

Bilgewater

June 2023



*The sailing season may have finished, but still some nice days to be out there
Alan Macdonald on 'Signs of Life' – contemplating fish and life*





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| | | |
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*Our first and foremost objective is to encourage and support
safe family sailing – both cruising and racing*

Commodore's Comment

I would like to start my comment by thanking all of you who attended this years prize giving. It is always enjoyable to finish the season in this way.

We are now entering the quiet part of the year, but there is still plenty of sailing to be had. I would like to encourage all members to get involved in some of the winter sailing that is on offer at various clubs around the place. Winter sailing tends to have a slightly higher focus on racing and less on cruising, so it is a good place to hone some of your skills. Some of the options that are available are:

- BOPTYS winter series. The dates do vary a bit (often due to other events), but generally these races take place on the first Sunday of the month between May and September.
- Ngaroto run the John Dixon memorial regatta for trailer yachts. This is a two day event that usually takes place in July or August (need to wait for all the duck shooting to finish). Keep an eye out for more info about this years event.
- Winter Keeler racing at Pine harbour. A few of our keeler skippers compete in this series and they are often on the lookout for crew.

Last month we took 'Ghost Train' down to Rotoiti for the start of the winter series. However things didn't quite go to plan. The weekend started with us dropping the boat off at the compound before heading to Lake Tarawera with the family. We did the walk to the hot water beach followed by a ride back on the water taxi. This was a great way to spend a winters day and I would recommend it if you are looking for a day out with the family. We then went back to Rotoiti and spent a cold, wet, and dark evening rigging the boat ready for racing on Sunday.

The weather on Sunday morning was a blustery northerly with regular rain squalls (yummy). I backed the boat in, leaving Nick holding a bow and stern rope while I parked the trailer. Then disaster struck! A big gust grabbed the stern of the boat and ripped the rope out of Nick's hands. The boat swung around and smashed into the jetty on the other side of the boat ramp. This punched a fist sized hole in the side of the boat. So it was back on the trailer, derig in the rain, and head home to do some fixing!!! Not how we hoped the day would go. A lesson was learnt (help tie the boat to the jetty before parking the trailer).

Luckily it was a reasonably simple repair and we are all set to go this weekend for the next round of the series!

This month is our AGM where I will be stepping down as Commodore. These last three years have been challenging and enjoyable. Covid has definitely been a defining feature of my time as Commodore. Navigating the constantly changing landscape of rules (particularly regarding gatherings) has been challenging. We have also been navigating other changes, particularly around the rules for clubs like ours and the rules regarding safety of events.

I am hugely grateful to the other members of the committee (and a few members outside of the committee who have stepped up). Not long into my term I had a change of employment which reduced the amount of time and energy I had to spare. So this job would not have been possible without the help of others.

Our club is in a really good position. We have a good number of active members. The trailer yacht fleet continues to be healthy and it has been great to see the rise of the numbers of small keelers. What next, could it be multihulls!?!?!?

James

COMING UP – OUR AGM

The Waikato Yacht Squadron AGM

Tuesday 27 June 2023 – 7:30pm at Hamilton Yacht Club

Details of our upcoming AGM were emailed out to members on 25 May and we do encourage you to come along. Assemble from 7pm for a start at 7.30pm.

But have you considered being nominated for the Squadron Committee? Our Squadron Committee has a very positive vibe. It is also a great way to give back to the organisation that is the catalyst for so much of our sailing fun and camaraderie. It would be great to have at least one or two of our ladies on the Committee. You don't have to live in the Waikato as we have zoom facilities for remote attendance as necessary.

SAD NEWS



In Memory of an Irreplaceable First Mate

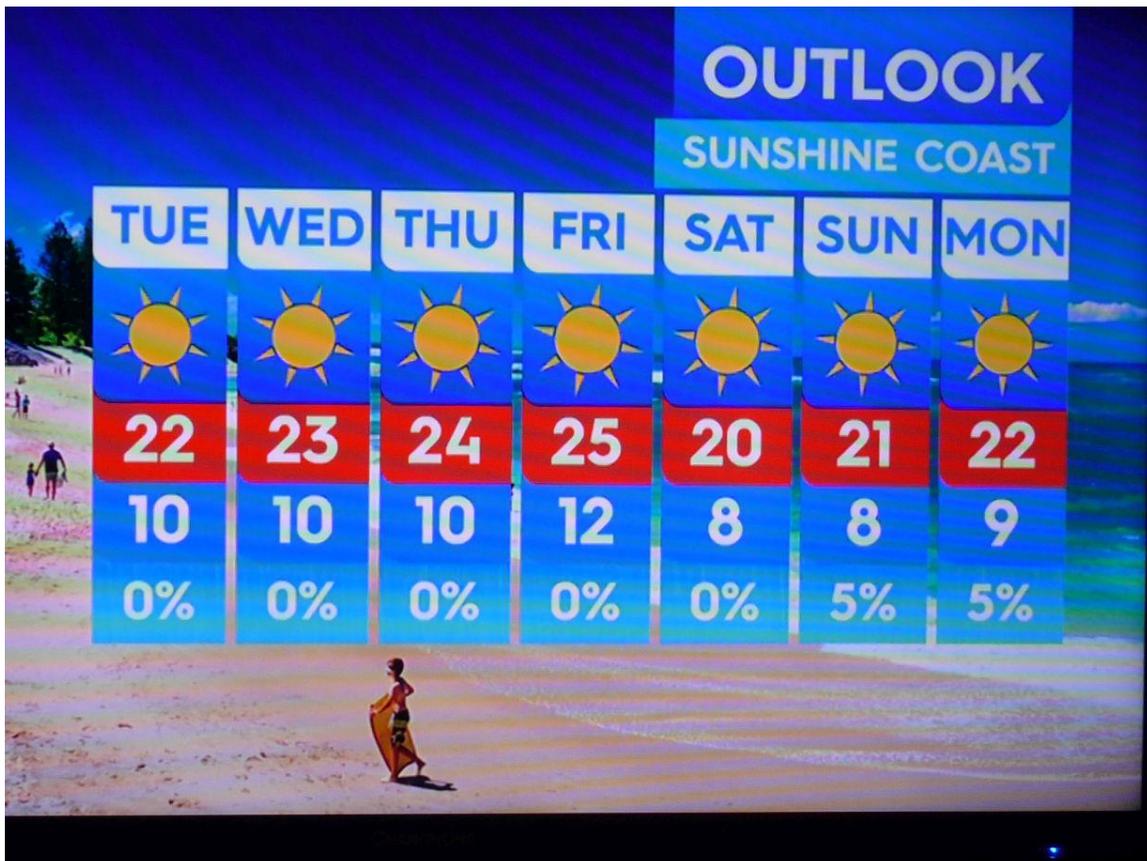
Doreen Ann Pasco

18 August 1942 to 24 May 2023

Around the Fleet

With our sailing season having come to an end, there isn't much to report from around the fleet this month.

Our annual escape to Australia for winter is now well underway and with very few news stories and photos coming in from our members I thought I should include a photo from over here. So out came my camera and I wondered what I should take a photo of – ah, I know; how about the weather map from TV tonight.



It's a bit cooler than usual for over here, and of course the sailing here isn't anywhere near as good as the Hauraki Gulf, so we'll be back

Despite the NZ winter rapidly approaching, it's been good to hear that some of our members have managed to be out sailing in the Hauraki Gulf on some nice sunny days over the past few weeks.

James Hepburn has also been sailing in the Rotoiti winter series. Having given us a really good training session on undertaking repairs to our boat hulls at a recent Nog 'n Natter, it seems he was so inspired that he needed another little project to work on. Yes, you guessed it, having fixed the hole in his Cherry's hull a few month's ago, he decided to have a re-run, but this time on Ross 780 'Ghost Train'.

As mentioned in his Commodore's comment, rather than taking on another boat, this time he decided to have a go at the Rotoiti jetty.



Just a simple job for our boat repair expert James

This month has also seen Nigel and Christine Lancaster sprucing up their Davidson 35 'Passing Fancy'.



'Passing Fancy' looking good



*A bunch of our young owners out on the water on a lovely sunny day in mid-May
(Young 77's that is)*



*And what would sailing be
without having the skipper along!
See if you can guess which one is
the skipper*

ANNUAL PRIZEGIVING DINNER AND CELEBRATION OF OUR SAILING SEASON

Our annual prizegiving dinner and celebration of the 2022/23 sailing season was held on 23 May 2023 at The Boundary Bar and Restaurant at Tamahere, Hamilton.



This season's prize winners were:

TRAILER YACHT CHAMPIONSHIP RACE SERIES

| Race | Open Winner (based on NZTYA boat rating) | Handicap Winner (Halsail handicap system) |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Rocky Bay Race | David Reffin Young 11 'Barometer Soup' | James Hepburn Ross 780 'Ghost Train' |
| Ponui Race | Flip Rayner Gazelle 'Escargot' | Greg Morgan Young 6 'Young Gem' |
| Hooks Bay Race | Greg Morgan Young 6 'Young Gem' | Greg Morgan Young 6 'Young Gem' |
| Motuihe Race | Flip Rayner Gazelle 'Escargot' | Wayne Johnstone Joker 820 'Falkor' |
| Tarahiki Race | James Hepburn Ross 780 'Ghost Train' | James Hepburn Ross 780 'Ghost Train' |
| Coromandel Race | Race cancelled due to the weather | |

Trailer Yacht Open Champion 2022/23 - James Hepburn, Ross 780 'Ghost Train'

Trailer Yacht Handicap Champion 2022/23 - Flip Rayner, Gazelle 'Escargot'

TRAILER YACHT NIGHT RACE

Winner - Chris Martin, Noelex 25 'Suzie'

TRAILER YACHT ROUND THE BUOYS RACE SERIES

Winner - Chris Martin, Noelex 25 'Suzie'

KEELERS

Just one race completed – the Hooks Bay Race. Winner – Bryan O'Brien, Hanse 370e 'Audrey'

SPECIAL AWARDS

Participation Awards

The Participation Awards, one for trailer yachts and one for keelers, go to members who have been outstanding participants in Squadron events and Squadron life in general during the season.

Participation Award - for Trailer Yachts



The Trailer Yacht Participation Award this year goes to **Alex and Jenny Ross** sailing MacGregor 26x 'Amethyst'. Fairly new to sailing, Alex and Jenny have participated in every Squadron event they could and have probably clocked up more cruising hours during the season than any other members. Very determined to finish every race, despite being caught in an adverse tide in one race they still completed the course unconcerned about finishing several hours after the previous boat. They came on the Great Barrier cruise and then decided to stay another week. We've also enjoyed Alex's Re-live tracker sailing videos and Jenny's Facebook page contributions. Though living in Auckland, they have made the effort to come to many of our Tuesday evening Nog 'n Natter events. Unfortunately they couldn't attend the prize giving as they were in Australia.

Participation Award - for Keelers



The Keeler Participation Award this year goes to **Anton Post**. Starting the season off with Nova 28 'Manutai', Anton and his family ended the season with Farr 1020 'Perpetual Motion'. Also fairly new to sailing, and very keen, Anton has participated in almost everything to do with the Squadron whether on or off the water, despite a few leaks and dramas with his boats along the way. He has also provided some great feedback to the committee which among other things has seen us develop our 'Have a Go' fun races and other events to better cater for our newer families. With his keeler moored at Kawakawa Bay, Anton has often helped the trailer yachts with their launching/retrieving on windy days.

Rock Hopper Award

This award goes to the person/boat that had the most meritorious coming together with the seabed. And this year, despite quite strong competition, the award goes to **Bryan O'Brien**, sailing Hanse 370e 'Audrey'.



Bryan and 'Audrey' ran aground on a rock on the NW side of Rotoroa island. There is a port marker there but the reef extends further out from that mark. 'Audrey' was stuck hard and fast about 100 metres from the port marker. Bryan called Coastguard but another yacht came across and picked up his main halyard and pulled 'Audrey' over so she floated free. Word has it that Coastguard then arrived but couldn't find them as by then they had been pulled free. A worthy recipient of this year's award!

Most Improved Skipper Award and the John and Lynne Pollard Trophy



Flip Rayner made huge gains as a skipper this year having previously been a mid-fleet sailor. Having our YNZ Regional Development Manager aboard for the Ponui Race showed him how his sails could be trimmed for maximum speed and upwind pointing. Having won the open in the Ponui race he went on to win the Motuihe Race open and even the Gulf Classic TY60. An outstanding effort and definitely our most improved skipper.



Flip also picked up the John and Lynne Pollard Trophy. This award, voted on by members, goes to the person who has provided the greatest help to other individual members. Not only has Flip helped many new members in his role as Membership Coordinator but it seems every week he has been helping Anton – diving under the hull to find a leak, getting the boat up on the hard for temporary repairs, then getting Anton’s new keeler into the Kawakawa Bay breakwater for rudder repairs and much more.

Junior Sailor Champions - Boy and Girl



Our Champion Girl is **Alyssa Reeve**. Alyssa’s sailing skills and confidence have progressed in leaps and bounds this year. She can often be found helping Mum and Dad’s Joker 820 ‘Aperitif’ including helping the night race with Dad as crew. As the family now also has a Noelex 22, the word from Alyssa is that “she’ll be my boat”. Expect to see Alyssa out helping the Noelex 22 soon!



Our Champion Boy is **Nick Hepburn**. Nick’s progress this year has included Optimist and P Class sailing plus often helping Dad’s Ross 780 ‘Ghost Train’ or Pelin Cherry ‘Wai-Ula’. Under Dad’s watchful eye he has also been learning to undertake fibreglass repairs – including lots of sanding. (Note: The Hepburn family seems to breed boats).

Squadron Supporter Award



The Squadron Supporter Award goes to a person who supports what we do, and often what their partners do in terms of sailing, despite at times finding it challenging. They soldier on when they would perhaps rather be doing something that is personally less demanding. This year’s Squadron Supporters Award goes to **Susan Ings** of H28 keeler ‘Rakiura’. Susan we know you don’t always find sailing easy, but we want to recognise your support, your contribution, and how much you have advanced. Well done!

The Wooden Spoon



Always keenly contested, this year The Wooden Spoon goes to **Luke McGregor** of Davidson 28 keeler 'Cortez'. When he came up to receive the award, no one could initially remember what he did. Luke said "was it when we ran aground in Wreck Bay?" No, we didn't even know about that! The answer was that Luke for months had been wondering why his battery charge never seemed to last. He was always having to run the motor to top it up. Then one day when looking at the solar panels, he noticed that one of the panels was wired positive on the panel, to positive on the solar controller, the other was wired negative on the solar panel to positive on the solar controller. This whole time his two panels had been fighting each other, putting in 0 volts!

*Trailer Yacht Handicap Champion
Flip Rayner
(pictured here also with the Gulf
Classic Trophy)*



*Trailer Yacht Open Champion
James Hepburn*



And a great evening was had by all





The Waikato Yacht Squadron Legacy Keeps On

Being a fairly new member to the Squadron (5 years), I am continually surprised by the number of people I come across in the sailing world who are part of the Squadron's legacy.

Another came to light this week as I read the latest briefings from Yachting New Zealand (YNZ). In case any of you missed it, I was given permission by YNZ to reproduce the article in Bilgewater. It is an interview of one of the Squadron's earlier members, Jon Henry. Here's the article in full.



Spotlight on: Jon Henry

YNZ Briefings 31 May 2023

Over the past two decades, Jon Henry has become synonymous with short-handed sailing in New Zealand.

The 62-year-old father of two is one of the most long-standing volunteers at the Short Handed Sailing Association of New Zealand, having served as the race director for the last four Round North Island races, and SSANZ vice-chairman and committee member - all while running a large dairy farm in the Waikato and battling ill health.

In the latest of our regular feature shining the spotlight on the country's yachting community and the people at its heart, we talk to Henry about his passion for offshore sailing, how the sport has evolved over the years and knowing his decisions could be the difference between a competitive race and catastrophe

Tell us about your introduction to sailing

I grew up on a farm in north Waikato – the same farm I still live on. We converted it from a sheep and beef to a dairy farm back in the late 90s. I have someone who looks after it now, which allows me a bit more time for my other job.

The first sail I ever went for was aged 7 in Mercury Bay while staying with some friends at their bach. They had a small two-man dinghy and I got hooked straight away. From there I progressed to a Farr 3.7 and much later we bought a trailer yacht 6000. I had that for 12 years, raced with Waikato Yacht Squadron and won the club champs a few times.

My wife Carol and I started cruising a bit with our young family and in about 2000 we bought a Carpenter 29 and sailed out of Pine Harbour. I was on the race committee with Waikato Yacht Squadron for about five years and ended up as chairman.

How did you get into offshore sailing?

We sold the Carpenter and bought a Beale 38 called Danaide and around the same time I met a guy called Paddy Green who had a Farr 1104 and he wanted to do some offshore racing. We did the 2005 Auckland-Suva race together, after which we decided to get into a bit of two-handed sailing in the Beale.



Jon Henry and Paddy Green won the 2008 Round North Island race on board Danaide - a career highlight. Photo / Supplied

In 2008, after four Round White Island Races and a few years of SSANZ Triple Series, we had a go at the Round North Island. We won the race on ORC - just enough for us to start thinking we knew what we were doing.

And you didn't?

In the next RNI, in 2011, we had gear failure and ended up turning around. We had overhauled the steering system on the boat and one of the bearings that we replaced fell out after going down the west coast.

Only about half the fleet got around that year – two boats lost their masts, one had a keel problem, and another guy broke his back off New Plymouth. We were on leg two from Mangonui up to the North Cape when we heard on the radio there had been a massive earthquake in Christchurch. A few of the southern boats pulled out in Wellington to be with their families.

You didn't sail in another RNI after that?

No. Paddy and I did the two-handed Round New Zealand Race in 2012 and after that, we felt we had achieved everything we set out to do together.

I had been on the RNI committee since 2009 and got more involved with the management side of things. I was asked to be the race officer and race director for the 2014 RNI, which I was really pleased with. My goal for that race was to get every boat that started across the finish line and that's what happened. I've been in charge since then - 2017, 2020 and this year.

Was it a difficult decision to shorten the 2023 editions from four legs to three, skipping the planned stopover in Napier, following the devastation from Cyclone Gabrielle?

It was one of the tougher calls to make but, at the same time, also a very logical decision. The toughest thing probably was getting enough information to make the decision.

What's the best part of the job?

The camaraderie between shorthanded sailors is something you don't see anywhere else. A boat will have an issue and there will be a sailmaker or a rigger on another boat that'll jump on board and do whatever they can to help. The competition on the water is world-class but the camaraderie off it is unrivalled.

And the most challenging?

Often competitors don't understand that I don't have a dog in the fight. To me it makes no difference who wins - my role as race officer is to make sure it's fair and safe and we stick to the rules.

At SSANZ we have a philosophy that it's the skipper's decision to race and unless it would be grossly unsafe, we'll fire the gun. But we make it very clear at the briefings that it's ultimately

your decision, and if you think the conditions are potentially above you, you shouldn't race. That's just good seamanship.

It's a fine balance but if you keep lowering the standard of when you will race, you end up with lighter boats that are less capable because they're the only ones that can compete on light days. And you also end up with a fleet of sailors that don't know how to handle conditions like that.

We want everyone to get round safely, but part of that is actually not making all the decisions for the skippers.

And if we make a decision that's wrong, we encourage people to protest the race committee because that way we can learn from it and make sure it doesn't happen again. Sometimes, race committees are a bit inclined to put themselves above the competitors, whereas we have all been competitors and we all will be competitors again.

Has it changed much over your time being involved?

It certainly has. We all cut our teeth on 30-something footers offshore and having to deal with a situation that we found ourselves in. Nowadays, the young sailors that are coming through are jumping on big flash race boats and not making any decisions.

It's a great leveller, shorthanded sailing. You look at the size of the spinnakers they had on the likes of 'Equilibrium' and 'Wired' during the last Round North Island - it's a real art getting those big sails down shorthanded.

Short-handed sailing is a lot less about the gun you bring to the fight. It's more a sailors' competition than a dollar competition.

What are some of the highlights from your time in sailing?

In 2014 we bought a Dufour 525 called Ma'ara and sailed it back from Greece. Not many Kiwis get the opportunity to sail across the Atlantic and we ended up having quite a few friends getting in touch. It ended up taking about 12 months with more than 30 different crew.

From a cruising point of view that was a definite highlight but winning the 2008 RNI is probably at the top of the list.

What are your future plans?

My goal as race director for SSANZ is to be fully replaceable and over the past few years I've got a group of people involved in race management. I stepped back from being race manager and have just been race director since 2017.

I am also now a safety inspector.

I haven't done much short-handed sailing for a while as my health hasn't been that good for the last four or five years. It's a type of leukaemia. It won't kill me but it weakens my immune system. I am in remission at the moment and Carol and I are planning a trip quite soon.



Jon Henry now owns a Dufour 525 called Ma'ara which he sailed across the Atlantic. Photo / Supplied



I was at Orams' hardstand at Westhaven recently and spotted 'Wired', (as referred to in Jon's interview) so had to take a photo. Imagine racing that two handed in the RNI – and winning.
Bilgewater Ed.

WINTER'S A GREAT TIME FOR READING SAILING BOOKS

As my time as Bilgewater Editor draws to a close with this edition, I'd like to recommend some winter reading books for those of us who love cruising under sail.

Several years ago when sailing back from the Bay of Islands I had to call into Whangarei to have my mainsail repaired. While moored at the courtesy pontoon at the Whangarei Town Basin, an American came alongside in his inflatable dinghy and we had a great chat for half an hour. He was interested in my boat, where I'd come from and so on. It transpired that he (in his sixties) had lived on a yacht for all but a small number of years, and he and his wife were on their fourth circumnavigation. I hadn't asked his name but he gave me his card as he motored away.

It wasn't until I was back home that I discovered he (Captain Fatty Goodlander) was the author of a good number of sailing books and an editor of Cruising World magazine.

I have since purchased and read several of his books and I would like to commend them to you. He is a person who has vast lived sea experience. He has lived aboard much of the time on a shoe string budget, and so can tell you the much less costly ways to have a seaworthy cruising yacht.

He also had one of his boats (the liveaboard home he shared with his wife and daughter) sink during the peak of Cyclone Hugo in the Caribbean while they were aboard, when a runaway 70 foot schooner dragged anchor onto them. The story of the sinking as recounted in one of his books "Chasing the Horizon" is both compelling and very moving. As their own multiple anchors then pulled free he says "I was steering my boat in 200 knots of wind to her death".....

Three of his other books I have read are:

Cruising Boat Basics – Hints, tips and tricks for a fabulous life afloat.

Creative anchoring - Everything a cruising sailor needs to know about anchoring, anchor gear and related skills.

Storm Proofing your Boat, Gear and Crew - Surviving a large storm aboard a small boat on a big ocean.

I have learnt a lot from his books. You can find out more and buy his books via his website. www.fattygoodlander.com

I will sign off my last Bilgewater edition with this great advice that was given to him by his father. Captain James Goodlander:

..... "Listen to the boat son. Ask the boat what she wants. Fools command ships, sailors guide them. A good boat is smarter than you'll ever be. The Art of Sailing is one of listening, asking, understanding. Never fight the boat, never attempt to beat the sea. Cooperate, learn from them."

Bilgewater Ed.

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