

# thirty two° fifty five

newcastle cruising  
yacht club journal

SUMMER 2023-24

Clippers coming to town!  
Frantic wins Sydney Auckland  
Melbourne Cup fashion pictorial



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Opinions of contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the Board or the Club.

While articles and correspondence are welcomed, the Editor reserves the right to decline to publish.

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Planning and preparation for the Clipper Round the World yachts in January and the Australian IRC Championships in April continues.

If you're interested in volunteering at NCYC there are opportunities in becoming involved for the Clipper Race visit – contact Ethan as a first point of call.

## OPERATIONS

We had reasonable trading in September and October. At Board level, we have been discussing the effect of the Reserve Bank's tightening policy on our business. Last month while we were below our budget in earnings, we were above where we were last year. We continue to have strong cashflow and make extra payments on our loan. We are on track to have our loan for the clubhouse extension repaid by the end of our financial year (March '24) or earlier. We remain a little below our yearly budget and are watching the bottom line carefully. Our cash flow has allowed us to make a further payment towards our residual loan for the Clubhouse extension which is now \$300,000. This is down from \$1,700,000 in March 2022.

## CLUBHOUSE

August, September, and October have been challenging months in the bar and restaurant. We have made ongoing changes to the menus based on feedback, which stem from the success of "Seafood Sundays" and our freshly cooked pizzas. This is an ongoing process, and you will see more changes as Summer progresses.

To ensure we give maximum value for our Members we have always accepted that we run this part of the business as close as possible to cost. To ensure we have real control over costs, we employ the kitchen and bar staff directly. It's a difficult balance to achieve with rising food costs but we won't give up. We also must not forget that rising interest rates are designed to lower spending in all parts of the economy and that those rates are now still below the 25-year average of around 4.5% (currently 4.1%). Like it or not, NCYC is part of the discretionary spend economy. Our food is almost entirely prepared from fresh ingredients sourced locally.

## MEMBERSHIP

We continue to have growth in Membership. Despite the retirement of Members that I mentioned in my August message to you, we still have positive growth

and maintain above our figures from last year by approximately 200. In September, we approved over 20 new Members to be placed on the board and we had another New Members Night on 5 October. The Board also discussed ways to incentivise our long-term Sailing Members to become General (voting) members in recognition of their commitment.

We welcomed another 80 new Members during the past three months. We continue to work on new Member benefits; see below to learn about our new kayak and paddleboard storage. After the cancellation of our own SOLAS Trust dinner event, I was one of about 15 NCYC Members who attended the CYCA event on 20th October. This event raises money to support the immediate needs of the families of those lost at sea during an Australian Sailing event – it has its beginnings in the aftermath of the 1998 Sydney Hobart race when six lives were lost. Since then, over \$1.6M has been raised. Maybe you would like to support next year?

## SAILING

Work is complete at our new site across the creek in Carrington. This includes racking, dollies and trolleys, as well as a bird-scare motion activated sprinkler system on pontoon to discourage bird droppings. We have also installed an igloo shelter over the shipping containers and purchased a whiteboard for instructional use.

I also offer my congratulations to our very strong team at the NSW Youth Championships:

Laser Class 1st - Thomas Farley

O'pen Skiff Class 1st - Zoe Webb.

29er Class 1st - Christian & Sebastian Spencer

Waszp Class - 3rd Banjo Nicholson, 4th Marshall Day, 5th Connor Radford, 7th Emma Webb

Flying Eleven Class – 5th Arthur Bell and Nicholas Drummond, 6th Sophie Drummond and Harriet Skelton, 7th Jayden Palmer and Zachary Tait, 13th Ava Spencer and Jett Jordan

With the end of the winter break you will have seen more activity on the Marina arms. Along with the general theme of people tightening their budgets we have seen a small reduction in Tackers participation over the school holidays. There has also been Tackers activity on Saturday and Sunday mornings with learn-to-sail and Green Fleet activities.

The Force 24s have been engaged on Wednesday afternoons with our "OutThere" teens program. Our Elliott 6 fleet has been busy on Tuesdays with the Youth League commitments. Add in the Adult learn-to-sail



We have a great balance of sailing and social events and activities on the calendar for 2023/24, so make sure you are receiving the weekly newsletter to keep up with what's going on.

It's been a great start to summer at the Club so far and there is plenty more to come.

Offshore sailing is in full swing with Sundays, Wednesdays, and the Ocean Point score all underway. Inshore sailing has been very competitive with the youth on Tuesdays, Open Elliot racing Thursdays, and Lasers on a Friday.

The Bay Sailing Centre has also started its point score with good numbers. As always, the volunteer race management team have done a great job conducting races up to five times a week. The Academy is as busy as ever with Learn to Sail programs, Masterclass series and Community programs.

We are looking forward to some significant major events coming up over this summer starting with The Hunter 100, the Club's overnight race. We have four NCYC boats entered into the Sydney to Hobart; *Vérité*, *Mako*, *She's The Culprit*, and *Frantic*. The Club will be running a sweep and showing the start on the big screens.

We have The Clipper Race stopping over in January which will bring National and International attention. We will be hosting a Meet the Members night on Friday 5th January with the aim of competitors and our Members connecting over a few drinks. Clipper Village and boat inspections will be open Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th January.

Their race will restart in front of Queens Wharf Hotel at 3pm on the 10th January and will be worth watching.

We finish the summer hosting the Australian Titles for yacht racing 5-7 April. We are hoping for a strong fleet and already have great interest from the TP fleet and a few 60-footers.

The club house is extremely busy with the summer menu proving a big hit. We also having lots of Members choosing the Club for their end-of-year celebrations which is much appreciated.

We have a new wedding offering so please spread the word about what a great venue we have.

I would like to thank all the staff here at NCYC for their commitment and effort at this very busy and challenging time of year.

I hope all our members can enjoy sailing, boating, and socialising over the summer.

– Paul O'Rourke

## \Continued from Page 4

program, Women's sailing on Thursday evening and women's learn to sail on Thursday and Friday, offshore keelboats on Sunday and we have something happening on the docks almost every day.

Don't forget about the Bay Sailing Centre where we hosted learn-to-sail in the October School holidays and have Laser Racing involving 6-10 boats. Also, we are investigating licensing at the BSC to allow it to be more functional and increase our return on investment. We also held a fantastic She Sails Open Regatta on the 25th and 26th November. And we are currently looking at the ever-expanding sport of Wing Foiling!

## MARINA

Marina occupancy is slightly down from July. Figures fluctuate monthly as short-term stay vessels come and go, but this area of the business remains steady. We are continuing the work on long-term maintenance items identified in the Asset Maintenance Plan.

Marina and fuel revenue were above budget in September. Prices for rectification of the travel-lift runway corrosion issues have been sought. Planning to minimise disruption of services to our Members and tenants during these works, which include underwater inspections, is underway. We are also planning repair and reinforcement works on A-arm. We are constructing a paddleboard and kayak storage area for F arm. Members will be able to rent a place. Additionally, we will be starting to roll out WiFi on the marina, the first stage of which will be complete in late December.

## PARKING

A redesigned carpark concept was presented to improve flow and allow better access for members and tenants while restricting access to others. Your Board agreed to get firm quotes and undertake an operational review. We are quickly approaching the point of selecting a contractor for the new access system to our carpark.



– Barry Kelly



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NCYC now has over 1600 members and this is increasing at a healthy rate. It is great to have many new Crew Members and we especially welcome those who have joined us from the Sailing Academy programs, Making Waves Foundation, and Front Line Sailing.

Just a reminder that NCYC requires all those who sail in the Pantaenius Twilight Series, Sunday, and inshore fleets, to be a Crew or General Member of the Club.

There have been two main social occasions during recent months. The SheSails 'She Shanties Night', which coincided with International Talk Like a Pirate Day, was a colourful, fun and rather noisy evening. Executive Chef Luke prepared a delicious Caribbean style Ox Tail Stew for the main course and Pineapple Upside Down Cake for dessert.

Founders' Day and the Blessing of the Fleet was celebrated on a perfect spring day in early September and there was a fantastic showing of participants who made a considerable effort to decorate their boats. The spectacular parade was followed by hospitality in the Club and a lunch in The Bridge for Founding, Senior, and Life Members. We thank Reverend Canon Garry Dodd for individually blessing each of our boats as they paraded past him on the pontoon.



The Mission to Seafarers provide Care Packs for visiting sailors to Newcastle

- Books
- Men's Clothing
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- Souvenirs
- Toiletries



Any donation is appreciated and can be left at NCYC Admin/Marina office or dropped off at 96 Hannell St, Wickham



SailFest Newcastle

We welcomed new Members at a convivial New Members evening on Thursday October 3rd. Melbourne Cup Day celebrations were an outstanding success. There was a choice of two events, one was a cocktail style in The Retreat and a seated option in The Regatta Room. We thank all those who put together groups and chose NCYC for this special annual occasion.

Can you believe that 2024 will see us celebrating our NCYC 30th birthday?

During the year there will be many anniversary events and special offers to look forward to. It will be a big 12 months, starting with social events associated with the first ever visit by the Clipper Round the World fleet early in the New Year, and then SailFest and the

Australian IRC Championships in early April.

Congratulations and thank you to Mark Nugent and Jack Buchan for designing and installing a beautiful Christmas lights display in front of the Club. At night time, it gives the NCYC precinct a really festive atmosphere.


Summer is the season for socialising and being on the water, and there isn't a better spot than NCYC for meeting family and friends for a drink, a meal, a function or some boating activity. We look forward to seeing you at the Club over the coming months.



– Jan Howard

### STEPS TO STAY SAFE NEAR SEAGOING SHIPS

- > Always **keep a lookout** for seagoing ships.
- > **Determine if the vessel is moving towards you** or away from you.
- > Always **keep a safe distance** away from a large vessel.
- > From the ship's bridge it is hard to see smaller boats. Some ships will have blind spots ahead of up to 600 metres. **Stay far enough away to be in sight.**
- > **Act early** so you can move away from these seagoing ships.
- > **Familiarise yourself** with the shipping channels or fairways.
- > **Stay clear** of the channels or fairways when seagoing ships are entering or departing the port and harbour.
- > **Be aware** of wakes of seagoing ships, particularly when the large vessel is in relatively shallow water and moving at higher speeds.
- > Always have your **navigation lights on at night** so other vessels can clearly see you.





- > You **MUST** stay well clear of the shipping channels and large ships and only cross the channel when it is safe to do so.
- > **DO NOT** anchor in a channel or fairway.
- > **DO NOT** block a channel or fairway.

### SAFETY NOTICE TO ALL BOAT OPERATORS

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A couple is seen from behind, sitting on the deck of a boat. The man is standing and holding a rope, while the woman is sitting next to him. They are looking out at the ocean during a sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, and the water reflects the light. In the foreground, the boat's deck is visible, showing a large white speaker and some equipment. The overall mood is peaceful and romantic.

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## Club Manager's Report



As we welcome another spectacular summer at Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club, the Clubhouse kicked it off on a high note. We've witnessed an overwhelming demand for lunch and dinner services, with our tables near capacity every single day.

It is a clear sign that our Members and guests were eager

to make the most of the warm weather and vibrant atmosphere.

One of the standout events of the season so far has been our Melbourne Cup Luncheon, breaking all previous records with an impressive attendance of over 250 guests. The day was an absolute triumph, filled with excitement, laughter, drinking, dining, and dancing.

Adding to the allure of our clubhouse, we proudly introduced custom-made wooden high bar tables



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receive a 12% discount on all purchases when using their discount card.



## NAUTICA DINING

(made by Newcastle School of Woodwork, Carrington) enhancing the ambiance of our beer garden. The positive response from our Members has been overwhelming, solidifying our beer garden as one of the most inviting and enjoyable spaces in Newcastle. These new additions have truly elevated the overall experience for our patrons.

Looking ahead, we're excited to host our Members Christmas Party. Ticket sales have reached a new record, with 300 members eagerly awaiting the festivities.

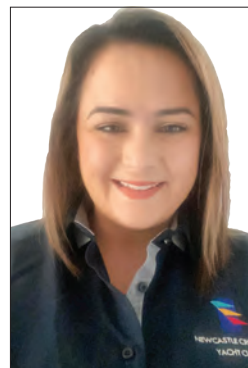
The joy and excitement in the air are palpable as we prepare for an evening filled with celebrations, good company, and the warmth of the holiday spirit.

As we approach the end of the year, we extend our heartfelt wishes to all our Members for a safe and merry Christmas, as well as joyous holidays.

The success and joy we've experienced this year are a testament to the vibrant community that makes Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club a truly exceptional place to belong. Cheers to another year of memories!

– Matt Stamp

## Function Manager's Report



This year brought us many different celebrations and as summer reaches its peak, functions are thriving, creating a buzz of excitement. The anticipation is palpable as Members eagerly await the upcoming Christmas Party on December 17th, promising a night of joyous celebrations with 300 of our Members.

Looking ahead, the new year brings further excitement to our NYE party and with the arrival of the Clipper Round the World Race yachts in January for even more festivities.

As always, we'd like to extend a great big thank you to all of our staff for their efforts and to our Members and guests for making sure the Clubhouse is full of life, smiles, and good times.

– Bec Frost



A hoy sailors! So much has happened in the first half of the 2023-2024 sailing season here at the Club and we've got another busy summer lined up for our onwater racing calendar this season. In September, the Blessing of the Fleet paraded past the front of our Clubhouse, marking the official start of the boating season.

Then, we celebrated as Club Member Damien Boldyrew was awarded Australian Sailing's Official of the Year for 2023! Congratulations Damo and thank you for your volunteer contributions to our Club and to our sport.

The Pantaenius Offshore Twilight series returned with daylight savings and each week the race winner is handed the Pantaenius Twilight Leaders banner to fly from their boat for the rest of the week. Scuffy has been a regular winner in twilight racing this year with Summer Salt also winning two races so far.

The Spring Short Ocean Pointscore is nearing the pointy end. *Summer Salt* is leading the pack, three points ahead of *She's the Culprit*, *This Way Up* is in third. In division 2, *Betty D* has a strong lead ahead of *Ataraxia* and *Trim*.

The Ocean Pointscore has raced the Anna Bay Race, Bird Island Race, Newcastle to Port Stephens Race, Port Stephens to Newcastle Race, and the overnight Hunter 100. *Summer Salt* are narrowly holding the lead just two points ahead of *Mako*, who are just three points ahead of *This Way Up* and another half a point to *She's the Culprit*. In the New Year, the Ocean Pointscore will end with the Moon Islet Race, and then the Pittwater races.

In the Hunter 100, *Frantic* sailed away with the wins in all divisions (line honours, IRC, PHS). *Vérité* scored 2nd place in IRC and 3rd in PHS. *She's the Culprit* scored 2nd in PHS. They started in Newcastle in a drizzly 15-knot north-easterly which held in steady for most of the race, only dropping out on Saturday morning after *Frantic* had already finished.

The Female Helm race saw Sophie Macken take the wheel and win on *This Way Up*, while Alyson Gearing scored second on *Summer Salt*, and Lee McCourt took third on *She's the Culprit*. In division 2, Emily Sellens scored first on *Betty D*, and Annette Cross took second on *Ataraxia*.

Meanwhile our inshore fleet of Elliotts contested the Members League for six weeks throughout Oct-Nov. First place was Joe de Kock sailing with Karma Randall, and Julian Clements. Second place was the youth team of Craig Wright, Griffin Suturs and Rohan



Perceval. Third place was Adrian Kiely, Tim Dodds, and Mark Nugent.

Our Lasers racing from the hardstand at Carrington are halfway through the annual pointscore. In PHS results, Eric Besuijen is leading the series, ahead of Mark Alderton in second, and Graham Baxendale in third. The Club Championship scratch series has Toby Whittle in the lead ahead of Ken Semple in second, and Mark Alderton in third.

Up at the Bay Sailing Centre, the Laser fleet is also nearly halfway through its PHS annual pointscore. Peter Heywood is leading the series ahead of Ross Bell in second, and Dennis Hume in third.

Back onshore, our Clipper Volunteers have been working with club staff as we prepare to host the Clipper Round the World Race stopover here at the Club 1st-10th January 2024. Each boat is assigned two volunteers each who will be their local concierge to help them complete tasks, source provisions, effect repairs, and be the crews' first point of contact for anything they need during their visit. The Clipper Yachts will be open to the public on the weekend of 6-7 January, so I



encourage everyone to come down and check out the boats and meet the teams. Then join us on 10th January for the start of the Newcastle to Airlie Beach!

The onwater maintenance team never sleeps, with our maintenance team and our men's shed volunteers making further improvements to the hardstand and our crane at Carrington, constructing kayak storage racks to install on the marina at the Club for Members to use, and constructing Christmas light displays that will float in front of the Clubhouse throughout December. Join us at dusk to check out the floating light displays!

And watch on Boxing Day for the Sydney Hobart Yacht Race start. We'll be following local yachts *Frantic*, *Mako*, *She's the Culprit*, and *Vérité*, who'll be flying the club banner in the toughest race in offshore yachting!

As always, we encourage all members of the club to get involved in our upcoming events. Please contact me if I can help you become involved or if you're interested in opportunities to volunteer to help us deliver any of our racing or regattas. We look forward to helping more Members get on the water, in more ways, more often!

– Jack Buchan



## LEARN TO SAIL COURSES FOR KIDS

The NCYC Sailing Academy is a registered provider with Service NSW and accepts the \$100 ACTIVE KIDS vouchers.

For further information,  
contact our Sailing Academy  
Tel: (02) 4940 8188 or  
email: [sailingacademy@ncyc.net.au](mailto:sailingacademy@ncyc.net.au)



Welcome to *Thirty-Two Fifty-Five*. It's summer already – I say this every issue but time sure flies when you're having fun ... and what fun it is working at NCYC.

In recent months, our marina has been bustling with activity. We've hosted fleets from LMYC Cruising Division, SASC, Pittwater, and Trinity Point, all

of whom have taken full advantage of the Clubhouse bar, restaurant, and amenities. We've welcomed those returning home after spending the winter season up north, and our marina has served as the first point of entry for several international visitors, while Sevenstar arranged multiple ship loadings and unloadings as well.

Our marina has served as the first point of entry for several international visitors, while Sevenstar arranged multiple ship loadings and unloadings

Looking forward, only more positive things to report. In January, we will see the Clippers Round the World Yacht Race participants stopover for 2 weeks coming from Freemantle before their next leg to East Asia. Spanning over 40,000 nautical miles and visiting six continents, the race comprises a series of intense ocean legs and demanding challenges, testing the amateur sailor's skills, endurance, and teamwork.

This will bring many people to NCYC, with staff and crew numbers alone making up over 300 people! It's



Above: *The luxury motoryacht Shadow.*

going to be massive, and we are looking forward to hosting a memorable and historic event.

To all marina occupants, members, and other readers – wishing you a safe and Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year.

I'll leave you with this great photo of the vessel *Shadow*, which utilised our fuel service and stayed overnight recently and absolutely dwarves the 30m ferry next to it, taken by our very own Matisse from Nautica Dining.

– Matt Williams

### ALWAYS LOOKOUT FOR SEAGOING SHIPS

DO NOT pass within 30 metres of the side or stern of a seagoing ship

- > Before heading out check the Daily Vessel Movements at [portauthority.com.au/lookoutnewcastle](http://portauthority.com.au/lookoutnewcastle)
- > Keep monitoring the safety broadcast from Newcastle Harbour VTC (24/7) VHF Channel 09

### STAY FAR AWAY TO BE IN SIGHT

From the ship's bridge it is hard to see smaller boats. Some ships will have blind spots ahead of up to 600 metres. Stay far enough away to be in sight.

Line of vision from bridge  
Blind distance ahead

### BE AWARE IT'S THE LAW

Under NSW marine legislation you are required to never obstruct, restrict or impede access to:

- > any fairway or channel
- > any wharf or other landing place
- > the safe navigation of a vessel
- > the handling of cargo or movement of passengers
- > launching, removal, securing of a vessel.

It is an offence to:

- > fail to comply with the directions of the harbour master or any person acting under the direction of a harbour master
- > operate a vessel in any navigable waters negligently, recklessly or at a speed or in a manner dangerous to the public.

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Disclaimer: This information is provided for general information only and it does not constitute legal or other professional advice.

## Transition to Yachting

When I moved to the Hunter Region, I finally had the time available to learn to sail, something I had always wanted to do. I signed up with NCYC's Sailing Academy and completed the 'Crewing', 'Helming', and 'Skippering' courses, in the Force 24 keelboats, which gave me the basics of sailing. I then signed up with the excellent 'Transition to Yachting' program that started last year.

My aim was to develop my sailing skills and hopefully start crewing for the races, but the move from the 24' keelboats used for the introductory courses to a 40' yacht is quite significant.

The yacht used for the program is *Aurora*. It has completed 25 Sydney to Hobart races and its owner and skipper, Mary Holley, developed the course with the NCYC Sailing Academy. During the course, she is joined by several other experienced sailing mentors, to familiarise you and the other course participants with the sailing of larger yachts.

The course takes you through yacht set-up, sail trimming, safety and crew functions out on Newcastle

harbour over six weeks. You also get to meet other NCYC skippers who need crew for racing.

While doing the course I was able to start crewing on other yachts and continued to learn. One of the aspects that is wonderful about sailing is that you never stop learning and YouTube is no substitute for sailing with experienced sailors.

NCYC provides many pathways for learning how to sail, and presents regular masterclass sessions on specific aspects of sailing. It has won Australian Sailing's 'Club of the Year' twice and has outstanding facilities.

As well as crewing regularly, I have also been able to volunteer for the 'Making Waves' program which is supported by the Club and exposes disabled and disadvantaged youth to sailing. This program runs out of Newcastle, Sydney, Melbourne, Geelong, and Brisbane and is growing in numbers of participants and volunteers.

– Laurence McDonnell



# Melbourne Cup 2023





## Clipper Race Stopover



With the support of Newcastle City Council, NCCYC will be pulling out all the stops to ensure the 2023-24 Clipper Round the World Race fleet has a memorable stopover after arriving in early January.

Australia actually gets three bites of the cherry with the endurance race, Fremantle and Airlie Beach also gaining hosting rights.

The 11 teams are due to complete the challenging 5500nm (8900km) Cape Town to Fremantle leg between December 8 and 13, and will restart on December 19.

Leg 4 will take them across the Great Australian Bight, dipping below the 40th Parallel before rounding the southern tip of Tasmania and heading to Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club.

With the arrival window predicted to be January 1-4, the teams will have time to rest and prepare for the January 10 in-harbour start, bound for the Whitsundays and Vietnam after that.

At a record-breaking 40,000nm (74,080km) the Clipper Race is one of the toughest aquatic marathons in the world, especially since the crews are amateurs who pay for the experience aboard the 70ft ocean racing yachts.

The aptly named *Perseverance* was leading the standings at the time of writing, after three legs, from

*Dare to Lead* and *Yacht Club Punta Del Este*.

Clipper has a huge following that will put Newcastle Harbour on the international sporting map. It's also potentially a test bed for the 2027 Ocean Race.

Over 200 competitors will be accompanied by officials, family members and sponsors, boosting local accommodation at a time many people look further up the coast. Activities will be centred in a specially erected marquee at NCCYC carpark, right on the harbour and in front of the berths.

There will be a 'Fan Zone' where community members can inspect the boats and learn about the race. The club will conduct Try Sailing days and demonstrations throughout the visit to encourage participation and outdoor activity.

Competitors will enjoy an Outriggers Day, Historical Tours, Food and Wine tours and the chance to go surfing. As part of their environmental commitment they will undertake a clean-up of the Throsby Basin foreshore.

The Race restart is scheduled for January 10 at 3pm off Queens Wharf, with the Fort Scratchley cannon to fire.

**Details at [clipperroundtheworld.com](http://clipperroundtheworld.com).**



## Middlesea Race

Since early 2022, I have been fortunate to be part of the UK-based ocean racing teams of *INO XXX* and *INO NOIR* led by owner/skipper, and RORC Commodore James Neville. We competed in the 2022 Round Ireland Race in the original *INO XXX*, a JV42. Unfortunately, retirement was necessary due to technical problems sustained in very heavy conditions off SW Ireland. That boat was replaced in early 2023 by *INO Noir*, a Southampton-built Carkeek 45.

The busy 2023 racing season started with the 50th Rolex Fastnet Race. It was a very challenging race, particularly the first 24 hours, most of which was sailed under storm sails during the leg from The Needles at the entrance to the Solent, to Lands End. We finished 9th overall on IRC.

Shortly after the Fastnet Race, the yacht was shipped to Valetta, Malta, where we competed in the Rolex Middle Sea Race. It was a fantastic race track taking the 110 boat fleet northwards from Malta, anti-clockwise around Sicily passing the spectacular volcano island of Stromboli, and the islands of Pantelleria and Lampedusa to the west and south of Malta.

The 2023 Middle Sea Race was characterised by light to moderate winds, warm weather and various weather 'gates' which saw the fleet compress. The first 24 hours were challenging, especially through the narrow Strait of Messina which, at its most northern point, is only a little wider than Newcastle Harbour entrance.

During the first half of the race, we remained in touch with favourite and winner of the 2023 Fastnet Race,



*Caro*, a Botin 52 and a similar 52-footer, *Warrior Won*. Various wind 'shut downs' in the lee of Islands, allowed us to compress in to these bigger and faster yachts who literally matched the full length

of the 610nm course. The second half of the race from the western most tip of Sicily and around the islands of Pantelleria and Lampedusa, saw the larger 52-footers stretch their legs away from us. Lighter winds in the final 24 hours of the race, however, allowed the Wally 93 *Bullitt* to take the overall lead on IRC handicap.

Interestingly, the 2023 edition of the Rolex Middle Sea Race saw the small yachts in the fleet come home with wet sails, and the overall winner was not decided until the double-handed Sunfast 33, *Red Ruby*, crossed the



finish line just 24 seconds slower than the time required to take the top spot on the podium, from *Bullitt*.

As two seasons of being part of the *INO NOIR* team come to a close, I have reflected on sailing more generally and the amazing platform that Europe offers those looking to compete and challenge themselves in an extensive ocean racing program. Unlike Australia, Europe offers a shorter but very busy ocean racing season through the spring and summer months and those teams looking to campaign year-round can race in the Caribbean during January and February.

As part of a predominantly professionally crewed yacht, sailing on *INO NOIR* has been a fantastic experience. Prior to each major ocean race, several days of on-water training are completed to prepare the yacht and ensure the team are in the best possible condition to perform. The yacht is raced with a lean, stripped down crew.

While a typical powerful 45ft modern racing yacht might have 14 crew, *INO NOIR* is generally raced with 10, with two watches of four, plus a floating navigator and owner/skipper. Each watch includes a full-time, experienced Bowman, and most major manoeuvres, including spinnaker peels and reefs, only require one additional off watch crew member to assist on deck.

Having been part of this very successful crew and completing in many major ocean races with them over the last two years, I get the sense that it is not only their careers that binds them together, but that they are also really good mates who are highly skilled and respect each other's individual contribution to the team.

– Will Howard



Above: The Frantic crew celebrate in Auckland.

In 2019, Members of the RPAYC, Pittwater, decided to hold an event in 2020 of an international race from Sydney to Auckland of at least 1250 nautical miles. At that time, more than 40 yachts submitted an expression of interest but then all racing came to a stop.

In 2022, the idea was revived and a date was set for the race to commence on Saturday, 6 October, 2023. Unfortunately, on race day only 5 boats made the start line at 1300. They included a Santa Cruz 72 – *Antipodes*, TP52 – *Frantic*, Rogers 46 – *Mayfair*, Beneteau Figaro 3 – *Inity*, and Bavaria 51 – *Painkiller*. *Frantic* was built in 2004 in Brazil. This TP52 claims the Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club as its home and was crewed by 12 veterans who had sailed on *Frantic* since its purchase by Michael Martin in 2012. Some of these past races and results include a win on IRC and ORCi in the 2013 Gosford to Lord Howe Race, 2018 Pittwater to Paradise Line Honours, and new race record (4 days, 2 Hours, and 24 minutes) in the 2018 PONANT Sydney Noumea Yacht Race.

So, as per normal for any commencement of a long-distance ocean race, the boats competing in this inaugural race decided to attack each other in an area no bigger than a rugby union field when they had the whole of Sydney Harbour (55sq km) to manoeuvre in.

*Frantic* got a good start and was bow-to-bow with *Antipodes*. After crossing the line *Frantic* cracked sails as we bent around North Head the kite was brought on deck and hoisted

Our first mark was a buoy of Barrenjoey Light, which *Frantic* turned first. The fleet then headed east with most of the crew perhaps fleetingly wishing that we would have continued north back to Newcastle or have turned to port rather than starboard and stayed in Pittwater.

Around dusk on the first night, *Antipodes* gradually overtook *Frantic* and was soon lost in the darkness. Shift watches then commenced. The game plan was to head above 090 degrees and go fast.

For three days we sailed on our own in the empty Tasman Sea. On the afternoon of Day 3 *Antipodes* was sighted in the distance. Although we had satellite communication and information downloads of where the fleet was, it was good to have a visual sighting. Though we also knew *Mayfair* was not far behind ready to pounce if we lost focus.

A gybing duel then commenced till the evening of Day 4 when *Frantic* was able to pull ahead and reach the next mark, being the northern tip of North Island NZ.

As so many sailors ponder, you can race for days with different tactics and speed yet still be within a nautical mile of your competitors. That evening, due to a forced sail change (kite blew out!), *Antipodes* regained the lead and in the daylight of the 5th day they galloped down the eastern shore of the North Island. By this time the wind was on the nose and all that day we worked towards the finish line and the stern of *Antipodes*.

From the tip of the North Island to Auckland the coastline was beautiful. If you ever get a chance to sail along this coastline, do it!

At 1637 hours and 57 seconds (5 days, 3 hours 37 minutes, and 57 seconds) *Antipodes* crossed the finish line, receiving line honours in the inaugural Sydney to Auckland Yacht Race.

At 1753 hours and 19 seconds, 75 minutes and 22 seconds later *Frantic* crossed the line. This was to no avail, as NZ Border Force and Customs only work from 0830 to 1630.

So that evening both boats entered New Zealand Quarantine Dock and with permission from NZ Border Force and Customs, the organisers of the event and respective boat shore managers brought down pizzas,

beer, and rum. A party was held and in the early hours of the next morning *Mayfair* crossed the line.

Due to the closeness of the race, *Frantic* was able to claim handicap Honours and at the official presentation was announced race winner.

Most of the yachts had at least some Novocastrians or Lake Macquarie sailors on board. This goes to show the calibre of not only the sailors but also the events put on by the sailing clubs like NCYC with their offshore events.

**Some information:** Weather – Mainly S/E ranging from 15-25 knots, nice long ocean swells, but temperature was cold with the weather swinging around Tasmania into the Tasman Sea.

**Food:** First 3 days/nights fresh food then dehydrated evening meals. All yachts finished, with the last boat taking 9+ days.

It is a very doable race and one worth considering in 2025 (every two years). Thanks go out to the organising clubs and their officials. A big shout out to Mick Martin and his crew both on the boat and on shore.

– David Blakemore



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# A Transpacific Odyssey: Honolulu-Sydney via Palmyra, Samoa, Tonga and Fiji

## Honolulu to Palmyra Atoll (960 nm)

Embarking on a maritime escapade from Honolulu to Sydney, the crew of *Wings*, a Dehler 46 racer cruiser, transformed their vessel from a race-ready mode to a well-equipped caravan. With jerry cans secured, Biminis up, and provisions stowed, the crew – Ian, Mark, Elyse, and Janease commenced the next leg of their adventure. Their first destination was the Palmyra Atoll Wildlife Refuge, a remote sanctuary accessible only by sailing yacht.

After a successful pest and hull inspection in Hawai'i, the crew secured a permit to visit Palmyra. Their sail through the Pacific was characterized by steady 15-25 knot northeasterly trade winds, providing an idyllic backdrop for activities like reading, cooking, and knitting. The crew adopted a six-hour on, six-hour off watch system, and relished the opportunity for onboard showers and clothe washing courtesy of a water maker – a luxurious departure from racing conditions.

## Palmyra Atoll: A Natural Haven

Cooper Island emerged on the horizon at dawn, welcomed by a rain squall and the vibrant red-footed booby birds, the islands' entertaining inhabitants. The crew explored the East Lagoon by dinghy, accompanied by juvenile red-footed boobies soaring alongside like playful dolphins. The snorkelling experience in Palmyra proved enchanting, revealing a thriving underwater world of reef sharks, lemon sharks, manta rays, and vibrant coral life.

Despite the remote location, signs of human impact were evident as discarded plastic washed ashore. The crew



encountered a Fish Attraction Device, used in purse seine fishing, underscoring the challenges of pollution even in the most secluded corners of the ocean.

## Cultural Enrichment in Samoa (1320nm)

Departing Palmyra, the crew sailed toward Samoa, guided by celestial navigation and the Southern Cross. The Equator was crossed, and the crew earned the title of "shell backs." However, bureaucratic challenges arose upon arrival in Apia, Samoa, as clearance documents posed a conundrum. Despite delays, the crew immersed themselves in the warmth of Samoan hospitality, exploring waterfalls, the To-Sua Ocean trench, and vibrant local markets.

## Trade Winds to Tonga (480nm)

The journey continued to Niuatoputapu, Tonga, propelled by strong trade winds and squalls. The crew navigated the challenges of a saltwater spa bath during a mid-squall gennaker rescue operation. In Niuatoputapu, a remote northern Tongan island with minimal infrastructure, the crew engaged with the local community, trading essentials for fresh produce in an economy devoid of banks or ATMs.





*Above: Outrigger canoe at Muscat Cove.*

*Below from left: Bouma Waterfall, Vianni Bay Fiji and Palmyra.*

*Top left: Wings entering Muscat Cove*

## **Fiji: A Tapestry of Islands (410nm)**

As *Wings* sailed into Fiji, the crew explored Savusavu, a bustling town offering access to fresh produce. Vianni Bay, lauded as Fiji's most beautiful anchorage, lived up to its reputation. The crew dived into Fijian culture, participating in a traditional mat-weaving session and enjoying the local cuisine. The journey included visits to Somosomo in Taveuni, Namena Island, and Mololo Island, each offering unique experiences, from cultural encounters to excellent snorkelling.



## **Fiji to Sydney (1700nm)**

The final leg became the most demanding as the crew confronted a low-pressure system off New Caledonia and formidable weather systems near Australia. Autopilot malfunctions added to the challenges, but the crew persevered. Finally, they reached Newcastle, Australia, marking the completion of a remarkable transpacific journey.

## **Reflections on an Extraordinary Odyssey**

The crew reflected on the privilege of visiting pristine locations, acknowledging the environmental challenges facing even the most remote areas. Cultural immersion and resilience in the face of challenges emerged as central themes.

The camaraderie formed among the crew and the connections made with local communities enriched the narrative, highlighting the transformative power of oceanic exploration.

In conclusion, the Honolulu to Sydney sailing adventure unfolded as a multifaceted odyssey—a fusion of natural wonders, cultural immersion, and maritime challenges.

The crew's journey, from the untouched beauty of Palmyra to the vibrant cultures of Samoa, Tonga, and Fiji, culminated in a triumphant return home, forever etching this transpacific voyage into the annals of their seafaring experiences.

– Janease Graham

**M**aking Waves Foundation has now been operating permanently in Newcastle for two years - and we've kicked some major goals!

Our Winds of Joy program has given 820 guests with a disability and their carers the opportunity to experience life-changing sails on Newcastle Harbour over the last year – an increase of 33% from 2022. Schools report that the program helps students better integrate with the community and communicate with people from a variety of backgrounds. Participants are also excited when they get to see dolphins swimming alongside, whales breaching, and of course, catching a glimpse of our resident seal at the end of Nobbys Breakwall.

In Term 2 this year, we introduced our second program, Winds of Change with great success. This is an 8-week program for up to 10 young people who are disengaged from school and/or experiencing disadvantage. It provides students with the opportunity for personal growth and development while they learn sailing skills. Two local schools have participated so far, and this program is fully booked for 2024!

Three students from the most recent Winds of Change enjoyed the experience so much, that they joined the crew onboard our program yacht *Joy* for the NCYC Pantaenius Twilight Series.

We have big goals for 2024 with plans to introduce one of our other programs to Newcastle, Wright of Passage. Wright of Passage is an on-dock work-based learning program for 15-18 year olds looking for learning options outside of the classroom. With the assistance of volunteer mentors, students build a kitset boat and through this process grow in confidence, consistency,



and develop positive attitudes and skills needed for their journey through education, training, and employment. Attendees also have the opportunity for some sailing as well!

Further afield, we will be entering our 21st Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race onboard Sydney based yacht, *Kayle*. While we expect to be competitive in our division, we hope to inspire our participants to push their own limits and break barriers both on and off the water. In our continuing journey to advocate for inclusion, several of our crew sail with a disability, following the legacy of the organisation's founders who first sailed in the 1994 Sydney to Hobart yacht race. If you'd like to check out the team or show your support by sponsoring one of the crew, please visit [makingwaves.au/sydney-to-hobart](http://makingwaves.au/sydney-to-hobart)

2024 will be another big year for Making Wave Foundation. We'll be working hard to connect with many more local young people with disability and those experiencing disadvantage to enable them to further develop their potential and growth through our unique sailing programs.

We will be looking for more volunteers to help grow these amazing programs. To find out more or join our crew, go to [makingwaves.au](http://makingwaves.au).

It is an exciting time for the Making Waves Foundation Newcastle operation and we can't wait for 2024!

We are looking forward to welcoming a new group of athletes into our Youth Squad next April.

– Sarah Gamble

### foster & co. hairdressing

#### Shop 3/91 Hannell Street Wickham

Hello! I am Christie Foster, founder and creative director of foster & co. hairdressing. With over 25 years' experience, you are in very safe hands. My passion for my craft and making women feel and look the best version of themselves is evident on meeting me. I love creating beautiful hair, with beautiful ladies.

Relax and recharge receiving full service, one-on-one expert professional care when you visit. I specialise in soft, natural looking colours designed to enhance your natural beauty.

My firm salon booking policy since 2012 is NO double bookings or squeezing in, your time with me is valued and important. Leave the outside world at the doorstep as you relax and are pampered, enabling you to leave feeling fresh and fabulous.

During my career, I've been fortunate enough to work alongside some of the best hairdressers both here in Australia and internationally. Representing well-known brands like REDKEN, Kevin Murphy, Eleven Australia. From runways to stage shows to education, I've had the privilege of being both the educator and the attendee. I spent over a decade working backstage at fashion week, and I've seen and created some amazing styles.

foster & co. pricing reflects my level of experience and commitment to ongoing training and education. You will be looked after by me, a qualified stylist at ALL times during your visit. The personal touch is important to the foster. & co. brand. Our clients are like family and friends, not just another client in the chair.

Building strong relationships, some spanning over 20 years has been the key to such a strong business. One where the trust in the quality of service and personal touch has evolved into the business it is today.

Our new Wickham salon space is designed to ensure a bright and inviting atmosphere. Merging the natural lighting with well-planned artificial lighting, fixtures, fittings, and furniture to create a salon experience that blends functionality with elegance and comfort.

Relax with a book on our lounge, or work comfortably at our large table with complimentary WiFi available to all guests. Our working professionals enjoy being able to escape the office and still get work done, in our peaceful relaxed space or simply remain in your comfortable chair at the mirror and bench while your colour is processing flicking through magazines.

We serve a selection of refreshing hot and cold drinks, while offering a selection of the latest magazines.



Communication and constant engagement with our friends really set us apart.

I know your time is important and precious to you, I value and respect this. Please arrive on time for your scheduled appointments, if we find ourselves to be unexpectedly a few minutes behind you can expect an SMS or courtesy call to let you know. This courtesy is expected in return from our guests should they find themselves running late.

I am currently welcoming new ladies' clients. If you understand the importance of building a relationship with your stylist to ensure the best results, if you are organised and plan your visits in advance to have a regular passionate stylist who cares about you and the health of your hair also maintaining your look then I would really love to meet you.

Please call 0402 452 444.

– Christie Foster



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## Celebrating 3 years!



The Bay Sailing Centre is approaching its third year in operation and the things it has been a part of so far is incredible. The locals know it as their little secret piece of paradise with sweeping views of the water.

Its location and ease of access to the water has seen it be the perfect host for various off the beach regattas, both internally run by NCYC and externally run with the support of NCYC.

However, it is also available for functions. One Member recently celebrated turning 50 at this magnificent waterfront location.

If you're in the area, make sure to check it out, or if you're interested in hosting a function there, contact Kaylee – [functions@baysailingcentre.com.au](mailto:functions@baysailingcentre.com.au)



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Welcome back aboard Marine Rescue Newcastle. Since the last edition, we have fully settled into our base at Stockton with several training sessions being held in our 'state-of-the-art' conference room.

We have also hosted emergency service training/conference days as well.

On the water has been extremely successful, with multiple assists and training sessions.

Some months ago, NC30 headed to Swansea to undertake a 'search and rescue exercise' (SAREX).

This event is a combination of MRNSW, SLSNSW (water and drone assets) and the Marine Area Command (MAC).

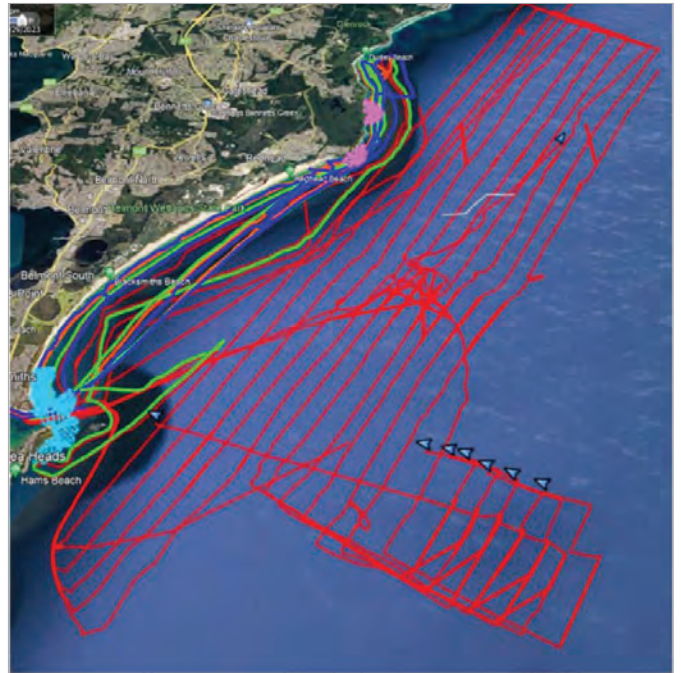
The MAC are in overall command of these events and all assets take this exercise very seriously.

The MAC put forward a scenario that sees all assets proceed to sea or close in shore and look to find a number of 'dummies' positioned either offshore or in close to the shallow and rocky areas.

The search patterns used were extremely well followed and proved that training undertaken by various organisations work when put to the test.

During the debrief on the Sunday, police were extremely happy with how the On Water and Communications phases went and stated that the overlay of what tracks should have been taken and actual tracks were almost perfect.

This would indicate in a real-life situation; it would allow a far better chance of finding someone lost at sea in a relatively quick time.



Above: Marine Rescue Boat Officer Ian Morrow receives an ESM from Governor Margaret Beazley.  
Top: Search pattern area for SAREX.

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## Medal for Ian Morrow

On a separate topic, our Boat Officer and current Unit Commander at the Central Coast Unit, Ian Morrow, was invested with the Emergency Service Medal ESM from the Governor of NSW, Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley.

Ian is one of Marine Rescue's most dedicated officers and we all congratulate him on receiving this prestigious award.

### Checking the weather forecast

It's a great time of year to be spending time out on the water with your friends and family. As the skipper, you're responsible for the safety of everyone on board your vessel. This includes making sure you have the correct safety equipment and lifejackets for everyone on board, knowing the weather and conditions and making good judgement calls while out on the water.

Before you head out, it is important to check the weather forecast and conditions. Weather conditions can change quickly, so regularly monitor the conditions during your trip, and be prepared. Knowing what weather is heading your way and when it is expected to hit to keep you and your passengers safe.

To learn more on wind and wave forecasts and conditions, as well as information on where you can get up to date weather forecasts and warnings, visit [lifejacketwearit.com.au](http://lifejacketwearit.com.au) and watch the videos on these topics, made in collaboration with the Bureau of Meteorology.

While summer is a time of celebration, remember that alcohol can affect your judgement, coordination, vision



and balance, which greatly increases your risk of having an incident. Driving a vessel under the influence puts everyone on, and in, the water at risk. Enjoy your time out on the water, but don't go overboard with alcohol - stay under the 0.05 BAC limit.

Remember, it's your responsibility to keep everyone safe. Know your limits and avoid taking risks. If in doubt, don't go out.

## Have you planned ahead for your day out?



You're the skipper, you're responsible. Visit [lifejacketwearit.com.au](http://lifejacketwearit.com.au) to plan your day and prepare for common risks.



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## Sail Port Stephens 2024

Having transformed from a stand-alone Race Week into a fully-fledged Regatta Series spanning three weekends and embracing a broad cross-section of sailing activities, the 17th annual Sail Port Stephens (SPS) in April-May 2024 promises to bring more excitement for competitors.

The Commodores Cup and Port Stephens Trophy regattas run concurrently from 15-20 April. This forms the cruisy "Passage Series" sailed from d'Albora Marina Nelson Bay, with a raft of surrounding social activities.

The prestigious NSW Yachting Championships, TP52 Gold Cup Act 3 and Rob Hampshire Cup combine from 26-28 April in an event called the "Windward-Leeward Series", with The Anchorage at Corlette being the hub.

Part 3 invites dinghy classes, trailer sailers, trailable sportsboats and Windsurfers to enjoy their own "Bay Series". Dates are 3-5 May.

### Save the Dates

17 Dec	Christmas Sail
1-10 Jan	Clipper Stopover
5-7 April	SailFest (inc Aust Yachting C'ships)
15-20 April	Sail Port Stephens Passage Series
26-28 April	Sail Port Stephens W/L Series
3-5 May	Sail Port Stephens Bay Series

## Security Phone Numbers

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- Police – (02) 4929 0999
- Water Police – (02) 4984 9012
- Fire Department – 000
- Dockmaster – 0408 299 512

### Club Directory

- **General Inquiries** (9am - 5pm)  
(02) 4940 8188 – [info@ncyc.net.au](mailto:info@ncyc.net.au)
- **Licensed Club**  
(02) 4940 8188 – [barmanager@ncyc.net.au](mailto:barmanager@ncyc.net.au)
- **Marina Manager** (8am - 4pm 7 days)  
0408 299 512 – [dockmaster@ncyc.net.au](mailto:dockmaster@ncyc.net.au)
- **Administration** (9am - 5pm 5 days)  
(02) 4940 8188 – [info@ncyc.net.au](mailto:info@ncyc.net.au)
- **Functions** (9am - 5pm)  
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