

# THE NEW ZEALAND CLASSIC YACHT JOURNAL



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## *Rawhiti on the road to recovery*

By Chad Thompson



Work has now started on the restoration of *Rawhiti*, the 40ft Linear Rater (54' x 37'6" x 9'8" x 7'6") designed by Arch Logan and launched by Logan Bros. on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1905 for A.T. Pittar of Sydney.

After a series of "modernisation" projects spanning 60 years, her present owners Greg Lee and Sam Stubbs have committed to the "Full Monty". Her decks are off, all of her modern interior is out, and her 1970s skeg rudder has been binned. She is a canoe.

To a non-New Zealander,

her interior looks quite strange without a rib inside her, just stringers and low floors. The triple-skin construction refined by early New Zealand boatbuilders led by Robert Logan offers incredible strength, lightness and hull form retention. And all that kauri! It's an amazing timber to work with!

The accompanying photos also show the commencement of the refastening of the hull with copper rivets. Peter Brookes is replacing both the original rivets and the stainless steel screws used during her earlier

modernisation projects and plugging all holes before he drives home new copper rivets in adjoining timber.

On Thursday, October the 6<sup>th</sup> the CYA called together more than 70 members who descended upon the Brookes Boat Builders shed in Waimauku to celebrate *Rawhiti's* 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of her launching. What a great insight it was into the skills of Peter and his team. Along with members of the Association also came members of the Marler family, who had owned her from 1945 through until

the 1970s. They had many stories of early Auckland yachting and of the riotous traditions of Auckland yachtsmen of the time.

You can view updates on her work in progress on Peter Brookes' web site [www.classicsail.net](http://www.classicsail.net).

Coming back under gaff rig over the next couple of years will be a fitting reward for one of New Zealand's most famous keel yachts. To see her then alongside *Ariki*, *Rainbow* (also under faithful restoration) and our other gaffers will be a great sight on the Waitemata.

# *Falcon: a touch of New Bedford, USA*

*By Baden Pascoe*

A few years ago I noticed a nice looking clinker hull propped up on a front lawn of a Ti Rakau Drive, Pakuranga home. I thought, "I must call in one day and find out more about this interesting boat". I made the visit a few months later and, on closer inspection, I noticed that this unusual hull was carvel as far up as the waterline with clinker topsides. There was a nice varnished name board with the name "Falcon" neatly screwed to the transom.

A few minutes later the owner, Jim Mateer appeared. After talking with Jim for a few minutes and looking at the quality of the restoration work, it was not hard to understand that this man was very in touch with all aspects of small working craft of years gone by. Since this day, Jim has become a close friend with whom I enjoy talking about old boats.

Jim found this unnamed hull about 18 years ago almost hours before she was going to become bonfire fuel. I think he has saved possibly one of New Zealand's oldest boats and I could confidently say the only surviving New Zealand built "seam and batten / clinker constructed" hulls.

When Jim found this hulk, she had the rotting remains of a plywood cabin attached to her decks and her hull was weak and distorted. Jim said he found most of her the hull was very sound.

Jim took her home and stripped all the non-original



*Jim Mateer and Falcon at home in Pakuranga*

fixtures off her hull. While he was cleaning her up ready for repair, he noticed many things that could be clues of her past uses and history. From the number of tingles riveted to her planking and holes cut in her transom, she has seen and worn out a few engines in her time. The inner mid hull section between the two main thwarts is also very significant. This section of hull has been made smooth inside by use of filer planks fastened between the plank batons to form a smooth ceiling. Both Jim and I are sure that this was done when she was built. We think that this acted as a hold section and this was construction was necessary to prevent sharp objects piercing her planking. There is also a square mast step chiselled into her keelson. This may have stepped a mast for sailing, or more than likely a mast for supporting a lifting boom.

It is quite obvious that she had a major refit at some stage with the aim of increasing freeboard. Her gunwale was removed and a new shear plank was fitted and at the same time intermediate ribs were fitted. These ran across her keelson from stem to stern. Jim thinks her fore and aft decks were also added at this time. It is hard to tell what alterations took place as the standard of workmanship is so professional and in keeping with the original construction.

All this work may have been done to keep her a dry



*Rainbow is the next Auckland first class classic yacht to get the same authentic restoration as Rawhiti. Her owners have invited CYA members and anyone interested in her restoration to a function alongside her in late December. Watch out in Sheerlines on our website for this. Watch out, too, for battles between these two Logan thoroughbreds on the Waitemata in the near future! – Harold Kidd*

## Classics to set the scene

Our beautiful classic yachts and launches followed by the tall ships will set the scene for the 166<sup>th</sup> New Zealand Herald Anniversary Day Regatta. A parade of sail celebrating our yachting heritage will grace the Waitemata Harbour on Monday 30 January from 9.30am heading up to their start line off Orakei Wharf. Start time is 11.20am.

The Tall Ships will also race starting from a line around Princes Wharf and head up under the Harbour Bridge.

Our yachts will race back from Mahurangi on Sunday 29 January and as many as possible will berth in the Viaduct Harbour overnight and be entertained by the live concert !! Prizegiving is at the Loaded Hog.

Auckland's birthday will be celebrated on a grand scale in 2006 – an already bustling city will electrify further with the extravaganza that will be the Auckland Harbour Festival. A spectacular array of events and activities – from circus acts, to rides, to live bands and fireworks.

Don't miss out on being part of this fantastic celebration – register your interest now:

Joyce Talbot, tel 09-836-4747 or 021-818-448

e-mail [joycetalbot@xtra.co.nz](mailto:joycetalbot@xtra.co.nz)

### Falcon cont ...

boat while working surf or foul weather while carrying big loads. The lower belting was also added to protect her topsides while alongside landings.

We are also sure she was built with floors, but again you can see where more was added to accommodate various engine beds. Her kauri planking, mungimungi ribs and pohutukawa knees give her away as a New Zealand-built boat.

After Jim had stripped all the rubbish off the hull he "set her up" on a strong back so that he could shore her back into shape. He carried out the few necessary plank repairs, tightened up almost all of the fastenings and replaced about six ribs. Her plank

hood ends were very sick where they were fasted to the apron. These were cleaned up re-set in and refastened. The same had to be done where the planks were fitted to the transom. When the hull was completed Jim made up a "lug" rig with a lug mizzen using period materials and tackle. This again is very in keeping and makes her a very usable classic boat. She is also fitted with a sliding outboard motor fixing device (Jim's own design).

He then named her Falcon. This vessel was restored, not rebuilt and the end result gives one the impression that Falcon has been a cared for workboat most of her life.

At this stage her history is only speculation. Jim has been told she was built up North somewhere. There are no more details. In the 1820's

– 1830's Northland was host to many American whaling fleets. Most of these were New Bedford registered ships. The crews of these ships had many skills including shipwright and boat building know-how. We think Falcon was definitely built by a skilled American builder as most of her construction is exactly the same used in the 26ft New Bedford whale boats. Her hull shape is designed to carry a good load while still maintaining easy "pulling"(rowing) characteristics.

Our thoughts are that she was built as a shore-based ship's boat to service one or more whaling stations. In later years she may have carried on with this work for other shore-based activities around the Northland coast, servicing the local farms

etc where there were no purposed-built landings. She may have had an engine installed after the turn of the century and, as these wore out or played up, were replaced with later machines. There is no doubt that in her final years she ended up as a fishing boat like most small craft.

Jim being his humble self takes no praise for the preservation of Falcon. He thanks the person who did the major refit as the one who needs the "pat on the back" for saving this very significant piece of New Zealand nautical history. If you see Falcon on Jim's front lawn or around the Tamaki Estuary, and want to take in early New Zealand boat construction, Falcon and Jim Mateer are well worth a visit!



# Alfred's not sure if it's Arthur or Martha



The launch that Andrew Pollard rescued from the mud of the Whau Creek has a tentative i.d. She appears very similar to a Bailey & Lowe launch called *Alfred*, built for T. Hartley & Sons of Kohukohu around 1904. Certainly, if she's (he's?) not *Alfred*, then she's a twin and was probably a stock Bailey & Lowe 26'x6'6" "cruiser stern" launch and built from the same moulds as *Alfred*. Research continues.

Andrew has also just rescued an interesting 28ft keel yacht, *Maranui*, beautifully built by Coulthard of Onehunga in the early 1930s for a Capt. Kirk, who adzed out her model.

*Harold Kidd*



Top two pictures: *Alfred* at Kohukohu around 1905.  
Left: *Alfred* (maybe) in 2005.  
Above: *Maranui*.

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