

Commodore's Message



The Commodore greeting Father Christmas

John Butterfield

Christmas brought many joyful festivities to the Squadron, and all functions were well attended by Members and their friends. Organisations who held their Christmas functions at the Squadron were very pleased with their day, our organisation and the Squadron as a venue. We are pleased that they used our facilities and we hope they continue to do so.

Three of our yachts entered in this year's Sydney-Hobart Race. They were Keith Flint's *Helsal II*, Bob Francis's *Renegade* and Bill Strangways' *Speakeasy*, which lost her mast off the Victorian coast near Port Fairy. In hindsight, this was a blessing in disguise, although

naturally Bill would have liked to make it to Hobart. Maybe next time, Bill! As you know, this was one of the toughest Hobart races ever, with tragic loss of both yachts and crews. So to Keith and Bob, and their crews, well done for coming through the ordeal with minimal damage.

Secret Men's Business, owned by Geoff Boettcher, has dual membership with the Squadron and with the Cruising Yacht Club of South Australia. We are pleased to see that Geoff, his vessel and his crew also came through without serious damage.

The Squadron organised a welcome-home night for all the South Australian yachts entered in this year's Sydney-Hobart Race. This turned out very well, with a saturated house, and was enjoyed by all who attended.

Rear Commodore David Henshall asked me to join his son Bruce and Andrew Ellison in sailing his yacht *Lara III*, a Cavalier 39.5, from Townsville to Adelaide. We departed Townsville at 1600 on 5 January and arrived at the Squadron pontoon at 1230 on 25 January. The total distance sailed was 2,380 nm, and we stopped for fuel and essential supplies at Coffs Harbor and Port Fairy. There we met Bill Strangways loading *Speakeasy* on to a truck for the trip home to the Squadron. Bill joined us for the evening meal aboard *Lara III*. He recounted his experience of the incident of losing his mast, his stay at Port Fairy and the hospitality of the townsfolk.

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Lara passed the area of the lethal storm encountered by the Sydney-Hobart fleet in a wind of four to five knots SE. For three days a topic of conversation aboard was, 'Hope we don't get the weather they got in the Hobart race!' Mother Nature was kind to us. It was an excellent trip and I learnt a lot from doing it. Thank you, David, for the invitation!

The Quins-Simrad Adelaide to Port Lincoln Race brought a hive of activity to the Squadron during the preceding weeks as participants in both the Cruising and Racing Divisions made their craft ready. The safety inspectors were their usual obliging selves, and made themselves available at almost any time for inspections, depending on the craft involved. Mike Hambidge, the rest of your Jameson's Whiskey is still on board my yacht *Jazam*.

The event this year attracted approximately 87 yachts in the two divisions. Our congratulations go to the Commodore of the Port Lincoln Yacht Club, Di Birchard and her organising committee for a job well done. The largest entrant this year was *Wild Thing*, chartered by members of the Port Lincoln Yacht Club. *Wild Thing* broke the

record set by *Helsal II* by an impressive 32 minutes. This was very good sailing, as the weather conditions were not conducive to attaining the high speeds she is capable of. I have been told by people who have sailed on her that she can get up to 26 knots off the wind. At least for the moment, this leaves the race record within the grasp of yachts that are not so grand when they strike the right weather conditions.

Next year we will all be trying for the 50th Adelaide to Port Lincoln race, and the organisers hope to achieve a larger fleet than this year, both from within South Australia and from interstate. The Squadron will do all that it can to accommodate and work with the Port Lincoln Yacht Club to ensure that this it is successful, to mark such an important anniversary in our long association with this event, right from its inception.

As the summer heads towards its close, a small working bee will be required towards the end of May to establish our new mast work area on the eastern boundary. Please contact me or the Office to indicate if you are willing to help. It would be very much appreciated.

Good sailing!

SQ

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