

Member Profile

Allan McDonald

Cathryn's skipper is a real stalwart of the Squadron. If you want something done without fuss, a guest taken for a sail, or some practical advice then Allan McDonald is your man. But he is also skilled at sea. Would you like to try South Neptune in a trailer sailer? ...Allan did.

Allan cut his sailing teeth on a plywood Hartley 21 at Pt Vincent Sailing Club when he was managing the Bank of Adelaide at Warooka on York Peninsula. He gutted and rebuilt it, tacking 2'6" on the end. He sailed that Hartley 21+2 for 15 years. 'We sailed *Catriona* in Streaky Bay when we lived there,' says Allan, 'and towed her to Port Vincent for holidays and Easter. *Catriona* still sails out of the Garden Island Yacht Club.'

Later, sailing out of Largs Bay and Port Adelaide Sailing Clubs, Allan built the trailer sailer *Skye*, a water ballasted Young 7.8.

In the Trailer Sailer Association of SA, Allan was secretary, then president. His contribution to TSASA was such that he was awarded Life Membership. 'Trailer sailers allowed us to go many places we didn't have time for otherwise' says Allan, referring to the rigours of a working life.

'We towed *Skye* to Streaky Bay and launched with Lloyd Cushway and his Timpani 620, *Lorelei*. We worked our way up the coast to Smoky Bay and then out to the Franklin Islands where the tiger snakes get fat on mutton birds, thence to Nuyts Archipelago of legendary Lilliput fame.'

'Four of us, including Lloyd again, took the boats to the Whitsundays for 3 months; and we sailed to KI annually. They were wonderful trips.'

The yearn to build a bigger boat resulted in *Cathryn*, the keel boat that took 4 years to build at home. She now resides in berth I15 at the Squadron and races and cruises frequently.

Allan explains: 'We race consistently for I have a magnificently loyal crew. Helen and Phil Moody have been great and now that they have their own keeler, *Magic Beach*, we cruise in company. Geoff Beacham has taken real ownership of *Cathryn*. It's Geoff who takes the sheets home to wash and is always there to sail and assist with maintenance. Andrea Freeborn, Sue Buckley and Anne Bisset are also great crew. They've all made *Cathryn*!'

The late Alan Rice once asked Allan of *Cathryn*, 'Are you going to break ice with this boat?' And she is strong. At

31', a Seaflyer of hard chine plywood construction, she is cold moulded from the bottom chine down, with sheet ply above. The cabin top and deck is strip planked. All is fibre glassed and epoxy coated.

Strong enough to go out to The Neptunes? 'Well yes, I did that with Ray Partridge 5 years ago. It's deep water there and with a swell running we stayed just long enough to walk up to the lighthouse then hot footed back to Memory Cove. Ray had been before, in his 26' Stiletto *Ladybird*. His wife, two kids and the dog went too.'

Allan spent the last twenty years of his working life at Glasscraft Marine, an

asset when his hobby was building boats. Now retired, Allan simply wants to keep sailing. He praises his crew for *Cathryn*'s success. But somehow I think the generous and calm spirit that exudes from AMcD, his dedication to sailing and fun, and his raft of deep seated skills attracts that sort of loyalty.

BELOW: Cathryn races in Summer, Winter and Twilight Series
Photo: Langdon Hamlyn

