

This is the next in a long series of articles by Barry Allison recording some of the experiences and adventures of our many Senior Members of the Squadron. This is an abridged account of the extraordinary long association with the sea and the Squadron extracted from extensive notes written by Rick Halliday, who has been a Senior Member for 53 years.



No account of Rick's involvement with the Squadron would be complete without acknowledging the selfless actions of the crew of Trieste in November 2015 when he suffered a cardiac arrest while steering during the countdown to the start of an offshore race. The combined efforts of Tony Foster, Richard Watson, Blake Saville, Ian Roberts, Richard Rol and Peter Mooney saved his life by initiating and maintaining a long period of CPR.

Rick first started sailing at the age of 8 in a Cadet Dinghy with his older cousin at the Largs Bay Sailing Club. His principal function was as ballast or to swim ashore on light days to lighten ship. School holidays involved a voyage on the coastal ships being skippered by his father, and at this early age he learnt basic navigation, pilotage and some fundamental seamanship. There was no timetable for the coastal ships in those days and radio communications with Adelaide Radio were often sporadic, depending on atmospheric conditions. Other school holidays were spent drifting around the Port River, camping under a Cadet Dinghy on Torrens Island and catching crabs off the beach at Largs. Rick recalls riding his Malvern Star bicycle to Jenkins Street in the Port and peeking through the crack in Searles boatshed door where *Southern Myth* was being built. He never thought for a moment that one day he would own a similar yacht.

At aged 14 he became a mainsheet hand with Laurie Deacon in his heavyweight 12 square metre sharpie Aero and competed very competitively in State championships. Laurie Deacon and David Morphet later monopolised the racing. After a short period as crew with Jack Williams on his 6 metre

Judith Phil, he was lucky to join Rex Godfrey on his immaculate blue Tumlar *Unity*. There were six Tumlars racing at this time including Bob Stephens in *Zefir*, Helen and Margaret (Ullett) Thiem in *Venture*, and Tom Flint in *Zanet*. The Tumlar was a 28 foot long, narrow, double-ended wooden planked craft without self-draining cockpits and provided some interesting moments if the crew were not quick enough in baling with a bucket.

In the late sixties, the Jaffer brothers lent Rick their homemade plywood trimaran *Tarkari* for Saturday races. This 28 foot long craft had a wooden centre board of the size, shape, weight and hydrodynamic properties of a tombstone. In those days such craft were considered inappropriate for a Royal Squadron and were not allowed within the confines of the Squadron basin, but were moored on the shallow waters immediately west of the then lease. Fortunately Colin Haselgrove and Wilbur Tedmanson were able to persuade the then Committee to permit *Tarkari* to race on the basis that if, as expected, a trimaran imploded into shards of fractured plywood, there was more chance of picking up the crew if it was within the confines of a race course. This design was not particularly good at tacking in over 10 knots of wind. On one occasion it reached out of the pool into a fresh sea breeze towards the starting line. Instead of hardening up into the wind, it continued on a westerly course unresponsive to the helm and sped across the river until coming to a rapid halt on the breakwater sandbar. Chris Eaton promptly jumped over the side and pushed the main hull through the wind, jumped back aboard and the whole catastrophe was repeated as they set off once again, totally out of control but on a reciprocal course. Fortunately this took them directly back to their mooring which they managed to grab. The crew took prompt refuge in the Club bar and refused to move until closing time. During his late teens Rick joined the crew of *Cooroyba* with Colin Haselgrove, then the doyen of South Australian red wine makers. The keelboat sailing at this time included Jim Taylor's *Ingrid*, Norm Howard's *Southern Myth*, Alan Smith's *Cooinda*, Henry Wilken's *Tahuna*, Dick Fidock's *Kareelah*, David Judell's *Jedda*, Jim Polson's *Wyo*, *Gip* – now *Reprieve*, and of course *Yampl*, the first aluminium racing yacht in Australia and built by Ray Cauchi. Other prominent skippers included Jim Howell and Keith

Flint, and keelboat sailing blossomed in these years. *Cooroyba* was one of the most successful offshore yachts of her time and sailed to offshore and remote distant places, and competed in almost every race on the calendar when she was not away cruising.

The feature of the summer season was the now defunct Neptune Island race held on the January long weekend. This race required adequate provisioning, competent watch-keeping, a degree of endurance not found in the shorter Gulf races and the readiness to put up with bad weather. At times *Cooroyba* leaked through most seams and, as the youngest crew member, Rick reckons that he pumped most of both Gulfs through her more than once. Mock Sarah once caulked her from the inside whilst cooking a roast dinner with three veg. Rick considered himself fortunate in sailing with Colin who had incredible leadership skills and the ability to test a crew's ability to handle the sea and life in general. There were many offshore races when *Cooroyba* had no speed or distance logs and sometimes no charts. Courses were sailed with a magnetic compass and 'A grade' eyeballs. Distance was measured with a matchbox on the chart which equalled five nautical miles. Rick worked with Colin in updating the cruising notes originating from his vast knowledge of the North Coast of Kangaroo Island and both Gulfs. Shipmates over those years included Bob Haselgrove, Don Haselgrove, Mark Tostevin, Pud Powell, and occasionally Fred Neil and Colin Todd. It was considered to be an honour to be a crew member of one of the leading offshore yachts, with loyalty to the ship being paramount. The summer was spent sailing and much of the winter was spent maintaining the ship – often on the slip at the 'Royal Searles Yacht Club'.

During Rick's university years, he helped Terry Dixon deliver his new Nicholson 32 *Lorelei* to his home. She was the first fibreglass keelboat in South Australia and created a lot of interest. She competed in the Queenscliff to Port Lincoln race with Terry Dixon, Rex Godfrey, Peter Lauridsen, Les Sampson and Rick as crew. A broken boom off Cape Bridgewater put an end to this race.

The 1970s to the 1990s were boom times for yachting at the Squadron. The economy was good and there were half a dozen or so yacht builders and sail makers active in the State. The cash economy was in full swing with new yachts being launched almost weekly. The Squadron enjoyed

a monopoly as the CYCSA had not yet made any impact. In 1972 Dick Fidock, with whom Rick had sailed and raced against, introduced him to Dick Cavill. Dick had recently had Swarbricks build and comprehensively outfit the S&S 34 *Morning Mischief*, a design which was considered the ultimate for smallish ocean racing yachts at that time. A short telephone conversation with Dick took place –

"Do you sail boats and know people your age and experience who do?"

"Yes."

"Would you sail my boat for me? Do what you like with it. My secretary will send you a cheque book with \$10,000 in it to pay the bills. Let me have any trophies we win. I can't talk now – I'm leaving for Singapore in a few minutes."

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In the certain belief that this was some sort of prank, Ray Cauchi, Sam Bauer, David Borg, Geoff Semmens and Rick boarded the yacht and sailed her for a few weeks expecting a visit at any time from the police. Another phone call followed some time later – "Of course you will want to do the Sydney Hobart race."

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What followed was three years of fully-funded use of a highly competitive ocean racing yacht, including representing SA in the 1973 Southern Cross Cup series. *Morning Mischief* achieved a very creditable 5th in her division and 29th overall in an international field of about 100 yachts in the Hobart race that year. Pep Manthorpe was navigator for this series and achieved some remarkable navigation results without



Pronto

Satnavs and GPS. Rick was then – but no longer – the youngest person to skipper a yacht in that Sydney to Hobart race.

Rick will always be grateful for Dick Cavill's generosity in fully funding the whole exercise, which extended to flying wives and children to Hobart, including accommodation. It opened many doors, including a further 8 ½ Hobart races. They were first and fastest in the inaugural Sydney to Eden race – hence the half. Three more Southern Cross Cup races and three Australian ¾ ton (level rating) championships as navigator followed, and also as number two helmsman with the Tall Ships bicentennial race from Hobart to Sydney.

In 1975, Rick chartered the famous *Windward Passage* on behalf of the Squadron for the coming Southern Cross series as at that stage there were only two SA yachts entering – the series required three yachts from each competing team. A charter fee of two unopened bottles of Cooper's Ale and a book of Aussie Slang was incorporated into the charter document. There was a permanent crew of nine on *Windward Passage* which was supplemented by three local crew as part of the charter document – Ray Cauchi, David Borg and Rick Halliday. *Windward Passage* was a 73 foot ketch designed by Alan Gurney and constructed of three skins of laminated Sitka spruce. At 11 to 12 knots upwind she left an almost imperceptible wake and at 25 to 30 knots downwind a spectacular rooster tail followed. The race to Hobart that year consisted mainly of moderate to fresh north-easterlies. By the early afternoon of day 2 she was 20 miles abeam of Triabunna, with *Kialoa* a speck astern on the horizon. Then disaster struck with a cast padeye holding the return block to the main spinnaker halyard fracturing with a loud explosion. The spinnaker fell into the water astern like a fishing net and reduced speed back to 5 knots. The spinnaker pole – about a foot in diameter – sheared about 2 feet from the beak, leaving the fractured part dancing around the air carving large chunks of timber out of the foredeck. The whole crew took around 30 minutes to drag the shredded spinnaker over the aft pulpit, by which



Escapade

time *Kialoa* had flown past and went on to beat *Windward Passage* by 20 minutes and set the race record which lasted for more than 20 years.

The next adventure started with the purchase of Keith Adam's Spencer 30 *Cockatoo* and was renamed *Escapade*. After increasing the mast height by 2 feet and bolting a jarrah shoe to the bottom of the lead fin, Rick raced and cruised her for about 10 years, covering nearly 10,000 miles. *Escapade* went on to win five out of six consecutive State Championships against formidable competition including Keith Adams in *Peacock*, Roy Hambour and later Peter White in *Kaos*, Ian Moncrieff in *Pied Piper*, Brian Snowden in *Redback* and Chook Smith in *Rouseabout*.

Racing and cruising continued with *Pronto*, an Adams 12 with more emphasis on cruising. She has a fridge, a decent diesel engine and most importantly an anchor winch which works most of the time. Highlights have been three month-long cruises to the west coast of South Australia and a fourth with Patrick Hill and Steve Siebert on *Adagio*. *Pronto* was the only yacht to participate in the Matthew Flinders bicentenary re-enactment voyage from Petrel Bay on St Francis Island to a memorial service in Memory Cove in February 2002.

Rick has prepared a two volume guide to West Coast cruising for publication comprised of the extensive professional notes of his father, Pep Manthorpe, and of his own notes, charts and photographs.

Today, Rick has significantly reduced his yachting activities and is content to spend his time amusing or being amused by his grandchildren in his small motorboat. We wish him many more years of retirement.

