

Some Yachts Relevant to Glenelg

Magic

This celebrated old cutter survived until wrecked at Cape Cassini, Kangaroo Island on 3 April 1957.

19 June 1922

A WELL-KNOWN YACHT

Under the heading 'Australia's yachting History', *The Harbour*, a Sydney magazine, contains the following reference to the genesis of what has long been one of the best-known yachts in South Australia...

Nereid, which between the seasons of 1866 and 1873 had sailed in 23 races and won 15, carrying the aggregate prize money of £555, had been sold as a pearler, when Mr Fairfax transferred his flag to the *Magic*... The great event of the '73-'74 season was the launching of Mr Alfred Fairfax's *Magic* at Langford at Millers Point. It was so long since anything in her class had been built in Sydney, that her appearance was looked for with the greatest interest...

Magic's tonnage by the club's measurement was 28 tons, her length from stemhead to taffrail 55 ft, and from stem to sternpost 48 ft by 12 ft beam. Her cabin was 6 ft high, and she also possessed two staterooms hardly less lofty. She was built of wood carefully selected by Langfords, who were excellent judges of timber; her sails were from Laphornes, while her spars, fittings and other rigging were by White of Cowes. Her ballast when she left the yard was 12 tons of lead, but another six tons was added later.

The Anniversary Regatta of '75 was based on the best programme for years...

She was sailed to Port Adelaide in 1894, where she was first owned by William Russell. As Official Measurer he recorded her LWL as 48 ft 4 in, sail area 2801.45 sq ft and rated her at 23 tons. As a fishing boat her draft was 9 ft.

Magic was never much of a racing craft, but was notable for her local cruises and the convivial companionship of the partnership of William Russell and Magnus Wald. An extract from the published obituary of Manus Wald conveys this.

Mr WG Randall, whose yachting yarns published in *The Saturday Journal* in 1924 attracted widespread interest, said:— 'Magnus Wald (Mag always to old friends) has discharged port dues and crossed the bar 'outward bound'. 'Mag' and myself were yachting friends for more than 40 years. A bright, genial, lovable fellow, he was. Whether grafting at the winch, a long scope of anchor chain out, and *Magic* dipping bowsprit into a short sea before the anchor broke out, or dragging at throat halliards of her heavy mainsail, tailing on to those outrageous chain jib halliards, again up to the middle on the beach, hauling a fish net at night, he was just the same cheerful chap. Well might his motto have been, 'semper eadem' (always the same). I have vivid recollections of such times when the old *Magic* would be lying at anchor at Black Point or maybe Eastern Cove, when it was 'watch below' for all hands. There would be that old veteran 'Jack' Powell rattling pots and pans in the galley, down in the cabin would be 'Mag', 'Willie' Russell, 'Jack' Playfair and 'Will' Fisher, a deck of playing cards on the table, one of the company giving forth concertina music and a blue fog of tobacco smoke that one could scarcely cut with a bait knife. Alas, this quartet have 'gone west'. One of the penalties attached to outliving one's friends is a sense of loneliness, something missing. Still, there comes a gleam of brightness in the remembrance of the old couplet:— 'Tis better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all.'
