



SASC NEWS

The Newsletter of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club



December 2019

THEMS WERE THE DAYS

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*An old race programme rekindles memories of a bygone offshore era
for David Salter*

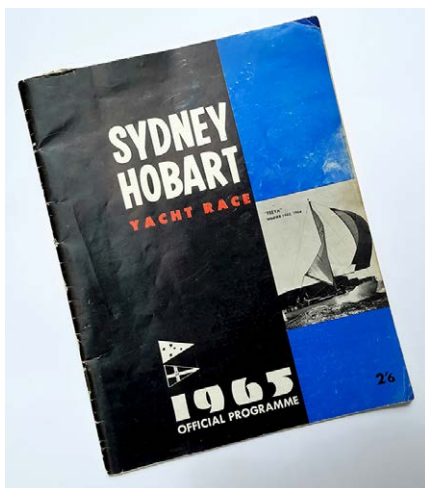
Indulge me, please, in a few moments of personal nostalgia. My first Sydney-Hobart race was in 1965 aboard a leaky 32-footer with tired sails and a ragtag crew. Not surprisingly, we had a shocker. But when our Commodore recently lent me a dog-eared copy of the 1965 *Official Programme* of that race the memories came flooding back — not just of that wet and dodgy sail South, but of the whole atmosphere of Australian blue-water yachting more than 50 years ago.

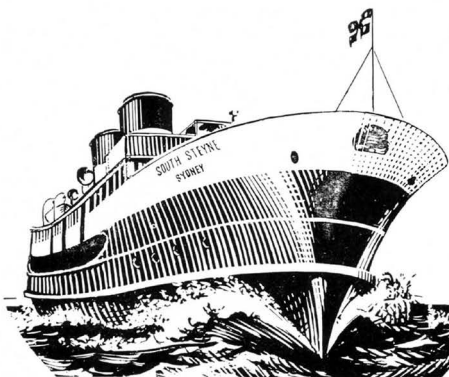
For starters, the programme was a solid 64-page publication crammed with useful content and plenty of advertising. What a contrast to the anorexic world of most local sailing magazines today. (And for the grammar Nazis it's worth noting that throughout the programme the words "Sydney-Hobart" were always correctly hyphenated. For some reason known only to themselves, the Cruising Yacht Club has recently dispensed with that punctuation, which signifies "to". But I digress.)

In tiny type the title page listed every Flag Officer, Director and Committee Member of the CYCA, and there were some famous names among them: Gordon Ingate, Merv Davey, Bill Psaltis, Graham Newland, Mick York, Horrie Godden, Ron Swanson, Alan Payne. These were the men who together had already helped build the Hobart race into a genuine offshore classic.

The official starter in 1965 — also listed on the title page — was "The Rt. Hon. SIR ROBERT MENZIES, K.T., P.C., C.H., Q.C., LL.M." Imagine how often the poor proof reader had to check all those letters after the Prime Minister's name! (The start itself was at 11:00 am in the days before sponsors wanted television coverage of the race to fall neatly during the lunch break of the Melbourne test cricket at 13:00.)

In many ways the advertising content in the old programme is as nostalgic today as the editorial material. A full page ad for Bonds Grand Slam sports shirts ("has the difference that sportsmen like") reminded me of how proud we all were to sail in navy blue tops which featured that little white penguin embroidered on the left side. The Port Jackson & Manly Steam Ship Company offered spectators the chance to follow the fleet out to sea on the S.S. *South Steyne* ("Why put up with jostling traffic for a vantage point or being caught in heavy traffic? Adults 20/-, Children 7/6").





Follow the Hobart Yacht Race to sea . . .

in S. S. SOUTH STEYNE

Don't be disappointed

BOOK NOW!

No. 3 Jetty Circular Quay

Here is your chance to get a perfect view of the start of this classic yacht race.

Why put up with jostling for a vantage point . . . or being caught in the heavy traffic to and from all viewing positions?

The South Steyne departs No. 3 Jetty, Circular Quay, at 10.30 a.m. You will follow the competitors across the start, right down the harbour and round South Head. All the way an experienced radio announcer on board will help you follow the action. You will return to Circular Quay at about 1 p.m.

Fares for the trip . . . Adults 20/-, Children 7/6.

Other advertisers included Nock & Kirby's ("Everything for the Water-sportsman"), TAA ("The quietest jets in the world"), Redex ("The new way to stop Diesel Fumes") and sailmakers Joe Pearce, Rolly Tasker, McNeill & Sheeran, Laurie Mitchell and Peter Cole. Not a square inch of Kevlar or carbon among them! A newfangled marine radio ("Simple to operate") was offered with five transmitter channels and a choice of cabinet colours.

But perhaps the most evocative aspect for me of looking back at the 1965 Sydney-Hobart is recalling the sturdy boats that battled their way to Hobart that year. *Freya* (Trygve and Magnus Halvorsen) romped home to claim an unprecedented three-in-a-row handicap win; *Stormvogel*, the plywood 75-footer from South Africa, took line honours. At the opposite end of the fleet was the tiny 29-footer *Zilvergeest* — with current SASC Hon. Treasurer Charles Davis listed among the crew.

*Man,
there's a
big
difference!*



BOND'S
Australia's Greatest Name in Cotton

"GRAND SLAM"

SPORTS SHIRT

has the difference that sportsmen like

It's 100% sports shirt. Complete with underarm gussets that give full freedom when you're active. Airy, cool and very absorbent, is easy to wash and requires no ironing. In bold colours or softer shades at stores everywhere.

Your size
39/11
Best
29/11

0479



Photos John Jeremy

Other yachts in that 1965 fleet whose names have lived on in Australian offshore history included *Bachus D*, *Balandra*, *Cadence*, *Enid*, *Fare Thee Well*, *Ilina*, *Janzoon II*, *Rival*, *Salacia*, *Southerly*, *Southern Myth* and *Valhalla*. Some of their skippers were Bob Crichton-Brown, Bill Russell-Slade, Alby Burgin, John Bennetto, Lou Abrahams, Don Mickelborough and a certain Keith Rupert Murdoch.

And the newest boat in the fleet? A 36-foot double-ender built for Peter Kurts which was fresh out of Ron Swanson's shed at Dee Why. It's name? *Mister Christian*. At the time, aged just 17 and admiring the yacht from across the dock at Rushcutter's Bay, I thought she was the best thing I'd ever seen afloat. Still do.

26 December 1965 — spectator boat control was more relaxed in those days

Stormvogel soon after the start





The beautiful 62 ft ketch *Enid* (CYC38) drawing abeam of *Stormvogel* on the way to the Heads.
Note the large TV camera on the tug



Well known yachts on the way to Hobart — *Tahuna* (CYC31), *Janzoon II* (185), *Salacia* (190),
Karingal (181) and *Narranda* (SA8)