

## **Classic Yacht Association AGM — 12 July 2016**

### **Chairman's Report**

This is my last Chair's report. Tonight I will be passing the baton to a new CYA Chairman and committee so it is with mixed emotion that I deliver this report to you. Mixed as I admit to feeling some relief, but at the same time some regrets that I could have achieved more over my six-year tenure with the committee, four of those as Chairman.

As with each year-end report, I'll touch on some of the season's highlights of which there were many.

### **Racing**

The four-race winter series hosted by the RNZYS continues to be popular with a growing fleet, ten boats this season, braving the often-trying conditions. We continue to develop and strengthen the association with the Squadron and this season we added the Classic Yacht Regatta into the mix.

The summer race season kicked off last October with the Squadron's Opening Day Regatta. Due to the fresh conditions, which hampered racing and events throughout the rest of 2015, we drew smaller than hoped-for fleets. The fresh weather prompted some robust discussion at the Boat Owners meeting with the feeling that the Race Officer should take the lead when conditions are marginal and make an early call. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the skipper to decide whether to race but it was felt that this could expose boats and crews to unnecessary risk. I'm sure this will continue to be a subject of debate... On the positive side and true to recent form, the warm summer weather finally arrived and tracked later and ran longer. Towards the back end of the season skippers were complaining about too little wind...

The season's racing highlights included:

1. Northcote Birkenhead two-race format, supported by skippers at the Boat Owners meeting
2. Patio Bay and Mahurangi continue as perennial favourites and are well supported
3. Anniversary Regatta received positive feedback with the shorter course favoured by skippers however, this event continues to struggle with the Classics the only keelboat fleet out in numbers. With my AAR Committee hat on, I can advise that there is considerable work being done behind the scenes to reverse the recent trend of low entries and breathe life back into this showcase event – but it does need your continued support
4. The Classic Yacht Regatta, this year supported by the Trillian Trust and hosted by the Squadron

Overall, my impression is that with increasing pressure on skippers and crews, the decision to race, particularly in the harbour series, is being left to the last minute. The reduction in full-season series entries supports this. Following feedback, the committee is looking at a 2016/17 season calendar that will provide short, fun racing over varied harbour courses, hosted by our partner clubs. The Classic Yacht Regatta

remains as a three-day premier racing highlight, and the season is rounded out by the passage series, which is more inclusive with the launch and yacht fleets combining for some great classic socialising.

The overall season's results saw *Katrina II* (A div), *Kotuku* (B div) and *Princess* (moderns) take the honours in the harbour series and *Waitangi* (A div) and again *Kotuku* (B div) the passage series. Again congratulations to skippers and crews who took home the silverware!

### **Events**

This year we tried to mix things up a little on the event front. We added a new overnight destination at Fairway Bay, Gulf Harbour which, thanks to the kind spring weather, attracted a number of yachts and launches. We think this safe anchorage will prove to be a popular event. Following feedback, the committee will continue to provide opportunities for new outings, mixed with the perennial favourites.

There is no question that the Patio Bay and Mahurangi events continue to tick all the boxes, providing boat owners, crews, guests and the viewing public with a spectacular showcase of our vessels and the lifestyle they provide.

The Round Rangi race and Cake Day formula towards the end of the season continues to attract support and the Riverhead cruises an opportunity to showcase our growing launch fleet with 15 to 20 vessels packed with visitors making the epic journey to the top of the harbour twice (officially) this season.

Greg Salthouse opened the yard and gave us some insight to the challenges the industry is facing. They are proving that Kiwi innovation and strong leadership will continue to be the backbone of the marine industry in New Zealand.

### **Administration**

We saw another baton-change late in the season with Tanya Ankersmit resigning from her role as secretary, which she held for four years, due to personal circumstances. I would like to again formerly acknowledge Tanya's administrative and management skills – she kept us all in line! The potential hiccup that this could have caused was fortunately avoided as Joyce Talbot, our stalwart and Life Member, needed little encouragement to step up. We all welcome Joyce back into an officer role.

One of the early improvements Joyce has made has been dragging us into the digital banking age. We no longer write cheques, and now authorise (once approved by the committee) and pay all expenses online. The other Joyce initiative is the "Virtual Mail Service" which scans and emails all mail correspondence to our admin dept. This saves time and the cost of a PO Box.

Joyce and Bruce Tantrum continue to manage activities at Heritage Landing. The MoU between the CYA and Waterfront Auckland (now Panuku Development Auckland) has been dusted-off and we are starting to see some changes. The true costs including electricity etc are now being passed to boat owners and Bruce has negotiated a very satisfactory outcome with respect to dinghy storage with Viaduct

Harbour Marina who manages the Heritage Landing berthage. I'm sure that this season will see more heritage activity at Silo Park...

I would like to again thank the committee for their continued support and dedication to delivering a great year. I would particularly like to thank my vice, Peter Mence for his continued positive energy and enthusiasm; James Mortimer for his leadership and passion as our Yacht Captain; and Iain Lowrie, Adrian Sully and Guy King for their valued input and support. I would like to acknowledge Nathan Herbert who was voted in as Launch Captain last AGM. Unfortunately we had to accept Nathan's resignation during the season. Nathan has continued to provide support with the Classic Yacht Journal/Breeze publications and with the coordination of the next Classic Yacht Register due for publication October this year.

In summary, I reflect on some of what we have achieved as an association over the last 6 years:

1. Conducted a survey to provide an evidence-based approach to providing what members are looking for from the CYA
2. Building a committee structure to deliver on members expectations
3. Providing events and opportunities that develop collaboration between the yachting and launch members
4. Improving the CYA website, publications and journals including the Classic Register
5. Developing relationships with the many clubs and entities that host our race and social programmes, in particular the RNZYS
6. Streamlining processes such as online race entries, subs payments and now electronic banking and postage to improve services to members

I believe we still need to work on:

1. Membership numbers – each year we add on average 60 new members and 20 new classic vessels – unfortunately we lose almost the same number through attrition for various reasons so our growth, as discussed previously, remains static. The challenge to members and the new committee is how to continue to ensure that the association is listening, is relevant and that it is an attractive proposition, particularly to younger members
2. Continuing to be inclusive in our attitudes and actions – it is always about ensuring our vessels are the focus and not us. Once we get too political or personal, we lose focus on what the association was established to achieve: the protection of our classic vessels, enjoying the sense of pride we derive as their caretakers and having fun using them...

The baton-pass is almost complete. Tonight you will have a new committee and a new Chair. I wish them every success and ask you all to give them your full support. I'm sure that this coming year will again see new members, new vessels and some restorations re-launched, providing us all with the opportunity to enjoy beautiful wooden boats and the company of great people.

**Rod Marler**

Chairman, CYA Committee 2016