an annual navigation race between KMYC and RMYC.*





Bob and Noreen Forson accept the Patron's Trophy at the Presentation Night 1985.



Jack Stanford gave his name to a navigation trophy. Son Peter (below) was a former Race Committee member and Race Secretary.



Secretary and Committee. As early as September 1947 - just after club members started racing - a Special General Meeting records that "it was decided to have the stopwatches tested". Later in the same season it was agreed to "check the clock". In the 1980s, despite the new rules, it was not unusual to have boat owners steaming up to the Race/Rally Box with enough puff left to breathe fire and brimstone. Perhaps it wasn't all that surprising.

A Race Committee member who served many years in the Box reports: "Boats were handicapped according to the speed they declared so that - all other things being equal, and God being in His heaven - in each heat all boats would reach the finishing line simultaneously.

"In my time the finishing line was a strand of wire attached vertically down the Box window. This lined up with the point of the triangular pole-head outside the Box, and a slash of white on a rock on the opposite shore."

(This finishing line streak of white had been a sore point between Park rangers and the Race Secretary. We had defaced the rock, and would have to remove the mark. It wasn't our mark - a seagull must have been responsible. Funny thing, isn't it, said the ranger, that it has all the consistency of a bit of high gloss white. Funny things seagulls eat around here.)

"If ever all boats did reach the line together, there was chaos in the Race Box.

"Someone's eye was on the wire, and the white mark, and each boat was called by number as its prow hit the line. But occasionally it would happen that there had been six boats in a

heat, and there were only five results. Sometimes in navigation races the course led competitors across headlands, and once deep in to Porto Bay, where you'd be lucky not to ground a dinghy. On one famous occasion after a navigation route had led the fleet up Coal and Candle, the return line went clear through the Race Box."

Fortunately the rally fraternity was forgiving. Competitors preferred the fun of racing and the element of the unexpected, and resisted invitations to "come and have a go yourself, then". So perhaps it's better not to mention the day - all in one race - when the big clock stopped, two stopwatches broke down, and the official with the third watch had not been paying attention and had failed to start it on time.

The General Committee was not always as understanding as the racing members. Paperwork to keep track of heat results, time trials, speeds at so many knots, actual times and overall points took a great amount of time in preparation for a race day, and much of the work was repetitive. Race Secretary Bill Prendergast appealed for a small copying machine. "I need HELP," he said.

An obliging Committee sent a small parcel to next Race Day - two new biros and six sheets of carbon paper.

Disqualification could also be a sore point.

One of our first Race Secretaries had had to bite the bullet on the stragglers who would not make it to the starting line on time. They were to be automatically disqualified, but always had up to 50 different reasons why they should not be, and were prepared to argue at length.

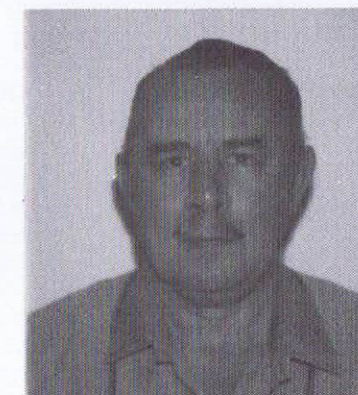
Our Deep Throat from a former Race Committee recalls:

"Disqualification rules were clear and simple. But let any scribe in the Committee put the dreaded 'D' in the results column and the Race Secretary would howl with anguish. 'You can't disqualify him! He's just donated \$50 to the annual race trophies!' - or - 'He's just agreed to do me a favour!' - or - 'He's new to racing and we have to encourage him!' Threatened with strike action if favouritism were to be a factor in race results, the Secretary usually subsided, muttering.

"Bribery attempts were rife. The bribes were gratefully accepted, though it made no difference to the results. With the western sun beating in the window of the Box, a few cold tinnies were a great help, and were shared around."

A number of trophies are available for

members who take part in the rally program, among them: the *Heldu* Trophy, donated by Col Peck (who could beat all hands in nav. races - and why not? As he was a Qantas



Jim Court - Past Commodore, former club Treasurer and a tiger in defence of his many racing trophies.

captain, one would have been seriously disturbed if his navigational skills had not been spot on); the Jack Stanford Trophy for the best beginner in each season's navigation races; trophies for the best pointscores of the season. But it is not necessary to win to get a prize - there's the Broken Propeller Trophy for the worst performance of the season.

The introduction of 27MHz radio brought a new dimension to the rally program. Boats - far from maintaining radio silence - could talk to one another as well as to the Rally Box. Usually the messages were ones of complaint:

ENLARGEMENT OF NOTCHES ON THE HANDLE OF THE RACE BOX STARTING PISTOL

