



ISSUE 2

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Welcome to the Classic Yacht Association of Australia's (CYAA) second newsletter! Whether you're the owner of a fully restored William Fife Gaff Cutter, or in the throes of renovating a Port Phillip Couta Boat, or simply enjoy messing about with beautiful yachts, you'll find something in this issue to enjoy.

So, what is a classic yacht? While it's impossible to be concisely definitive, our first yardstick is that she should be of a timeless design, probably from the pen of a renowned architect. She should be constructed from quality materials - and wood springs most obviously, but not exclusively, to mind. If she's been restored, then the renovations should be sympathetic to the spirit of the design. But most of all she should be loved, cared for, and sailed!

The CYAA's major commitment is to foster appreciation for, and encourage the sailing of, classic yachts. We aim to provide our members with an exciting program of events around Australia, with regular races, cruises and get-togethers. Through these events - and you'll find a calendar in each issue of our newsletter - we can promote the beauty and history of classic yachts to a wider audience, as well as sharing in the appreciation of the ownership, restoration, maintenance, and sailing of classic yachts.

It's our aim to become an active, high-profile force in the Australian yachting scene, representing the interest of lovers of classic yachts. To achieve this we need as much input from you, our members, as you can possibly spare. So please contact your State Rep with any ideas and suggestions for the kind of events and activities you think the CYAA should be involved in. And if you're not already a member - come and join us!

Happy Sailing!

"AORERE"

HISTROY

(with thanks to F.H. 'Bert' Ferris, RMYS Historian)

Currently being restored in Perth by Andrew Mason and Ed Van Beem.

Aorere, which is Maori for 'Flying Scud' was a beautiful clipper bowd yacht about 38ft overall, 7'10" beam with a draft of 5'9", a long bowsprit for jib and staysail, and a boom hanging over the counter stern about four feet.

She was built by a Mr. E.G. Phillips of St Kilda for Messrs Scott and Ames and launched 21st March 1898 to immediately go on a maiden voyage to Mornington some 30 miles down the coast. It has been said and recorded that Aorere was a Fife design, and although she shows many similarities to Fife's yachts, there is no proof of Fife being the designer.

For the 1901-1902 season she was sold to Dr Retallack, who appears to have only owned her for a short time as there is a result on 17/3/1904 of her winning an important race in the name of Dr. Hodgson. She was sold again for the 1907-08 season to another St Kilda Yacht Club member Mr A.C. (Bert) Watts, a wealthy Western Australian grazier and cattle station owner affectionately known as "Skipper Watts".

Aorere became his social racing and entertaining boat, being beautifully lined in French polished Australian red cedar with red plush cushions and furnishings, and she was always a treat to behold above and below decks.

Skipper Watts was a well known figure on Port Phillip and on the reintroduction of the Six Metre class at the Royal St Kilda Yacht Club, had built for the Northcote Cup Challenge 'Judith Pihl'.

Aorere in the meantime was skippered by Skipper Watts and Judith Pihl by champion 14 footer skipper H.C. (Mick) Brooke. When the Six Metre class broke up in 1937 due to a class dispute Judith Pihl was sold to Sydney. Mick Brooke then became full time skipper on Aorere.

It was about 1938 that Aorere, then fitted with a mast and sails retained from Judith Pihl, was entered in the 38 mile Williamstown to Geelong race. It was blowing 35-45 mph from the southwest with big seas. Immediately successful, Aorere tramped, or rather submarined her way through the fleet of great yachts, including "Acrospire IV" and "Eun-na-mara", and eventually gained line honours. It was a memorable feat to be talked about for years. Skipper Watt's was so delighted with Aorere's performance that he sent her plans to Fife in Scotland and asked to design a Marconi rig which was eventually put into Aorere.

On July 29th, 1943, Aorere was sold by the estate of the late A.C Watts to Russel Coutie of the Royal St Kilda Y.C. who retained her for a number of seasons. She was then on the register of Sandringham Y.C. and Royal Brighton Y.S. until purchased in 1948 by Royal Geelong Yacht Club member Ran McAllister.

Ran McAllister sailed Aorere with success in R.G.Y.C. events for a number of years winning the A class Aggregate in the 1949-50 season.

Aorere was sold again to a solicitor by the name of Hewison in the early fifties and again to Graham Gates in 1958, who enlarged the coachroof to its most recent shape. She was sold again to South Australia and little is known of her time there except that her last known owner was Vic Hutchison, who lived aboard for some time until ill health forced him ashore.

Aorere is thought to have been sent to Western Australia around 1987, and was purchased at auction in 1992 and taken out of the water for restoration. The old deck and superstructure were stripped off and the majority of ribs replaced before the hull was sold to Nicki King Smith and John Buchanan.

DESIGN

There has been some speculation that Aorere was designed by William Fife III, however there is no record of this in Fife's archives. Although there are many features of Aorere's design that indicate a Fife influence, there are several features that make it unlikely that Fife was the designer. It is much more likely that Aorere's design was based on features from several existing boats including both Fife and Logan designs.

The design is credited in Lloyds Register to A.L. Scott, one of the original owners. It is not known whether Scott was the actual designer, and if so whether he was a professional or amateur. The lines of the hull are certainly well

executed and fair, and are unlikely to have been drawn by an inexperienced designer.

The profile shape of Aorere is remarkably similar to that of Kelpie, an 1884 Fife design built in Sydney. The profile of Waitangi, an 1894 Logan design also shows a similar shape to the forefoot to Aorere, although Waitangi has longer, more gently sloping overhangs.

Aorere has flared bow sections and although the flare is subtle, Fife designs were typically convex in the forward sections. Similarly Aorere shows much more vee in the aft sections, while Fife typically had flatter sections under the counter and a firmer turn to the bilge aft. In plan view Aorere's lines are extremely symmetrical fore and

aft and it is likely that the helm would be very well balanced at high angles of heel as a result, but that by modern standards her center of buoyancy would be too far forward.

As a result of the change in rules Aorere did not have a particularly outstanding racing career, although the successes she did have illustrate that she was a fast boat.

Aorere is also of interest as she is typical of the yacht designs of the 1890's. She is one of the last of the deep, narrow, heavy displacement yachts of the late Victorian era, with yachts built only a year or two later being radically different in design.

For further information on "Aorere" contact Andrew Mason.



Aorere in the late 1920's