

Allara, written by Chris vonderBorch, November 2020

We built our first yacht in the late 1950's. It was a lovely 28 foot double-ender, a "Daydream" design wooden sloop, which we named "Allara". At least three other "Daydreams" were also built at about the same time, names by mutual agreement all beginning with "A" (Arete, Argana, Ariadne). Construction was by my brother Adrian and myself, and of course by our wonderful dad "Vondy", all carried out in our Torrens Park backyard. Launching was at the (then) South Australian Yacht Squadron (the Queen had not yet visited the premises to add the "Royal"). A young Barry Quin from Quin Marine was also there to help with rigging and launching. The auxiliary was a 5/7 horsepower "Blaxland Twin" petrol engine which never started in emergencies, thus honing our sailing skills; we could even sail, without power, right on to our Squadron mooring. We "blooded" Allara soon after launching, by winning (on handicap) the overnight race, the "Orontes Cup", during which we weathered a wild 50 knot front. This hit us complete with thunder and lightning, on a very dark night, as we rounded the Orontes Beacon. We discovered then that a reliable marine forecast, a self-draining cockpit, flares, a radio, life jackets and stanchions, workable reefing tackle, and safety harnesses would have been good ideas...but we were young and invincible! However, cruises to Kangaroo Island in subsequent years honed our sailing and navigation skills. Allara, I wonder where you are now; you were last seen years ago, in good shape, on Lake Alexandrina, with the Jarrah deadwood and cast-iron keel removed.