

THE NEW ZEALAND CLASSIC YACHT QUARTERLY



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

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PROUDLY SPONSORED BY LOGAN CLOTHING

APRIL 2000

THE LOGAN CLASSIC REGATTA



BOB WHARTON, STILLS PHOTOGRAPHY



TERRY FONG, AFA



BOB WHARTON, STILLS PHOTOGRAPHY

(Above) *Ranger* takes on eventual race winner *Velsheda*, and *Belle Aventure*.

(Far Left) *Seljm*, *Belle Aventure* and *Mariella*.

(Left) *Patsy of Island Bay*, *Teal* and *Gypsy* hard on the wind. *Thelma* obscures two others running.

AUCKLAND NEW ZEALAND
The Logan Classic
 MILLENNIUM YACHTING CUP

The regatta was a great success as many people have said here, in some very kind comments on the occasion and in various despatches.

Whilst a lot of praise has been heaped on me I hope you will also remember the team from the Classic Yacht Association Committee, especially Chad Thompson, Hamish Ross and Chris Smith, and our redoubtable Race Secretary Joyce Talbot who worked every bit as hard and long as I did.

And thankyou to all of you, the participants without whom the Regatta obviously wouldn't have been the spectacle and the huge success that it was.

I am happy to report that the Regatta was financially a viable operation for the Association. We ran all of the Regatta's affairs in a separate "ring fenced" account, and after spending in excess of \$85,000 in total for the operation we will wind up in a slightly better than break-even situation without creating a drain on the Association's subscription funds.

Whilst the Regatta was a success, I recognise that there were a few aspects of our organisation which could have been better. We were on a "learning curve", this being the first event of its kind any of us had organised, and we learned a lot on the way through the event. If any of

you were disappointed by some of the things we did or failed to do, please accept our apologies and rest assured we have reviewed every aspect of the three days and we will improve those things next time.

Planning, with the benefit of this experience, is already under way for the "next time" which we expect will be in February 2003, prior to the next America's Cup defence. Watch this space...

Mark Bartlett
 Chairman,
 Organising Committee



(Above) *Ashanti IV* and *Arcturus*.

BOB WHARTON STILLS PHOTOGRAPHY



(Above) *Patry of Island Bay*, *Waione* and *Ngataringa* round Motukorea light.

TERRY FONG, AFA



(Above) *Rawene*, eventual winner of the Logan Gold Cup.
 (Below) *Prize* and *Ngatira*.

TERRY FONG, AFA

STILLS PHOTOGRAPHY

See more Logan Classic and Millenium Cup images under pictorial, on PCC web site: pcc.org.nz

Bob Wharton, phone: (09) 473 1097 025 316 351

CLASSIC EVENTS CALENDAR

Sunday 2 April 2000
 PCC Vintage & Veterans Day

Saturday 8 April 2000
 RNZYS Round Rangitoto Race

Saturday 29 April 2000
 VCC ANZAC Day regatta for old crew.
 Please note: VCC have changed the date for this race

Sunday 30 April 2000
 PCC Closing day

= A Logan Race

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

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TERRY FONG, AFA

AFA PHOTOGRAPHY

Terry Fong has a great selection of photographs of the Logan Classic.
 Terry Fong, phone: (09) 579 6256 025 770 099

A GREAT REGATTA!

THE Classic Yacht Association's Logan Classic Regatta from 12-14 February was a tremendous success.

84 boats came to the Waitemata Harbour from the Mediterranean, the Netherlands, England, the US, Australia, and from both ends of New Zealand. The distances covered by some of these old boat owners was a credit to their enthusiasm and support of their vessels and classic yachting in general.

Aorere and *Anamoana* from the Bay of Islands, *Patsy of Island Bay* from Sydney, *Waitangi* from Melbourne and of course the many really big boats from overseas gave the local yachts a level of competition never experienced before in New Zealand.

Fidelis returned from Sydney to line up against her old sparring partner *Ranger*, but in the event she was placed in the modern classic fleet while *Ranger* sailed with the first division classic yachts on account of her age. As has been her wont since her launching in 1938, *Ranger* was the first New Zealand yacht home most days, and she eventually clinched second place in the first division behind the magnificent 130' J-class *Velsheda*, the giant of the fleet.

Unlike some of the America's Cup racing, conditions on the gulf were extremely kind to the Association. Breezes were around 10 knots on the Saturday and Sunday, and 15-18 knots on the Monday. Tops'ls were hoisted all three days, but the larger more powerful boats like *Ta'Aroa* would have appreciated more puff to really show off their racing stripes.

The view from land was spectacular. A harbour full of sail, with the inherent beauty of the gaffs and tops'ls making the older boats of the fleet stand out. The gaff rigged boats performed surprisingly well against their bermudan counterparts. The large yachts were what caught the eye of the uninitiated. I was standing on Bastion Point one day and received a full racing commentary with sail numbers, (no names) from a passer-by. When I asked him what his interest in the old boats was, he said that he was actually there to watch the powerboats which were racing further out in the gulf, but that these beautiful old boats had really caught his eye!

The variety of boats made for very tricky work for Race Officer Janet Watkins and Handicapper Chris Smith. Some boats would have appreciated less on the wind work, others wanted longer courses, everyone had comments on handicaps, but overall I think everyone appreciated how successful these officers were in accommodating such a variety of boats in the one regatta. There were boats ranging in age from the 1892 *Aorere* through to the brand new *Kilrush Nomad II*, both in the second division, and boats ranging in size from the first division 130' *Velsheda* to the 22' *Heather* in the third division. The variables of hull shape - from flat bottoms to plank on edge were a nightmare best left to the handicapper.

Chris (*Moana*) decided that the best way to start was with the La Nioularge handicapping system, but it quickly became obvious that it was going to take a new computer programme to deal with the multitude of variables presented by such a diverse fleet. He developed a programme that takes all of the variables into account, and came up with a handicapping system that required very little adjusting when tested against the CYA's historical performance based handicapping and put before the committee. An incredible feat in the circumstances.

Outright winner of the Logan Gold Cup, awarded to the boat which outperformed its theoretical speed by the greatest margin, was *Rawene*. A

fitting tribute to a boat which has been described as one of the best of the Logan yachts. But aren't all the boats the best in one way or another? It was also great for those who have gone back to gaff rigs to see this rig configuration perform so well against the bermudan counterparts.

The yachts were well supported out on the water by the race committee and the international judges. There was very little 'argy bargy' in what turned out to be a remarkably harmonious competition.

Sincere thanks from all of us to our sponsors Logans (Outdoor Heritage), stockbrokers Merrill Lynch and to the Heritage Hotel who hosted the prizegiving dinner on the Monday night.

Thanks also go to Ron and Michelle Copeland and the Ponsonby Cruising Club, and the many CYA members who put in time organising the regatta. Most of all, thanks to Mark Bartlett for a year or more of work that he put into the regatta's organisation. Without Mark there would have been no Logan Classic regatta. And last but not least, thanks to all the competitors for coming, some from very long distances indeed - thank you to everyone for participating and making the Logan Classic Regatta such a success.

First overall on performance rating

1st	<i>Rawene</i>	Logan Classic Cup
Division One - Classics		
1st	<i>Velsheda</i>	Merrill Lynch Cup
2nd	<i>Ranger</i>	
3rd	<i>Mariella</i>	
Division One - Modern Classics		
1st	<i>Ta'Aroa</i>	CYA Cup
2nd	<i>Fidelis</i>	
3rd	<i>Freedom</i>	
Division Two - Classics		
1st	<i>Rawene</i>	Heritage Cup
2nd	<i>Waione</i>	
3rd	<i>Moana</i>	
Division Two - Modern Classics		
1st	<i>Pahi</i>	CYA Cup
2nd	<i>Solara</i>	
3rd	<i>Namu</i>	
Division Three - Classics		
1st	<i>Nomad</i>	CYA Cup
2nd	<i>Scout</i>	
3rd	<i>Thelma</i>	
Division Three - Modern Classics		
1st	<i>Dream</i>	CYA Cup
2nd	<i>Jonquil</i>	
3rd	<i>Spirit</i>	
Division Four - Dragon Class		
1st	<i>Wild Rose</i>	CYA Cup
2nd	<i>Leander VI</i>	
3rd	<i>Russo-Orient Express</i>	

FULL REGATTA RESULTS

The Logan Classic 2000 - Division 1, Classics

YACHT NAME	RACE 1		RACE 2		RACE 3	
	PLACING	TIME	PLACING	TIME	PLACING	TIME
Valsheda	1	268.783	1	290.217	4	145.467
Ranger	2	301.883	2	298.533	3	143.600
Rawhiti	3	313.067	3	329.683	5	162.017
Waitangi	4	332.733	6	353.683	7	176.608
Belle Aventure	5	339.350	5	343.600	2	141.917
Mariella	6	349.133	4	341.750	1	141.175
Arcturus	7	357.467	7	436.167	6	168.200

The Logan Classic 2000 - Division 1, Modern Classics

YACHT NAME	RACE 1		RACE 2		RACE 3	
	PLACING	TIME	PLACING	TIME	PLACING	TIME
Ta'Aroa	1	287.700	1	313.083	1	165.383
Fidelis	2	330.000	2	333.583	6	182.258
Volante	3	336.900	5	362.483	5	181.392
Freedom	4	339.217	4	360.867	3	176.583
Long White Cloud	5	341.800	7	394.867	7	183.975
Baliceaux	6	357.467	8	410.867	8	186.950
Aschanti IV	7	369.000	3	356.233	4	180.475
Seljm	8	371.733	6	370.733	2	175.150

The Logan Classic 2000 - Division 2, Classics

YACHT NAME	RACE 1		RACE 2		RACE 3	
	PLACING	TIME	PLACING	TIME	PLACING	TIME
Rawene	1	187.823	1	144.180	1	137.957
Waione	2	202.485	2	157.420	4	157.318
Aorere	3	203.085	10	179.870	8	166.202
Moana	4	203.718	3	166.470	2	153.568
Little Jim	5	213.560	6	171.920	7	166.127
Sapphire	6	216.135	4	170.020	5	159.802
Ngataranga	7	217.380	5	170.310	11	171.880
Prize	8	220.325	7	174.883	3	156.158
Gleam	9	222.750	9	177.733	12	173.350
Victory	10	223.432	8	177.013	9	169.165
Arohia	11	226.000	11	183.800	15	175.467
Ngatira	12	228.500	14	192.083	10	170.567
Aramoana	13	234.403	13	191.840	13	175.137
Aronui	14	238.077	15	196.570	18	182.660
Patsy of Island Bay	15	247.803	18	212.590	14	175.287
Gypsy	16	250.222	20	231.043	20	195.805
Katrina II	17	250.707	16	207.180	19	188.473
Tawera	18	252.210	12	189.603	16	178.160
Jackson	19	253.538	19	225.943	17	182.605
Helen	20	253.755	17	208.210	0	DNS
Thelma VII	21	254.148	21	234.063	21	197.282
Frances	22	258.470	23	251.457	6	162.720
Teal	23	260.710	22	243.120	0	DNS
Seaward	24	279.212	0	DNS	0	DNS
Kilrush Nomad II	25	279.908	26	284.917	22	198.842
Sagacious	26	299.283	24	259.850	23	207.483
Ailsa	27	348.222	25	276.777	0	DNS

FOR SALE

HELEN, KI

Due to relocation overseas the Bob Stewart/ Col Wild K class *Helen* is for sale. 3x skin kauri, with teak cabin and trim. Recent major restoration. \$59,000.00. Ph Andrew Cawte (09) 360 3424 or 025 268 5474.

CHERUB

22' gaff cutter, sailed and chartered out of Lyttelton. MSA survey. \$10,500.00. Ph Mike Rousseau, (03) 389 9259.

The Logan Classic 2000 - Division 2, Modern Classics

YACHT NAME	RACE 1		RACE 2		RACE 3	
	PLACING	TIME	PLACING	TIME	PLACING	TIME
Pahi	1	176.768	1	154.670	1	146.568
Solara	2	181.443	3	161.487	3	156.543
Plane Jane	3	206.090	6	174.463	4	165.257
Nemine	4	208.048	5	173.213	8	170.565
Offshore	5	219.747	7	178.160	7	170.413
Namu	6	220.358	2	160.417	2	156.308
Resolution	7	223.685	4	172.353	6	168.052
Carli	8	238.272	9	194.727	10	200.788
The Satanita	9	238.272	8	178.377	5	166.088
Tern	10	275.665	11	239.230	0	DNS
Quicksilver	11	299.897	10	202.277	9	170.863

The Logan Classic 2000 - Division 3, Classics

YACHT NAME	RACE 1		RACE 2		RACE 3	
	PLACING	TIME	PLACING	TIME	PLACING	TIME
Scout	1	168.390	2	144.883	2	125.390
Spray II	2	178.348	5	165.467	9	154.632
Nomad	3	186.537	1	144.483	1	116.887
Thelma	4	188.025	3	154.683	4	131.492
Yum Yum	5	200.792	12	207.800	3	130.758
Loloma	6	208.458	11	199.767	7	143.442
Owhanga	7	217.002	4	161.483	5	136.768
Heather	8	217.608	8	171.300	12	164.125
Dolphin	9	218.908	15	225.250	0	DNS
Janet	10	222.625	7	168.917	8	149.408
Patricia	11	226.352	10	98.583	15	172.468
Alia	12	231.223	14	224.817	10	159.607
Wanderlust	13	232.312	16	226.383	14	171.778
Kotuku	14	235.227	9	189.367	13	171.160
Dawn	15	235.373	17	232.800	11	159.623
Merriman	16	376.148	18	308.567	0	DNS
Lexia	0	DNS	13	216.017	16	174.745
Petrel	0	DNS	6	168.667	6	142.270
Irene	0	DNF	0	DNS	0	DNS

The Logan Classic 2000 - Division 3, Modern Classics

YACHT NAME	RACE 1		RACE 2		RACE 3	
	PLACING	TIME	PLACING	TIME	PLACING	TIME
Gunner	1	157.042	1	126.067	0	DNS
Dream	2	160.158	3	152.683	2	125.058
Jonquil	3	168.003	4	156.817	1	121.187
Spirit	4	174.972	2	152.483	3	139.505
Stormbird	5	206.867	5	178.600	4	140.667
Contender	6	210.353	6	209.717	5	161.970
Elusive	7	228.590	7	219.817	7	175.323
Te Hani	8	237.402	8	225.433	6	173.818

The Logan Classic 2000 - Division 4, Dragon Class

YACHT NAME	RACE 1		RACE 2		RACE 3	
	PLACING	TIME	PLACING	TIME	PLACING	TIME
Wild Rose	1	163.033	1	144.083	1	126.367
Russo-Orient Express	2	166.917	4	298.533	3	132.600
Leander VI	3	181.767	2	161.317	2	132.600
Pieces of Eight	4	216.033	3	166.133	4	135.433

5TH ANNUAL CLASSIC YACHT AND MOTOR BOAT REGATTA

Diamond Harbour, Lyttelton. Easter Monday, 24th April, 2000

All older yachts and motor boats welcome.

Contact Mike on (03) 389 9259

LETTERS

(The following are edited letters from overseas visitors to the Logan Regatta):

Dear Hamish:

I know that I speak for all the Judges who served on the International Jury for the Logan classic when I say what a distinct pleasure it was to be associated with that marvellous event. We have felt a trifle overwhelmed by your welcome and hospitality. In fact, we did next to nothing in the performance of our duties and yet we have been your guests (along with spouses) at a magnificent formal dinner and now you have presented each of us with the beautiful and most expensive edition of Southern Breezes. We feel inadequate. We loved seeing the gorgeous "yachts" on the water. Unfortunately, we had to watch from aboard our umpire boats or on board *Luna Rossa* as the competitors gracefully slid by. What a magnificent sight! That alone would have been worth our miniscule efforts on behalf of the Regatta...

Thank you so much for the opportunity to be part of the Logan Classic and for your extreme generosity. We would look forward to helping again in any way that we can.

Warmest regards,

Henry (Menin, International Jury)



Hello Mark

Well, what can I say? What a weekend! What a week! As I said to Chad, I think the event ranks up there with some of the best trad boat events I've been to (which includes La Nioulargue and Monaco). And a great chance for me to meet a lot of interested and interesting people...

Many thanks for getting me out there, and for putting me up and generally looking after me during my stay... I hope it becomes a regular event in the international yachting calendar.

Best wishes

Nic @ Classic Boat (UK)



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

One of the things that is heart-breaking about editing this magazine, is how much I have to leave out each time. I love doing the interviews with our 'more experienced' sailors, they are such a treasure trove of information and stories. This time I had to leave out so many of Con Thode's war stories, accounts of the really interesting and varied life he has lived since the war, including his time (25 years) with the *Spirit of Adventure*, and a wonderful account of how two sailors decided that they'd better take *Viking* for a circumnavigation of New Zealand before they got too old. And so they did - Con was 87 at the time and Gordon Tait was seventy something. Their wives thought they'd better take a younger crew with them just in case. The younger crew included men in their 60's!

It just goes to show, like these old boats we all own and love, growing old doesn't have to mean you're getting that much slower!

Sandra Gorter, Ed

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HAPPENINGS

PATIO BAY - MORE FAMILY FUN

On Saturday 4 December nearly twenty boats raced away from the start line off Browns Island for a day's family sailing to Patio Bay. There was a good showing from the modern classics with *Astrolabe*, *Baliceaux*, *Contender*, *Break Free* pitting their sailing skills against the older competitors. At least six of the fleet carried sailors from the upcoming generation as "four and a half" seemed to be the most 'prestigious' response to enquiries on the beach regarding age. The young teenagers were also well represented and thanks to the generous offer of the Brighthouse bunkroom by Margaret Woolcott, they managed to carry on their own party long after the adults had retired. Mahurangi CC made a good showing with *Scout* and *Te Hani*. After the America's Cup boats, *Scout's* mast would have to be one of the most ascended on the Waitemata - their young crew must have set a record for the number of 'inspections' carried out during and after a race!

Thanks again to the Brighthouse and Woolcott families for a lovely evening.



MAHURANGI AND THE ANNIVERSARY DAY RACE

Mahurangi 28-31 January was a blustery event with the flotilla competing in choppy seas in the Mahurangi harbour. *Moana* and *Prize* fought a battle at the head of the fleet with *Little Jim*, *The Satanita*, *Baliceaux* and *Ngataranga* not far behind. It was the first outing for the Rawene with the CYA fleet, and battle hardened *Waione* was nipping at her heels for most of the race. These gaff rigged racers showing the way to the many larger yachts in the fleet.

Strong winds put a damper on the social activities, but prizes were won by the younger crews in the beach activities at Sullivan's Bay on Saturday.

Eleven boats got together got together in 2 rafts on Sunday night for after race dissections, and to share thoughts on the racing and restoration of the boats. They were joined by the Thode family who provided current owners with much pleasure as they shared memories of the boats racing in the early years and the social activities that went on then.

Ranger stayed moored by the top mark during the race, according to her new skipper, gathering information on the racing performances of her rivals. She only beat *Rawhiti* back to Auckland on Anniversary Day by 40 seconds, but they got things worked out by the start of the Logan Regatta in February. The bigger yachts had an exciting sail back, experiences aboard the smaller boats were however somewhat less enjoyable. The Classics had the largest division in the Anniversary Day regatta, probably because we were already out there (!).



CYA PICNIC POSTPONED DUE TO AMERICA'S CUP RACING

Sincere apologies to all who were hoping to picnic on 27 February. I know a few people missed the phone and fax messages sent postponing the picnic, but a clash with the America's Cup hadn't been anticipated when the calendar was set last year. I hope you are able to make it to the new date on 25 & 26 March, an account of this year's picnic will feature in the next magazine.

VIDEO OF THE LOGAN REGATTA

As shown at the March social meeting, Bill McCarthy has over an hour of footage from the Logan Regatta for sale on video. It is \$16.20 include GST and postage, and includes footage of the two southern boats *Rainbow* and *Rona*. Phone Bill at (09) 413 9003, or PO Box 24 Greenhithe.

TEAL

THE A CLASS THAT WASN'T AN A CLASS

BY MALCOLM TRASK

On 22 December 1948 a new keel yacht was let down the slipway in St Mary's Bay. The caption that appeared with the photo of the launching in the Auckland Star that evening read:

"A new light displacement 38' keeler for Mr W Goodfellow of Ponui Island was launched at Lidgards shipyard at 11.15 this morning. Named *Teal*, the yacht will be used by her owner to travel between his home at Ponui, and Auckland. She is fitted with a 10hp engine. Designed by Mr J Lidgard, *Teal* is 38' overall, 30' on the waterline, 7'4" beam, and 5'8" draught. Working sail area in a sloop rig is 450sq, a displacement of 3.75 tons. She has a short keel base and fine lines, and should prove a handy and capable boat"

This caption dispels the myth that *Teal* was designed by HE Cox, as had been written by many well known yachting writers. *Teal* was built alongside a Cox designed yacht, the 28' Snowgoose and the myth may have arisen from this. To my mind *Teal* is a larger copy of Gleam, the revolutionary racing 34', designed by Jack Brooke and launched in 1940.

Little is known by the writer of *Teal*'s early years, and it is assumed she was used for the purpose she was designed for by Goodfellow. *Teal*'s name was not to appear on the entries of the Auckland Anniversary Regatta until 1956 when at the age of seven years, she was entered in division A sail number A6 under the name of Cleary. *Teal* started the race that year on the same handicap as the similar sized *Victory A8*. I do not know which one triumphed that day, but these two yachts were destined to remain race rivals four decades later. What was found however, is that *Teal*'s sailing performance was substandard for a yacht sporting the A number on her sail, or whether it was sail performance alone, or size, or a combination of both, the next year *Teal* was entered in the B division with a new number, B5, the A6 number going to the new 43' *Tuahine*.

The years 1956-57 marked the start of what was to be a long, successful and varied race career. In spite of her poor windward sailing performance, her downwind and reaching ability (as I was to discover many years later) was excellent. Around this time *Teal* was purchased by Sir Keith Park of the Battle of Britain fame, and around 1960 by a well

known yachtsman Mark Williams, who is the father of current Whitbread and champion yachting Erle Williams. It was under Williams' ownership that *Teal* was to become most widely known in the Auckland racing circles, for in 1962 she lined up with 19 other yachts in a race which was to become known as the 'Jack White Memorial', a 150 mile outer gulf course for the Balokovic Cup series. The result was that of all the yachts that started at Orakei wharf, *Teal* was the only one to

finish the course. Seasick crews were the main reason given for the withdrawal of competitors. As radios were virtually non-existent in those

days, no cancellation of the race could be given. 34 years later a similar scenario was to present itself when *Teal* started with the classic division in the 1996 Coastal Classic.

Throughout the 1960s *Teal* raced and cruised the waters of the Hauraki gulf. She had sprung some planks on the port side in an offshore race, and a succession of short term owners through the next 30 years failed to deal with the resultant leak. Around 1970 she was taken out of the water by her then owner, a man called Elliot, and put on the hard beside his factory in East Auckland. When she appeared back on the harbour some 2 years later she was a completely different boat. The long, low, wooden cabin top had been rebuilt with a doghouse configuration with large windows, which I'm sure was the fashion of boatbuilding at the time. The keel hung original rudder was removed and replaced with a skeg fitted spade rudder. The toerails were built up, rising to a height of 9" above the deck at the bow, giving the sheer line a banana appearance and adding 2' extra in total length. Extra lead

and bulbs were added to the keel to sink the stern 6" lower in the water and raise the bow up. Last but not least, a new aluminium mast was manufactured, shorter and heavier with single spreaders, and with a 15' boom and a large fore triangle. When she appeared on the water again, *Teal* had nothing of her previous low-wooded sleek appearance.

For the next two decades she was to cruise the waters of the Hauraki Gulf in this configuration as successive owners tried to deal with her leaking problems. By 1993 *Teal* was 45 years old and as with most of the old boats her successful race career of the '50's and '60's, just a memory. New things were happening in yachting, many of the long keel boats were being purchased by young enthusiastic owners keen to restore and race them again. As with *Katrina II*, *Ngataringa*, *Little Jim*, and *Hinemoa*, *Teal* changed hands once again.

Since acquiring *Teal* in 1993 an extensive refitting and remodelling programme has been carried out. This includes: new mast 1994, new Yanmar diesel 1995, extensive refastening and recaulking 1996, toerails cut down and/or reshaped 1997, and large windows cut down 1999. Of all these the single most important feature is the rig, which has paved the way for *Teal*'s successful comeback into classic racing, and will ensure that she will still be able to race well into the 21st century.

Teal has won many races and trophies since 1994. As the new millennium and this fine boat's 51st birthday approach I can't help but recall the words of a well known member of the yachting establishment and handicapper when I queried *Teal*'s handicap for the 1993 Coastal Classic: "In certain conditions that boat could beat most of the A class up to 50' long. There were some fast B class boats around, but that one was the fastest B class motor sailer ever built in New Zealand, and in no way will you be getting an easy handicap!"

45 years after the officials in RNZYS decided *Teal* wasn't worthy of an A class number, life is looking rosy for this fine double skinned kauri yacht. She is in excellent sailing condition and is used and maintained regularly. I hope that if any of those officials are still alive from 1956, that they are now eating their words when they see that this A class always was an A class after all.



JEAN NEWCOMB

INTERVIEW BETWEEN MRS JEAN NEWCOMB AND SANDRA GORTER, 15-9-99

MRS JEAN NEWCOMB: The reason I rang you was to say that we need to mention the original owners of these boats more. They built these boats with their own money you know, and a lot of thought went into the boats. People can buy them now, I don't know how much they pay for them, but a lot went into those original yachts, it would have been their life savings in many cases. I think the original owners of these boats should be acknowledged.

Sandra Gorter: Yes thank you for your call.

JN: Here comes Stan. Hello Stan.

Mr Stan Jervis: Hello.

JN: Stan, we were remembering the names of all the original owners. You sailed with most of them didn't you?

SJ: Well we sailed ourselves.

JN: But what yacht did you sail mostly in?

SJ: Oh the two *Little Jims*. There were two *Little Jims* you know, B7 the first *Little Jim*, then when we wrecked it on Great Barrier... Were you on board?

SJ: Oh yes.

JN: And my brother-in-law Hal Newcomb, he swam ashore to secure to secure the line to the beach.

We were lucky... Pat was lucky with *Tamatea*. I think I told you that she was built out of one kauri log which had grown on his own property up in the Waitakeres. I was living in England at the time, I think it was an excuse for Pat to talk to me, he used to get me to order some shackles, or bits and pieces, or this or that from Arthur Robb who designed *Tamatea*. I don't think I'd sailed before I came to New Zealand when I was sixteen, and really the only thing I knew about boating was boats on the round pond, that sort of thing. But anyway I soon learnt. I didn't know Pat in the nice *Ladye Wilma* days, which all my friends knew about, but anyway, we were in love and my mother sent me to England and I was away two years.

When I got back we went out for a sail in the *Tamatea* and Pat popped the question which I accepted. We came ashore at Mechanics Bay and it was low tide and we had to walk ashore in the mud! So it wasn't such a romantic ending. But then in January that next year we got engaged. My mother was in England so we couldn't get married for three months which annoyed us, but anyway we went to Tauranga and won the Tauranga Gold Cup that year, and we had this fabulous evening there. That was a bill when we won the Tauranga gold cup (shows a hotel bill from album), quite fantastic, fifty drinks...

The next day there was a harbour race, it was so exciting. My husband was the gentlest sort of a person at home, we were marvellous friends and here we were in the race, shouting at each other. You know, cut the b.. down and this and that.. anything! You couldn't believe that such language was going on. I can't remember where we came, but it was terrific fun.

JN: Another thing about Mechanics Bay, my husband's mother was a Miss Wiseman. Her father was J Wiseman, commodore of the RNZYS from 1890-94 with the early *Tawera*, and then 1898-1901 with *Matangi*. It was moored there in the old days when there was a bay, and she learnt to row and swim there. On Sundays they'd sit down to a meal in this yacht and I think they had about twelve sitting down for lunch in white ducks, it was very formal.

JN: Now you wouldn't believe it but the Yacht Squadron have got the wrong numbers in this book here. They don't really change the A-class numbers do they?

SG: No, no they don't.

JN: Because *Ranger's* not 6, she's 22. I wrote down what I could of the old owners there (gives SG a piece of paper).

SG: What does that say, *Waitangi*.

JN: Frater. Frater boys, *Waitangi*. Marion... a great friend of mine Marion Wright she was, Miss Frater, and she went and had a wonderful time...



An Auckland marriage of wide interest: the Newcomb—Carnegie-Brown wedding at St Mary's Cathedral, Parnell, yesterday afternoon.

JN: (looking at photos) That's Pat's cousin Scott Wilson, in *Tawera*.

SG: A lot of people would have been related one way or another.

JN: Yes they were. And I'm told that Pat was one of the originators of cobweb corner. Do they still go down to the yacht Squadron and sit and have drinks and lunch and whatever.. I've forgotten which day of the week it was on...? Anyway, we were remembering the names of all the original owners. *Tawera* was Scott Wilson, (to SJ) did you know Scott Wilson?

SJ: He was an old friend of mine, yes, Scotty.

JN: *Moana* was Alf Miller. That was a very old one A9. I wouldn't know what year she was built would you...?

SJ: 1894 or 5?

JN: Going back much earlier there was A2 the *Thelma*, and *Rainbow*.. we know about that one, the Pittars. I think they built it here and then went to Australia...

SJ: Wasn't that *Rawhit*?

JN: Cecil Pittar. He sailed with Pat in *Tamatea* and served in the *Achilles* at the Battle of the River Plate in the war. My brother in law Jan Trythall was a gunnery officer on the *Achilles* too. He later became a rear admiral in the RN. But Cecil was a surgeon, and in his will he left *Tamatea* a suit of sails, but he didn't die so we never got them!

He was one of our best friends.

Now then, 3. *Ariki*. Who built her.. Logan of course!

SJ: I think it was a Wilson, she was built at the beginning of the early 1900's. Yes, then Scotty used to own it, Scotty Wilson.

JN: Well perhaps it was Scotty's father?

SJ: It would probably be his grandfather.

JN: Might be his father I think, he married Pat's mother's sister. I think that's the person. Pat's mother's sister was Olive Wilson and they lived over at Takapuna and gave their house to the crippled children, do you know the house?

5.. 5 was *Rawene* wasn't it? Alf Gifford was the father and Jack Gifford, he's the one we used to sail with.

SJ: A4...? Who was A4?

SG: A4's *Iorangi*. *Iorangi* was Turnbull, but she was more Wellington/Dunedin up until the '30's wasn't she?

SJ: I'm not quite sure, but she was owned by a fellow called George MacKenzie who lived up in Kaikohe. He was an engineer, electrical engineer... he used to come down all the way from Kaikohe to race *Iorangi* when I used to race in those days. A great little chap, wonderful man.

(A discussion of women on yachts is underway, son Mark Newcomb has arrived)

SJ: The *Waitangi* (A6) used to take their girls and their wives and so forth away.

JN: That was Fraters.

SJ: The Fraters, she was the doyen if you like of Auckland yachting.

Mark Newcomb: And the *Ida*, who was *Ida*? Didn't Arthur Angel have *Ida* with Cove Littler.

SG: *Ida's* in Sydney now. She's a Bailey, forty something feet.

MN: She was owned by Arthur Angel and Cove Littler. They bought *Ariki* off the Hortons. And the *Thelma*, that was a Bloomfield boat, didn't the *Little Jim* team have ownership of her at one stage?

SJ: No, we just sailed on her.

SG: And the *Ngataranga*, did she sail with you?

SJ: Oh yes, but she's a modern boat she's not a yacht. She's a tramcar yacht as we used to call them.

SG: Tramcar yachts, what does that mean?

SJ: Well you had an engine in it. That's what we used to call them in the old days, because we never had the engines you know. Any boat with an engine we used to call a tramcar, tramcar yacht because it had a motor in it.

JN: 15, By the way, Bill Edean was the first owner of *Prize*. Did you know the Edeans? *Prize* was built by Bill Edean but the Thompsons used to take the boat racing. *Tamatea* was 20 Pat and Hal Newcomb. 16 was *Little Jim*, the second time for Jimmy Mitchelson.

* * *

JN: Here's why I could never win the ladies' race. I'd been sailing for years, we'd go to Kawau and we'd all have a wonderful time but I always



Charles George (Bunty) Palmer 1910 - 1999

Bunty Palmer owned and sailed a number of yachts in Auckland, including *Minerva*, built for him by Collings and Bell, *Carli*, a Bruce Clark design, and then in his later years a motor launch which gave easy access through an open transom. Bunty is remembered by the yachtsmen and women of Auckland who served in WWII as a man whose fighting spirit enabled him to overcome the dreadful injuries suffered when his minesweeper HMS *Cromarty* was sunk off the Straits of Bonafacio. Toward the end of his life he insisted on going out each day, mostly to Westhaven to look at the boats. Despite spending many years of rehabilitation during and after the war he was always cheerful, never allowing his injuries to overcome his tremendous fighting spirit. He was an inspiration to those who knew him.

"(In Alexandria) We had a great reunion and it was wonderful to see that he was mobile again even though with sticks. We decided we should dine out so I phoned a friend whom I had known in Alex. in

wanted to win something as you can imagine, but every single woman that you could see or possibly take out, would come aboard. Pat at Kawau... all the women that weren't doing anything knew they could come with us and we'd have a lovely sail, but you couldn't see through them. It was always a great party but I never won the ladies' race until I went sailing with Hugh Littler in *Ariki* once.

SG: Did you used to go up to Squadron Weekend with the family?

JN: No, I didn't want the family there (laughing)! Well... we went down for the Squadron weekends you see, and were put up at Mansion House. We all had to share rooms because there were so many of us. I ended up with Cathy Stephens whose husband was Clinton Stephens, Stevie as we used to call him. He was the captain of the... what was the naval ship that got in trouble for hurrying back to watch an All Black match...? Anyway it was a long time ago, and she and I found ourselves together in this double bed, so she said there was none of this and put her walking... shooting stick down the bed between us! I don't know if it was that night or another Squadron Weekend, but she was in our dinghy going from ship to shore and we'd had quite a lot to drink, and here she was sitting in the dinghy going ashore and she was violently sick, and she said 'If this is yachting I've had it!'

On another excursion back from one of these boats at Kawau, Pat was aboard and his crew were on the rampage a bit and had the dinghy, and we were all going ashore again to have a bit more fun. We were overloaded and the boat sank and of course the outboard got salt water in it and so we had to take it out and rinse it in my bath in Mansion House, as though nothing had happened. I think it went again and of course I can't, I'm not quite sure but... it was all great fun!

SG: So the fleet used to be moored out in the bay and the ladies went ashore and stayed at Mansion House.

JN: Yes. We'd come up by car to go across by ferry. Some people stayed with Betty Potter, Betty Pountney she was, and then she married Harold Potter. Some people used to stay there in the baches, but we generally all stayed in Mansion House. Is there still a ladies' race?

SG: Yes, I've raced in that.

JN: I bet you didn't have about thirty women aboard though.

SG: No, no, I was on the tiller, but all of my crew were male...

JN: That was nice. Anyway Cecil Pittar brought a Scottish bride back from the war who became one of my best friends, she was pretty naughty but lots of fun... and we did a lot of sailing together.



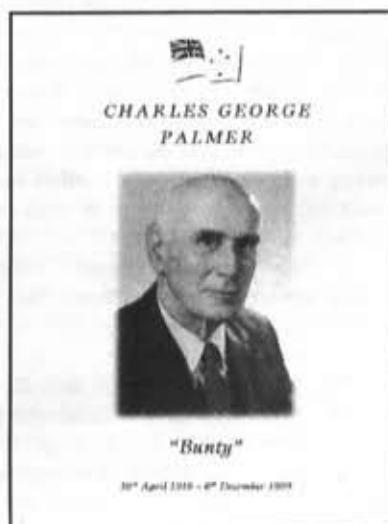
Since recording this with Sandra I have had the honour to go aboard the returned *Waitangi* to welcome home this beautiful old boat, followed by dinner at the RNZYS.

Sandra had earlier asked me about sailing 60 years ago. She seemed surprised that we women were never allowed on board for set races, but enjoyed a 'cake day' sail the next day. It was partly superstition but they probably enjoyed it more without us!

However I do envy the lucky young women who all sail today.

1941/42. He suggested the Carlton night club and when we met him there he was accompanied by a gorgeous Hungarian woman. Some of the diners were enjoying dancing on the centre floor and Bunty decided that, despite his injuries, he would like to try and dance. The lovely lady almost carried him around the floor. Such is the fighting spirit that rescues people from horrendous injuries."

(From War-Time Memoirs of CP (Con) Thode)





WAIHAU BILL

THE OPOTIKI BAR

THE following is an extract from *Waihau* - Among the last of New Zealand's old Trading Coasters by Ralph Sewell, published by Endeavour Press, 1978, printed by Coroprint - Coromandel. I thought a few people might enjoy this

insight into the early years of New Zealand's coastal trading vessels, and an insight into the experiences of Ralph Sewell who died on Christmas eve 1999.

Sandra Gorter, Ed.

Chapter 1: Lloyd's Certificate tells us that *Waihau* was built by Chas. Bailey of Northcote in 1913, for one William Walker, hotel-keeper of Te Kahu. She is 45 feet overall and 10 feet beam. Billy Walker was one of the last of the old pioneers, and the old East Coasters say that he and the *Waihau* tamed the East Coast as far as Cape Runaway.

Although the Walkers are a part Maori family, they tell me that Billy was a Pakeha.

The life of Billy Walker was a hard one and his courage and spirit will live on as have those of our earlier New Zealand pioneers. Billy, who had a half share in the Hotel at Te Kahu, had the mail contract from Opotiki to Cape Runaway.

This was before the road was put through and the boat was, of course, named *Waihau* after Waihau Bay, where she spent most of her time. Charlie Bailey built her for £350 on the beach at Northcote, out of heart kauri.

The *Waihau* used to do weekly and sometimes bi-weekly trips to Te Kahu and the Cape, weather permitting. 'Weather permitting' is a masterly understatement. The Opotiki bar could only be worked at high water, therefore the time of departure was simply at high tide. Naturally, his arrival back at Opotiki could not be relied upon in this simple manner. Due to weather, engine break-downs, and other circumstances, they frequently did NOT arrive at high tide. In fact, it was not uncommon for many a tide to come and go while the good folk of Opotiki looked out anxiously over the bar for the tell-tale pall of black kerosene smoke coming down the coast, for it was well known that *Waihau's* engine required a new set of main bearings every trip and that, if the trip was a protracted one, they might not see the bob out.

This annoying bearing problem led to a shed being built on the river bank near the wharf, and another at Waihau Bay, both heaped high with white metal and provided with a suitable pot and fireplace for heating the stuff up to re-run the worn bearings. I am told this was done each trip.

I have never decided which of the two was the tougher - Billy or *Waihau*. The only comment I can make is that, during the years I owned

Waihau, although I never spared her, I never had cause to abuse and thrash her as Billy Walker frequently had to do.

I have spent many happy hours yarning with Ernest Kemp on the verandah of his old house next to the Stone Store at Kerikeri, about his early life on his farm at Whangaparaoa, Cape Runaway, and the stories of his adventures with Billy Walker on *Waihau*.

Ernest's description of crossing the Opotiki bar on *Waihau* makes one realise the slender thread on which communications hung, even well into our present century.

As often as not, it was necessary, through stress of weather, approaching darkness, or other emergencies, to cross the bar in unfavourable conditions. Ernest explains that the technique was to hang around outside the first line of breakers and wait for the approach of a wave bigger than the rest. Billy would then shout down the engine-room hatch to Sam, the engineer, to 'feed her the herbs' and smartly slam the hatch on top of him. *Waihau* would lunge forward like a surf boat until she hit the bottom and, with the receding wave, slew broadside on, almost high and dry. Still battened down below, the Maori engineer would await the signal for full ahead as the next big one approached, the boat being raked from end to end meanwhile by the onset of each successive wave. As the next big sea came rearing in, Billy Walker would hammer vigorously on the hatch with a monkey wrench, and the boat, picking herself up with her terrified passengers clinging on as best they may, would straighten up and lunge forward once more, engulfed in spray, to fetch up with a sickening thud in a hundred yards ahead. In Ernest Kemp's own words, 'Three of these and you were in! ...

(from chapter 2)... Mr Percy Ward, a footwear manufacturer in his younger days, used to have business connections down in Opotiki and Cape Runaway... Percy remembers meeting Billy Walker's mother, who was a tiny, wizened little woman of over a hundred years of age. At that age she could clean up all comers at poker. Nowadays we no longer see these aged old Maoris that we knew so well in our youth with their tattooed faces and bowler hats...

When *Waihau* was expected, Mrs Walker always used to hang a lantern on the riverbank to guide them over the bar at night. Unfortunately, there were hazards other than those already mentioned connected with entering the river. On one occasion, a Northern Company scow ran amok on the bar and took a wire hawser across to a tree on the opposite bank which Billy didn't see in the failing light of the evening. That is how *Waihau* lost her mainmast. It was never replaced as sail was never carried during the years that she was on the Cape Runaway run.

Ralph and Endeavour Press also published a number of other entertaining books on Scows, how-to-build books on boats, rigs, clinker dinghies etc, and books of reminiscences of the early years of the trading vessels of New Zealand. *Ed.

Ralph Sewell 1927 - 1999

CYA member Ralph Sewell died on Christmas day 1999 on his yacht *Ripple*, at Clevedon. Ralph lived in Auckland, Coromandel, and aboard his boats on the Hauraki gulf. He was associated with shoal draft boats, building many remarkable vessels from his own funds, including the *Ripple*, the *Breeze*, and the 1/10 model of the *Endeavour* now in the Russell museum. The *Endeavour* is remembered by many New Zealanders as the boat which toured NZ to help mark New Zealand's 150 year celebrations in 1969. Ralph also built shoal draft vessels, mullet boats, and many clinker dingies over the years from his Devonport yard, and had a number of miniature steam trains and steam launches. He loved all things musical and had his own orchestra. When he stopped boat building he worked as a builder of pipe organs. This colourful, eccentric character will be sadly missed.



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IORANGI, KAHURANGI, AND THE WAR

Mr Con Thode (cont...)

Mr Con Thode: My first job when I left school, was at LD Nathans. I was in the shipping office, they were agents for Shaw Savill in those days when the shipping office was quite a big place, dealing with manifests and bills of lading and things like that. Lawrence Nathan came to the office as my junior we became great friends.

Mrs Marcie Thode: Were you keen on sailing in those days?

CT: Well Lawrence had a share in *Kotiri* with a chap called Don Wilson before he went away. Wilson was transferred to Wellington as the government architect, and Lawrence, because we already knew each other, rang me up when he got back from University in 1936 and said, I've bought Wilson's share in *Kotiri* and I own her now completely. He said she's on the slip at Bailey and Lowe getting painted, and I've got a heap of rope and a sack of blocks but I don't know what to do with them (smiles).

SG: What an invitation!

CT: (laughs) So I went and sorted out where everything should go and rigged *Kotiri* for him. That was in the spring of '36 I think from memory. He then rang me and said would I race her in the Auckland Regatta, although we had a crew, they were just a cruising crew, so I raced her in the Auckland Regatta. We got third... (Marcie says something in the background) I'd better tell you which way the wind was (CT laughs).

MT: (from kitchen) You can't remember, can you!

CT: It was south east darling, south east, raining, and blowing like hell!

MT: .. horrible!

CT: I think the Windward lost a mast that day and the boat that won the race was *Rambler* when she was practically brand new. She loved the conditions. But *Kotiri*, when I got aboard, around the carlines, she had screw eyes and lashings across the carlines. She didn't have a skylight and I asked, what are these for? He said oh that's where we put the bunks. So the bunks were taken out and stacked up on these ropes in the cabin top. I had a look and saw a four gallon petrol can down there, he said oh yes, that's the bailer, and they bailed from the cabin - all the way round the course. They were bailing the water from the bunk area out, out and over the side.. ohh! Anyhow, we got a third out of it.



SG: Why didn't Lawrence want to be skipper, was he a good sailor?

CT: No he wasn't a sailor. He loved the sea, absolutely adored being at sea. But he would never sit down and concentrate. Occasionally when we were away cruising he would say oh I think I'd like to sail the boat and he would sail it for a brief way, but he just wasn't interested, he just wanted to be there and be at sea and so forth. In fact I can remember coming back from Houhora in *Iorangi*, we'd come around Karekare and the wind was in the north east (looks at Marcie..), and we were running very free and he said he would like to sail the boat and somebody was sitting alongside ready to stop him jibing. You know, he absolutely loved the sea - he did that world trip in *Kahurangi*, but he was never interested in sailing the boat. He left it entirely to me, which was good fun, because she (*Iorangi*) was virtually my boat. It was wonderful, because I was only a young bloke, and to be given the skippering of a beautiful ship like *Iorangi*, I was thrilled to bits.

SG: That wasn't uncommon was it, to have an owner and another person who did the sailing.

CT: A bit uncommon in those days.

CT: She was laid up during the war years and when I got back she was sitting up in *Vos*'. I climbed up the ladder one day, Lawrence was up the ladder too despite losing his leg in the war, and Percy Vos, the three of us got up on to the deck of *Iorangi* and stood there and as I was looking along the deck and I could see there were these little stains..? So I took my nail file out and put it into one stain and there was a ping inside. Then I did it again, and another ping inside. The screw points were so close to the paint which had deteriorated over the war years, that the moisture had got down the screws and she had all gone rotten around the screws. So that meant a new deck which fitted

in of course with bringing the mast aft with the new rig and it also meant that the skylight had to be shifted aft.

So she got a complete new deck in 1946 and the hull was refastened. When Vic Speight bought her later he added the cabin top. He decided where the cabin top was going to be and so they drew a line on the deck like this, and then they just got a chainsaw and they went chwrtr... slacked off the wedges on the mast, lifted the deck up, and then built a coaming, so the deck became the top of the cabin top.

SG: She didn't look much like a snake any more?

CT: A snake.. you mean her hull lines?

SG: Wasn't *Iorangi*'s nick-name 'the snake'.

CT: No, she was always known as the canoe, and she does look like a canoe.

CT: That's wartime storage at Vos and Brijs, there she is there. What they did is they put a piece of timber fore and aft up the centre line and then put wooden covers on. When the war started in '39 we decided we'd have our last Christmas cruise and go for it, you see. And Lawrence took so much booze aboard, that we were in Mangonui.. north east, raining, one of those days you know, and he said well, I'm going to mix a cocktail. And the recipe was written down on a piece of toilet paper. And that's it..! SG: ...(reading) *Iorangi* schnapps..?

CT: *Iorangi* Iccup.

SG: Iccup? What's the significance of iccup?

CT: Oh well, he said he reckoned we'd all get drunk and iccup you see!!

SG: Who are these people here?

CT: My brother John, Ted Dacre, Cecil Pittar, his father owned the *Rainbow*, Jim Belgarnie, and Ira Sutherland, he was killed flying a Mosquito aircraft in Burma.

SG: Did you have much to do with the *Rainbow*?

CT: Raced against her. In fact we.. that's another story. Well, this is the start of the war story actually. When I couldn't get into the navy here I got a bit fed up and went along to the army and enlisted. Then a letter arrived



from Arthur Robb, we corresponded, saying that he was in the navy and he thought that any Auckland yachtsman particularly if he had a ticket, would get a job in England, so I had to get out of the army. I went along to Colonel Potter in Army HQ and explained my wish to go to England to join the Royal Navy, and he gave me a clearance before I was called up. So I made a hurried exit as a deck hand on the SS Port Darwin.

The whole winter of '39 we'd done night classes to get our yacht masters tickets ready for the war, and then the war started in September '39 and we decided to make the most of that season before we went. And.. there was a yacht race, a harbour race on the Saturday afternoon, and we beat the *Rainbow*.

It was a hell of a battle, a beauty race! Then on the Monday, navigation examinations started. There were written papers on this, papers on that and there was a half hour verbal question on seamanship. Captain Stewart lined me up and said oh, "You sailed a good race on Saturday Thode". I said, "Oh thank you Sir". He said "Why did you do so and so?" I said "oh so and so and so and so". He said "oh yes... He said, "after we saw you start at Kings Wharf we went down to Bastion Point and watched you going up and down the channel, why did you do this and that?" Then, "oh.. that's the end of the half hour!" He said "oh that will do for seamanship", so I must have explained it alright!

On that day it was blowing very hard and *Rainbow* decided they would stack the extra crew for weight. They had about fourteen or fifteen blokes in the cabin which we didn't know about. All sitting around inside, we found out about it later. We beat them on the starting line, that was the crucial thing, and

with *Jonangi's* reaching speed we had them well under control at the Bastion mark. Then on the slog out she was a faster boat to windward, but no way was Joe Patrick getting past me! So we beat him in the slog out, covering him all the time, and then the run back we kept ahead of him.. and then on the second slog we had the same battle. It was a great race, it was a tremendous race!

The War

SG: The question that's on the tip of my tongue, is about a book you've written for your children...

CT: The war book? Well, the children kept on asking me questions, what about this in the war Dad, and what about that. So I sat down and I wrote a little bit of what I could remember, and just got my son to print it.

SG: The incident that stood out for me was the first time you were depth charged - where you had to go away and get a woollen jersey because you were shivering, and how after that you always wore a jersey if you thought you were going to get depth charged because it provided some comfort and warmth.

CT: Yes. It wasn't cold, so I was obviously frightened! (laughs)

SG: Did you see the movie 'Das Boot'...

CT: Oh yes that was good wasn't it? I have one criticism, and that was.. you may remember they were very, very deep in the Gibraltar straits being attacked with water coming in. They were able to stem the flow of water and survive, but you see water exerts a pressure of forty five per pounds per square inch every hundred feet of depth and they were down to about eight hundred feet. The water pressure would be just like a steel rod. We were down once with water coming in through rivets for'ard after being rammed by a destroyer, and although we were only at around seventy or eighty feet, we realised that we had to get back up to reduce the pressure because the water was like bars of steel. So the U-boat could never have stopped it. That was my only criticism of that picture however, otherwise it was very good.

SG: How did you get into the submarines?

CT: When I arrived in London I went to the Admiralty and said, I've got a yacht masters ticket can I have a job? Well they put me through a little test, and I became an Acting, Temporary, Probationary, Sub Lieutenant (laughs)! I was trained in a place called King Alfred, near Brighton for a few weeks where they taught you how to pass the port at a naval dinner and all those sort of niceties (!), and then they sent me off to a corvette in Liverpool and we did Atlantic convoys escort.

Then a signal came, calling for volunteers from the RNVR for service in submarines. Until then, other than some Merchant Service RNR it had generally been straight RN,

but they were getting short of officers, they were losing so many. I volunteered in 1940, did my training in '41, then went to *Proteus* as a navigator in the Mediterranean, and then in 1942 went back to England, to be promoted to a first lieutenant.. that's like the first mate on a ship. You've got the captain on a ship and the

first mate runs the ship. I was a first lieutenant, then I was recommended for command, and I got command.

SG: That was quite an achievement for a New Zealander wasn't it?

CT: (Clears his throat) Well apparently. I was the only New Zealand RNVR to ever command a submarine. Gordon Tait, was in submarines. He joined in about 1943 I think and qualified for command after the war. Also Larry Herrick from the Wairarapa, they were Royal Navy. Larry had joined the RN before the war and was a submarine captain, but he and Gordon were RN, I was the only RNVR.

SG: What is the difference between a commander and a captain?

CT: Commander is a rank and Captain is a rank but both words are used also to signify being in command. You can be the captain of a submarine or the commander of a submarine because you are in command of it, I was in command of a submarine as a Lieutenant, but I was its Captain... it gets a bit confusing at times (laughs)!

SG: Right...

CT: Gordon Tait was Lieutenant RN when the war finished. But he was RN and he stayed in the Royal Navy whereas I went back to civvy street. He went on and qualified for command a year or two later, but went on and did a lot of submarine command. I've forgotten how many submarines he served in, but then of course he went on in rank and eventually he became an admiral, which is a great tribute.

SG: You had four years during the war in submarines, its a wonder you survived, with one chance in two of dying you must have done something right.

CT: Yes, well I was lucky. I often think of...

After I'd qualified as a submariner in 1941 they said right, go on leave awaiting appointment. So I went to New Zealand house, they had a list of people there who would entertain or look after New Zealanders when they were on holiday. So I went on leave and went down to a place in Cornwall. One Friday they sent me a signal from the Admiralty for a submarine posting, telling me to be in touch regarding an appointment. But that signal didn't reach me until the Monday because I was in such an isolated place. So they sent somebody else to do the job which was to go to Gibraltar to join a submarine, and one of my classmates went and he was lost... first trip...

SG: Do you think that there was anything that enabled you to survive, or was it just luck?

CT: No. Just.. just being lucky that's... Well you were.

SG: Perhaps you were cautious, didn't rush in where angels fear to tread..?

CT: No. No, no because when I was navigator of *Proteus* we got into some awful tight corners. It was nothing to do with me, I was just... I was just there. In fact she had quite a reputation as a survivor did the old *Profi* in the end. We had so many depth charge attacks and survived them, that after.. she was getting so old that they took her back to England and used her for practising depth charge attacks (both laugh) to see why she did... (laugh).

No, I think its just a bit of good luck that's all. It can't be anything because.. I don't know, if there's a job to do, you just did it.

CT: This is *Scythian*.

SG: Were you in charge of building her?

CT: Yes, I was sent to her when she was in the building yard at Scotts in Greenock. She'd been launched and named and so forth, and



was floating in the dock. There were welders and painters and engineers and everybody everywhere and I was there perhaps a month before I actually drove her away. They said to me here is *Scythian*, she's yours, she's a name we haven't used before, we've got no crest.. ships usually carry the crest of the previous name you see. So no crest, no motto, no nothing, but she's all yours! So I had the job of going down to the museum in London and trying to find out all about the *Scythians*.

You've heard of the Parthian shot? Well the *Scythians* were a race of people in the Caucasus prior to the Parthians and they were the people who invented the Parthian shot. That is, apparently retreating when being chased by the enemy, but firing arrows backwards from their horses. So that's where I got that little griffin, the *Scythian* griffin, and then got that motto down there, 'Insidiose Profugus' which means in apparent retreat we are dangerous. It applied to the *Scythians* and applies to a submarine because when you dived, that's when you are a dangerous vessel.

CT: My first command after I'd qualified was with a first world war submarine called H33, oh no, little old wrecks they were. They were used for ping running, you know what ping running is, well to train Asdic operators obviously they've got to have a submarine. Quite a lot of the old submarines were used for just that purpose. We used to tow a buff so they could see where we were. Although the operator was shielded, he couldn't see he was only looking at the set, the officer at the top was watching where the buff was. We did a tremendous amount of that. So I had my first command in one of these H-class submarines. I took her away from the depot ship to go around to Campbelltown where we had a ping running base and I said well, we'd better dive her. (laughs) I thought, I haven't got anybody else to rely on, it was a funny feeling!

SG: Were they leaky...

CT: Well, when I got back from the Mediterranean in '42, to be a First Lieutenant they said right, your first First Lieutenant's job will be H-50 which is refitting in Sheerness. But, as you don't know how these things work you'd better go and have a couple of weeks in

one that is working. So they sent me to H-28 and I spent two weeks in her. Then went back to Sheerness for the refit, then the captain joined, and oddly enough the captain was a chap who had been First Lieutenant when I was in *Proteus*. We commissioned her out of the refit, and the dockyard head came along and said right, we've done our best for you but she's getting very old, don't take her down below a hundred feet whatever you do! We left Sheerness and went around to Portsmouth to the base at Gosport, and then went down to Plymouth where we were to exercise with members of the Czech airforce, they wanted to practice seeing a submarine from the air and so forth, and we had to just dive and surface and so forth. I had a young sub Lieutenant with me under training, and was teaching him how to do the trim. We were down at eighty feet and



(L to R) Lt. George Hunt, Lt. Peter Scott-Maxwell (RN), Lt. Con Thode (RNVR), Lt. Jeremy Nash at 38' in *Proteus*, 1941

we were sitting there quite happily and she started to go down so I ran the pump. She kept on going down and I ran the pump again and she kept on going down, and she got to a hundred and twenty feet so I thought this is no bloody good so I called out to the captain in the tiny wardroom and said one pump's not coping, can I put some HP air in the main ballast and he said yes, sure. So I put some high pressure air into the main ballast tanks and lifted her up again. The sub Lieutenant panicked and that was why we threw him out of submarines but that was beside the point... you can't have that sort of thing. Eventually we came back into the harbour and we started to find out what was wrong and the pump was full of chips of wood..!

SG: That's a funny thing isn't it?

CT: Well, sabotage did occur, and we never really knew whether it was sabotage in the dock yard or whether they'd been doing some furniture woodwork in the vessel and it had accidentally got into the bilges. But it had bugged up the pump.

SG: What happened to the chap who panicked?

CT: Oh he'd started to make comments, you can't be down here, we're too deep, the boat's under stress, that sort of thing. He lost his cool. A nice bloke but he didn't fit in submarines. We sent him back to general service and he went on to destroyers and got a

DSC for bravery there.

SG: I can understand how people would lose their nerve in a submarine, its so little.

CT: Yes, some people really don't stand the confinement.

SG: What sort of a person went best in submarines?

CT: Well, you had to be a passive sort of person, yes, passive.

I found after the war... you see I'd been with ICI for years before the war, when I came back they transferred me to head office in Wellington. I said I wanted my Auckland job back, but they said you can't have it, as so and so has got it. I said but he's a conscientious objector, got my job! After the war we put the modern rig into *Jorangi*, we launched her just before Christmas in '46 and had quite a few seasons, lovely racing and cruising, and then I got married. By

'51 I had had it with business and the city. I gave it away and went north to Matakana milking cows from '51 to '58. During that time *Kahurangi* was built, so I wasn't really involved with her except when Lawrence asked me to take her away for a cruise in February in the first or second year that she was built.

MT: Is that the year when we took *Kahurangi*.. when the whole family came?

CT: Yes.

MT: There were eight children. Eight children, four adults, that was twelve, and two young men to help entertain the children, take them ashore and run races and things, there were fourteen on board *Kahurangi* (!), it was a lovely cruise, we thoroughly enjoyed it!

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