Commodore's Report 2024

Mr President, fellow Flag officers, Committee and Club Members.

Welcome and thank you for attending our 2024 Annual General Meeting, this being the 120th AGM of the Richmond Yacht Club.

The purpose of Richmond Yacht Club stated in our Club's constitution, is the encouragement of amateur yachting and boating generally for the benefit of amateur boating and all the Club members. It sounds simple enough, but there are a huge number of facets to the Club, indeed too many to include in this Commodore's Report. I will focus on a few, and will endeavour to be both comprehensive and brief. Other areas are covered in the Secretary's Report.

Racing

It has been an enjoyable year on the water despite a few weeks of poor water quality and cancelled races in early summer. We had 67 series entrants into Wednesday Night Racing, an increase of 4 on the previous year; and have 61 entered into this year's Winter Racing, an increase of 11 on 2023. Route 66 was a great success, with a northbound fleet of 52 and ideal conditions.

We have started making use of digital surveys this year, to gain feedback from our Members on races they've participated in, such as Route 66 and the Friday Night Special. We hope that this feedback loop will help us make changes to our race programme that will be well received by members and hopefully attract new participants.

On behalf of all members, I thank our Principal Race Officer Andrew Burr, along with his fellow race officers, tower crew and Taipan crew, for their time and efforts preparing and running our races.

Administration

Kerry went on Maternity Leave in February of this year, and we were delighted for her and Andy on the mid-March arrival of Eliza. We have also been delighted to welcome Sharon onboard to cover the Club Administrator role. She has picked up the ropes quickly and we are very happy with how she is getting on.

Membership

It's very encouraging to see our 2024 membership of 289 exceed the numbers of the previous two years, however there is still much more work to be done. Skippers, please encourage your crews to join the Club as Crew members. It's worthwhile pointing out that your Commodore and Vice Commodore both started with Richmond as Crew members through the Friday Night Special. For the Club to continue viably towards its 150th year, we need your crews to build a connection to the Club, a connection that will hopefully result in them one day putting their hands up at an AGM to keep this place going.

Building Operations

We are immensely grateful to our fantastic Club Captain Keith Bekker for his unflappable efforts in maintaining this building which in November will be 84 years old. Keith steps down this year, and David Cashmore and Tony Evans have put up their hands to fill Keith's shoes…. Or perhaps, better said, work boots ?! The Secretary's report contains more detail on work undertaken this year.

You'll have noticed as you arrived tonight that Eke Panuku continues its work on the seawall. Three pohutukawa trees were recently relocated, and work will continue on the footpath and surrounds for considerable time. While this current project is intended to build in resilience to future weather events, Eke Panuku's webpage lists a longer-term project to raise the level of the reclamation by approximately one metre - and the buildings with it. Funding availability will determine when this project begins, but these plans will no doubt eventually have a massive impact on the Club and prompt major decisions. Your Committee will keep you informed.

The Club as an Incorporated Society

The Club was registered as an Incorporated Society in August 1939, under the law of the day, the Incorporated Societies Act 1908. This law was overhauled and replaced by the Incorporated Societies Act 2022, and Richmond must re-register by April 2026 with a new up-to-date constitution. I had hoped to have a new constitution ready for voting upon at this AGM, but it was not to be: we will hold this over until the 2025 AGM, which still gives us plenty of time before the 2026 deadline.

Looking ahead

As I stand here at the 120th AGM of the Richmond Yacht Club, I am optimistic about the future of the Club, but conscious of the oncoming challenges too: Westhaven is changing, the sport of yachting is changing, and the geography and demographics of Auckland are changing. I am grateful to everyone who makes the Richmond Yacht Club what it is today, and I look forward to serving the club for a second year as Commodore.

Thank you.

Chris Crone

Commodore