

THE NEW ZEALAND CLASSIC YACHT QUARTERLY



THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CLASSIC YACHT ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND INC.

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ISSUE 18

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JANUARY 2000

The Louis Vuitton – the view from the Rawhiti

IS right there, at the heart of the action. If you haven't managed to secure a seat ringside at the America's Cup action, the CYA's *Rawhiti* is the stake 2 mark boat for the Louis Vuitton racing and Brent Balemi has been taking CYA members and others out to view the racing most days. *Rawhiti's* graceful racing lines have been attracting attention amongst the stunn-

ingly opulent motor launches supporting the racing teams, and the equally opulent spectator vessels. Between the Louis Vuitton and the TV3 coverage of the Akarana race the classic yachts have been getting plenty of coverage in the media lately.

Rawhiti's job is to patrol the left hand side of the start 'box' keeping spectator boats out before leading the spectator fleet up to the stake 2 mark on the port side of the approximately kite shaped course. Spectator vessels are allowed to proceed to the top mark once *Rawhiti* reaches her position at the stake 2 mark. The top mark for the day's windward/leeward course is set by the course committee, depending on the wind direction.

There are 3 races each for the 2 courses, with starts 10 min apart making plenty of action for those out there watching the racing. On the day John Gorter and John Bertenshaw (*Waione*) went out, Spain and the Swiss brought the action right to the bow of *Rawhiti* as they tussled for the start.

More racing next issue with the defender series..!



Spain and Switzerland compete for the start from the *Rawhiti*.



The Swiss.



France and Switzerland.

Photographs by John Bertenshaw

CLASSIC EVENTS CALENDAR

= A Logan Race

Friday, 28 January 2000 -
Mahurangi Weekend
- Night Race NYC
- Mahurangi Festival
- Anniversary Regatta. . . .

Friday, 4 February 2000 -
Squadron Weekend Kawau -
- Friday Night Race
- Saturday Harbour Race

Friday 11th (evening) -
Monday 14th February 2000 -
Logan Classic Millennium
Regatta

Saturday, 27 February 2000 -
CYA picnic/BBQ to Islington Bay or
Motoihue

Saturday, 11 March 2000 -
NYC - Regatta and
Winstone Memorial

Saturday, 18 March 2000 -
RNZYS Te Kouma Weekend

Sunday, 2 April 2000 -
PCC Vintage & Veterans Day

Saturday, 8 April 2000 -
RNZYS Round Rangitoto Race

Tuesday, 25 April 2000 -
VCC ANZAC Day Regatta
for Old Crew

Sunday, 30 April 2000 -
PCC Closing Day

5 out of the 8 Logan races
to count for the Logan
Championship Points Prize

Race Program for the Classic Yacht
Association
of New Zealand 1999-2000
Season Sponsored by:

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RAWHITI

THE BALEMI CONNECTION

My sailing interests started as with most Kiwi sailers in P class and Starlings. The first keeler I owned was a Pied Piper which gave everyone lots of fun.

From this beginning I raced on other people's boats in coastal, offshore and international regattas. These boats were mainly stripped out, light displacement racing yachts – fast but often uncomfortable. It was on an offshore race with a stopover in Fiji that I had my first introduction to the classic yachts. We were at anchor on *Future Shock* in a lagoon. Across the bay from us was *Fidelis*. In this setting she looked beautiful. We swam across to say hello, and to have a look over her. I was most impressed at what I saw, especially her comfort compared to our boat.

After 10 years of serious racing I was getting tired of it. So I was back to sailing my trailer sailer with close friends and my wife Rebecca, and we had lots of enjoyable racing and cruising.

One Sunday morning I was reading a boat magazine and saw a classic yacht for sale approximately 40ft in length. It brought back memories of *Fidelis*. So I rang up about it and that afternoon we were sanding on the deck of *Spray*. It is a lovely boat but we felt it wasn't quite suitable for us. While speaking to the broker afterwards he told us of a classic Logan for sale at Gulf Harbour. The following weekend we found ourselves staring at this long, low, light green immaculate craft called *Rawhiti*. As with most owners



of classics it was love at first sight. Wayne Hurst had done a terrific job of bringing *Rawhiti* back to life after a period that it had been abandoned.

To some true traditionalists, *Rawhiti* wasn't back to her original self, but to us she was just perfect. Wayne had completely stripped, rebuilt her and added a few luxuries. Wayne explained in detail to us about the renovations and went on to tell us about her history, which we found to be most existing. You start to realise that you are not just purchasing a yacht but also a history.

Rebecca and I thought *Rawhiti* was perfect. It had the looks, performance and more than enough equipment for our requirements. We made an offer but only to find out the following day that the broker had told us the asking price was double what he had originally told us. We were most dejected, we really wanted this boat but couldn't afford it. We over extended ourselves with an offer which was also turned down. We gave up hope only to receive a call some weeks later to



Rawhiti, Terry Fong AFA Photography



Rawhiti, Terry Fong AFA Photography

say that our offer would be accepted. We went for it, but did wonder what we had let ourselves in for.

All our family and friends thought we had gone mad buying a 90 year old yacht. That was until they had seen it, then everyone wanted to go sailing on her!

Our whole sailing lifestyle had changed. *Rawhiti* is such a pleasure to sail. For a 54ft. boat Rebecca and myself can comfortably sail her by ourselves. We are certainly very proud owners and it gives much enjoyment and creates interest when people come over to admire your boat. Also I think that half of Auckland must have at some stage sailed on her as we are forever meeting people with connections and stories about *Rawhiti*.

We have made many new friends and with the Classic Yacht Association have really enjoyed the last five years of ownership. We look forward to many more enjoyable times. We are now introducing a new generation to sailing on *Rawhiti*. Celia our two year old daughter, has already taken to climbing out on the bowsprit. If you are interested in *Rawhiti's* history and you see us moored in a bay, come on over and we can fill you in on its long and interesting past.

By Brent and Rebecca Balemi



Celia Balemi at the helm of *Rawhiti*.



SUNDAY NEWS, June 1, 1975

ADMIRALS CUP CHALLENGE TRICYCLE RELAY RACE

SATURDAY, JUNE 7, start 10am

AT

DOWNTOWN SERVICE STATION LTD

TEAMS FROM:

Barnacle Bill — Inca — Gerontius.
10 gruelling miles from Fanshawe Street to
Mission Bay and return.

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P.O. Box 6365, Auckland

I agree to sponsor yacht at the
rate of per mile (max. 10 miles) or phone
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SUNDAY NEWS, June 1, 1975-5

PEDALLING THEIR WAY TO BRITAIN

BIKIES with a difference?
No . . . three key men in
the Dunhill Admiral's Cup
yachting team doing their
bit to raise money for the
challenge in Britain in
August.

Mayor Robbie will start
the race at 10 a.m. and the
public is being asked to
sponsor the crew of its
choice on a per mile basis.

The public is invited to
sponsor the team of its
choice by ringing 361-753
with details.

Bruce Farr (left), Chris
Bouzaid (centre) and
Mike Spanhake thought
getting their gear off as
Males of the Week was as
good a way as any to
spread the word about
their fund-raising triathlon
on June 7.

The three cup crews —
Inca, Barnacle Bill and
Gerontius — will race
kid's trikes from the
Downtown Service Station
in Fanshawe Street to Mis-
sion Bay and back to raise
money for their trip to Bri-
tain.



JUST ADD WATER AND WATCH 'EM GROW

The Spirit of Adventure Trust and the Auckland Maritime
Museum Classic Boat Festival at the Princes Wharf/Hobson
Wharf basin on the weekend of 6&7 of November was a
credit to the organisation and the supporters of the event.

As I wandered along Princes wharf on the Saturday there
were a host of friendly Spirit of Adventure volunteers
providing information on each of the vessels tied up alongside
the wharf. The *Ted Ashby*, the *Soren Larsen* and of course the
Spirit of New Zealand were there providing guided tours of
their various vessels, with regular sailing programmes for the
two day event advertised on information boards on the wharf.

Our own Classic Yacht Association was represented by
Little Jim and *Spray II* which greeted visitors at the city end
of the wharf and John Duder had even organised an
information board for visitors. The immaculate *Viking* was
moored at Hobson wharf drawing visitors past the *Gypsy*
and the *Puke* which were offering steamboat rides, and the
model yachts and P-class dinghies which were racing in the basin. The navy band provided ambiance for
those indulging at one of the many cafes, and visitors were able to inspect the museum's latest exhibits
while they were there.

All credit to the organisers and crew of volunteers, it was a great family day out.



The Spirit of New Zealand as seen from
Thelma Labour Weekend 1999.

RANGER IS BACK!

Are the A-class fleet back to having 'Line Honours' all sown up by one boat again? Maybe. *Ranger* is back after a two-year refit at Yachting Developments and has already taken line honours in the first Logan race, the Squadron's Classics day.

Ian Cook and Yachting Developments took *Ranger* back to her bare keel and deckbeams and worked up from there.



Ian Cook, Yachting Developments.

Her hull is now glassed, she has new kauri cabin sides over her old mahogany, the Swedish masonite board has been replaced with kauri ply and she has been saturated with epoxy, but she is in remarkably good condition and YD found "nothing that you wouldn't expect to find in a battle scarred 60 year old lady". Fosters designed her rig and Sobstad did

the sails. Max Carter, members of the Tercel family and Mac Redmond have all been monitoring her refit, the CYA will now be monitoring her racing performance - hopefully not from behind her on the race track too often!



Re-launching Day, 7 October 1999.

Photographs: Bob Wharton, Stills Photography.

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DISCOUNTED PRICES DIRECT
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LOOK FOR THE BROCHURE AND
ORDER FORM ENCLOSED WITH
THIS ISSUE OF CLASSIC YACHT
QUARTERLY.



12TH - 14TH FEBRUARY, 2000

'The Heritage of the America's Cup'

REMINDER

- GET YOUR ENTRIES IN NOW!!!

Entries close on Christmas Eve and there's not much time left!!
Any problems call Joyce Talbot, Race Secretary on (09) 836 4747.

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MR CONNELL (CON) THODE

OBE (FOR SERVICES TO SAILING)

NEW ZEALAND'S ONLY RNZNVR SUBMARINE COMMANDER

By Sandra Gorter

MR Con Thode: I started sailing in 1922 when I was eleven years of age, my father bought a boat called the *Schopolo*. When they had mullet boats that were going to the shallow waters for catching mullet they also had keel boats going out and catching snapper, and because they had no refrigeration they were designed to sail well to get the fish back to the market quickly. *Victory* was a snapper boat, and the *Francis* as well.

Schopolo belonged to a Greek, it means shark or something. Dad bought her in 1922 and he



Percy Thode on deck of *Toroa*, Cox's Creek, c.1910.

didn't like the name so he changed it to *Rangi*. Dad had *Rangi* until 1928 when the real estate business got very tough with the depression, and he sold it to Alan Leonard. Alan Leonard in due course lent it to Lieutenant Commander Juler to do the first trans-Tasman race against the *Teddy*, Erling Tambs *Teddy*. I started on *Rangi* at eleven and she'd had years and years and years of antifouling put on, so my first job was to take to her with an old scraper and I spent the winter just quietly scraping antifouling off the bottom! I had what was probably the first P, actually they were called Tauranga seven footers then. I had raced with Dad to Tauranga in *Rangi* in about 1925. We usually went north for our cruising but we raced this year to Tauranga, and when I was in Tauranga I spotted these little boats flitting around. I said to Dad 'I want one of those', and he said 'Do you?' So a day or two later he came aboard with a roll of plans and he said there you are, go and build it! So with the help of the next door neighbour I built what was probably the first seven footer in Auckland.

Sandra Gorter: How old were you?

CT: 14... yes 14 or 15. Dad wouldn't know which end of a saw he was looking at, but the next door neighbour had built a twenty two foot

mullet boat himself. My parents were separated in those days and I lived with my mother in Mount Eden while Dad lived at Westmere, just near Cox's creek. When I say I built this thing, I did a little bit of work but Mr Williamson did most of it. The only thing was, she was all ready but no rudder and I hadn't found out how to make a tip rudder at that stage.

I went over to Cox's creek one day with my brother and a chap called George Moore and it was a lovely westerly, sou-west breeze. I remembered Dad had an old broken oar under the house and of course she had a very thick transom, so we bored a hole down through the transom and put a rowlock into that, and cut the oar off and made it fit into the rowlock, then three of us got into this seven footer, one sitting on the little bit of deck with his feet in the cockpit facing aft – that was my brother, and George and I sat alongside each other in the cockpit, and we went across to Kauri Point with father dancing up and down on the beach yelling, 'You bloody fools' !!!

Mrs Marcie Thode: He thought you were going to drown.

CT: Fun though isn't it?!!

CT: When Dad sold *Rangi* in 1928 I had a season on *Prize*. Then Dad bought the Waipapakauri hotel in the far north. The depression had started to bite by this time and real estate was no good, so he got all his friends to help with some money and help.. you know, lend him money, and he bought the pub in the north. He said to me come on, give me a hand. So I went up to Waipapakauri in '29. While I was there I had to have some sailing so I bought an M-class eighteen footer called *Mischief*. We used to sail around the Awanui



Lieut. Con Thode RNVR and Lieut. George Hunt DSC, RN, on the bridge of HM sub-H50, 1942 off Plymouth.

Harbour but occasionally – if I could get a break, we would sail out the Awanui entrance and across Ranginui Bay to Houhora. I've often thought back to those sails – *Mischief* had no built-in flotation, we had no lifejackets or flares, not a vessel in sight, and next stop South America!

While we were up there we had a race with a Bedford Whaler, a New Bedford Whaler which is now in the maritime museum. You've heard about the *Elingamite*, the ship that hit the Three Kings?

SG: Yes.

CT: Sunk. A lot of the survivors got on to the island. Some of them got by boat across to the north cape of New Zealand and as a the result



Thelma A2, Squadron weekend, Kawau 1935. Left to right staning Stan Waters, Percy Thode, Peter Annan, Max Darrow, Pat Stewart, Con Thode and seated Roy Hume.

of that word got through about the wreck. John Smith, Pukenui, Houhora went out in his whale boat to try and find a ship. He intercepted a ship which was bound from Auckland to Sydney, the *Zealandia*. In those days many ships had no radio so communicating with the *Zealandia* was a manual affair. The *Zealandia* went and picked up the people on the Kings so of course that whale boat had a great aura. The locals reckoned she did twenty knots and we said well *Mischief* only does six and a half but she'll probably beat her, so we had a famous race up there. We beat her of course. My father took a ten pound stake which was a lot of money in those days. Dad put the money up and so he insisted on sailing the boat which upset me! However that's a long story, but that whaleboat is now in the maritime museum.

Then in 1933 I got fed up with working for Dad and I came back to Auckland. I went to see my cousin Cobbs Mays who was the sailing master of *Prize* when Bill Edean, the MP from Parnell owned her. I said 'Can I have a trip', because I'd got back just at the beginning of February and squadron weekend was coming up, and he said sorry we're full he said but *Ariki's* not would you like to have ago on *Ariki*...!? Would I like to go on *Ariki*... (both laughing)!!! So, we did a night race to Kawau, which we won, and then the next morning Mr Wilson who owned *Ariki* said to me, 'Look, we're going north for two weeks cruise would you like to come'...! You've got to be lucky!

We had a great time. I worked in Auckland and I had a few years on *Prize*. Then I had a couple of seasons in *Thelma*. Not the little *Thelma* your one, the big A2, there she is up there (indicates on wall). Then Lawrence Nathan came to me in 1937 and said he was thinking of buying *Iorangi* would I be the skipper, well I said 'twist my arm!' So he bought *Iorangi* and I had three seasons in her before I went to the war.

SG: How did she go? Did she race well?

CT: She went well in certain conditions. I could never get her to windward very well in light airs. It used to annoy me. In those days we used to start the races, harbour races off the Kings wharf and go down around the Bastion mark off from Tamaki yacht club, and then down to the saltworks beacon down by Rangitoto beacon and up and down the channel a couple of times. In a nor'easter we'd get to the Bastion and start to slog out the channel and there would be the bloody little *Rawene* pointing higher than us. I could see him going... Grrrr...! (laughs). We'd beat him on boat speed, but the way she could outpoint us



Rawene, Bob Wharton, Stills Photography

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Iorangi went very well at times.

On the night race to Kawau and a few other things like that. But then all the gear on her was in a bad way. George Mackenzie who had owned her for many, many years had left her lying up on the slip at Devonport. The gear was in a mess and

she was getting old even in those days believe it or not. The first season we broke some rigging screws among other things. They were the old bronze rigging screws, and after the first one broke I kept on board some big bow-shackles and lots of tarred europe line. I'd put a bow shackle top and bottom and rove a lanyard through. I kept the spares on board! Obviously she was due for a big refit and so we went to Archie Logan and talked to him about it.

He said he had always wanted to bring the rig in and up. She was originally designed for Turnbull, of the Turnbull Library and he had wanted to go across Cook Strait to the sounds for bird hunting and so forth. Perhaps she was designed with less draft to suit her squat rig for Wellington and Cook Strait conditions, I don't know. Anyway, Logan said that if we altered the rig as he wanted to alter it we would have to make the boat six inches deeper, and you don't argue with Archie Logan! So the keel was taken off, the boat was lifted up, a six inch slab of kauri was put in between, but of course because of the rake of the rudder, as the keel came down it went forward, and so the next thing the lead's here and the boat's there, so they had to put a big filling piece in there to fill it in.

This was all done at Percy Voss' slip with Archie Logan coming over and keeping a tight eye on it. Then we got a new suit of Ratsey sails with this modernised rig and she didn't ever go very well. I used to look at the Ratsey mainsail and say it's too flat in the luff and no matter what we did with batons, the leech was always loose. We actually won an Auckland Regatta with that rig so we did have our moments, but she was never very successful.

So when I was in England during the war and at the submarine base at Gosport, I went into Ratsey and Laphorne sail loft and showed Mr Ratsey the pictures. I said look at the set of this sail, what do you think about it? He looked at the picture I showed him and he said I know what's happened, we never make gaff mainsails now. I looked at him and he said, 'Of course on a gaff mainsail the leech is much longer than the luff and the sail makers have thought that they were working on the luff of a Bermudan sail. They've run the round out to the leech and the flat for the leech has gone into the luff.' He admitted it!

He explained how to alter the sail but after the war she was converted to the bermudan rig so the changes were never made. When she was converted in 1946 to suit the new rig the whole of the inside was also ripped out because she was being completely refastened and you need to be able to get at all the fittings. We launched her just before Christmas in '46, and we had quite a few seasons, lovely racing and cruising then in '51 I got fed up with the city and gave it away and went north, went up to Matakana milking cows.

SG: Some people have said that after the war there was a shortage of crew and it was that which changed the nature of yachting.

CT: I hadn't thought of it that way... I hadn't



Laurence Nathan, owner of *Iorangi* and *Kahurangi*.

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SG: Why do you think it changed after the war?

CT: Well I think generally.. its the changing social scene. Similarly you see the Yacht Squadron which I belong to was men only, now its mixed. Women used to be the people that stayed at home and did the cooking and looked after the kids. But women have gained a sort of independence now and I think I see that's why we see more of them in boats, and a lot of them are excelling in boats, aren't they?

No... I often think back before the war, it must have been not long before the war, we had a race to Te Kouma, and Te Kouma had always been a man's race, men only. We arrived in *Iorangi*, put the hook down, and shortly afterwards the *Little Jim* arrived and they yelled out come and have a beer which used to be the par for the course... We went over to the *Little Jim* and we were all sitting around the cabin top having a beer and

The *Iorangi* winner of the race, working up to the starting point in Dunedin Harbour.



Ocean Yacht race from Dunedin to Oamaru, January 15 & 16 1910.

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