



RICHMOND
YACHT CLUB

Plain Sailing

November 2015



75 Years at Westhaven
1940 - 2015

FROM THE FLAG

I find that the commodore has an ombudsman role at Richmond - with comments and suggestions coming from all directions. These range from "About my handicap..." to "...lovely day, but..." to the more pleasing, "great race!" However, I rarely hear about our clubhouse from outside the committee, good or bad. I presume this is due to the fact that our clubhouse doesn't generally inspire great emotions from the people it serves. It is a lovely building, well maintained, and with a coveted aspect on the harbour, but not of the latest or flashiest design; it could be more nautical, it could be more functional, we could be open more. This issue of Plain Sailing should serve to provide a perspective on how our clubhouse came to be and how our use of it has evolved over the years as the club evolved. It is more "old friend" than "new love" and, like a steadfast old friend, the clubhouse has been with us at Westhaven for 75 years.



Some aspects of the clubhouse have not changed. The striking art-deco inspired exterior remains about the same. The wooden inserts in the dinghy locker floor were from when we were a dinghy club in the 1940s and there are still dinghies stored in the original lockers, though these are now used as cruising tenders. The tower is original and we start our Friday Night Special races from the club. However, most of the clubhouse has been modified. The physical changes are described in the remembrances in this issue and serve to remind us that RYC is not a static club - we evolved to meet the needs of the Westhaven sailing scene. Some of these we even initiated - consider that we started Wednesday night racing and, more recently, the SoloIQ Singlehanded Series. Many of the changes made, that define the club and clubhouse as it is today, have been in response to pressure from the council. Some things never change!



75 Years at Westhaven
1940-2015

It is also pleasing to know that our clubhouse is valued part of the community; we host regular users from community groups as well as countless wedding receptions and 21st celebrations at Richmond. Bob Marks summed it up well, "Richmond has always been a friendly club - we were never a booze club or a highbrow club, just a family club." Enjoy this special issue, Cornelia's last as editor (she goes out with a bang!), and be sure to come down to the club at the next chance - you'll be made welcome. And keep those comments and suggestions coming.

Bryon Wright, Commodore

EDITOR'S WELCOME

This issue is all about RYC's history, as the club celebrates the 75th anniversary of the opening of the clubhouse at Westhaven Marina. (Previous premises were a boat shed at Sloane's Beach, Herne Bay.)

I've used this anniversary as an opportunity to delve into RYC's history: not just the clubhouse itself, but the people involved, and events that have taken place in the clubhouse over the years. A big thank-you to everyone who helped with this.

This is my last issue as Editor - I've now sold *FX* and am living in Kerikeri, and am having fun crewing in Kerikeri and Opuia yacht races. Please keep sending your stories and photos to Mark Lloyd, who's taking over as Editor. Welcome, Mark! And I hope you enjoy editing this magazine as much as I have.

If you have any stories (old or new) to share, please send your words and pictures to: magazine@richmondyc.org.nz

Cornelia Luethi, Plain Sailing Editor

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

General and Family members

Mathew Dunne (Ross 680, *Sunset Sam*),
Blair McPheat (*Tiny Dancer*),
Graham Curd (Beneteau 43, *Kairos I*),
Richard Challis (White 32, *Lionmark*),
Richard Limbrick (Ross 850, *Cool Change*),
Andrew and Sarah Thompson (Ross 830, *Clandestine Jet*),
Brent Fraser (Senior 10m, *Bridgette Kou*),
Graeme Lucas and Samantha Harpur (Elliott 1050, *Chain Reaction*).



Crew Members

David and Stella Pye, Wendy Kerr, Cyril Tous, Bev Steward, Matthew McCullough, Steve Wright, Claire Annan, Ryan Packer, Kate Wanless, Natasha Eichler, Craig Boshoff, John Cochrane, Ann and Michael Hutching, Penelope Dine, Matty Thomas, Michelle Holmes, Mark Sutcliffe, Taylor Farrell, Annalise Silan, Justin Kim, Vladen Totev, Andre McConnell, Nick Woolerton, Murray Drake, Katrin Roehring, Tim Graves, James Butcher, Lana Mehelicic, Peter Kukulsky, Kenneth Chan, Warren Mara, Simon Bayliss, Jeremy Cope, Julie Williams, Caroline Roughneen, Brent Lawry, Glen Vartha, Oliver Mitchell, James Couch, Craig Rogers, Marco Sigismondi, Daniel Espinoza Madrid, Alexandra Keyte Beattie.

New members are very welcome! See the club's website or office for details.

CALENDAR & NOTICES

For the most up-to-date event information, contact the RYC office.

December	4	Fri	Emergency Services Regatta 1
	5	Sat	Gulf 3 - Sir Peter Blake Memorial Race
	9	Wed	Wednesday Night Series Race 6
	11	Fri	Victoria Friday Night Special Race 4
	13	Sun	Harbour Races - His 'n' Hers 1
	19	Sat	RYC Christmas Party at Sloane's Beach
	23	Wed	Crew.org.nz Rum Race
January	13	Wed	Wednesday Night Series Race 7
	15	Fri	Victoria Friday Night Special Race 5
	22	Fri	Victoria Friday Night Special Race 6
	27	Wed	Wednesday Night Series Race 7
	29	Fri	Gulf 4 - Mahurangi Night Race

Thanks to all of our great sponsors that help us put on our racing!



NEW WORLD

Victoria Park

Birkenhead



SPRING REGATTA: BY JORDAN VAUGHN



A bit of a drifter at the start.



The start - on *Pukeko*.



Slow times at North Head.



***Space Station* and *Pretty Woman* fighting the tide.**



***Pukeko* crew and Rangitoto.**

RYC QUIZ NIGHT: BY MARK LLOYD

Richmond Yacht Club's infamous Quiz Night was held again on Friday 31st July and attracted over 100 people for a night that was filled with a mild sprinkling of competitive angst - but more a great sense of fun and laughter.

The nautical-inspired questions often provided much head scratching and navel gazing during the quiz section, after which scores were tallied and teams then attempted to embellish their score with their athletic performances in the indoor fishing, bowls and golf team activities.

We saw a high number of teams participate with entries from the Coastguard and Westhaven Rotary as well as many club members soliciting friends to make up teams (some it must be said had limited nautical knowledge but enjoyed themselves just the same), which greatly bolstered overall numbers on the night.

After the mayhem of the sporting challenges, there could of course only be one winner. This year again saw the multi-talented Transformer Team taking out the top prize.



Quiz Winners: Hans Swete, Glenda Bennett, Steve and Tiff Robertson, Carl and Adrianne Swete.



Thanks go out to Mark Becroft and his helpers for putting on such a fun night and we all look forward to next one which Mark tells us will be even more challenging now he is in possession of a new nautical quiz book!

Will it be the Transformer Team carrying out a three peat next year?

Athletes in Action.

WESTHAVEN OPEN DAY: BY JORDAN VAUGHN

Richmond Yacht Club joined the fun of Westhaven Open Day on 3rd October with a coffee cart, free yacht biscuits, and gutter boat racing in front of the club.



Decorating sails for the gutter boats inside the dinghy locker.



And they're off!



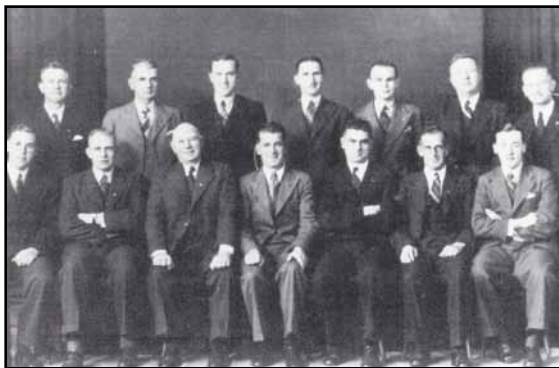
Free yacht biscuits, yummm.

"A YACHTSMAN'S PARADISE"

November 2015 marks Richmond Yacht Club's 75th anniversary at Westhaven. Here's an article from 'Powerboat', an Australian aquatic sports magazine - published on 10 September 1940, which describes the new RYC clubhouse:

"Built by the Auckland Harbour Board at a cost of £4,944, the plans were drawn by the Harbour Board's architect, Mr Norman Wade. The club was fortunate in having two architects among its members - Messrs RA and RL Thorpe - who, with their knowledge of the requirements of yachtsmen, were able to put forward many suggestions that were worked into the plans...

Considered to be the most up-to-date in New Zealand, the clubhouse, finished in cream-coloured concrete blocks, is built in the modern style of severe straight lines. Attractive as is the exterior, the "boatie" who steps inside finds all that delights the heart of a lover of the sea.



The Richmond Building Committee 1940.
Back row: George Dennes, Alf Thompson, Ray Thorpe (Hon Architect), Leith Philpott, Jim McAndrew, Trentham C. Webster, George Laycock.

Front row: Colin Dennes, Jim Frankham, Bob Rew, Murray Thomson, Rupert Thorpe (Hon Architect), Jack Craig, Roy Bowden.

Photo: From the book 'Lee Rail', by Harold Kidd and Robin Elliott.



About 96 dinghy lockers have been provided - and they have sliding doors that ensure that the dinghy "stays put" from any interference.

A nautical effect has been given to the building by the adoption of the "porthole" window on a large scale - to remind members, no doubt, that they are attached to the sea. Telephones are provided, and on the next floor there is a clothes locker for every dinghy locker downstairs. What a yachtsman's paradise! The visitor cannot but be impressed by the finish on the doors and stairways. They are such as would make the average householder envious...

FOREWORD BY CORNELIA LUETHI

On the next floor is the roomy committee and social room surrounded by windows, every second section of which opens. From here may be obtained magnificent views of practically all parts of the harbour. Finished in panelling of an unusual pattern, the room is capable of seating more than 60 people, and at one end there is a coat recess and a galley, complete with cupboards, wash-up basin and all the necessary gadgets to guarantee a meal to the hungry and thirsty. Soon two electric clocks will be placed in two apertures made ready for them."

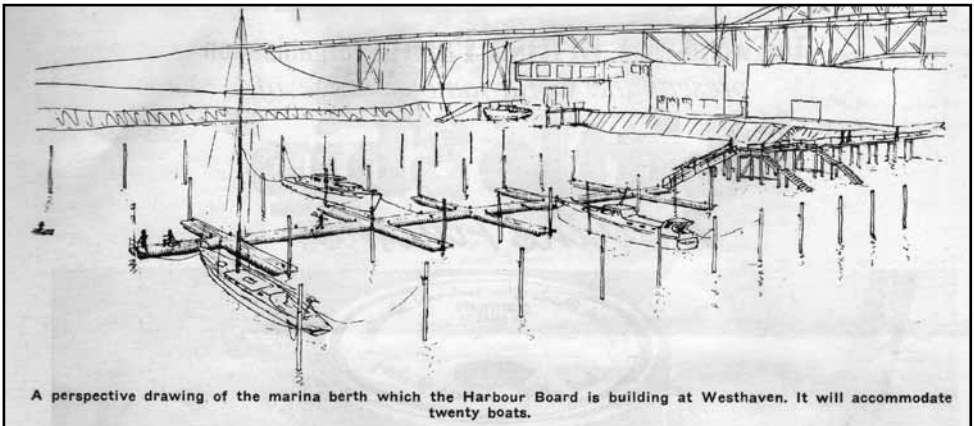


The dinghy lockers as they are today. Photo: Cornelia Luethi.

(Reproduced in part from the book 'Lee Rail: A Centennial History of the Richmond Yacht Club 1903 - 2003', by Harold Kidd and Robin Elliott.)

Current RYC members are too young to remember the opening of the new clubhouse. But I figured that many members would have some good stories and memories of the clubhouse - and the events it hosted - over the years.

I hope you enjoy the members' recollections as much as I did (I certainly learned a lot about the club's roots in the process). And please remember that these are memories and sailing yarns rather than verified facts. Enjoy!



Just to give an idea of how much Westhaven has changed over the years: the drawing above is from 'Sea Spray' in May 1963 - only then were the first 20 marina berths being planned. Thanks to Neil Chalmers for the scanned image.

VERA MUMMERY

"I came to New Zealand in 1953 - I'm originally from Watford in England. England was still recovering from the war; it was such a gloomy place and seemed like it would never improve. When we arrived here we thought we'd arrived in paradise."

I joined Richmond Yacht Club in 1966, before we had a boat. We bought a 32' Townson, *Caress*, a little while afterwards, and we were as green as grass - we'd never sailed in our lives before. We won our first race - we had the kite up in 38 knots of wind! I remember seeing the race result published in the evening newspaper.



Vera Mummery: RYC President and Life Member.

Photo: Cornelia Luethi.

Back in those days, women were okay for making the tea and sweeping the floor of the clubhouse, but they didn't go racing. That was fine by me, as I didn't really enjoy the racing. So while my husband raced, I helped out in the club by making and serving the tea and cleaning up afterwards. We usually left the yacht club at around midnight after a Wednesday night race.

My husband, Ted (short for Edward), was Commodore of Richmond from 1978 to 1980. He could never get over the fact that a lad from Liverpool was Commodore of a yacht club!

I was hands-on in the club for 45 years, and it's given me so much pleasure. I was Secretary of the club for 23 years - I resigned at the AGM in 2004 and was immediately elected President, replacing Nigel Bale who had resigned as President at the same meeting. We were both elected life members at the 1985 AGM and that was a great honour. Richmond Yacht Club has been a very big part of my life - not intentionally, it just worked out that way. So thank you, Richmond, for giving me such an interesting life!"

The clubhouse in the early days

"Back in those days, the entrance to the building was through the dinghy lockers - the entrance was near the Squadron. The rooms where we have prizegivings now used to be a mezzanine floor, that had lockers all around. The upstairs room (that's now rented out) wasn't there - it was built at a later stage by club members.

There never used to be any windows looking out over the sea - it was just a blank wall. We were told that we couldn't have any windows there. I remember Ron

Marks, who was a builder, taking a sledgehammer and knocking a hole in the wall. 'The building is still standing', he said, and so the windows were then put in.

That was during a big renovation of the clubhouse, and we had to lime the walls. Everyone helped out. The wall with the windows was my wall and another lady's wall. It might have been work, but it was never hard work, helping at the club. It was always a pleasure - you did things you enjoyed doing.

We used to sell liquor without a licence - my children used to sell bottles of Lion Red and DB Draught! But eventually we had to get a licence, and a lot of work went into it to satisfy the requirements. Everyone was thrilled when we finally got the liquor licence."

Bonnie the monkey

"One club member was a Professor at the University. He thought that monkeys could be trained to help people, and he had his own monkey called Bonnie.

He used to bring Bonnie along to the clubhouse and Family Cruising. Bonnie loved to get on all the boats and go up the masts. She even came to some of the functions at the club - she liked the rum!"

Celebrating the ladies' loo

"In the early days, the ladies had to use the downstairs loo underneath the staircase - there was no lighting and it was very dark. We had a wonderful party when the ladies' toilet went in! The members did all the work - the membership included a builder and a glazier."



The old, dark cloakroom can still be seen in the dinghy locker area of the club. Photo: Cornelia Luethi.

Rental increases

"At one time, the club went through a real trauma. We used to pay a nominal rent of around £200-300 a year in rent. The rent went up exorbitantly - to something like hundreds of thousands of dollars a year. It was ridiculous, and there was no way the club could afford to pay that. So we had meetings all over the place, trying to negotiate a reasonable sum. At one point, we thought we'd have to move.

The eventual solution was for the club to buy the building (not the land, just the actual building). It seemed crazy to buy the building that our members had built, but it was the only way to avoid the ridiculous rent."

VERA MUMMERY - *continued*

The Spring Regatta

"The Spring Regatta used to be known as 'the ice breaker', because it started the season in September. My husband was Commodore at the time, and one year we had 498 entrants in the race. We tried our darndest to get 2 more boats to make it an even 500!"

Wednesday night racing

"New Zealand winning the One Ton Cup in 1969 changed NZ yachting - that's the year that the Wednesday Night Series started. A member had been on holiday in Australia and brought the idea back with him. In the first race, there were 2 divisions with just 11 boats. The idea caught on, and the Squadron asked Richmond if they could also run Wednesday evening races - but they promised to remember that the idea was Richmond's."

Destination races

"Destination races used to be called 'Family Cruising', and I just loved those - they were a lot more laid back. They were wonderful. There were always lots of children, and events such as dinghy racing."

Westhaven

"Westhaven has changed so much - it used to be a lot more casual. We never used to race in winter, and the area around the Sitting Duck Café was open land that was used as a haul-out area. Whole families used to go to their boat; scrub it down; and bring along their lunch and eat together. It was a great place to be - my children more or less grew up at Westhaven."

Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron

"Back in the early days, the Squadron wasn't at Westhaven but at Anzac Avenue in town. The building that the Squadron is in now used to be a function venue. In those days, the Squadron didn't let women into their building at all - not even for doing the cleaning."

Vera's sailing highlight

"I was a timer for the Louis Vuitton races in Auckland in 1999. I knew all the sailors and skippers - little old me! My husband had died over 2 years before; it was such a shame that he wasn't around to see me do it. He would most likely have been helping too."

OLD PHOTOS OF WESTHAVEN

A big thank-you to Tony Evans for hunting out these gems of photos. They are all from the National Library of NZ, from the aerial collection of Whites Aviation Ltd.



BOB MARKS

"I built a boat in my back yard in Herne Bay in 1973-4 - a Lidgard 47, *Remarquable*. My mates came every weekend to give me a hand. When I'd finished building it, I was invited to Richmond Yacht Club. Back in those days the doors were always closed and locked - the clubhouse was only used for meetings. Richmond has always been a friendly club - we were never a booze club or a highbrow club, just a family club.

I did well in my first race, but I was disqualified - we were only allowed to put up one headsail, and I'd put up all the sails on my cutter rig. I'll have owned *Remarquable* for 40 years this year. The whole family spent 9 months cruising overseas once; my wife and I went all around the islands with the kids.

My kids and grand kids sail with me now in the Friday Night Specials on *Remarquable* - sailing has kept my family together."

Memories of the clubhouse

"As for the RYC clubhouse, the bottom floor was only half built, and it was suggested that we make the whole floor one. We needed a loan of about \$30,000 to raise the money for the renovations, and I was one of 8 or 10 guarantors for the loan. But even after we paid off the loan, the bank wouldn't release our responsibility, in case there were on-going creditors. But thankfully a Richmond member worked at that bank and sorted that out.

It was decided that we'd cook meals at the club on a Friday night, and we used to take turns. Except that the wiring wasn't up to it; the power went through half-way through cooking! That happened about 4 times.

There were a lot of working bees over the years, and everyone pitched in, from accountants to lawyers and bankers. A lot of women helped too. In fact, women were the unsung heroes of the club: no-one realises



This photo of Anniversary Day in 1946 gives an idea of just how popular boating events used to be.

Photo: Courtesy of Heather Lidgard.

how much they did to help behind the scenes.

I remember the time the club had to get a liquor licence, which meant getting the building permit approved. That was a can of worms!

On Wednesday nights, we used to get 300 to 400 boats racing, and we had to cart all the beer upstairs. And there'd be 8 or 10 jugs of rum just sat on the counter!

The Spring Regatta was always a big event, and sometimes we had to hire a bigger premises for the prize giving.

One year we got the notice that the peppercorn rent Richmond paid would be increasing. We fire-proofed the top floor and put in an extra set of stairs. That top floor is rented out now, and that pays for the club's rent."

Barn dances at Awaawaroa Bay

"Richmond members used to have a barn dance at Awaawaroa Bay on Waiheke Island. There's a wool shed there, and I used to go down, clean it out, and spray it to get rid of all the wriggles and crawlies.

One time I thought it would be good to take a keg of beer along - but of course, by the time I sailed there with it, half of it was froth!

There was no power at the wool shed, so we used to take a generator and row that ashore. We then hooked it up to the stereo and lights. We had parties like that for a few years in a row. We had to limit the numbers though, because the wool shed wasn't particularly big.

The Easter Rally used to be great - we got a lot of boats, and raced from one bay to another, and had a barbecue on the beach. But a lot of the women got sick of racing every day, so that faded out."

The future

"I think that the next big step is for Richmond to find out what the club needs to do to go on. I'd love to see the club build 4 or 5 one-design trailer sailors that younger people can race. And then rent those boats out over summer.

That way people that can't otherwise own a boat get access to a boat. It would need a good sponsor to help build the boats, and also someone to maintain the boats, as people just don't have the time these days. But I think this would help keep the club in the limelight."

TONY BARKER

"I started sailing off Takapuna beach when I was 12 years old, with Tim Smedley and a group of other boys. We still all meet every year at Tim's house.

I had *Mithril*, a Reactor 25, when I first joined Richmond in 1972. Soon after joining the club I was voted onto the General Committee where I served for 10 years, including 6 years as a Flag Officer.

The next boat we built was a Townson 32, *Arwen*. My wife, Chree, and I owned her for 20 years and sailed over 25,000 miles. Our 3 children have many happy memories of sailing with RYC and all retain an active interest in sailing."

The clubhouse

"In the early days, the main club area used by members was upstairs, the area now being leased out. The narrow mezzanine floor, above the dinghy lockers, housed lockers for storing sailing gear.

When Bruce Ardern was Commodore, he proposed that we increase the size of the club premises to cope with the growing membership. His original idea was to expand the top floor across the building to provide a larger lounge area. However, the St Mary's Bay residents objected to any change to the profile of the building and so that idea had to be scrapped. Instead, plans were drawn up to fill in the mezzanine floor to develop more space, while still retaining the upper lounge.

Up until then, RYC paid a peppercorn rental to the Auckland Harbour Board, based on the fact that the reclamation was paid for by the Government as a gift to the yachtsmen of Auckland and that the building had been built by members. The Harbour Board then 'assumed ownership' of all of the clubhouses (except Squadron) on the reclamation and began to charge rents based on the commercial value of the buildings. As a result, we had to find ways of making more money for the club without dissuading membership with higher fees. The answer was to get a licence and promote the sale of liquor after the races. Meeting the new licensing requirements meant that development of the new area had to be done to a high standard, which was done largely with voluntary labour. Unfortunately this increased the building's value and the rent we had to pay. Roy Malpass was responsible for the high quality woodwork around the bar and he also produced a number of honours boards for the clubroom.

The RNZYS was in a better position than the other clubs. They purchased their building from Trillo's (function rooms) and had title to their building, thus paying only rates and not rental. After many years of negotiation, RYC did finally manage to purchase title to our clubhouse.

Unfortunately, to continue earning income, we had to lease out the upper floor, with its floor to ceiling windows and splendid outlook.”

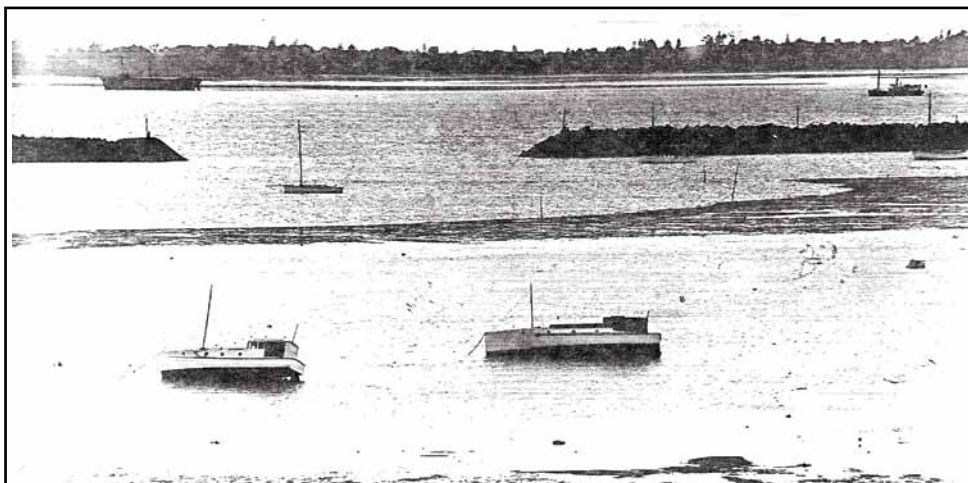
Spring Regatta

“The Spring Regatta started as a small race, with the date carefully chosen so it didn’t clash with any other major racing in Auckland. We actively promoted the race by putting flyers on every car windscreen at all the marinas. It took on a life of its own and quickly grew to a fleet of several hundred boats, on a par with today’s Coastal Classic. Even back then, it was very difficult to stir any media interest in yacht racing by smaller clubs, no matter how big the fleet. KFC sponsored a helicopter for the media one year, but no reports of significance were published.”

Family Cruising

“Family Cruising was one of RYC’s strengths. The races were held every second Saturday - we had to tow a dinghy and no extras were permitted. The series of 10 races finished mid-afternoon at a variety of venues. The children would go ashore soon after anchoring, with the teenagers collecting the very young children so that they could join in. Age was no barrier, I suspect because they realised that they had all shared both good and bad experiences while sailing. We would all gather on the beach in the evening to light a driftwood fire and cook sausages.

The friendships formed among the group were strong. The camaraderie ensured that they were the main source of new Committee members and Flag Officers.”



This photo from 1939 shows how tidal Westhaven used to be before it was dredged: entry and exit was at high tide only. Photo: Courtesy of Colin Clare.

NEIL CHALMERS

"I started crewing in the 1970s on Wednesday nights, and got my own boat in the 1980s. Back in those days, Westhaven was a community of people working on their boats - it was very special.

My first boat was a Lidgard, *Cracka*. Then I had a Townson 8.8, *Dream Maker*. I have another Townson 8.8 now, *Profile*, that I've owned since 1987 and cruise on.

I raced my previous boats regularly, and particularly enjoyed the Wednesday night racing and 2 person racing in winter - we had good fleets."

One Ton Cup

"When the One Ton Cup came to New Zealand, there were lots of overseas yachts here: Auckland hosted the cream of world yachting. Lots of these boats raced in the Richmond Wednesday Night Series - it was great to race against them. Flap Martinengo raced them and beat them!"

Changes to the clubhouse

"There were a lot of changes to the clubhouse in the 1980s. The area where the current bar is was a mezzanine floor; masts and other yachting gear was stored there over the winter.

Before the changes, the bar was on the top floor, and that's where we had the Wednesday Night after-match functions.

If you look at the Squadron side of the Richmond clubhouse, there's the face of a huge clock - that was used for starting races in the 1940s to 1960s when small boats were raced at Westhaven. You can still see the clock mechanism inside the building.

Richmond Yacht Club was at a really convenient location to the boats, with a wooden dinghy ramp right outside. There weren't many cars around



The clubhouse in 1940, finished and ready for the Opening Ceremony. You can see the clock on the side of the building. Photo: From the book 'Lee Rail', by Harold Kidd and Robin Elliott.



The wooden boat ramp that used to be outside RYC.

Photo: National Library of NZ, from the aerial collection of Whites Aviation Ltd.

back then.”

Helping in the tower

“I used to help in the start tower at the top of the building. The results and handicaps were all calculated by hand using mathematical tables. Sorting out the results into finishing order took ages, especially when there were hundreds of boats taking part! I remember one particularly slow boat, *Gavotte*, that used to call in.

It was great when one Committee member, a computer buff, installed TV screen, it really helped with recording finishing times as it saved us having to call out the times for each boat.”

Family Cruising

“I did a lot of Family Cruising, and sometimes I was the finishing boat. At times I gave everyone the gun!

One Richmond member worked at the University and had a pet monkey. It was quite a vicious thing and it would yelp and try and bite you. He'd bring the monkey to the beach at Family Cruising.

I remember one time that the Westpac rescue helicopter got called out to help someone who had fallen out of a tree at Rakino at a Family Cruising event.

Those Family Cruises were before gas barbecues were around, so we all had to forage for firewood. There weren't any fire bans back in those days.”



The wooden strip in the middle of the dingy locker area would have made it easier dragging your sailing dinghy to and fro (bearing in mind the boat ramp was just outside).

Photo: Cornelia Luethi.

CLUBHOUSE TOUR

After hearing the stories of long-standing RYC members, I realised there were many parts of the clubhouse I wasn't even aware of.

(I've only ever seen the room where we have prizegivings - which I always thought was 'upstairs', but it's not, it's the former mezzanine level!)

Kate Herstell kindly gave me a tour - here's what I discovered...



The RYC clubhouse as it is today. I can't believe I never noticed that the prizegivings aren't in the top floor, but the mezzanine!

The dinghy lockers

Not being a dinghy locker tenant, I assumed that there was just one dinghy locker area underneath the club - but there are actually 2 areas.

The 2 areas are interconnected by a maze of rooms, including an old office area, which is rented out to a church group.



This is one of the rooms downstairs that interconnects the dinghy locker. It's rented out to a church group.

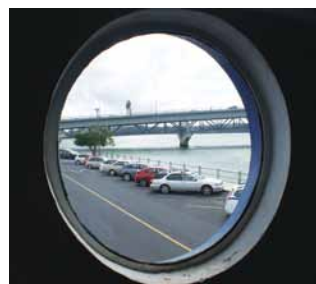
Upstairs

The upstairs area is rented to LOMOcean - formerly known as Craig Loomes Design. (Sorry, I didn't take any photos as I didn't want to get into trouble for photographing something commercially sensitive in their office.)

But as you walk around the building, you really appreciate the porthole windows - they are very cool.

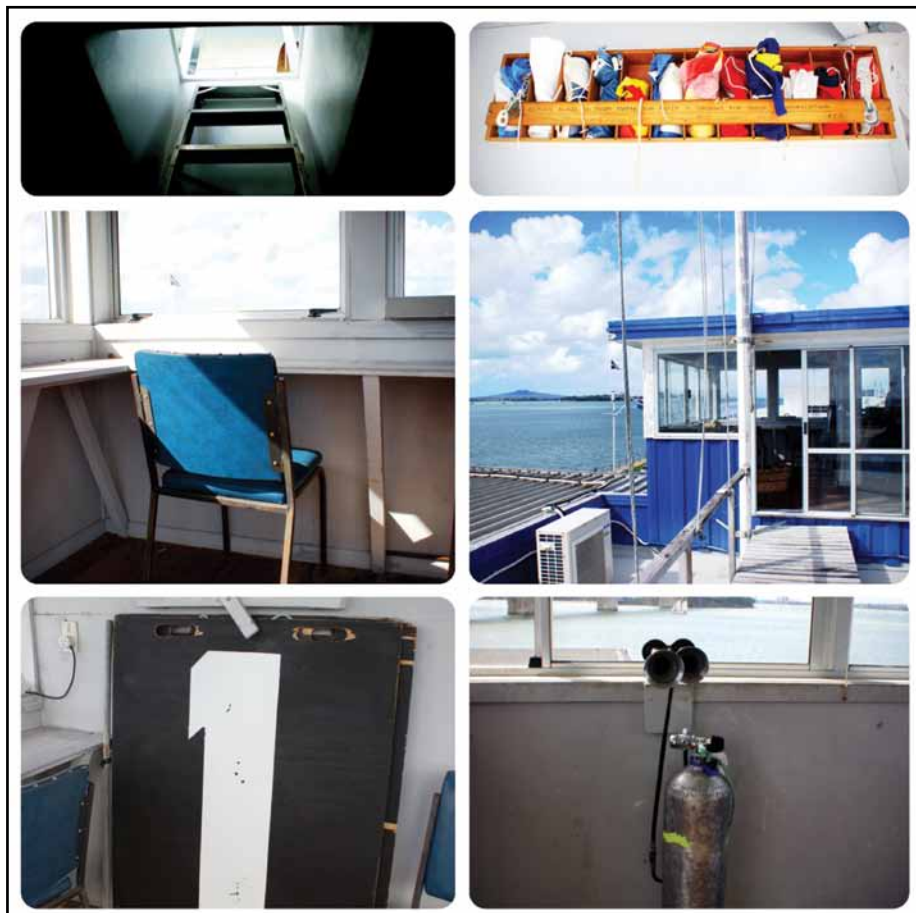
The Richmond start tower

When I first started racing with Richmond Yacht Club, the tower on the clubhouse was frequently used as the Start and Finish line on Wednesday



You really notice the porthole windows when you're inside the building.

night races. It's a little bit trickier as a start line, as the line is on quite an angle. It's definitely easier (on the water) starting from the tower in the car park.



Anyway, I'd always imagined that the RYC start tower was quite plush, with carpeted steps leading the way up. Wrong! Access is from the lunch room in the upper (tenanted) level, via a ladder that's pulled down from the ceiling... easy access it is not. Once you've squeezed through the access hatch, the tower is gorgeous - it has a real retro nautical feel.

The gas canister for the hooter is ready to go; the flags are neatly organised in cubby holes; and the big numbered boards are stacked in the corner. And, of course, the view is stunning. If you ever get the chance to go up to the RYC start tower, do it!

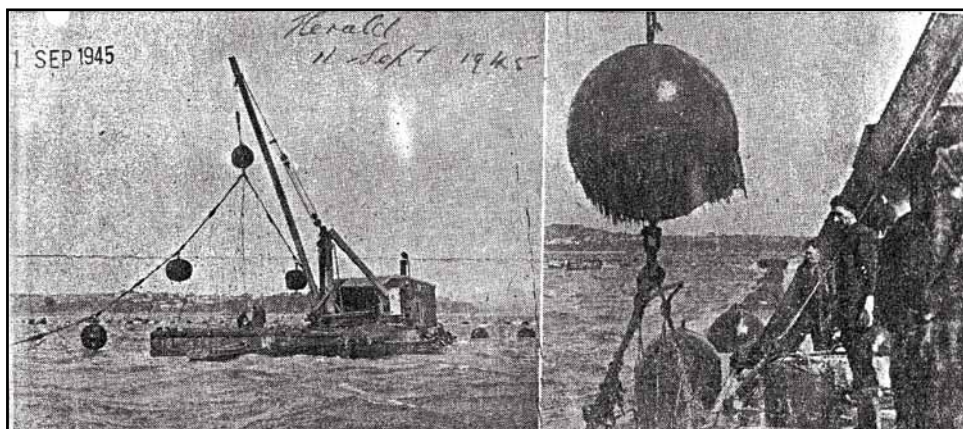
THE WAR-TIME 'BOOM'

When the RYC clubhouse was opened in 1940, the Second World War was in full swing. This affected sailing in the Waitemata Harbour too, as there was a wire gate, known as a 'boom' laid between North Head and Tamaki. This was an anti-submarine device to protect Auckland Harbour. A steam ship, *Claymore*, controlled the boom gate.

To cross the boom, boats had to be registered with a large registration number painted on the side. The boom would then be lifted up to allow for access.

The images below are from the NZ Herald on 1st September 1945, and show the dismantling of the boom.

Thank you to Colin Clare for the information and photos.



CLUB INFORMATION

Officers

President	Vera Mummery	<i>Nevenka</i>
Commodore	Bryon Wright	<i>Revolution Blues</i>
Vice Commodore	Andrew Burr	
Rear Commodore	Tony Evans	<i>Grenada and Predator</i>
Treasurer	Heather Gaites	<i>Maestro</i>
Secretary	Evelien van Vliet	<i>Morning Star</i>
Club Manager	Tim Smedley	
Building Manager	Andrew Burr	

General Committee

John Davies	<i>Crocodile</i>
Doug Campbell	<i>Yotasaurus</i>
Christel Townley	
Sinisa Grujicic	<i>Wild</i>
Fleur Cox	
Tim Smedley	
Peter Locke	<i>The Bondi Tram</i>
Mark Becroft	<i>Maggie May</i>
Andrew Hall	<i>Unitec II</i>
Sarah Michel	
Gordon Dyer	<i>Apparition</i>
Jordan Vaughn	<i>Pukeko</i>

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Magazine

Please email your
stories and photos to:

[magazine@
richmondyc.org.nz](mailto:magazine@richmondyc.org.nz)



COVER PHOTOS: Front: the wooden boat ramp that used to be outside the RYC clubhouse at Westhaven (thanks to Tony Evans for finding this photo at the National Library of NZ, from the aerial collection of Whites Aviation Ltd.). Back: Vintage RYC life ring (photo: Cornelia Luethi).



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