



KMYC vessels in Sydney Harbour.

Our members were sufficiently inexperienced in these conditions to be towing dinghies. (One boat lost a cedar dinghy). On Bert Osborne's *Daydream* - which was so low it was customary to call "Up periscope!" if it met a swell going around West Head - it was all happening. His cherished sailing dingy flooded and sank, still tied on. There was a mad dash for a carving knife and a friend sawed through the painter. He collapsed over the controls, where Bert was having problems seeing which way was up, and said: "Thank God that emergency is over", knocked the ignition switch and turned off the engine. "It was almost the end of a very good friendship," Bert said.

On *Chiquita*, one small boy was crying with fright and begging father George Alchin to turn around and go home. As *Chiquita* bucked and soared and fell with a wallop between waves, someone tried to comfort him. He pointed to the ship's bell. "It's all right. You don't have to worry until the bell rings."

On cue, the bell rang.

There may be some truth in the tale that a couple of our sailors spent an inordinate time in Middle Harbour after the event, gathering the courage to come home.

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Everyone has a hire boat story.

Among Carl Halvorsen's favourites: The young couple who rang in panic from Brooklyn after having problems rowing ashore, to complain that they had been given two left-hand oars. Carl had to explain gently that the LH stood

for Lars Halvorsen. And another group who called back an hour after leaving Bobbin Head for some assistance. "Where are you?" they were asked. "Sydney Harbour. We can see the Bridge." And the yuppie, keen to show he knew what it was all about. "Ah, new pontoons since I was here," he said. "Last time they were right down there, and now they're right up here."

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Former club member Berry Jackson has her own special one. She was on the home moorings, busily varnishing up front when a hire boat creamed through the fleet and almost rammed *Samara*. It stopped dead within inches of Berry, who dropped her brush and took a firm hold to push it back. At that instant the hire boat was rammed into reverse, full throttle, taking off with Berry hanging in mid-air over the water.

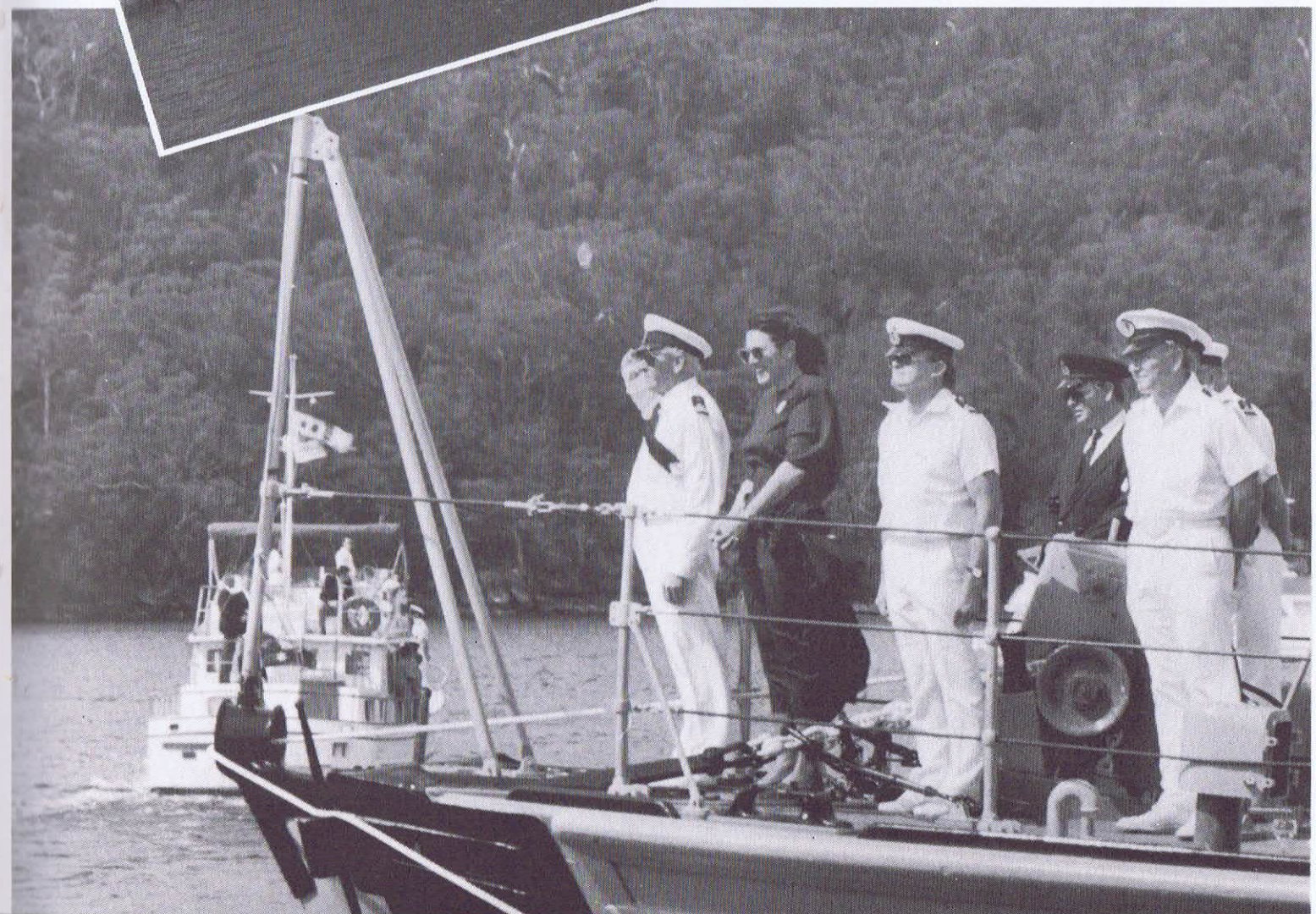
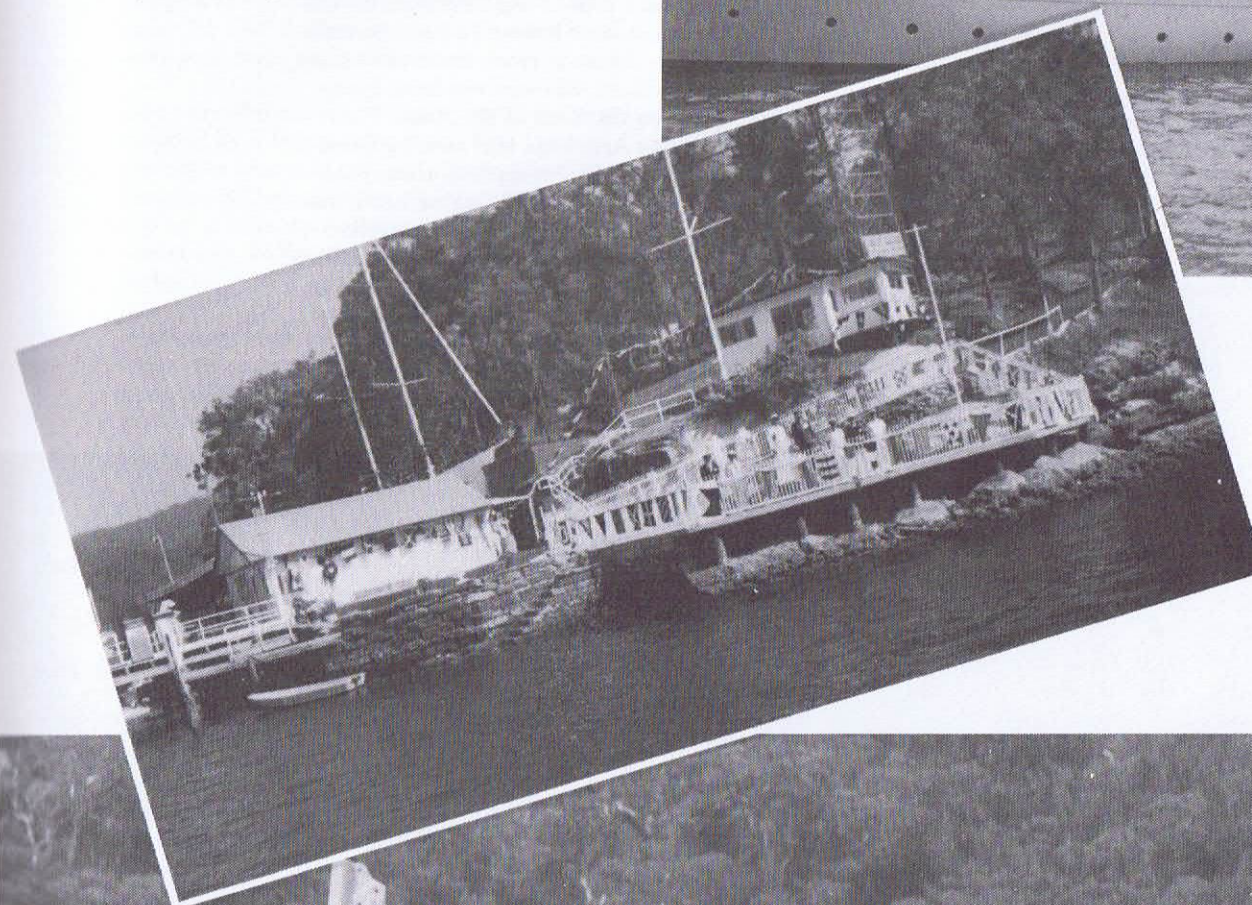
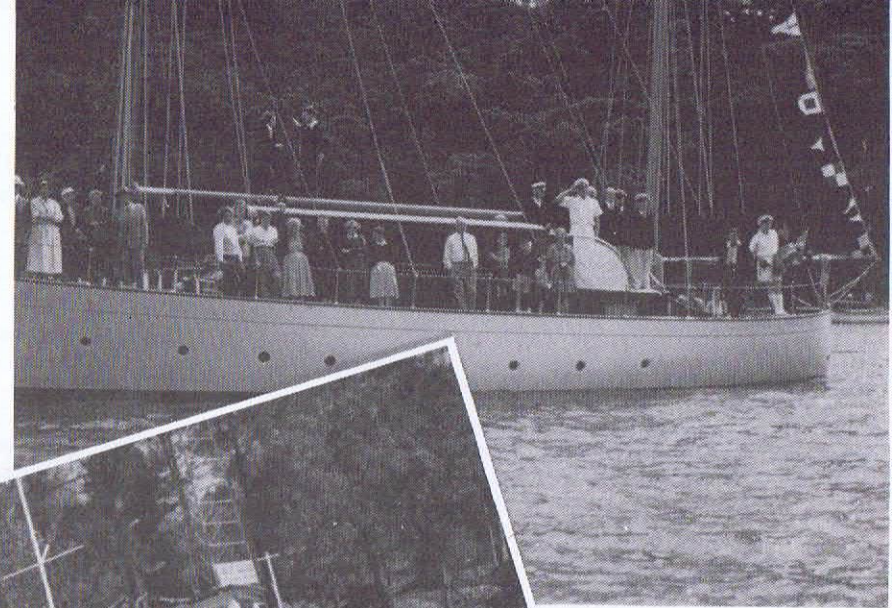
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Then there was the houseboat which rammed the supporting sea wall as it tried to moor in the swimming pool. And another which - apparently fearing bad weather - manoeuvred itself into a parking position among the dinghies behind the front pontoons. It took four club members to extricate it.

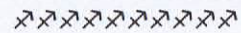
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In Stingray Bay, with *Karana* on its second day at anchor, there came a hire boat captained by two elegant, grey-haired gentlemen (with cravats) with a bevy of their nieces on board. One swung overboard a nonchalant anchor, which just skimmed the water, while the other started pouring

Right: Flagship *Lauriana* is the saluting base for a Bobbin Head Opening Day sailpast. Below: Commodore Bob Whettlers prepares to take the salute at the swimming pool surrounds at the club. Bottom: Commodore Don Jackson with guest-of-honour Kay Cottee.



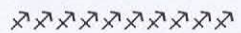
cocktails to growing hilarity. It was slack water, but as the tide turned the boat floated gently past *Karana* towards the sandbank. "Oh, I say!" one gentleman called as they passed. "Did you know you were drifting?"



A number of members built their own boats in the backyard. Or the front yard. *Chunooma* and *Chiquita* were two. (George Alchin had joined the club with an open 18ft whaler with an outboard, but somewhere along the line the membership rules changed: a "suitable" boat for membership had to have overnight accommodation and a toilet as minimum equipment.) Most got to the water unscathed - but not *Van Dieman*, which was launched by proud owner Roy Vaughan. It was not an event as much as a continuing saga.

- Roy had to demolish a part of his neighbour's property before he could get the boat out of his backyard
- The Road Transport permit required boat and trailer to be OFF the road by 6am this particular Saturday, but it took until 8am to get it ON the road
- At Crows Nest the trailer tyres overheated and two caught fire
- She went down by the bow on launching, with the stern in the air - the diesels had been sited too far forward. Two water tanks had to be fitted and kept permanently full to keep her on an even keel.

*Van Dieman* was the first ship to test the new slipway, which had been designed by Roy.



One of our members goes down in the annals

Below: *Van Dieman* on the slips.



of TWO clubs: on a friendly visit to RMYC for the Opening Day he brought the entire proceedings to a halt by trying to ram their flagship.



*Hukaelau* was a boat of legendary stuff - the only pleasure cruiser known to have become the cause of a threat to close down the entire Sydney waterfront. She arrived from Hong Kong crated on the deck of the *Asian Pearl* when Warwick Armitage was coming home to retire, and the KMYC reception committee (entrusted with the job of bringing her home to Cottage Point) was horrified to see the Chinese carpenters had added a few planks of 3x4 over the top of the crate. No way for the crane to life her out to swing her down into the water. Then the reception committee thoughtlessly picked up a hammer and a saw to free her ....



*Hukaelau* in happier days in America Bay.

Rebellion Days stayed part of the club's fabric for more than 10 years.

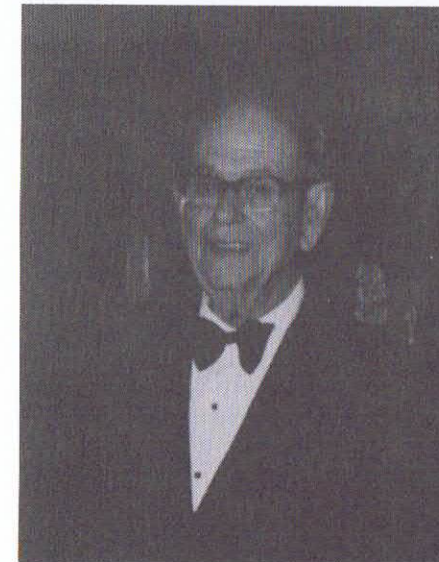
Each winter, as a gesture against the tyranny of boating chores, a convoy of cars would meet on the North Shore and proceed to a picnic spot - usually out towards the mountains. Besides the barbecue there were sack races, races for Old Duffers, and there was a lot of sitting on rugs and talking.

One year the convoy ran into trouble. It was stopped by a burly policeman. Was there a permit to travel in convoy? (No one had thought of that, and the club certainly wasn't trying to hide its activities, as each car had streamers, balloons and the club burgee flying.)

Were they perhaps a funeral, where cars could travel in convoy without this mysterious permit? Right, seeing they weren't, they'd have to travel separately. And he stayed to see them off on five-minute intervals.

As there were 43 cars that year, the picnic was a little late. But not the barbecue. Top dentist, top concreter, top path-layer and top barbecue chief Bert Osborne had been in one of the lead cars.

*Bert Osborne.*



Special days for disadvantaged children were large in club legend. Apart from the regular contributions made by the Ladies Auxiliary to such good causes, club members freely gave their time and their boats for Children's Days.

In the earliest days KMYC combined with RMYC to entertain 1000 or more happy children each year at The Basin.

Later, Frank and Deirdre Hannon's *Miss Eve* was THE boat to be on for club picnics. Their hospitality was legendary.







Alan Range.

Two men of our club in more modern times deserve the title "legend", for their unstinting gift of time and skills for the club's benefit. They came in the same mould as some of our founding fathers: Alchin, Vaughan, Osborne and Preston. And both in their time were Waterfront Chairmen for many years.

They were Alan Range and Ted Terry.

Alan was a quietly spoken Englishman, patient, painstaking, highly skilled - a strength to a number of commodores. In the 1980/81 Annual Report Graham Hignett recorded: "Vice Commodore Alan Range is retiring at the forthcoming AGM after many years of untiring effort on the club's behalf. He has worked many long hours planning, supervising and even quietly carrying out a number of improvements and additions to the fabric of the club. His skill and ability in problem-solving has on many occasions saved the club heavy expenditure."

Ted was "a very special person", Jim Cuming wrote in the LOG following his death in 1989. A major in Signals in World War 11, Ted took to boating in the post-war period. He bought a snub-nosed cattalina cruiser, *Kerri Ann*, with

wheelhouse almost over the anchor chain - distinctive in profile AND colour as it was painted pink. Often when he came down to the club in his later years he got no further than the seat outside Ted's Tavern (named for him), where he dispensed hospitality, advice and opinion, or just yarned with his good mate Bill Coker or anyone else who came along. He retired from "active duty" in his seventh season as Waterfront Chairman because of ill health.

Jim wrote: "The club owes so much to Ted, who became a member in 1951, and from the outset was a grand and prodigious contributor. Where there was work to be done Ted was a real leader, and was always there slogging away and inspiring others to do the same."

Ted was made a Life Member for his many contributions to the club.



Members have sometimes been quick to question the bona fides of strangers who walk along our front pontoons scanning the moored boats, but when two men come bearing a bunch of expensive flowers and an unwrapped bottle of Johnnie Walker Black Label held bashfully behind their backs, righteous indignation could well give way to curiosity.

Could we help?

The men, of Mediterranean appearance and obviously father and son, immediately looked relieved at the word. Yes, we certainly could help. They were looking for a boat - and gestured vaguely towards the moored fleet.

Which one?

Well, it had been very dark, but they were sure it was a big boat, and there hadn't been time to catch the name.

Did the men mind saying why they wanted to identify this boat?

Father immediately sat on one of the sets of steps on our front pontoon, cradling the Scotch so he could talk with the other hand. "They helped us last night," he said. "A man and a lady."

"When the women and children were screaming," the son added helpfully

It was not quite your run-of-the-mill hire boat story. Father and son, wife and daughter-in-law and the four children had hired two Halvorsen 25s for a week and on one of the days had invited friends to join them for an outing. In the morning both boats had gone to Illawong Bay to pick up the visitors. From

there they had gone down the creek and somewhere they'd found a pretty little bay with a beach where the children had played. It was a late winter day, and by the time the hosts were ready to return the visitors to Illawong, it was getting dark. And a fairly strong wind had got up. The women and children were worried that if they were left alone the boat might be blown out to sea.

"The women and children were screaming," the son explained.

So father tied the boat tightly to a tree on shore, to prevent it being blown to New Zealand, and left for Coal and Candle Creek. There were a few farewell drinks there - "just a couple" - and the men set off again, sailing confidently into the dark of a moonless night. But the pretty bay, with the beach and the Halvorsen tied to a tree had disappeared, no matter how far they searched. Three hours later, haggard and totally sober, they saw a boat's lights as it made fast to our pontoon so they followed it in, to ask for help to find the women and children.

A few basic questions, and the beach was identified. Our KMYC boat set off to lead father and son to the rescue, and the two Halvorsens were soon rafted up together again. "And this is to say thank you," father said, indicating flowers and scotch.

"So everything was all right?" we asked.

"Well, not exactly," father said.

It seemed that someone forgot to untie the

tree rope and when the tide went out during what was left of the night, the boats canted.

"The women and children were screaming," the son added.

They refused to stay on the boats and insisted on being escorted ashore, where a great fire was built.



In shelter, near the rocks?

No, out in the open, in the wind. The women and children were convinced that they would be attacked by spiders and snakes near the rocks.

"And they were - "

We interrupted hastily. "You probably won't be in a hurry to hire boats again."

The men were astonished. "But of course! Boating is FUN!"

*Below: If ever you wanted a helping hand, you didn't have to go further than Chum Ferris (pictured below with wife Joan). Chum, Technical Director of Ferris Radio, was always ready to help a club member - and the club itself on many an occasion - with hands-on help for radio and technical problems. He was made a life member of Penta Comstat. Right: Past Commodore Dickie Brooks with Bob Ibbotson. Bob owned Silver Cloud, one of the largest vessels in our waters during those years, and it was often our flagship for Opening Days.*



Are you one of those few club members who have, lurking somewhere in the cutlery drawer, an odd knife or fork with "KMYC" inscribed on the handle? If so, treasure it. It's all that's left of 12 gross, purchased by the Ladies Auxiliary more than 30 years ago, and finally put away for "special occasions".



The LOG has had a couple of mentions, but its predecessors were just as important to the membership. Our earliest records show that an Information Circular, typed out and roneoed off, went out regularly carrying news of club decisions, social occasions and special events.

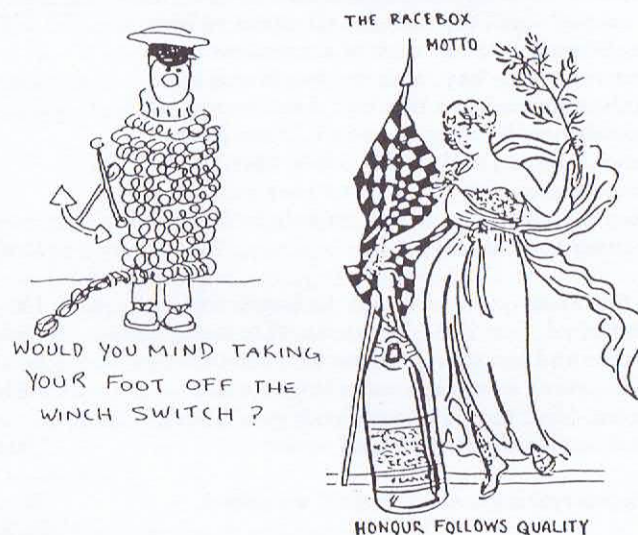
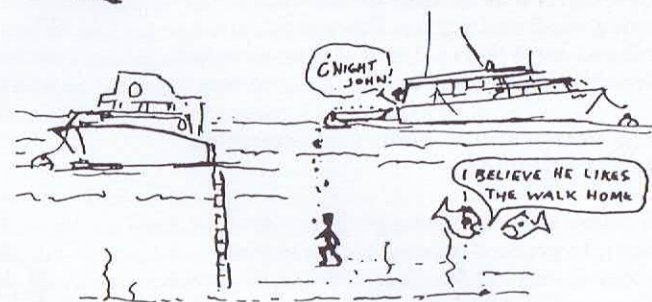
Some of the early reports - particularly from the Race Box - were inclined to be a bit stiff: "Sirs, I beg leave to report..." or "Sirs, I beg to submit herewith..." and the Circulars carried Roman numerals. Throughout the reports Latin phrases were sprinkled like confetti in a honeymoon suitcase - *et al, inter alia, serialim, per se, quod est demonstrandum, sine (et al, as it were)*, and in one unhappy week Sunday was declared to be a *dies non*.

The LOG had taken a number of formats during its existence, usually depending on how much information there was to pass on to members, and how much money the club could afford to spend printing and posting it.... an expensive item if the club budget was tight. Publication varied from eight or nine per year in the 80s to the current four per year.

It became the ideal vehicle for telling members about the doings of other members, and the Dunks' Club prospered with tales of those who had decided to take the first swim of the season a bit early, who had stepped on the transom step forgetting it had been taken off for repairs, who had walked backwards on the pontoons taking pictures, whose cabin-top handrail had mysteriously "broken" ... or who had been like Thelma Brooks.

Husband Dick was famous for approaching his mooring at full belt, with Thelma standing up front ready to pick up. If he did not slam *Van Dieman* into reverse in time, Thelma had done

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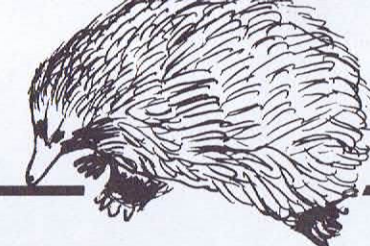


a brisk clip down the side, unable to let go the mooring, and once, right over the stern.

Joanne Worner was another natural for the Dunk's Club. She was made a life member after going overboard four times in one day from *Mehitabel*.

The club leaked like a sieve with this sort of information and it inevitably came to the attention of the Stoned Crow, and from there into Pieces of Eight. Frequently artist Marilyn Peck was ready to oblige with a quick sketch to brighten the column. For years, Crow and Marilyn made a larrikin pair.

# Trial by wind and fire



Any stranger who came down to our front pontoons, even with a moderate gale blowing, would look out on a scene of tranquillity, boats swinging gently on the moorings, children and dogs skylarking on the sandspit at low tide, members on the work pontoons doing more talk than work. By a happy circumstance of the fold of the hills, Cottage Point Bay and the inner moorings are protected from almost every wind that blows.

Before January 21, 1991, most of us would have said "every" wind. The day was to prove that no matter how constant peace might seem in the home bay, there was always the possibility - however remote - of a shadow darkening paradise.

Pat and Jim Stuart had *Sea Dee* tied up on the work pontoon that day - a typical January day, warm to start and with increasing heat and humidity as the hours passed. From time to time there was a faint breeze, but by noon there were no portents to start alarm bells. Later, in the LOG, they told of their experience during the afternoon.

"Around 4pm reports began coming in of freak fierce thunderstorm activity in the west and south western suburbs with descriptions of hail, wind squalls, lightning and heavy rain. At Cottage Point the sky began to darken and quite suddenly a huge bank of greenish black cloud rolled over the hills from the south west, tumbling over itself in a maelstrom of frantic activity. Almost at once a mighty gust of wind swept through the area, followed seconds later by sheets of driving rain, travelling almost horizontally through the moorings.

"Then came the hail, like a continuous burst of machine-gun fire, peppering the cabin tops, canopies and awnings of the moored craft. The wind seemed to follow a wild circular path like a dervish, twirling and spinning among the boats, forcing them this way and that as it changed direction every few seconds.

"The bay was lashed by metre waves, which crashed against the sea wall. *Sea Dee* was tied up to the work pontoon, and it was like riding a bucking horse as all 18 tons heaved and strained at the ropes with the wind pushing one way and the waves another.

"There was no let-up for the next 30 minutes in the intensity of the onslaught and those of us on board and at the pontoons wondered how the boats could survive without serious damage.

"It was over as quickly as it had begun.

"As we surveyed the scene we were amazed that only one boat had dragged its moorings and that, thankfully, out into the stream."

While there was horrific damage elsewhere - four years later the bush still shows the path of the wind from Turramurra to Akuna Bay, where damage was estimated in the millions - Cottage Point was relatively unscathed. The clubhouse and other buildings were spared, but one tree, an imported pine, had been torn down by the wind, and it had crashed into the engine shed at the top of the slips. The club had been incredibly lucky. The wind had torn the heart out of some areas, but as it sped on a two-kilometre front towards the Point, it had





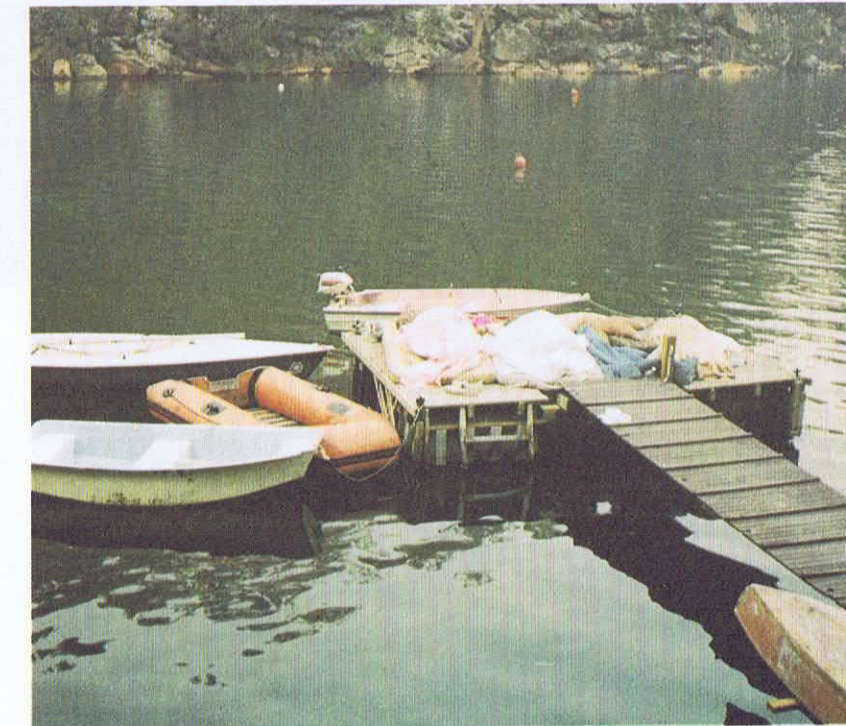
veered at the last minute and unleashed its savagery five kilometres east down Coal and Candle Creek.

We lived for some two years with a lunar landscape along the road from Terrey Hills to the Point before the bush started to re-clothe the naked trees.

Then last year, 1994, there was another January drama that could have been the end of the club. Once again the Point was saved, though this was due to the actions of a few club members, Cottage Point residents and the local Bushfire Brigade battling non-stop for three days against the worst bushfire in living memory.

Friday, January 7 saw the end of a horror week for holiday boaters on the Hawkesbury. For about 10 days the weather had been freakish - one day sweltering, the next cool; winds from the west and nor'west made our normally placid waterways choppy and uncomfortable; smoke from bushfires up and down the coast thickened the air. Shortly after New Year a spontaneous fire burst out on the southern headland of the entrance to Refuge. A few days later a vicious wind came in from the nor'west and strained every mooring rope. In America Bay a woman on a visiting craft tried to peg out a man's shirt on a makeshift line at the stern of the boat. It almost tore itself loose from her hands, and there were 11 pegs in the tail before it was properly secured.

In twos and threes, from about Tuesday 4th onward, club members left Refuge and America for the home moorings and finally for



*Above: Firefighters slept where they dropped. Bushfire pictures by courtesy of Phil Aitkin.*





home, in the face of increasing fire threat to all suburbs.

By Friday there were fire emergencies State-wide. Cottage Point Bushfire Brigade was on alert, and club caretaker Dave Allen, a Brigade member, was on standby. Then-Rear Commodore David Argles was on his way down the river with most of the family for a swim at Big Rock Beach and told Dave, "I'll be back about four this afternoon to pick up Kylie, but if anything happens, call me."

Well before 4pm Kylie called *Soul Coaxing*. "Dave says you'd better come back, Dad," she said. "There's fire at Christmas Tree Hill."

"Wait there," said David. "I'm on my way."

"Can't," said Kylie. "I'm just leaving with Dave in the *George Alchin* to fight a fire around past Cottage Point village."

As *Soul Coaxing* was creaming back to the club, David called up *Orca*, the Commodore's boat, which was in Refuge. A fire behind the club, between the club and the main road, would burn out our electricity supply lines, but *Orca* could supply the power needed to run the club's fire-fighting equipment. John Arnott was under way within minutes.

Back at the club Graeme Henderson was on *Jewel Sea* on his moorings. Ron Moane had *Blaxland* in Smith's Creek, but seeing the smoke from Christmas Tree Hill started back immediately. *Daibreak* was in Pittwater, but Don Gibson was already on his way around West Head to see what was needed.

"What was really needed was more manpower," David said. "But by now the Park was closed. We couldn't get anyone in, and no

one could get out - but miraculously people did appear: Kerry Jones, Bob Oastler, Richard Hunt and other Coast Guard members.

"The fire came over the back in Little Botany Bay, and though we tried to fight it from the boats, we just couldn't get the water to it.

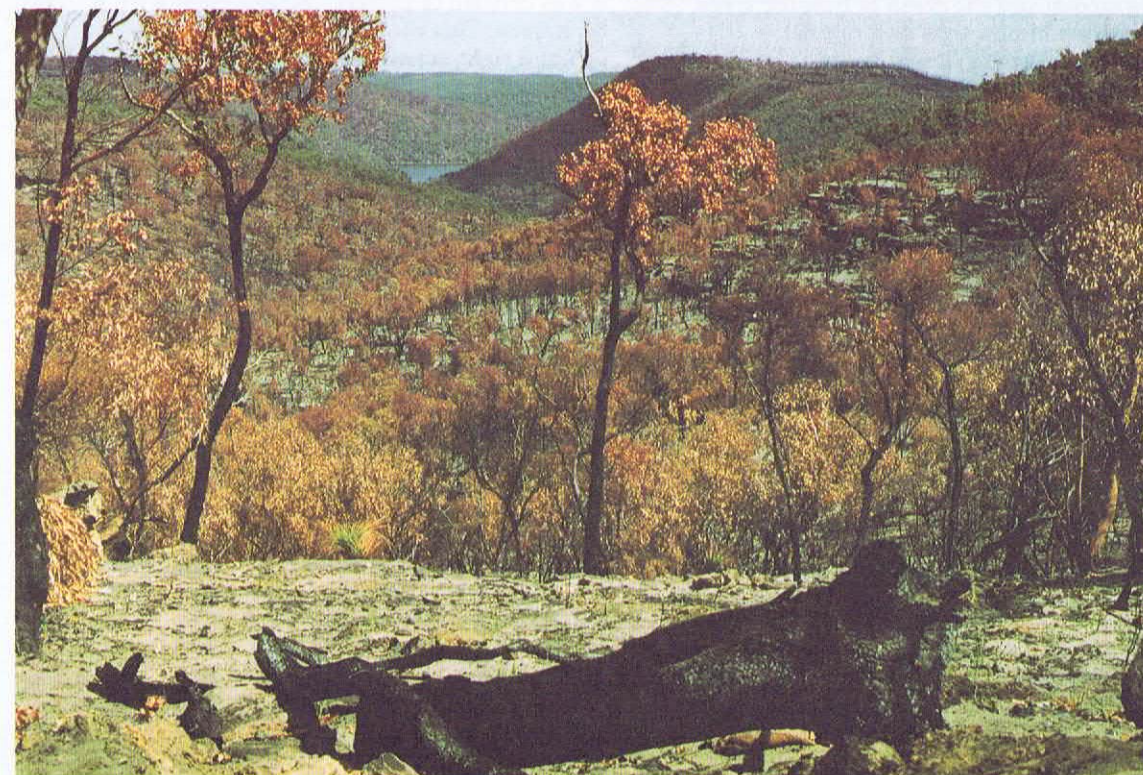
"It was a major exercise. The *George Alchin* was down there most of the night, with police boats and the Coastguard, and fresh crews were being brought in from Bobbin Head.

"We came back to the club and spent the early part of the night preparing to fight a major blaze, getting everything ready, and fighting spot fires behind us. Then Akuna Bay was in trouble. We started off down the river to try to help but were turned back by the police."

By midnight, everything was quiet at Cottage Point. The danger had eased. The capricious wind had changed direction and the fire roared on a new course towards Bayview, Elanora and Terrey Hills. The firefighters slept where they dropped and woke, red-eyed and hoarse from smoke, to the acrid smell of smouldering bush.

The news was worse than they could have believed. The fire had turned once again and was burning back from Illawong Bay towards the club.

David said: "We took a boat down the creek to look at the fire's progress, and we could see it wouldn't be long before it would be back at Cottage Point. It was burning right down to the water, so we came back and moved all the





*Dave Allen brings in the dam's vinyl hose for repair after the bushfire.*

boats close-in to the shore out to the far moorings."

It was a laconic way of describing hours of desperate work that had as its backdrop the roar of the advancing flames, the billowing, choking smoke and the crash of burning trees. Sparks fell on bimini tops and against curtains, as the boats closest to shore were unhitched from their moorings and towed to the outer moorings to be rafted up four and five abreast in comparative safety. All that day the *George Alchin* and the Coastguard vessel *MMI* patrolled the moorings ready to cut adrift and tow away burning boats. "There was no way we could have saved anything that started to burn," David said. "Our hands were full."

By lunchtime the fire was a wall of flame at the head of Cottage Point Bay and bearing down on the first of the cottages along the shoreline, searing everything in its path, creating its own mini-cyclone of swirling heat. There was no longer any way to fight it. The Fire Captain ordered the firefighters back, and gave the signal for the evacuation of Cottage Point.

Boats at the club's pontoons, and men were standing by to cast off but the wind changed again. Only feet short of the cottages at the

head of the bay it turned back on itself and the fire burned back the way it had come.

"It was the only thing that saved us," David said. "We had nothing left to fight with."

Dave Allen had spent the three days vital for the club with his own unit, Cottage Point Bushfire Brigade, before being deployed to other fires when we were safe.

"Neil Payne gave the first alert," he said. "He was doing some engineering work in Little Botany Bay and radioed from there that a fire had started on the northern entry point to Smiths Creek. The brigade was on standby, because of the conditions, and we immediately took a tanker down Cowan Drive to the end to start a back-burn that would protect the houses in Cottage Point village.

"You couldn't imagine the speed with which the fire was moving. From the time it started in Smiths, and roared up over the top of the hill, till the time it reached Akuna Bay, only 35 minutes had gone. Cottage Point Road had been cut, and we were isolated."

The alert had been given at 4.30pm on that dreadful Friday. Within an hour, a fire front that stretched from the head of the home bay to Little Botany Bay was bearing down on houses and the club property.

The brigade's report on the fire details the superhuman efforts that were made to save the Point.

"Two back-up brigades were finally able to get through to the Point and with their assistance it was decided to protect Cottage Point with a back-burn. This required a fire break to be cut by hand right across the Point. Brigade Headquarters gave us one hour to complete the task. A path down to earth, and one metre wide was firstly cut from Cottage Point Road down to Notting Lane then from Cottage Point Road to the end of Cowan Drive. This was done with brush-cutters, macleod tools (a type of rake-come-hoe) and axes. The bush in areas above Cowan Drive was virtually impenetrable but, a lot of blisters later, the task was completed. This fire line can still be seen amongst the embers.

"Back-burning operations commenced from this line toward the fire just as the sun was setting (what sun could be seen through the smoke).

"During the night the wind dropped, and back-burning operations continued all night and into the next day.

"Saturday morning brought the same horrendous weather conditions - hot, dry, with



*Murray Campbell accepts a cheque for \$11,000 from Vice Commodore David Argles.*

the wind picking up - but what was worse, the wind turned to the south. Not a cool southerly change, but a hot, dry southerly. The fire now approached the Point with all its fury, spotting ahead over our back-burn. Saturday midday there was a short respite. The fire on the plateau above Cowan Drive was controlled and damped down, a bite for all, a change out of black overalls and a bit of 'shut eye', check the gear and re-fill the tanker.

"Then all hell broke loose. The wind gusted to extremes, a fireball went down the creek in Cottage Point Bay and was fought by brigade members with a portable pump in a boat and standing shoulder deep in water, holding hoses.

"The plateau above Cowan Drive re-ignited, spread down towards Cowan Drive and threatened houses on the lower side.

"The front in Cowan Drive was controlled with the portable pump using the water progressively from the tanks accessible from the road. Two brigade members were stationed there, backed up by a team of residents and a couple of outside helpers.

A quick clearing around the telephone station before it was too hot to handle, then the brigade retreated to the station and backed the tanker down Notting Lane.

"By dusk the wind dropped again, and from the tanker we were able to wet down thoroughly all the threatened area. We were all exhausted but maintained a regular watch all night.

"The point across Coal and Candle Creek (Green Point) was still alight. Large trees were still burning around Cottage Point and many were heard crashing to the ground through the night.

"Sunday saw Cottage Point in a relatively safe position. However, ash was still falling in large, hot pieces from the fires around us.

While the area around Cottage Point had nothing left to burn, the unburnt areas within the Point right up to the houses were still tinder dry and any spark from the fires that still surrounded us across both Smiths and Coal and Candle Creeks could be a real problem.

*Cottage Point Bushfire Brigade members: Back row: Jan Garskie, Peter Clark, Middle row: Dave Allen, Marisa Balsdon, Vicki Hendy, Murray Campbell, Keith Mackay, John Russell, Ian Mitchell, Front: Karina Simmit, Jodie Wexham, Malcolm Ellis, Grant Humes*



"Gradually we became aware that the danger has passed, and finally it rained."

It was a very sober, but relieved, group of fire-fighters and residents who came to the "thank-you" spread KMYC turned on for everyone some weeks later, when the brigade accepted a cheque for \$11,000 collected from those whose property they had saved. It had been a shattering experience for many.

"I've been involved in rescue work for the past 15 years, with the Coast Guard, and later with the brigade," Dave Allen said, "but this was the first time I had been really frightened. You can't walk away from a fire - but you can swim if your boat sinks."

"But if you're surrounded by flames, and it's hard to breathe because the fire has taken all the oxygen from the air, you wonder how anyone is going to get in to help you. You eye the tanker and wonder how much water is left, because if there's none you're just going to crisp up in the next few minutes like a potato chip."

"If I never have to fight another fire, it will be soon enough."

"Mind you, if it hadn't been for the residents, we wouldn't have made it. It was the sheer person-power of the team effort that got us through without one bit of property loss."

Around Cottage Point area the wildlife loss was estimated at about 90%. There were no bird sounds. The lyrebird habitat on the high side of our turn-off to Cottage Point was a black desolation, and there had never been any hope for the Akuna Bay koala colony, or the few who lived a couple of kilometres back up the road from the club. The only large tree to survive on the hillside facing the club pontoons was the one that held the two straggly nests built by the bay's resident eagles, but there was no sign of them.

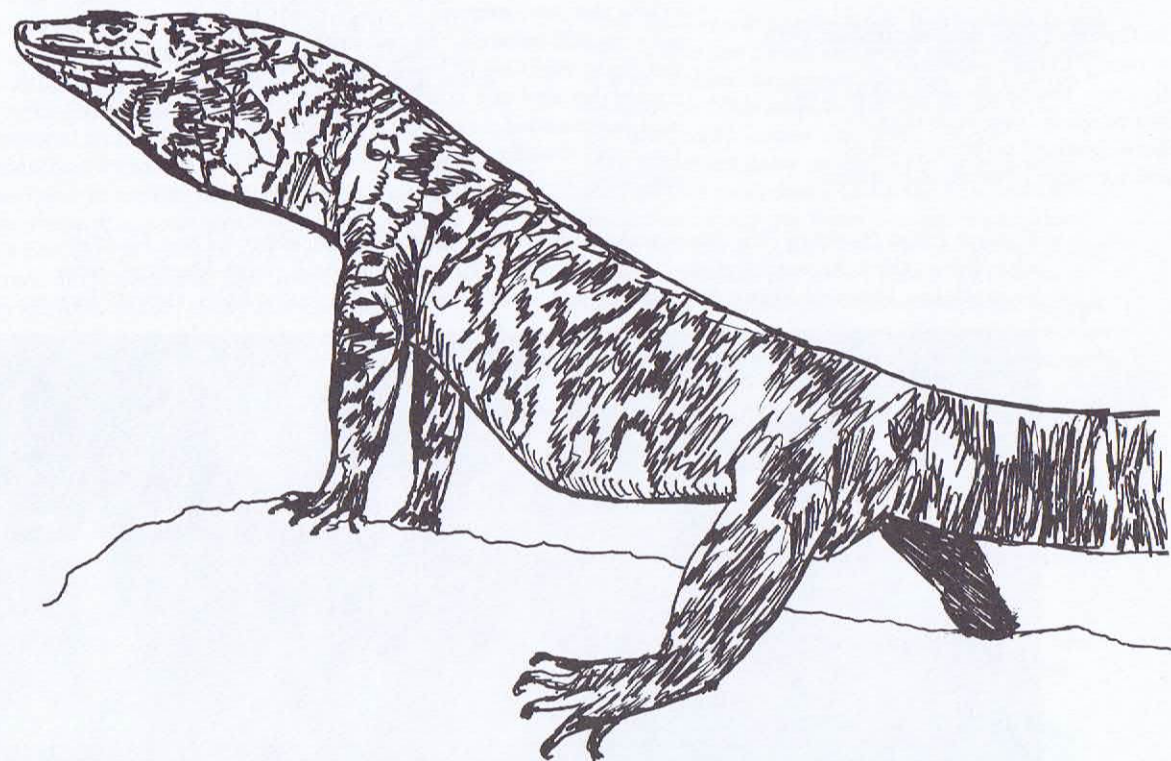
However, there was reason to hope.

The following Tuesday, when all that was left of the danger was the acrid smell of smouldering timber, a brown shape flashed down our front pontoon, leaped in one movement into Kerry Jones' boat, into the cabin and under a pillow, with only the tip of a tail hanging out. A young possum had found refuge.

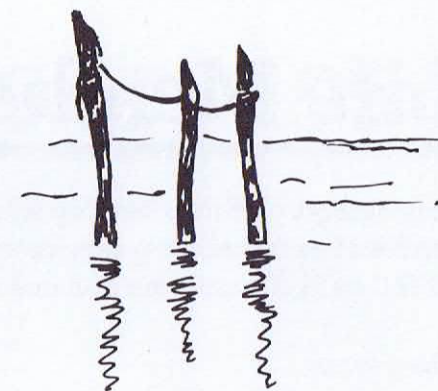
"We couldn't persuade it to eat or drink," Kerry said. "It was in a state of shock. We took it down to Bobbin Head and gave it to the WIRES depot, and they released it to the wild when it had recovered."

In August, the eagles nested again.

And the terror of Mushroom Bay - the very large goanna who is wont to share club members' barbecue picnics - has reappeared, to look fixedly at the prospect of steak and sausage sailing towards his domain.



## In conclusion....



In conclusion I would assure members that our club is at present held in the highest esteem by other yacht clubs. This has been attained over the years and can only be maintained by the individual and collective efforts of us all.

This is a great club.

Let us work diligently for it and strive to further enhance its prestige, and help each other to make new and better friendships within our own and kindred clubs.

George Alchin  
Commodore  
Kuring-gai Motor Yacht Club

30 May 1960