

# Celebrating The Past

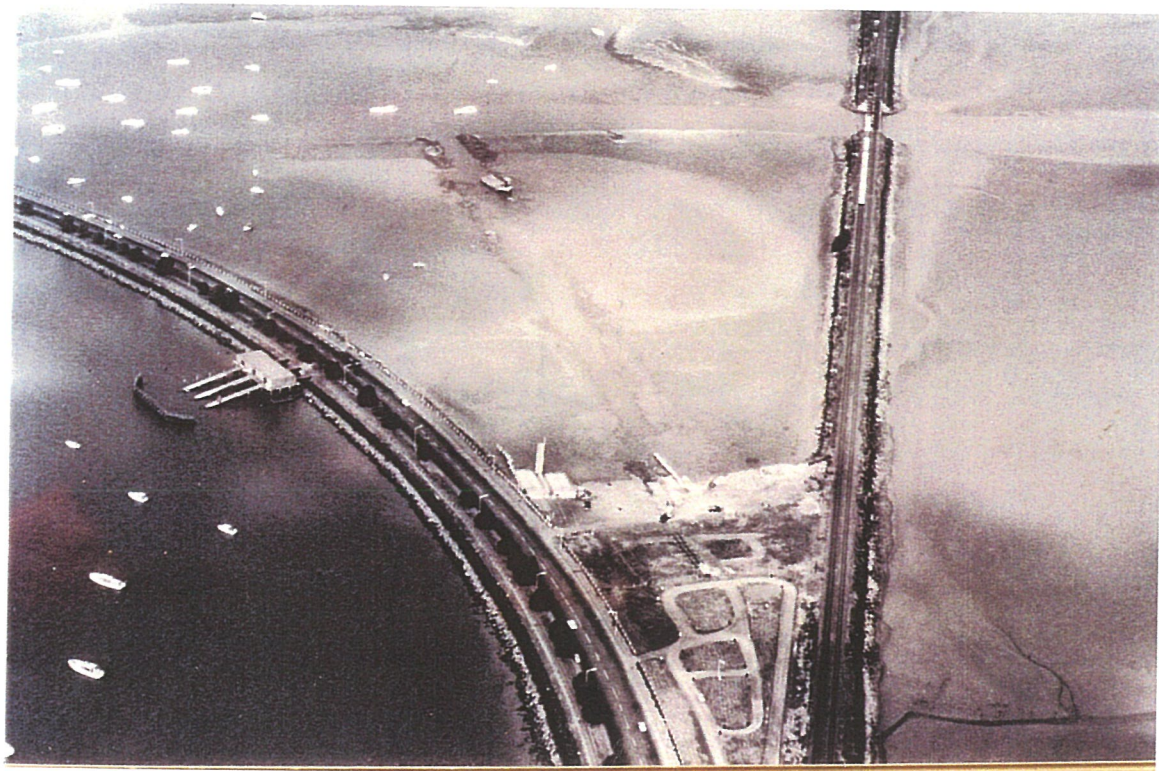
Commemorating fifty years of  
The Outboard Boating Club of Auckland

**1956-2006**

*by Katherine Dickinson*

*Appendix by John Hager*





*The OBC Site – 1950's*



*The OBC Site – 1990's*

# Contents

|                                                    |    |
|----------------------------------------------------|----|
| PREFACE -----                                      | 2  |
| INTRODUCTION -----                                 | 3  |
| OOZY MUD, SHOVELS AND GUMBOOTS -----               | 4  |
| THE MONEY SPINNER -----                            | 18 |
| A HOME, A HEART AND A HECTIC SOCIAL CALENDAR ----- | 23 |
| PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE-----                       | 34 |
| PLANS, PROPOSALS, AND MARINAS GALORE -----         | 43 |
| HIGH HEELS, TEA TOWELS AND TEAPOTS -----           | 53 |
| MEMORIES OF GREAT OBC MEMBERS-----                 | 56 |
| CLUB OFFICIALS -----                               | 60 |

## Preface

During the latter stages of John Hager's Commodoreship, three stalwarts of the Club passed on. We realised a forty year history should be compiled with urgency so as some of the early days were not lost forever. I would like to thank John for his efforts in coordinating those spoken to, in obtaining the old records and sorting through a myriad of photographic material.

There will be some people and events missed. (The Rainbow Warrior episode, where club members whilst on observation duty for burglars of boats moored in the bay, saw the commandos dump their outboards and other gear in the bay before being picked up by a van.) We apologise, but Katherine only had Minutes and Magazines to read through and of course many things are not mentioned.

Remember this publication will be added to in the future and if you have anecdotes that should be added, jot them down and the executive of the day will be delighted to have more material for the next issue - perhaps at 50 years.

The tradition of helping the people of Auckland continues and as a 40th year project, club members supplied the police with thermal imaging equipment to the value of \$15,000. The unit will enable the police to search at night for people in the water and can be used for surveillance work. Club members made a voluntary donation of \$10 with their subs, the Deodar Trust contributed its final balance of \$2500 with the club making up the difference.

My thanks to Katherine Dickinson, John Hager and all those who gave freely of their time to contribute to this history. The OBC of Auckland is a proud club dedicated to safety at sea and making the facilities at the club the best possible.

The following chapters make fascinating reading and prove that with effort, dogged determination and sticking to briefs can have major dividends. May the club continue down those lines.

Steve Burrett  
Commodore



# Introduction

It has taken three months to piece together the events of the Outboard Boating Club of Auckland's last forty years. During that time I have had the pleasure of reading about and meeting some of the delightful and hard working members of the OBC. Reading through 480 well documented magazines and newsletters, I have felt at times I have taken part in the club activities and outings, and have met the people who get mentioned so often. These are the people who built the jetties, who ran the meetings, who organised the Christmas party, who made the tea, who caught the biggest fish, who mowed the grass and painted the shed, or those who simply loved to go boating. It has made me realise how special and how big a part the club plays in the lives of so many people.

It is for that reason that I apologise for leaving out any important people or events, but in writing a history like this, it is impossible to record everything. This book is designed to touch on as many events as possible, and capture the memories of the past in an interesting way. I hope those members of the club who read this book will enjoy it for what it is.

I would like to thank those who lent me their time, their memories and their photographs, as it is the personal touch that brings such a book to life. Thanks especially to Noel Kirkpatrick, John Cross, Ron Martin, Betty and Des Rankin and Rod Osmond.

**Disclaimer:** I apologise for any inaccuracies in this documentation of the history of the Outboard Boating Club of Auckland, but as all the information comes directly from club newsletters or Outboarder magazines, or interviews with members, I accept no responsibility.

# Oozy Mud, Shovels and Gumboots

## 1956 - 1966

### So how did it all begin?

The first conception of a boating club for small boat owners, particularly boats that could be transported by trailer, was the idea of John Mallitte, editor of Sea Spray magazine in 1955. *"In March I published an article I had written called "Outboard Cruisers" which in general described the advantages of these craft and their development in the USA. During the remainder of the year I published more information on this type of boat as the interest in them was growing rapidly, and by the end of the 1955-56 season there were several more in the water and many more being built."* Outboarder, July, 1976

The desire for a trailer boat club in New Zealand came at a time when when the boating scene was just taking off in New Zealand. Building materials such as plywood and glue that were previously hard to get hold of became available, and the first kit set plans were designed for people to build their own boats. Import restrictions made it virtually impossible get hold of outboard motors, so boaties came up with the idea of substituting them with car engines. Ford 10s were considered the best, followed by Dodges.

John Mallitte was aware that this type of boating was not catered for in New Zealand by any of the existing clubs, so he wrote to the OBC of America for guidance in forming a similar organisation in New Zealand. *"Shortly after all the helpful literature arrived, trailer boat enthusiast Fred Walker came to my office clutching a duplicate set. He too thought it was time a club was formed and had also enlisted help from America."*

And so one afternoon in August 1956, 19 interested people gathered for a meeting in the boardroom of United Business Directories, publishers of the Sea Spray magazine. The meeting was chaired by John Mallitte, and it was agreed that a club to be known as the Outboard Boating Club of New Zealand be formed along the lines of the OBC in America, including the constitution, its officers and their duties. The discussion and planning led to a public meeting held in the Auckland Sunday School Hall and was attended by around 70 boating enthusiasts. This was the inaugural meeting of the OBC of New Zealand.

*"The formation of the OBC of New Zealand in Auckland last week has already created wide interest among the myriad of small boat owners. Seventy enthusiasts were present at the inaugural meeting and the local response since has been nothing short of amazing. The purpose for which the club was formed is to serve the interests of boating and in*

*particular those propelled by outboard motors, and to set a high standard of safety at sea.*" Auckland Star, June 1956

As one of the prime movers, Fred Walker seemed the obvious choice to be the first president but he declined, instead offering his services as chairman of one of the working committees. Stan Gleadow was chosen to be the club's first president at that meeting. Others elected at that first meeting were:

Secretary/Treasurer - Gore Fisher

Club Captain - Bob McRae

Chairman of the programme and attendance committee - Fred Walker

Chairman of the publicity and membership committee - Ron Abel

Chairman of the technical committee - Gordon Brookbanks

In all there were 15 foundation members.

The 1956 pioneers were elated with the enthusiasm surrounding the formation of the club but soon realised it was one thing to start the club, but it was an entirely different proposition to find it a home. From the 25th October 1956, monthly meetings were held in the Commodore's Lounge of the Tamaki Yacht Club on a Thursday night. However the date was later moved to Tuesday night as the clash with "Coronation Street" appeared to be the cause of poor turn outs. Communication among members was provided by a monthly club report published in Sea Spray magazine. Sea Spray also featured articles on any new boat that was built or owned by a member. At the end of the first year the club had some 70 members and an annual income of a pound a head per entrance fee. After all, the club had nothing to offer the members so it couldn't charge them much.

### Early outings

Lack of money and facilities didn't dampen the enthusiasm, and weekend outings were what held the club together. The club's first big run was organised in February 1957 when 21 smart cruisers, runabouts and high powered dinghies turned up at Mercer, each laden with wives, children, drink and food for the day - about 100 people in all. *"Proceeding at 12 m.p.h the flotilla made an impressive sight in those days, and we met up with two boats from the Waikato Power Boat Club who guided the formation through the narrow Rangiriri/Lake Waikare channel. The run home was at your own course and speed. Dad overboard pushing his craft off sand banks was a common sight, but it was a wonderful family affair and that was what the OBC was all about."* Newsletter, 1957.

*The OBC's most ambitious outing to date was an organised weekend to Kawau Island. The majority of boats trailed from Auckland to launch at Martins Bay, although one made the voyage by sea from Takapuna Beach. Boats ranged in size from John Hicks' 12ft dinghy up to club President Stan Gleadow's 21 ft giant. Vivian Bay became headquarters for the afternoon skiing, then back to Mansion House for dinner and dancing. The following morning some of the keener ones were up at 6am water skiing.* Sea Spray, May, 1957

At the end of the first year, the Outboard Boating Club of New Zealand was in full swing. The increasing interest in membership was drawing club members with wide experience and interests such as water skiing, skin diving and photography, and above all expert knowledge in marine engineering and boat building. Early in the year the club's pennant was designed and a supply was sent from Scotland. The first pennant was a real flag bunting which was unobtainable locally at the time. At all times emphasis was laid on the "family angle" and wives and children crowded the monthly meetings. Entertainment at the monthly meetings was of great importance and included practical demonstration of boating equipment, demonstrations from the Fire Department showing the best way to extinguish fires on boats, talks on navigating the inner Auckland harbours, slides on club outings, and slides and speeches on topics like skin diving by the Auckland Underwater Club. Often of greater interest though was the healthy democratic debate that went on among members. "We all had our own votes and we all believed our vote was as good as the next one, and we were right until proved otherwise," recalls Ron Martin. "The best speaker was Stan Gleadow. He could really draw a meeting. If he had an idea and no one else agreed, he would just talk and talk until we finally we all agreed." Technical meetings for the men were held between monthly meetings when representatives from the boating industry came to talk about their products and how to use them. One of the most popular subjects was fibreglass, the latest and greatest product on the market, and how to apply it without it bubbling. As well there were mid week visits to boat and trailer industries.

#### Early difficulties

The early pioneers had no home, no ramp and above all, no money. Private offices, or members homes were used for meetings other than the monthly one, and the club's first registered office was in secretary Ron Martin's garden shed. Although members were allowed to launch at Takapuna Beach and Torpedo Bay, it was the steep and slippery ramps at Okahu Bay that became the club launching pad. It was not uncommon to see a car and trailer slide into the water in those early days, and a quick tow was necessary for rescue.

"Launching at Okahu Bay was a slimy process," recalls John Cross. "I remember one time when I was helping a guy launch his brand new boat. He put his foot on the brake and the wheels stopped but the car and trailer slid straight into the water. It went so far in the boat floated off the trailer by itself, and the whole back of the car was floating in the water. I was standing with one foot on the trailer and one foot on the car bumper and I looked down and saw bubbles coming up from the exhaust - the car was still going! After that the guy lost all interest in the boating trip - he just wanted to get home to wash out his car."

Although the club managed to persuade the Harbour Board to clean a section of the Okahu Bay ramp and paint it with anti-foul to help overcome the problem, any other local body help was out of the question. *"With the slightest breeze from the wrong*



*direction waves lapped the ramp. Wives were left to hold the boat against the wind and waves while the skipper went off to get the trailer. Sometimes wet to the waist in their determined efforts, our womenfolk often got a bit unfriendly towards our love of boating." Outboarder, 1976.*

### A piece of land

At the annual meeting of the second year the name president was abolished and changed to commodore. With a healthy bank account following the club's first Boat Show and still no place to call home, members decided to plug for the rubbish dump at Hobson Bay - land they knew belonged to the Harbour Board but was vested in the Auckland City Council as a reserve. It was an eyesore on a main entrance to the city and without dredging lots of mud to form a channel approach it was not the ideal site for the club's purpose. However all attempts to obtain space at Okahu Bay or Westhaven were hopeless so beggars could not be choosers. In desperation members approached the Harbour Board with some practical ideas for the dump which were rejected out-right. By now though, a group of passionate members were determined to have this dump. After months of hammering, arguing, string pulling, lobbying sympathetic listeners plus good publicity from the Herald and the Star, they got it.

It was agreed that the OBC could occupy the land in Whakatakataka Bay under licence for an indefinite period, but that it would vacate the area without compensation when and if called to do so. The Auckland City Council and Harbour Board fenced and metalled the area and the Harbour Board, the ACC and the OBC each put up 300 pounds to build a ramp. The OBC wanted to supervise the ramp but all it could do was insist on a grade of 1 and 10 with a width of 12ft. The ramp was finished in heavy scoria rather than cement, and there was no show of retrieving a boat. The club dared an official to drive down to the waters edge then back up. When he had to be towed, the Harbour Board and the ACC agreed to provide the concrete and the OBC formed a working party to construct the boxing and pour the concrete. With the ramp in place, a jetty was the next step. The club hired a crane and at ten pounds a time, ten old piles members had scrounged from the Harbour Board were driven into the mud to build a nine inch wide fixed jetty alongside the road. There was a natural channel running alongside the road and this was used to reach Ngapipi Bridge.

### ***From the diary, 1959:***

*Looking back over the year's progress it is with pride we note that since the clubs inception in 1956, no member has come to grief through fool-hardiness or lack of knowledge in seamanship. For your information to refresh your memories and to our new members the following proposals were endorsed as compulsory back in 1956:*

*1 anchor and warp (end to be made fast to boat, warp 100ft, anchor to a size and type suitable to your boat)*

*2 oars and rowlocks or auxiliary engine*

*3 buoyancy equipment sufficient to support all occupants*

*4 hand bailer or pump*

*5 for night operation - navigation lights and powerful portable light*

*Recommendations:*

*1 carry a tool kit and vital running spares (spark plugs etc)*

*2 spare anchor and warp, also length of chain from anchor to warp*

*3 safety chain to secure anchor to boat*

*4 first aid kit*

*5 fire extinguisher and all fire fighting equipment*

*6 knife*

*7 spare fuel can*

*8 detachable floor boards*

*Another recommendation is that the club take a strict stand regarding the consumption of liquor while operating a boat. Unless we have a high standard in this respect the club would fall into disrespect if this were neglected and we consider it just as dangerous to operate a boat under the influence as it is to operate a car.*

*Outboarder, November, 1959*

### Boating adventures

The first outing every season was the "shakedown cruise", usually to Islington Bay or another close beach. The trip was held just before Labour Weekend and was meant as a trial run for those who had new boats or had worked on their boats over the winter before they were hauled or driven further afield for the Labour Weekend break. In a similar tradition, the season was finished off with the "Waikato River run", which as well as being a great trip, was primarily used to flush out the motors with fresh water before they were put away for the winter. Members launched at Rangiriri and cruised down the river to the Meremere power station where they tied up. They were given a conducted tour around the station before having a picnic lunch then heading back up the river. This was one of the most popular trips of the season, and many club members remember some great times.

Noel Kirkpatrick: "Jet boats were new at that time and one trip there was a guy who had one and couldn't stop telling us how magnificent they were - how the motor would cut out and you could just land on the sand bank. I asked him to give us a demonstration and he ended up 20ft up the sand bank! We just said to him if you can get your boat all the way up there, you can get it off again. Another time Reg Mogford and I had launched from Henry's Elbow in his new boat, but when he turned the boat to port it went to starboard - he had put the steering in the wrong way. I said well just remember to turn the wheel the opposite way you want to go. One time he didn't and we ended up on the sandbank, and we sat there until he had fixed it!"

During the Christmas holidays Lake Rotoiti was one of the most popular holiday spots. Club members went there in their droves, often congregating and taking over the hot spring at the lake's entrance after a day of water skiing. Other members like Ron Martin trailed their boat behind their car (or in Ron's case, his boat behind his caravan which was behind his car), as far afield as Mt Manganui. Other club runs during the year also drew large turnouts. "With no proper ramp, launching was very difficult and you needed everyone to help each other," explains John Cross. "Members also liked the safety aspect. The club bought two small radios and one boat who was the trip leader would take a radio and lead the group, while one person would wait on shore for the stragglers to arrive. That way if the leader went to a bay and found it was too rough he could call up and say they were heading somewhere else."

***From the diary, 1959:***

***1959/60 outings for the season:*** Shakedown cruise (first of the season) - Islington Bay, Labour weekend - Waikato River and Lake Karapiro, November - Lake Waikere, Anniversary Weekend - Mahurangi or Bay of Islands, February - skiing tuition and reliability trials, fishing competition, March - Sandspit and Kawanui, Easter - Lake Rotoiti.

***Lake Waikere cruise, November.*** This was the biggest muster of boats from 7 to 22ft and we celebrated the opening of a domain on the lake. Amphibian flights, swimming, skiing, novelties and thrills galore.

***Fishing competition for Woodroffe trophy, December.*** Members can fish anywhere except in the deep freeze.

***Christmas picnic:*** Karaka Bay - in the water, under the water, on the beach, on the boat. Get away early, stay in the evening for a BBQ and sing song. So pile aboard your hampers, kids, rugs, piano accordions, and juke boxes.

***Remember:*** Weekly rendezvous point at Okahu Bay three hours before high water or at our club launching ramp at Whatakataka Bay adjacent to Leighton's Driving School. Members at all times please fly your club pennants.

**Coming together**

At the close of the third year, club facilities included an area of land, a 12ft ramp, a fixed jetty and a water approach that could be used four hours either side of high tide. For the old style planing hull that did not draw much water, it was a good start. With rising funds in the kitty thanks to the boat show, it was decided to build a floating jetty. It was about this time that one of the club's most enthusiastic members, Evan Thomas, came onto the scene, and he took on the job of building the first floating jetty. Sheet metal welded to form spiral pipes made up the pontoons as polystyrenes were not known at the time.



*Members' working bees have played a vital part in the development of the club from the earliest days to the present*

When the jetty was ready a working bee widened the ramp to 20ft and the first floating jetty took its place along side.

### The grand opening

On the 30th April 1960, nearly three years and seven months after John Mallitte called the first meeting, the OBC of New Zealand held the official opening of its marina. The club had the dump at peppercorn rental, a car park, one 20ft ramp, one floating jetty, one fixed walkway and a very enthusiastic bunch of 350 members

### ***Details for the official opening of the marina 10.30 Saturday April 30th***

*Members must launch by 9.30 and gather in front of the launching ramp. The only boats to be tied up to the floating jetty are those of the executive committee. Loud speakers will be installed so those on boats can hear the speeches, and a brass band will play from 10am if one can be arranged. If any members have large coloured umbrellas please bring them to decorate the foreshore. Traffic will be hectic as the public will be there in their thousands. Please be early as hundreds of cars are expected between 10 and 10.30am. Official speakers: our Commodore, the Mayor of Auckland Mr DM Robinson, the chairman of the Auckland Harbor Board Mr E Turner and MP Mr RJ Tizard. The Mayoress of Auckland will cut the ribbon which will be across the ramp. A club boat will be launched via the ramp. This will be followed by a parade of boats Indian-style up to the bridge and back, or inside Hobson Bay if the weather is bad. The press and press photographers will be there to record the event which will surely be a milestone in the history of New Zealand.*

Outboarder, April, 1960

### ***Report from the official marina opening:***

*The weather was perfect and the response from members and their boats was very good. Les Holt had just completed building the club's longest cruiser, a 23 footer with twin 55hp outboards and after the usual speeches and the Mayoress had cut the tape, Les launched his ship amidst the loud cheers of all. It was a beautiful day and at the conclusion of the ceremony nearly 100 club boats which had been sitting at the waters edge in the marinas cruised up the harbour to the bridge carrying a sheet of bunting with "OBC" proudly displayed.*

*The boys looked good cruising out in Indian file but oh boy! what a scramble once they hit the bridge! Nevertheless, publicity was good. Casualties reported: one broken axle by Colin Maxwell doing his good deed for the day, one holed craft - Stan Crisp, they tell me, and the flotation equipment didn't appear too good, by all accounts. Nevertheless, Stan and crew got back safely due to club members' assistance.*

*Found: one holed boat. Lost: one flotation cushion by Leith Thompson*

Outboarder, April, 1960

### ***From the diary, 1960:***



**Report from AGM:** there is a new position on the club executive - chairman of the property committee..

**Further modifications to the ramp:** lighting and fresh water facilities have been installed.

**Wanted:** workers for club working bees every Saturday.

**Required:** small shed: any member who can give the club temporary use of such as a toilet requirement at the marina. Also garden furniture (with chains and padlocks).

**News:** The annual ball at Tamaki Yacht Club in September was a great success  
The most popular boat design in the club is an Augustin (there are 30 in the club)  
Five boats in the club have radio telephones.

A paid custodian, Mr Matthews, has been employed to patrol the car park and ramp during weekends.

### The Fire Brigade

As chairman of the Metropolitan Fire Service, Stan Gleadow made sure the Fire Brigade did their bit for the OBC. Stan considered the OBC ramps an ideal place for regular hose practice, ensuring that at the same time the ramps got a good clean. When the pipes for the jetty had to be put in, Stan called in the Fire Brigade. They put their hoses down the pipes and the force of the water cleared out the mud allowing the pipes to sink into the ground. As well, old hoses were put to good use as rub rails on the side of the jetty. The Fire Brigade also played a part in the Boat Show, turning up on the last night to pump out the 5 million gallons of water from the pool.

### The channel

By 1961 the membership had reached 450 and the club was gathering about 50 new members each year. Three Boat Shows had been held and arrangements were being made to transfer the show to the Epsom Showgrounds; Leighton's Driving School, which was adjacent to the club's parking area, agreed to let members use their grounds for weekend trailer parking; and above all, the OBC had a healthy bank balance. Members agreed that ramps, jetties and a channel were needed before a clubhouse was built, but some members were anti a clubhouse altogether. However a majority vote was passed for a clubhouse building fund to begin. The immediate concern though, was for a channel 30ft wide and 3ft deep at low tide. This was to cause some headaches - the first snag being the Harbour Board. Following their refusal to dredge the channel, the club asked permission to reach deep water by reclamation. This was also rejected, saying it may interfere with motorway plans for the area, (we are STILL waiting for the motorway!!!) and there was a possibility that the dredging could undermine the road and railway support. The club eventually produced professional evidence to refute such possibilities.



If gaining permission was frustrating, performance was worse. The first contractor, Harry Julian, considered the channel "a piece of cake", so the club hired him at 25 pounds an hour while his mechanical bucket was working. He said it would take ten days to do the job. Evan Thomas spent most of this time down at the marina checking the contractor's working time. After about three weeks he quit and finished up with the job half done. The club ended up paying the Harbour Board 48 pounds an hour and even then working bees were held at the entrance at low tide with gumboots and shovels, smoothing the humps which wore down propellers. After months of frustration, arguments, hard work and a fair few broken shovel handles, the channel was finished. It ended up costing a lot more than was expected, but it was a "must" and it was a success. The educated thinkers who claimed the running tide would keep the channel open were correct, and the Harbour Board adviser who said the road and railway would subside was wrong.

***From the diary, 1961:***

*Difficulties are still arising at the ramp re trailers going over the end and boats being caught by the tide and failing to make the ramp. One member in particular now realises the mud is more than a foot deep. He was, I believe, up to his waist in it.*

*Members, please do not trail pennants at high speed on your boats behind your cars - they're not made for that.*

Club newsletters

From 1959 the club had been kept together and informed thanks to the work of secretary Ron Martin. Known as "Pedro", Ron was also responsible for publicity and wrote the OBC's monthly newsletters that were printed on foolscap pages with printing so small you needed a magnifying glass to read it. The newsletter was first printed in November 1959 and provided a communication link between members, updating them with news, views and the activities of the ever-active club. Monthly features included "Plywood Alley", a section devoted to club boats - new ones, renovated ones, where they'd been seen and where they should be seen. Ron resigned from secretary in 1962, but continued his news and views in the newsletter until 1966.

Security

Evenings and weekdays during the summer, and all the time during winter when there was no custodian on duty, security at the club was a real problem. The club property was easily accessible from both the road and the railway line, and unfortunately a padlocked chain across the entrance did little to deter unwanted guests. The policy of displaying the club's current colour-coded membership sticker was helpful for the custodian when he was on duty, but of little help when no one was around to patrol the area. Only two or three boats would stay out overnight in those days as the average member had a day cruiser of 15 to 17ft. Those who went away for the weekend had a very trying time. Saturday night was the worst and it was not uncommon to find that thieves had broken

into your car and stolen everything of value. One owner returned one Saturday night to find his Jaguar sitting neatly on blocks minus four wheels, tyres and hub caps. Special police patrols were organised but even they could not catch the culprits. Outboards were hard to come by in those days so you daren't leave your boat overnight unattended with the outboard motor attached. A clamp lock was not a sufficient safeguard as thieves were known to cut out the tuck around the clamps and take it along with the motor. As well being a target of crime, the club also had a problem with its identity. With no buildings on the property some people seemed to think the land was still a rubbish dump and finding fresh loads of smelly rubbish in the grounds was not uncommon.

### ***From the diary, 1962:***

*The first toilets were erected in the grounds in March 1962. They were resplendent in their paintwork of chartreuse and terracotta.*

### **The adventures of Hornblower**

The flurry of development in late 1961 set the pace for 1962. Never happy to settle with what they had, the property committee was forever coming up with new ideas to make its club bigger and better. The club's parking area was extended after acquiring a derelict parking lot from the city council. This area was bulldozed level and seeds were planted for grass to grow over the area. A goat which mysteriously found its way to the OBC was kept on as the club lawn mower, but even Hornblower, as he was named, could not get the better of the prolific growth of grass. *"We are looking into ways of permanent grass removal at the marina which is causing quite a problem. Even our goat is completely overwhelmed by the quantity of feed available, which appears enough to support a whole herd."* Newsletter, May, 1962. The next month members received alarming news that Hornblower was stolen from his green pastures. He was finally traced by a ranger to a Lorne St restaurant where thankfully he had not yet been put on the menu. In September with grass over his head, Hornblower was relieved from his duties of consuming grass. A lawn mower was used to mow the car park grass and it took three days to do the job!

### **Property development**

Also in 1962 the green light was given for re-dredging the channel to 25 ft wide and for an all tide ramp to be built. This second ramp was to have a new pontoon jetty and catwalk. A long drop toilet block was built at the marina, and an additional two ramps were built. Dredging the channel, this time to a greater depth, was proving to be as hard as the first attempt. The result was two big holes in the harbour bed. Underneath the mud was a hard sandstone base which had even the Harbour Board's grab flummoxed. Work had to be temporarily halted while engineers worked out a new method of excavation.

In June 1963, plans for the clubhouse were discussed. By this time the membership had reached 480 and there was a definite need to have a place where the club could hold its gatherings and functions. The clubhouse project was approved at the November meeting,

and it was stated that the project should be completed and in use by the end of the summer season. Other property development around the club grounds included deepening and widening the access channel, building another 12ft wide concrete launching ramp (this was the club's 5th ramp), building another jetty, reclaiming and straightening up the foreshore, lengthening ramp 2 by 12 ft and extending its catwalk to serve it better.

In September 1964 it was decided to make it an ongoing policy to name the club's jetties after the commodore in service when it was built, or a prominent club member who was involved in its building. Jetty 1 became known as the Gleadow jetty, jetty 2 was the McElroy jetty, and jetty 3 was the Hitchcock jetty. Further work by members led by the property committee was the construction of an implement shed next to the toilet block; the installation of a public phone box; increased lighting was put in around the marina to combat the ever increasing problem of theft and vandalism in the marina; a dinghy and trailer was purchased for use by members who had boats moored out in the bay, and a caravan was put on the property for the new custodian Mr Neill O'Connell, the first full time custodian, who moved in in November. By that time there were seven ramps operating, as well as two tide guages - one in front of the McElroy jetty, the other under Ngapipi Rd bridge. In January 1965 long standing club member Mr Jack White presented a flag pole to the club, and it was decided the flag would be flown on weekends and holidays.

Another attempt in August 1965 to deepen the channel proved unsuccessful. Unwilling to give up though, the club tendered a new contract for deepening the channel, enlarging the turning basin and lengthening ramps 3 and 4. In January 1966 there was finally success. The completed channel had 2 feet of water at the shallowest part at low tide; the turning basin was about the same depth and twice as large; ramps 3 to 7 had concrete extensions down to channel level; and the Hitchcock jetty was extended to allow more room for tying up.

### ***Wobbly wheels.***

*The worst feature of holiday boating can be getting the boat to the water, one North Shore boat owner has found. Leaving Takapuna in glorious weather he headed north. But three miles out a wheel loosened and fell off. The trailer ground to a halt. The wheel was replaced. One mile later the other wheel fell off. By the time the holiday maker reached Albany, five miles away, the wheels had fallen off three times.*

Newsletter, 1964

*There appears to still be major problems of wheels falling off trailers, despite all advice in bulletins of how to care for the trailers. It is not uncommon to see boats and trailers stranded on the side of the road with no wheels.*

Newsletter, 1965

### **Club trips**

The social side of club activities was what being a club member was all about, and there was always plenty happening if you weren't at a working bee. The annual club picnic was one of the most important fixtures on the social calendar, and every year often over a hundred boats and members would head down to Motuihe for a day of action packed fun. Entertainment included running races, rowing races, tug of wars, egg throwing competitions, lolly scrambles for the kids, and of course the barbecue.

*At this year's club picnic at Motuihe there were 33 boats but there would have been one more if our worthy secretary Nelson McElroy hadn't taken a short cut inside Bean Rock. While everyone enjoyed a barbecue at Motuihe, Mr McElroy had his picnic at Mission Bay in the company of his holed vessel.* Newsletter, April, 1962.

Another picnic casualty in the 1960s was Governor General Fergusson, who had been granted honorary membership of the OBC so he could use the facilities for his boat. Noel Kirkpatrick recalls that day the Governor General had been anchored off the bay where the club was having its picnic, but didn't come ashore. "Being the Commodore at the time I thought I should do the respectable thing when he came back to the club and go and speak to him. Firstly he came up the channel the wrong side, and then he ran his boat right up the ramp! His aide-de-camp jumped out and apologised saying it was his fault, but it wasn't his fault at all. Thinking discretion was called for, I slipped away without speaking to him."

Fishing outings and competitions were popular with members, one of the favourites in these early days being the Kaipara Harbour fishing competition. However it didn't start off that way. Tired of no-one turning up to programmed outings, Noel Kirkpatrick and his programme committee decided to plan trips where they wanted to go, since they were the only ones who seemed to turn up. That way, it wouldn't matter if no-one else turned up. "We arranged this fishing trip to the Kaipara Harbour and were expecting about four boats. We had arranged to meet at the Huapai Hotel at 8am, and on the way we thought we would never stop going past a queue of boats and cars which were waiting for us. There would have been about 40 boats!"

Another annual competition was the Sea Horse Cup held every winter. Entrants had to predict the time it would take them to get around a "predicted log course", which included launching and retrieving boats, boat handling and safety requirements on the boat, trailer and car. Some parts of the course were designed to test the most conscientious boatie: marks were lost if 5 mph was exceeded through areas of anchored boats, if an anchor anchored on the beach stuck out of the sand, or if contestants could not back their boat through an obstacle course. "Reg Mogford set his speed one year but it got really rough," recalls Noel Kirkpatrick. "Reg managed to keep going at the same speed but the seats collapsed! When he finished the boat was fine but it had no seats!"

Members also enjoyed reciprocal outings with members from other clubs. These included Waikato River outings with the Hamilton Cabin Cruising Club, a crayfish day with the Auckland Underwater Club, and a combined trip to Pakatoa Island with the

Auckland Water Ski Club. The OBC was rapidly becoming one of Auckland's most highly regarded boating clubs, particularly because of the importance it placed on boating safety. The club was often asked for members to patrol at special events for other organisations such as swimming and sailing clubs, and to provide patrol boats for the start of big yacht races such as the Auckland to Suva yacht race and the Whitbread. On one occasion when the Britannia came into Auckland with the Queen on board, the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron who were to act as guard boats, invited members of the OBC to assist them. "The boats were to be stationed 100m apart down either side of the Britannia as she came up the harbour," recalls Noel Kirkpartick. "The Squadron was talking about 30 to 40ft boats, but I said yes, I'll do my stuff in my 13ft boat. The only problem was the pennants they gave us to fly were about 20ft long! I nearly got drowned in my little boat. We were given certificates to say we had taken part and I still laugh when I see mine: Name of vessel: "Sprat", length of vessel: "13ft"!"

#### The end of an era

In April 1963, the OBC of New Zealand became the OBC of Auckland. It was felt by the executive that the name change was necessary to encourage other boating clubs around New Zealand to become OBCs, which was the case in America where the name originally came from. The club was gaining on average 20 new members a month, and by February 1966 the membership was over 600. At the Annual General Meeting in July 1966, one decade after the club was first formed, it seemed appropriate that its founding Commodore Stan Gleadow was elected a life member. Few would argue that it was the strength and leadership of this man that got the club off the ground. His connections in the business world had gained the club a home, a ramp and a very respected patron. The other member to be granted the honour of life membership was Ron Martin who had contributed to every club newsletter since they first began. The honour granted to both men marked the end of an era. The hardest, do it yourself days that put the foundations in place for everything at the club today had come to an end. For Ron, the tiny print, home grown newsletter was giving way to a professional, glossy club bulletin. For Stan, oozy mud, shovels and gumboots were giving way to the clink of the contractor's machinery. It was truly the end of an era.

#### *From the diary, 1966:*

##### ***The Dreamer***

*I'd love to own a power boat, its one of my life dreams  
and spend a lot of hours afloat on a craft that shines and gleams.  
I've looked at all the different craft around the Auckland zone  
but up to know I haven't found the one I'd like to own.  
I've pestered dealers night and day and looked at all their craft-  
runabouts and dinghies and a disused harbour raft.  
They treat me like king, you know, and even call me Sir.  
The things they try to sell me, they think I'm a millionaire.  
But I will have the biggest laugh, yet they won't think it's funny,*

*'Cos I'm just a dreamer and don't have any money!*

***Reply to the dreamer of last months issue:***

*To the dreamer who just dreams away here's our advice to you:  
Please do not waste your life this way on dreams you don't fulfil.  
As you inspect the gleaming craft in each boat building yard,  
do not hide a mocking laugh and think you're quite a card!  
You are entitled to respect even with your lack of money  
magnificently to reject each boat (although she's a honey)*

*So continue on your way and gather lots of knowledge  
but each week put a pound away, a "money tree" bears foliage!  
Ane when you have a little saved enough for a deposit,  
Then come and see us right away and we'll relieve you of it!  
A Hales Kitset seems to be, the answer to those dreams  
to any man who really tries there are always ways and means*

*We offer our extensive range of boats for your selection  
workmanship all guaranteed, our price invites inspection  
A boat two willing hands can build, experience not needed  
the complete kitset needs no skill, other have succeeded!  
A little work, a little will...and you will have the extra thrill  
of knowing you have built the best  
So why not put it to the test?*



# The Money Spinner

## The first show

In 1956 the OBC of Auckland was formed with not a penny to its name. Despite the enthusiasm of the 15 foundation members, none of their ideas or goals could happen without money. It was while members were scratching around for ideas at a committee meeting in June 1957 that Leith Thompson said why don't we run a boat show? From that casual remark developed perhaps the most exciting event in the club's early history and which was to be the money spinner that put the OBC on its feet. The first show was held on the ground floor of the Farmers Trading Company carpark building in 1958. Just about every boat in the club was on display as well as three trade-only exhibitions. Admission charges were one shilling for adults and sixpence for children. The show itself was a completely static one and ran from the 25th - 27th November 1958. It was a memorable event and no one could ever appreciate the thrill for the organisers to see an opening day 12 o'clock lunch time crowd literally pouring down the drive.

*Approximately 15,000 people saw the show, many of them several times. To the man in the street who thought the outboarder was still a man in a dinghy with a frustrated look and a strong right arm, the sight of comfortable cabins, interiors like motor cars, small cruising launches, 60hp motors with push button starting and tilting, tail fins that put Detroit to shame, ship to shore radios, electric trailer winches, fibreglass veneer, chrome and plastic finishes, boats built for comfort and boats built for speed, boats that have covered the gulf, Coromandal coast and Bay of Islands, must have indeed been a revelation. SeaSpray Magazine, 1958.*

The show began with a parade of as many club boats as possible up Queen St. Once at the Farmers carpark, 47 boats were put on show ranging from 7ft dinghies through to 26ft fast cruisers. All forms of construction were represented from Kauri clinker to fibreglass coated plywood. Two thirds were amateur built and some amateur designed. At nights slides and movies showing club activities were screened with the emphasis on the family angle and the safety of group boating. Popular features of the show were the nightly demonstrations by members of special equipment. Centrepiece was Jack Stewart's 21ft Naiad floating in 12 inches of water in an wooden tank lined with polythene sheeting. Jack demonstrated launching and retrieving his boat from his trailer and people were amazed that fully loaded, she didn't touch the bottom in a foot of water. Fred Walker aboard Capri demonstrated his electro-hydraulic motor tilt button operated from the dash, and son Phil showed the working of his automatic rewind ski reel. Stan Gleadow demonstrated his amateur built electric trailer winch worked from his car battery that made handling his flagship Dord so easy. Gordon Pettit showed the neat installation of the inboard in his special water skiing cabin boat. Jack Stewart's brainchild of building a 22 ft x 8ft x 12ft pool to launch and retrieve his boat at that first boat show was the start

of the greatest gimmick that persisted throughout all the boat shows until 1980. The show was an instant success and resulted in a rapid increase in club membership. In the month following the first show, 54 new members were admitted.

#### ***Advertising for the Boat Show:***

*You have all been sent four stickers advertising the Boat Show. Would members PLEASE attach one to the rear window of their car, the other three to be placed in the same position in your friends' cars.* Newsletter, October, 1960.

#### The following years

The OBC ran two shows at Farmers, but moved when told the show caused too much interruption to business at that time of the year. In 1960 the Upper Queen St Campbell Motors premises was used. About this time the club was approached by the Auckland Water Ski Club and the R. Class Yacht Squadron asking for a joint show. Having already realised the public wanted more than just OBC boats, the clubs happily married. The Royal Easter Show Committee joined the party when the show moved to the Epsom Show Grounds the following year. The show was open from the 30th September to 7th October between 5 and 10pm weekdays and all day weekends. In 1961, 200 boats from all three clubs were exhibited making it the biggest collection and array of boats in the southern hemisphere. The staggering success of the boat show was due to the untold hours of time for weeks on end put in voluntarily by the members of all three clubs and their families. Noel Kirpatrick said that the OBC's motivation in particular was driven by the desire for money. "In those days we had no facilities and no money, and the only way to get both was for everyone to work." During the weeks prior to the show and during show week itself there was a picnic atmosphere. The hard work became a labour of love especially as the crowds turned up and the chips rolled in. The 1961 show attracted 38,000 people, not including children.

#### The pool

It was obvious the pool idea designed by Jack Stewart and used at the first show in 1958 was a huge success. At the first show at the Epsom Showgrounds Jack Stewart and Ted Frost built a ski pool, 250ft long, 40ft wide and 3 ft deep. Jack came up with the idea of pulling the skiers with a drum bolted to the rear hub of his Chevy car. Jack and wife Laurel spent hours on the edge of Lake Pupuke experimenting with the system and Jack, who was a top skier, said he and the rope parted company many times as the car took off like a rocket. The show pool was filled a week early for ski practices and many a laugh were had as workers watched Bill Lloyd and Bruce Douglas trying to get going in that short 250ft of water with this new style of pull. However, sheer determination from all concerned as well as the help of the educated thinkers eventually got Bruce and Bill not only skiing but also doing a trick turn before the end of the pool. The following year a larger pool and tractor allowed faster take offs. The system was so successful that young Glen Mundell gave a daring exhibition of bare foot skiing. What a success story. There were many amusing incidents in practice around the pool. At the end of a ski run it was

necessary to get the ski rope back to the start end of pool. To begin with some fit members would run the 300ft with it. To speed things up it was decided to use a motorcycle. On one particular night Rod Bond was the pillion rider with the ski rope wrapped around his waist and the motor bike scorching down the side of the pool to the start. Some bright spark in the ski rope tow tractor put his foot on the brake and locked the tow wheel. The result - Rod was whipped off the pillion seat, jerked into the air and landed flat on his back in the water. However the pool was not only used for demonstrations. In 1964, 3000 children were entertained with rides in the show's paddle steamers.

Despite the success of this attraction, it caused its share of headaches. John Cross remembers one year when the pool developed a leak so bad it opened up a sub-structure in the ground where there were caves. "We arrived one morning and all the water had disappeared. It took five truck and trailer loads of scoria and earth to fill the up the hole. We then concreted over it before filling the pool up again! After dark we connected the hose to the fire hydrant to fill the pool. The following year they put a meter on the hydrant, but somehow a stone went through it! One year we had problems getting the polythene which lined the pool to stay below the water. It kept floating up. I had to row around the edge of the pool dropping in little bits of steel to hold it down."

*The boat show this year was again a great success apart from problems with the OBC pool which kept leaking into another stall. It was repaired and refilled twice until it was finally realised it had perished. Outboarder, 1971.*

*More problems with the outside pool which contained the 28ft "Champagne Lady". While dismantling the pool the last band came apart too soon and the flood of water nearly floated away a house put on the lower side ready for Garden Week! Outboarder, 1972.*

### Bigger and better

The 1972 Boat Show attracted a record crowd of 91,168, well above the 1971 figure of 58,630. After profits were split, the OBC received a tidy sum of \$4625. But in order to keep pulling the punters, each year organisers had to make the show bigger and better. In 1975 the "aquarena" as it had become known, was expected to be the biggest draw card. Taking six million gallons of water, the three acre man-made lake was the largest of its type in the southern hemisphere, and as well it boasted coloured lighting and an ornamental fountain. The main item in the pool was a 20 minute display of high speed boat handling by four members of the Aquadevils, an Australasian team of piloting stuntmen in boats who roared over jumps and around the pool. The event climaxed with two boats in mid-air while the other two crossed at right angles beneath them. As well, over 9000 children rode in the three "Kentucky" boats built by OBC members. They were made of plywood and had 15hp motors that had been donated. "The pool only had three feet of water in it but we made everyone wear life jackets. We made it seem real and the kids loved it. The boats had bells that donged when we pushed off from the jetty,

and when you asked where they wanted to go, they'd say "lets go to the Barrier"," remembers Des Rankin.

At the 1976 show local commercial interest had grown so rapidly that the club's space had to limited to accommodate a growing shop window for the industry in New Zealand. The show committee had even received enquires from Australian manufacturers who were interested in exhibiting. The attendance at the 1975 show had been 100,000 so organisers hoped the crowds would reach 120,000 this year. As usual the pool was the major attraction, but this year it was only 5,000,000 gallon capacity (this still took four and a half weeks to fill at 10,000 gallons an hour). Action in the pool included "M" class yacht racing, mini-hydros, water-ski displays (by humans and a chimpanzee), jet boat races, a kids pirate ship and slippery spar competitions where people tried to push the other person off into the freezing pool water. As well, on land entertainment included theatre and cartoons for kids, a teenage disco and "sophisticated evening entertainment for the adults". There were also raffles, the Miss Boat Show feature and a huge display of yachts and boats.

Noel Kirkpatrick recalls one year when there was a brand new pavilion at the show grounds. "Although we were allowed to use it, we weren't allowed to touch it or do any damage. We wanted to put a turntable on the ground so we could put a boat on it but we couldn't figure out how to do it. Then Reg Mogford said "gather round"." The result of the conspiracy was a hole punched in the brand new pavilion floor with a rawlbolt. "We covered it over and nothing was ever said," said Noel.

The Boat Show was not just about boats. In fact from the report in the Outboarder from the 1976 show it appears that fashion was the main focus of interest:

*Our cool and elegant Commodore's wife Margaret, looked stunning as usual in a black velvet pant-suit. In contrast, Pam Collins glowed in cherry-red and white. Mrs Bob Carr (Chairman of the Harbour Board's wife) wore a multi-coloured 'jama suit. Wives of the Manufacturer's Federation representatives and the Water Ski Club executive added to this splash of fashion.*

### The Bounty

In the past, show organisers had produced five-acre pools, a half size pirate ship, and a 40ft representative shark. However organisers of the 1979 show planned to go one step better. Using only voluntary labour, representatives of the three clubs planned to build a full-sized mock-up of the sailing ship HMS Bounty. Constructed of timber planking over steel scaffolding, the Bounty was to be 26 metres long and 7.5 metres in beam. Th main mast was 29 metres high and weighed five tonnes without rigging. Numerous short poles and miles of rope were used to construct the yards, shrouds and other standing rigging. Between decks was an open area used for a maritime display, and access to the ship was via a boarding ramp on the ship's side. Copies of the original lines of the Bounty were obtained to ensure the replica was as authentic as practicable considering the short life of

the structure. Members from all three clubs put in endless hours after work, in weekends and during the day to ensure the Bounty was finished in time. The efforts of those who worked so long and hard on this mammoth task were rewarded at the boat show when the judges awarded the boat's builders a special plaque.

#### Running into problems

Despite the incredible financial boost the annual Boat Show gave to the club, it was a real struggle to get members to help. Every year it was the same handful of faithfuls who turned out, putting in twice as much time in as the other volunteers, just to keep the benefits up for everyone. Boat show delegate Trevor Kelly wrote an article in the Outboarder that hit readers hard with the facts: "The boat show is the responsibility of three equal partners who share equal profits. Equal partners should also mean equal work but this is not the case. The OBC has 1100 members, the Auckland Water Ski Club has 250 members, and the R Class Squadron has 30 members. At the 1978 show the OBC supplied 53 duties, the AWSC supplied 180 duties and the R Class supplied 141 duties. With 2.5% of the OBC's membership participating, the OBC is hardly doing its equal share. Every year the club receives between \$6000 - \$10,000 in profit from the boat show. The options are either the OBC pull out and relinquish this profit causing a subscription increase of \$10 p.a., or members get behind the boat show and pull their weight."

#### The end of the money

Members hardly had an option in the matter. In June 1980 the OBC and the Auckland R Class Squadron announced they were would not be part of the 1980 show. However the reason was not because of poor support. The depressed state of the boating industry and the fact that the A.P & I Shows Board had placed restrictions on the use of the arena at the show grounds and certain pavilions meant the 1980 show would run at a loss. For a worthwhile profit to be made gate takings and income from the sale of exhibition space would have to be considerably higher than last year. With this year's restraints on the use of the grounds and the depressed state of the boating industry, such increases were most unlikely. Although parting with the show was very sad considering it was the club's own baby and what put the OBC on its feet, it was seen as the only responsible way to prevent large losses.

# **A Home, a Heart and a Hectic Social Calendar**

## **1966 - 1976**

Just because things were getting a little easier and the work wasn't as back-breaking as it used to be, it didn't mean the frantic pace of development at the club slowed down. With a membership of 630, the number one priority was a clubhouse. Ten years down the track of a successful boating club, the only roofs were on a tool shed and a toilet block.

### Clubhouse construction

At the 1967 Annual General Meeting a resolution was passed for the executive committee to spend up to \$28,000 on the construction of a clubhouse. Knowing that gaining permission to build on the council land would not be an easy task, Stan Gleadow and his team had begun planning and seeking provisional approval five years earlier. However few reports had been made over the past few years for fear they could prejudice the negotiations with the Auckland City Council and the Harbour Board. One month after the club confirmed the finance expenditure, the club received provisional approval from the ACC and the Harbour Board for the plans drawn up by club member Bill Chick for a combined clubhouse and custodians' flat. The clubhouse plans included space to seat 100 people at a meeting and supper facilities. The interior colour scheme was planned in "quiet green, mahogany and pastel trim, with green upholstery on the main seating and emphasis colours on the lounge chairs". In return for the approval the club had to agree it would move the building at its expense if the Harbour Board decided to develop the area, although the Harbour Board confirmed that this would not happen before 1973. Because of this, it was made quite clear that the clubhouse was largely a temporary building.

In September the same year the club called for tenders for the job, and on October 24th the contract for piling and building was awarded. Construction began early in 1968 but was delayed by a series of hold-ups, the first major one being the delay of the supply of Australian ironbark timber. It appeared that the timber which was readily available when the drawings were being prepared, in the meantime had been sold. The Harbour Board came to the rescue and loaned the necessary amount of ironbark timber, the only trick being it was in different dimensions, causing a part change in the structural design of the building so it could be used. Thirty five piles were driven into the surface mud through the thin hard pan which is two feet below low tide, into the soft mud below. Each of the 12 piles was expected to hold 10 tons. These supported the ironbark beams which were to support the clubhouse. Further delays were caused by negotiations over the sum of money the Auckland Power Board had agreed to provide power for. The \$5,760 was much more



than anticipated, and deliberations by the executive meant contractors were without power until March. To add to the frustration, the metal windows were delivered late and at one time work was completely at a standstill. Despite such obstacles, the clubhouse was opened on Saturday 18th May. The work was completed at \$30,000, \$2000 over budget, but completely free of debt. The first monthly meeting was held on Tuesday 28th May at 8pm with a record attendance of well over 100 people.

### ***The Clubhouse Opening***

*This happy occasion was enhanced by the arrival of our guests of honour at the jetty during the one and only shower of rain that occurred throughout the whole proceedings. Prior to this the sky had cleared, the sun shone in splendour, highlighting the gay colours of the bunting, the assembled gathering and the greenery surrounding the entrance way. In the background the large marquee added a carnival touch to the whole scene. We of the welcoming committee had hoped that the skippers would throttle back just sufficiently to allow the shower to pass before disembarking their honoured guests, but arrival coincided exactly with the first splattering of rain. Umbrellas sprouted like mushrooms but the performance was in fact quite an impressive demonstration of seamanship for the Minister of Marine and the Harbour Master. Speeches were commendably short and the solemn unveiling of the memorial plaque went off without a hitch. Formalities over, the gathering poured through the now open doors while Bill Chick stood in the corner wringing his hands and biting his nails. A quick mental check had revealed a 50% overload on the hardwood piles... and the mud below was so SOFT! (There was a horrible moment when a few members thought of the day the Gleadow jetty was opened and because more people crowded on it than it was designed for, there were a lot of cold wet feet and red faces.) However the floor sustained the shock and remained level throughout the sumptuous morning tea. It was altogether a bright and happy occasion and the crowd dispersed slowly and reluctantly. Outboarder, June, 1968.*

### ***1968 Interim rules covering clubhouse use:***

- 1. The clubhouse will be open everyday until October between 8am and 6pm.*
- 2. Phone calls are free but 10c must be placed in the honesty box per toll call.*
- 3. Members and visitors are requested to sign the visitors book.*
- 4. Members making tea and coffee are asked to place 5c in the honesty box.*

### **The social whirl**

No sooner than the clubhouse had been opened, a host of social activities were planned to put it to good use. Members were invited to join the commodore for a relaxing lunch and catch up every Wednesday between 12 and 2pm. Food was a home packed lunch but tea and coffee were available at 5c a cup. Known as the "Wednesday Executives" this group of members took the chance to discuss and solve all the problems of the club. Further new meetings set up by the club's social enthusiasts included a social evening at the club every second Thursday of the month at 8pm which involved films, talks and whatever other entertainment the programme committee could dream up. The teenagers and young adults of the club also held a meeting to form a social club. This got off to a



*Outboard Boating Club Clubrooms Opening Day 18-5-68*  
*By the Minister of Marine Ron Grant Commodore*  
*Hon. W. J. Scott Harvey Shepherd Secretary*



*Opening of the Clubhouse Extension – 21st March 1981*  
*By Sir Dove-Myer Robinson, Patron*  
*left: Barry J. Eade, Commodore*

great start with an informal dine and dance, a presence at the annual club ball, a Guy Fawkes party, a tour of Auckland airport, a raffle for the boat show, a trip to Corbans winery, a party for intellectually handicapped children and a Christmas party, all in a few months. However its members, possibly through exhaustion, seemed to lose interest in the new year. As well, weekly two hour courses on navigation, seamanship and small boat handling were held in the club for new members of those wanting a refresher course.

In November the first of the club's famous auctions was held. The brainchild of club captain Bert Jones, the evening was such a success with Bert's bellowing auctioneer voice, that "Bert's Auction" became an annual event. Today the club auction still remains one of the club's most popular social occasions. *"This evening is being held with the idea that all of us are great hoarders (ask our wives). Dig out all your old boating treasures and clear a nice space in the garage, then buy lots of new treasures to fill up the space. This idea works well with the Vintage Car Club and I see no reason why we, as a boating club, cannot simulate. Those old oars you have may be just the thing for another member, so come along and join the fun."* Outboarder, October, 1968. As well as oars and lifejackets, a rusty birdcage and the odd wife or husband also slipped under the auctioneer's hammer. If you were lucky enough you could even buy back your own junk as one member did. He declared that his set of spokeless, hubless pram wheels "still had a few years left in them yet".

Although they probably would have liked it, members decided the new clubhouse was not a practicable venue for the annual OBC ball. This night was definitely the social event of the year. For years between 400 and 600 members and guests danced the winter night away in their satins, silks and tuxes at Trillos, then down at Westhaven.

***From the diary, 1968:***

***Lost:*** \$31 on the marina, Sunday 29th October. Could the finder please contact the treasurer. Could the loser also contact treasurer as we have lost him too."

***Tip:*** save your cold tea and pour it into the car windscreen washer container. Excellent to combat traffic film."

***Annual subscription:*** set at \$9, reduced to \$8 if paid by 30th September.

***Club resolution passed:*** the boat's name must be on the side of the boat.

The Outboarder

The new club bulletin was proving to be a huge success. The first seven editions were on ordinary paper and called the "News Bulletin". The issue that came out in May 1967 though, was a true magazine. "Outboarder" as it was called, was professionally produced on high quality gloss paper with photographs, and had a smart blue cover with red printing. It contained everything a member needed to know, from club news and reports,

to articles on boat maintenance such as, painting, design and refurbishing. The addition of letters to the editor was followed by articles reprinted from Seaspray, a crossword and a monthly tide chart. Being a professional publication, it was necessary to have advertisements in the magazine. Thanks to these it wasn't long before the magazine, edited by club secretary Harvey Sheppard, was making a profit.

### Further changes

The Thomas jetty (named after Evan Thomas) built in 1969 was the latest addition to the club's facilities. This was not enough for a growing club though, and in April a \$6000 project which was to include a new launching jetty, a new mooring jetty, hauling out facilities and the dredging of the marina basin, was approved. The new jetty was to be named the Grant jetty in recognition of the work done by former commodore Ron Grant. Once again the designs were drawn up by club genius Bill Chick. It was announced that at the completion of this most recent project, the OBC of Auckland would have marina facilities that represented capital investment of \$70,000, most of this revenue having come from funds from the boat show. In fact in July that year the committee announced that for the first time since the OBC of Auckland had been part of the boat show, club revenue from subscriptions outweighed revenue from the Boat Show. In December the same year the club submitted a proposal to the Harbour Board to reclaim 100ft by 200 yards of Whakatakataka Bay along the side of the railway line for a future marina parking extension.

Social activities in 1969 included the introduction of indoor bowling nights at the club. These were held twice a month and were an immediate success. The club purchased some mats and bowling sets and tuition was provided by the custodians Mr and Mrs Rowe. It seemed it wasn't long before many members knew more about the clubroom floors than the builders ever did. The games social get-togethers and more about laughs than serious playing, and at the conclusion of playing, a shared supper was held. Ladies morning teas were also started and held once a month. Further changes in the club included a debate to change the club's name since over one third of members' boats were powered by propulsion units rather than outboards. There was also a notice of motion "that the club adopts as its insignia a motif consisting of a Compass Rose in gold and white, surrounded by the words OBC Auckland, in white, with a round blue background." Keen to preserve the club's proud history as an outboard boating club, both motions were rejected. One positive move that was adopted though was that in June 1970 Mr Phil Bryers was appointed as the club's first salaried executive officer. His job was to handle the administrative, secretarial and financial duties of the club. With club membership at nearly 800, this was no small task.

A growing membership meant growing club facilities. In May 1970 the club's priority of safe boating and its association with the Coastguard was highlighted by a shed being built on the club grounds to house the Coastguard boat. Two small finger jetties which were built from the holding jetty in front of the club were also allowed to be used by the "cutters," club boats on coastguard duty. This latest jetty addition allowed space for

seven boats to be tied up away from the launching ramps. Also \$1,500 was spent on sealing the gate entrance and the top of the ramps. In February 1971 the committee decided to dredge the marina channel to make it 36 feet wide and one foot deeper, meaning that 3500 cubic yards of material would have to be moved. In May the green light was given for those project, as well as extending the Grant and McElroy jetties by 20 feet. At the same time the Harbour Board approved the club's proposal for reclamation beside the railway for parking. There was also a suggestion (probably from the club's bowling fraternity) to extend the clubhouse to fit in seven bowling mats and extra chairs and add a deck on as an upper level. Despite all these developments there was still money in the kitty and it was suggested that a section be purchased by the club somewhere in the Gulf for example Kawau or Waiheke, so it could be used by members for camping on their overnight boating expeditions.

*From the diary, 1971:*

*Seen at the ramp: A skipper smoothly launched his trim little ship off the trailer and the lady climbed aboard and stood in the cockpit. As he was taking his trailer away he heard her call "I'm in water up to my ankles. Is that all right dear?" Guess what? That's what happens when someone forgets the bungs. The speedy retrieval was a sight to admire.*

Morton Bay exchange

Many members may have noticed the framed message from Morton Bay Trailer Boat Club that hangs above the yacht club entrance. This was presented to the Commodore Graham Lincoln at the welcoming party of the first trip by Morton Bay members to the OBC. Following the OBC's first successful trip in to Queensland June 1970, it was decided that the two clubs should continue regular exchanges. Seventeen members from the Queensland club came to visit over anniversary weekend in 1972 and were billeted by club members. The visitors arrived on Thursday 27th January. Friday was spent looking around town and then attending a welcoming party at Commodore Graham Lincoln's house, Saturday was a day trip to Pakatoa Island by members' boats, and Sunday was another day trip to Wenderholm, with smaller boats in tow. Monday was spent out on the harbour watching the anniversary regatta followed by a farewell party at the club before the visitors flew home. Before the visitors had arrived the details of the visit were published in a feature article in the Auckland Star, and the publicity of the trip increased after this letter was received:

*Lord Mayor's Office  
Brisbane  
21st January 1972.*

*Sir Dove Myer Robinson  
Mayor of Auckland  
Town Hall, Queen St, Auckland*





*My Dear Mayor,*

*It is my great pleasure to send this message of greeting to you by the hands of Mr John Harper, Commodore of the Morton Bay Trailer Boat Club in this city.*

*Mr Harper and forty other members of the club are on a visit to Auckland as guests of the Outboard Boating Club of Auckland.*

*I believe this is the first time the Morton Bay club has undertaken such a visit, and I am grateful for the opportunity to convey, on behalf of the Aldermen and citizens of Brisbane, cordial good wishes to you and the citizens of Auckland.*

*I hope that the visit will do much to promote friendship, sportsmanship and understanding between our two cities.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Clem Jones, Lord Mayor.*

The Morton Bay exchanges hold a special place in the hearts to many members including Betty and Des Rankin. Having only been members for a short time, the 1970 trip was Betty's first chance to really get to know other members from the OBC and was also the start of other great friendships. "It was thought to be the first time a boating club in New Zealand had ever done an exchange like this so it was quite exciting. We were billeted with a couple in Brisbane and today they are still good personal friends. We stay in touch and I catch up with them whenever I'm visiting my son in Brisbane. When Des and I recently went on another club exchange to Morton Bay we stayed with them again. When the husband came to Auckland on a club visit he stayed with us too."

#### Other activities

For members who couldn't take part in the Morton Bay exchanges, there were plenty of other social activities - those on the water included the fish 'n' sizzle day at Motutapu, the annual club picnic at Motuihe, the Kaipara Harbour fishing trip and competition, and the Seahorse Cup competition day which involved completing a predicted log course. The OBC also opened its doors to the public for special occasions such as the annual Kiwi Club blind fishing trip and the annual jewellers' day. The Kiwi Fishing Club was set up by a group from the Foundation for the Blind who enjoyed boating and fishing. The fishing trip was one of the club's most challenging but rewarding activities where each participating OBC member was allocated several Kiwi Club members to take out in their boat. The OBC members were there simply to drive the boat, the serious fishing was left to Kiwi Club members who competed for the biggest fish. The jewellers' day was held once or twice a year, when the OBC facilities were open to members of the Jewellers Association who had boats but were not necessarily members of the club. Like the Kiwi Club fishing day, competition to outfish the opponent was fierce.

On-land activities of the OBC included a Toby Jug dine and dance, the Christmas shipwreck dance at the club, the annual ball, the Guy Fawkes party and bonfire and children's competition for the best "Guy", and of course the auction. One Christmas



party in particular has left its mark on the clubhouse to this day. "We had to shift the piano to the front of the room for the band to use and it kind of slipped from one guy's hand," explained Des Rankin. "One corner went through the floor and made a gaping whole. That night at the party everyone kept saying "look at the sea, its going to come through the floor". It seemed to be the biggest attraction at the party. I was all done up in my nice clothes but being the resident builder I had to put on my builders apron and slap a piece of plywood over it." But that wasn't the end of the night. "Later at 10pm we saw these lights coming up the channel and we thought who could this be. It turned out to be Jo and Alf Pinker who had decided to come by boat to the party from their house at Te Atatu. We could hear the big V8 engine but just in front of the clubhouse it cut out and the boat kept coming all the way up to the club house. It bent the rail on the verandah and the bow touched the clubhouse wall!" explained Des. "I think everyone was too drunk to care and we had a great night!"

Another amusing memory Des Rankin has was a day when a group of artists had been invited down to the club to paint the scenes and views from the club. "There marched in and set themselves up, some on the verandah outside and some inside. They were all that funny arty type. They ordered us all round like they owned the place, then wouldn't let us watch while they painted. Some of them were well underway with paintings and drawings of Rangitoto which had the old jetty poles in the foreground. It just happened that that day we had a back-acter doing some work on the jetties and it just went ahead as planned and pulled out the old jetty poles these people were painting. Well, you should have seen them. They went absolutely mad!"

#### Operation clean-up

With the club's high profile as one of the most active boating clubs in Auckland, it was felt there was a need to appoint a public relations officer for the club. This position was awarded to member Arthur Irvine who immediately set to work writing and placing four supplements in the Herald over next year. He also organised a campaign against harbour and gulf pollution called "clean our waterways of litter". This was launched on April 19th and its aims were to distribute a booklet to all boat owners on the effects of the problem and ways to prevent water pollution; to encourage all boating clubs in Auckland to set up their own anti-litter committees; and to set up an Auckland anti-litter waterway committee to work with the New Zealand Anti-Litter Campaign Council. "COWOL", as it became known, was officially launched on October 4th with a harbour clean up exercise. The day was started by Mayor and club patron Sir Dove-Myer Robinson firing a flare from a navy vessel, which was the signal for over 100 small boats to begin scouring the harbour and designated beaches and islands for rubbish. By the end of the day, over a ton of rubbish had been collected. By July the following year COWAL involved 20 other boating clubs, five municipalities, the Auckland Harbour Board and the Navy. As well, the OBC of Auckland had received an award of merit from the New Zealand Anti-Litter Council in recognition for its instigation of, and commitment to COWAL. It was decided that March 27th would always be COWAL day, when boaties all over the country would go to their local islands and beaches and tidy them and plant trees.



*The club has received many safety and conservation awards*

*From the diary, 1972:*

*News from the annual report: membership at 808, membership fee increased from \$14.50 to \$16.50, entrance fee increased from \$34 to \$50.*

*Anyone interested? defensive driving course lectures will be held at the club for members.*

*Reciprocal passes available: for launching and retrieving at Maraetai and Mangere boating clubs.*

Safety

Since the OBC of Auckland was first formed it was a club policy that new members, or members with new boats, must have their boats passed by an inspector after a safety check before they were allowed down a club ramp. The safety checks were run on Saturday mornings by rostered inspectors who were usually on the OBC's technical committee. One of the club's most active enforcers of club boat safety was Merv Hartnell who had been technical chairman for the past 8 years. Under Merv's guidance the club had put in place the Certificate of Seamanship which new members had to obtain by attending boating safety lectures at the club before they could use the club's launching facilities. In July 1972 Merv's outstanding efforts were recognised when he was presented with the Marine Department award for the person who had contributed most to boat safety in the last year. The following month Merv Hartnell and his assistant Reg Mogford were made life members of the OBC of Auckland.

*We've launched Mary, how did the boat get on?," inquired member George Armitage of the boat inspector when his new boat was in for inspection. Wife Mary, walking backwards along the pontoon, just kept on walking...right over the edge, and then had to repeat her dive in search of lost glasses. The specs were found and the boat was passed, but shouldn't Mary get the sticker? After all, she was launched first. Outboarder, 1976.*

*On a recent Saturday the rostered boat inspector was not able to attend. At the last minute it was arranged for Keith Woodward to come down. So keen was Keith to attend, he dressed over his pyjamas and came and did his duty. Not too many members will have had their boats checked by a pyjama-clad inspector. This is not a new uniform so to other inspectors, relax. Outboarder, 1988.*

Property development

By December 1972 the clubhouse had been in place four and a half years, and the effects of salt, wind and rain had taken their toll. As well as a new coat of paint on the outside of the clubhouse, extra wall heating, lighting, and four new tables were added. In an attempt to give the clubhouse more protection and add to its visual appeal, 30 pohutukawas were





NATIONAL ANTI-LITTER CAMPAIGN COUNCIL

*Award of Merit*

PRESENTED TO  
OUTBOARD  
BOATING CLUB  
of AUCKLAND  
for the example shown in  
discouraging the litter habit

R. W. FENTON  
Executive Director

E. C. MARRIS OBE  
Chairman

*[Signature]*



*Further conservation and safety awards*

planted along the railway line boundary. Work on the reclamation was going well, and with free fill being supplied, the only cost was the bulldozing. The committee also began investigating improved facilities for the washdown area at the club to try to avoid the bottleneck that occurred on every fine summer weekend. One of the ideas was a drive through wash bay that would eliminate the need to reverse, but this would require a lot of extra space. After many months of deliberation it was decided that the inner end of the reclamation would be used for a new drive through wash bay, and the present wash bay would become two new ramps and jetties numbered 8 and 9, with a new jetty on the railway side.

In March 1973 the first real threat to the club's present state came in the form of plans for a Hobson Bay Marine Park. The Auckland Harbour Board announced it would be seeking Government approval this year for this project. The plans involved re-siting the clubhouse in the centre of Whakatakataka Bay, extending parking and improving access from Tamaki Drive. Twenty acres of land were to be reclaimed. Designs for the marine park included a maritime museum, a rowing course and an area of sheltered water for young sailors to learn to sail. The Auckland Harbour Board was to take care of the marine and water works, the Auckland Regional Authority was going to construct roadways and a motorway running next to the railway, and the Auckland City Council was to be responsible for reclamation work and parking amenities. Of the 500 acres which make up Hobson Bay, 350 lie between the railway and Shore Rd. About 120 acres of this area was to become new reclaimed land. This grand but horrendously expensive project was supported by the Mayor, and being the club patron, he assured the club the development was in its best interests, and he encouraged everyone in the club to support it.

Unfazed by the proposed development, the club ploughed ahead with its own. On March 27th 1974 the new club washbay was finally opened during the Wednesday lunch gathering. While posing for a photo Commodore Barry Gee was doused with the hose. The light entertainment was taken well by the Commodore and made a great photo. As planned, the three car wash bay was on the newly reclaimed land, as well as space for parking another 60 cars and trailers. At the same time work on ramps 8 and 9 began, and the recently completed jetty was called the "Pollard" jetty after newly made life member and head of the property committee Len Pollard. The second new jetty was to be named after Noel Kirkpatrick.

#### More socialising

Despite non-stop changes around the club, its social heart just kept on ticking. A very successful teenage dance was held for 60 young members and the popular club bowls nights and pot luck dinners continued under the organisation of Des Rankin. This group also organised its own trips around town, including a visit to the Villa Maria vineyard. In June 32 members went on the long-awaited club trip to Fiji. More of an adventure than a holiday OBC members enjoyed duty-free shopping in Suva, wining and dining with the

rich at Suva Yacht Club, seeing traditional Fijian culture, relaxing on the beach at the Fijian resort, and marvelling at beautiful fish and coral on Mana Island.

In July 1973 the OBC of Auckland hosted the first Auckland bath-tub race. As crazy as it seems, 28 entries lined up in their bath tub speed machines with maximum 7hp outboards, and blasted down the harbour in hope of winning the race and a trip to the world bath tub champs in Canada. The club was used for briefing and launching, and hundreds of spectators including over 100 children turned out to laugh and cheer, making it a very festive day. The club picnic that season was the biggest ever with over 50 boats and 200 people cramming on the beach at Motuihe for the usual barbecue, games and races. Not to be outdone by the club's bowling fraternity, club visits were arranged to performances at the Mercury Theatre and a guided tour of the Auckland Central Police Station. At the 1973 prizegiving the following cups were awarded: the Seahorse cup for the predicted log course and sea trials, the Kaipara fishing contest cup, the Club Kiwi Blind fishing cup, the Consolidated Chemicals prize for the best boat at the boat show, and the Levenes Trophy for best amateur built boat (both awarded at the show).

#### ***From the diary, 1974.***

*The high tide of 3.85m on Saturday January 13th was one of the highest ever on record, and brought water almost to the flag pole platform outside the front door of the OBC. Tides like this happen every 18.6 years and are due to a combination of influences from the sun and moon.*

#### ***Does alcohol slow you down?***

*The controversial theory that alcohol, instead of being a stimulant, slows you down, was unfortunately supported by the experience of one of our most prominent members. At the end of last season he cleared out all the remaining bottles of beer used as ballast in his bilge. He then did a test run and found that he went four miles an hour faster. However, he is reluctant to jump to conclusions without higher proof, so, filled with true scientific spirit, he intends to repeat the experiment next season by refilling his bilge with beer bottled ballast on the grounds that one swallow does not make a summer, especially if it is a dry one like last year. Anyway, speed is not essential when you've got no place to go."*

***Club piano:*** Past Commodore Graham Lincoln and his wife Solita have donated a piano to the OBC.

#### **Preparing for the celebrations**

In his annual report for 1975, Commodore Barry Gee described it as a challenging and frustrating year for the club. Theft and vandalism continued to be a problem, and there were instances when whole rigs were stolen from the club. The reclamation project had its ongoing hassles, and the changes in water classifications and radio communications (from DSB to SSB then VHF) were confusing and expensive. The loss of the petrol



rebate also hit many members hard and caused an unusual number of registrations. However the membership tally stood at a healthy 988, and members were looking forward to and planning for the club's 20th anniversary celebrations. One of the celebration ideas was to find a sister OBC club in America to exchange technical information and visits. Other anniversary plans were an editorial feature in the Auckland Star, a jumbo edition of the July Outboarder, an anniversary ball at Trillos in the new Downtown complex, a fireworks display at the club on December 4th, and a sizeable investment that was to be put into bonds. The club's anniversary marked a bumper membership of 1038 members.

# Planning for the Future

## 1976 - 1986

### *From the diary 1976:*

***New club yearbook:** provides members with a complete register of boat names, owners, radio call signs, and information on first aid, navigation and boat handling.*

***Club membership:** 1073 - we will look at putting a ceiling on the membership in the next 12 months.*

### Problems with the channel

*Club secretary and boat safety course lecturer (!) John Curlett reasons that if a boat sticks on the mud the water should be the same depth on both sides. Caught on the channel mud recently he applied this theory. Guess which side he jumped off? Has anyone seen John since?*

### **Initiation**

*Dick and Leigh did sail away in their beautiful big new boat  
But coming home they struck the mud and couldn't stay afloat  
They came up the channel at dead low tide,  
and went on the mud at the right hand side.  
They pushed themselves off and sailed out wide,  
to land on the mud on the other side.  
The mud is deep and smelly and sloshy,  
And Dick was getting very stroppy  
Men have a way when their boats are queerest,  
Of blaming it all on their nearest and dearest.  
Poor Leigh was doing her very best  
She pushed and pulled without any rest.  
We watched it all from the clubhouse lounge,  
And felt for them as they stuck aground  
We've all been through it and know the frustrations,  
Of giving directions to one's relations.  
They came back to the clubhouse, made light of their strife,  
But we all know that it marks one for life.  
That channel needs dredging, there is no doubt,  
And Dick now knows what the fuss is about.*

During 1977 the channel and basin were successfully dredged and the jetties were extended. The property committee kept up its incessant maintenance to the clubhouse, and installed further flood lighting and expanded the dinghy storage. However it appears that not everyone was happy with the new numbering system. *"A member of the club executive has been taking liberties with the English numbering system. Not only has he painted the numbers on the dinghy rack from right to left as opposed to the more conventional left to right, but he has also started with Roman numerals, got up to IV then suddenly switched to Arabic. Why?"* Outboarder, 1977.

#### Minor developments

In 1978, the club was once again financially very healthy. It had \$70,000 invested in first mortgages on commercial and private property which earned over \$8000 in interest a year, as well as the usual Boat Show revenue of around \$3,500 a year. With money in the kitty, the property committee planned its next project. Theft seemed to be the biggest problem the club faced, and with a full time custodian and random security patrols, the only other solutions seemed more lighting and fencing. Priority parking under flood lighting away from railway was given to those parking overnight, but after a members' letter which stated that in the last 12 months over \$20,000 worth of equipment has been stolen or damaged, the executive agreed to put up fence along the railway line and Leighton's boundary. Having raised the garage floor as storms had brought in up to 9 inches of water over it at high tides, the next project was to increase the number of holding jetties. This was no small task. The area involved was 50m from the wash bays directly out in front of the reclamation area. The overall depth would be one metre at zero tide, covering an area capable of holding 24 boats. Plans for the project were submitted to the Harbour Board, and while awaiting an answer, the committee went ahead with sketch plans. The building was to take place in three stages, the first involved the dredging area and included cleaning out the mud traps at the end of the ramps, and taking the high spots out of the channel. In the mean time the inside of the clubhouse was brightened up by new paint paper and drapes. The underside of the club floor was also cleaned of salt deposits and suitably painted for protection against dampness.

By August 1979 there was still no decision by the Harbour Board on the jetty extension, so the club began plans to extend the clubrooms. It was decided a comfortable, private room was needed that would be carpeted and have space for coffee tables and lounge chairs. As well the dinghy storage space would be extended to store 30 dinghies, and the sealed areas at top of the ramps would be extended by another 8 meters. The club went on a spending spree too, buying two permanent concrete barbeques with wooden tables and seating, perfect for social gatherings after a day on the water, and a 20ft by 20ft garage with a work bench to store tools for the use of members to do running repairs.

#### Another official opening

*On Saturday afternoon, 21st March 1981, the new clubhouse extension was officially opened by our patron Sir Dove Myer Robinson. A large gathering of members attended*

*and a variety of refreshments increased the animation of the conversation. Many long-standing members were present including several past commodores. Later, while some enjoyed the luxury of the new lounge, others danced in the main room and stayed late into the evening. There was considerable praise for the new lounge which makes the clubhouse surprisingly spacious when the folding doors are opened. The coffee tables with a chart of the Gulf on top and the mobile bar were greatly admired. The carpet too was well chosen to camouflage beer stains. Outboarder, April, 1981.*

#### Other property news

A new security fence on the western boundary was installed with the intention to extend it parallel to the railway line and enclose the floodlit parking area. In May 1981 discussions of the long term development of the OBC marina were held, which included an all tide marina complex on the OBC side of the Ngapipi Bridge, hauling out facilities, deep water ramps and a maintenance area. Tentative plans were submitted to the Harbour Board. The importance of this development became evident with a huge drop in income due to 200 resignations in one year, coupled with the end of the club's involvement with the Boat Show. At the same time it was noticed that many members were moving towards larger boats and using diesel to reduce costs. The idea of providing grid, haul out and hard stand facilities was also suggested for catering for these members, and it would also produce revenue for the club. There were also discussions on holding the OBC's own boat show in the club grounds as a way to earn some more money. Meanwhile winter maintenance on the club continued with a clubhouse repaint, the ramps being cleaned clean and the jetties overhauled.

#### ***From the diary 1980:***

***A warning to you all:*** *A club member was recently suspended for 3 months after repeated complaints of speeding inside wavebreak. Remember 5 KNOTS.*

***Club donation:*** *The OBC has donated a dinghy to "Boat Skills in Schools" run by the Water Safety Association. This is our second donation to the association - the first was a four man life raft currently used in air-sea rescue operations.*

#### The club's custodians

Always seen but often not fully appreciated. That must sum up the custodians who have worked at the OBC since the first part time one in 1960. Originally the job of the custodian was to act as a security guard, minding cars that were left at the club, but as the membership grew and use of the club's ramps increased a full time custodian was employed to oversee parking and make sure only those with the current membership sticker entered the club grounds. Since then though, the role of custodian has grown enormously. Many of the retired couples who came to the OBC looking for an enjoyable way to meet people and spend their time had no idea of the demands of members. As well as being parking attendants and overseeing the property, custodians have been

expected to mow the grass, maintain the club grounds, wash the ramps, be first aid and counselling experts, and be on call to answer a member's whims at all hours of the day and night. Custodians such as Laurie and Ethel Young were even more to the club though. They were shopkeepers, bowls tutors, fix-it geniuses and family to everyone. In April 1980 Laurie and Ethel announced their retirement after serving the club for nine years, still today the longest period custodians have ever worked at the club. At an unusually large attendance at the April monthly meeting Commodore Barry Eade presented the Youngs with a \$1000 cheque and an enlarged framed phonograph of their home for the last nine years, the OBC clubhouse and marina. The Youngs stayed in Auckland until they left to retire in Australia several years later. As a gesture to remind members of them, they re-presented the club with their OBC photograph.

### More fun in social circles

*This year's club disco will be a chance for the 12 - 18 year olds in the club to learn some new routines. Generally, girls will find skirts and low heels at once more comfortable and allowing for better style. Other than that, clothes don't matter but grooming does. For those whose deodorant fails them, there will be some available on request.*  
Outboarder, June, 1978

Social activities during 1980 included another very successful club trip to the Morton Bay Trailer Boat Club in Queensland. The newly formed fishing and cruising group in the club was also very active, organising its own dine and dances at the club as well as holding regular meetings to decide on fishing gatherings and places to cruise to in weekends and holidays. The most popular meeting was in early December when members decided where they would go over Christmas. During 1980 they organised cruises to the Bay of Islands, Kawau-Great Barrier, Waiheke-Coromandel, and Mercury Islands-Whitianga. The following year a club golf afternoon was introduced at Remuera Golf Club, but this never became an annual event because of poor attendance. It seemed that members were happier holding a rod than a club. This was evident by the large turn out at the first annual fishing interclub competition contested by the OBC of Auckland, North Shore OBC, and West Auckland and Maretai trailer boat clubs.

### Fishy tales

Every member of the OBC may like to consider himself a fishman, but few would dare put themselves against Des Rankin. Undisputedly the club's fishing guru, others can only marvel. "We were on a club circumnavigation of Great Barrier, right round the back in our little boats. Des was just drifting, waiting for someone to fix his prop so he threw his line over the side and reeled in two huge schnapper!" remembers Rod Osmond. The size and number of fish in his catch may have often led to feelings of disbelief, frustration or jealousy from others, but Des has always been keen to pass on the art of his golden touch to others. Since his first tackle class in the early 1970s, Des has shared his knowledge on the art of fishing, the right gear to use, and where to go, with any member of the OBC who has wanted to come along and listen. "So many people have no luck because they



use the wrong gear or don't rig it right - like using round sinkers which roll on the bottom which fish won't go near because they make the bait move. In one class I demonstrated how I made my own sinkers by pouring measures of lead into egg cartons. You couldn't find an egg carton in Auckland for a week after that." As well as holding these classes for 22 years, Des now has his own fishing competition and cook-up. "I used to get so many fish that I developed different recipes for cooking them. The cook ups took a few days to prepare. I'd usually smoke the fish on the Friday, prepare them on the Saturday, then the competition and cooking demonstration would be on the Sunday. I'd often go through about \$50 worth of ingredients for all the fish." Although awards were given for the biggest catch of the day according to size and weight, the greatest challenge was to go home and test out Des's latest recipe on your prize catch.

***Des Rankin's famous fish batter recipe:***

*1 cup flour*

*1/2 teaspoon baking powder*

*1 teaspoon salt*

*Add water, stirring all the way. Leave for 15 minutes. Add 1 tablespoon of malt vinegar. Cut up fish with no bones and cook in hot Chef Aid, half an inch deep. Turn over after half a minute on each side. Add salt and turn out on brown paper.*

In all Des's fishing years, there's one story that remains his favourite. "One Saturday morning while I was sitting in the club rooms after doing boat inspections, I saw Les and Ruth James in the wash bay. They had been out fishing. Suddenly Ruth started waving her arms around and yelling at me. I ran to the window and saw this 22 pound kingfish lying on the McElroy jetty. I've never seen anything like it in my life. We ran out side and we were trying to hold him down but he was huge. Aubrey Ritchie said get a hammer so we can give him a dong on the head. No one actually saw it jump out onto the jetty, but I reckon it had been catching sprats in beside the ramp because when I cut it up it was full of sprats, and it had become disorientated and flicked itself up onto the jetty. Ruth asked for a fillet because she saw it first, then the people having morning tea with me said they wanted some too, then the custodians said it's our jetty so we want a fillet too. There were great discussions so I said give it to me and I'll take it home and cut it up. They said no, we'll never see it again. Finally they let me, and it just happened that that night there was a spit roast at the club. I cut it all up, mixed up a batter and took it to the club. I got going making fritters which took me a few hours and the kids took them round to everyone. Out of the 60 people who were there only about a dozen knew about it and the others wouldn't believe the fish had come from a 22 pound kingfish which had jumped onto our jetty. They were stroking my head saying I had a temperature, putting their leg out for me to pull, and saying they'd take me away in a white suit. I just said you can believe what you like but ITS TRUE!!!"

That may have been the easiest way to catch a fish, but another man was not so lucky. "I was out fishing in Rangī channel with this chap who couldn't fish to save himself," said Des. "I baited up for him and taught him you should always net a fish, no matter how big it is. He got a great big 10 pound schnapper but before I could get the net, the fish broke

and drifted away. This joker jumped straight into the water fully clothed but he couldn't swim. He got the fish but it seemed to come back to life and he was having a real tussle with it, trying to paddle back to the boat. I had to lift the pick and drive over and get him. When I pulled him out of the water he had blood all over him and I thought the fish had swallowed the hook. He sat down and said he didn't feel too good and he was bleeding. I took his shirt off and he had huge cuts across his chest and down his arm from the spine of the fish. I rushed him to A and E and he had to have 21 stitches!"

### ***Fishy Story***

*Home is the fisherman back from the lake,  
Stinking like hell, he's bagged his first eight.  
Smelling so vile and a grin like a trout,  
Reckons he has now worked it all out.  
So with rod in hand, and ale in his pack,  
He'll set out tomorrow to bring the big one back.  
Watch out you guys who tend to gloat,  
He's found a spot where fish jump in the boat.  
We've heard all the advice, which line and which hook,  
God help us all, he's writing a book!*

### **More socialising**

The programme committee was forever coming up with new ideas to keep the club's social ones on their toes. New to the calendar for the 1981-82 season was the commodore's shout - a social afternoon at the club where members could meet and get to know their new commodore and executive, and the Mississippi gambling night which was a huge success. For \$5 punters got \$10,000 worth of "funny money" which they could waste or win with to their hearts desire. *"On this historically hysterical night, over 100 hopeful gamblers moved around the eight gambling tables to place their bets while Sheriff Nottinggood (alias Vice Club Captain Roger Blake) armed with silver handled .45 pistols, moved amongst the punter looking for loaded dice. On to the auction, Warwick Paterson was the highest bidder for a set of crystal glasses. At \$38,000 each they gotta be the most expensive glasses in town, but immediate bar testing proved them to be winners."* Outboarder, December 1981. If members couldn't make this great night there was the Glenbrooke vintage railway trip and barbecue, the club barn dance, feature films screened at the club once a month on Saturday nights, and happy hours held once a month on Sunday afternoons. Of course there was also all the usual club outings, fishing competitions and social functions. Sadly though, at the end of 1983 poor turnouts caused the club bowls nights to finish.

### ***From the diary, 1981:***

#### ***The anatomy of a club:***

- 1 The wishbones: those who spend all their time wishing someone would do the work*
- 2 The jawbones: those who do all the talking but little else*

- 3 *The knucklebones: those who knock the efforts of others*  
4 *The lazybones: those who are too tired to understand.*  
5 *The backbones: those who get behind the head, give up time and do the work.*  
(With the AGM coming up let's hope there are a few extra "vertebrae" floating around)

***At the AGM:***

*Voted to install the "Immediate Past Commodore" position for the retiring Commodore to hold for one year after finishing their term as Commodore .*

Liquor licence debate

With all this socialising at the club many members felt it was appropriate for the club to apply for a liquor licence to be able to sell alcohol on the premises. The debate was a long, complicated one with letters flying back and forwards in Outboarders for several months. While some members felt the licence would break the club's tradition of family club and it would be an irresponsible move in terms of encouraging drinking and driving, others felt that the licence would do much to assist the club's revenue. As well as making outright profits from bar sales, the club would be able to make profits running club functions (in the past most club functions had run at a loss because supplied alcohol was included in the ticket price, but ticket prices were kept down to encourage healthy turnouts), and the bar would attract more club members. The executive announced the matter would be decided by a membership vote at the monthly meeting, but even this had to be abandoned for fear of intentional rigging of the vote. Instead a postal ballot was held with the following results: Those in favour of a limited liquor licence - 267, those against - 305, those returned with no indication - 2. 574 members voted, which represented 57% of the club's membership. It was therefore decided that an application for the licence would not proceed.

***From the diary, 1982:***

***"Are you an active member?"***

*Are you an active member, the kind that would be missed,  
Or are you just contented with your name upon the list?  
Do you attend the meetings and mingle with the flock,  
Or do you simply stay at home, then criticise and knock?  
Do you take an active part and help the work along,  
Or are you satisfied to be the kind that just belong?  
Do you push the cause along and make things really tick,  
Or leave the work to just a few and talk about the clique?  
Think it over member, you know the right from wrong,  
Are you an active member, or do you JUST BELONG?????*

A new marina

Having been assured by the Harbour Board in 1981 that it would protect the club's interests so it could proceed with further development, the club went ahead with its policy adopted in 1979 to build permanent holding berths for up to 30 small craft. Planning and negotiations continued for another two years until November 1983 when finally the club received permission from the Marine Department in Wellington to build a 29 berth marina. The first stage was to enlarge the basin area 50m from the washbays along the reclamation, and this was completed in February 1983. Like most development projects, the majority of time and hard work for this project was spent preparing and following through planning approvals. The project cost \$60,000 and took four years to complete. The project was carried through from its inception to the final construction stage by Barry Eade, a recent Commodore, immediate past Commodore and chairman of the property committee, so it was fitting the marina was named after him. The Barry Eade Marina was officially opened by Sir Dove Myer Robinson, Commodore Wayne Lester and Barry Eade on Saturday 6th August.

*"Many hours were put into evaluating the various types of construction, and in consultation with the firm Bruce Wallace and partners, the final design of wooden decking and polystyrene flotation units was devised. One unique feature of the flotation units was that they were first coated with Polyurethane followed by a coating of a special formula of bitumous material. This extra protection is hoped to extend the life of the units by several years and reduce the problems normally associated with marine growth."*  
Outboarder, September, 1983.

#### Another new marina?

Hardly before this marina was finished, the club was planning bigger and better things. It was decided that in keeping with the club's policy of continued development, in the future the club would build fully serviced marinas to hold up to 1000 power vessels of varying size. In February 1984 when the Harbour Board announced its intentions to build a 400 berth marina in Whakatakataka Bay, the club realised to protect its own interests, the future development may have to happen sooner than expected, and plans started for the club's own 210 berth marina. By August 1984 the environmental impact report for the new marina development was in its final stages. The Harbour Board's response to the club's plans was simply insisting that the OBC's marina accommodate those people on the Harbour Board's marina berth waiting list, as well as those on swing moorings in the immediate area who would be disposed by the OBC development. At this stage money was the main thing halting the club beginning the project. A list was then obtained from the Harbour Board and the club of interested parties with which the club could assess the level of demand and review obligations in terms of raising money for the project.

#### *From the diary, 1983:*

##### ***"Marine farming at the OBC"***

*The first of an interesting crop was taken from the water at the end of the Kilpatrick jetty on 12th June. With the help of those gallant policemen from the Deodar using grappling*

*equipment, a handsome Honda 250 motorcycle was dredged up and taken away by a police tow wagon. How it got there we do not know, but we feel that if we could harvest these in any quantity our financial worries would be over."*

### Membership drive

The club realised that in order for the new marina project to take place, it needed to attract new members to buy the berths and pay their subs. Club membership had fallen to 1000, which was not a healthy level for such a huge project. A membership drive was organised for October to November of 1983. On offer to every member who proposed a new member was a free \$10 petrol voucher, and the person with most new members was awarded a dinner voucher for \$50 at their favourite restaurant. By February 1984 11 new members had joined as a result of the membership drive. Unhappy to settle with this a sign advertising for new members was put up facing Tamaki Drive. By May the membership had risen significantly, particularly the number of launch members which the club was trying to attract to fill the marina. Club finances were in a healthier position after the annual subscription was raised to \$60, and the entrance fee to \$125.

In October the same year the OBC participated with other Auckland boating clubs and the Auckland Water Safety Association in another drive for new members. Called Shipshape '84, this project which involved a gala boating day, offered all joining members the chance to win a \$13,000 boat, motor and trailer, and those who joined by the end of October were tempted with the chance to win a trip to Fiji. The result of Shipshape '84 was 191 new members to boating clubs throughout Auckland, of which 41 signed up to join the OBC of Auckland. This result seemed to reflect a renewed interest in power boating after the downturn in early 1980s caused by economic pressures.

### ***From the diary, 1985:***

***Last month's hangi was turned into a barbecue on the club verandah. "Nobody told us that the OBC grounds are almost solid rock fill and digging a hole was out of the question."***

***The club is now operating OBC Sport Radio. The base station is at the clubhouse and operating hours are Friday lunchtime and evening and Saturday and Sunday between 9.30-10.30, 12.30-13.30 and 18.30-19.30. "Are you overnighing somewhere, is there anyone else in the vicinity? How about a BBQ when you return to the marina...call up and your steak and sausages will be ready out of the deep freeze when you return."***

# Plans, Proposals, and Marinas Galore

## 1986 - 1996

*From the diary, 1986:*

*Operating instructions for closing the new gate:*

- 1. Pull down drop arm, leave resting on top*
- 2. Close double gates. Lift drop arm at centre through arm holes, put hooks through inner rails on drop arm.*
- 3. Walk to corner. Get inside the middle restraining chain. Put left hand up to light, right hand to arrange combination. In this position it can now be lowered. Good luck."*

*(If this sounds confusing to you, you're not the only one. Due to popular demand the system was abolished one year later.)*

### Planning stage one of the new marina

By May 1987, plans were already underway for the new marina complex which included 200 marina berths, a carpark to accommodate 195 cars and trailers, and six new launching ramps. The Waitemata Planning Authority had designated the area from the clubhouse out to a line between Tamaki Drive and the railway bridges as Zone A which meant it was suitable for marina development. However, planners were presented with the unexpected problem of an arterial road along the north side of the railway line which called for a complete redesign of the complex. Following this, the proposal was re-submitted to the Auckland Harbour Board. Once a decision was made, it was decided the costs would be worked out to see if the project was still feasible and there was still enough interest.

### Financial matters

The 1987 stock market crash came at a difficult time for the club when it was in a crucial stage in the marina financial planning process, and it became Rod Osmond's job to secure the club's investment during the crash. The club had previously invested in first mortgages, but after the 1987 economic disaster, it was felt the club needed to deversify with its investments. The club moved into the fixed interest security market, Government stock, local body stock and other bond issues. Rod was also involved with the club's lengthy debate over whether incorporated societies such as the club were liable for taxation of income other than membership fees. On behalf of the club Rod argued that club activities which raised such money included the Boat Show and the new marina complex, both of which had and would continue to benefit the public. He also had to prove that if for any reason the club was wound up, it would not be to the financial



benefit to the members. As a result of his work, in 1988 the club received a tax exemption certificate that still stands today, and it has saved the club about \$90,000.

### ***From the diary, 1987:***

#### ***Speaking of cussed odians***

*Leaving the club camera with our custodian to take on-the-spot exciting, revealing, newsmaking photographs for publication in the Outboarder (maybe even Time magazine!), has proved to be an ill advised move. The Editor, upon hearing of the astounding exploits of our resident sleuth cameraman, fairly trembled with the excitement of being able to publish real live pictures in the magazine (and thus not having to write so much rubbish.) Unfortunately, several weeks of painstaking photography came to zilch. No film in the camera...*

*A weather gauge of wind strength and direction has been erected in front of the custodians' flat and will be reset whenever conditions change.*

*Despite last minute attempts by your club's executive, our club captain, Mike Chopping has been allowed to return to New Zealand after a trip to places overseas. Apparently Mike still uses a UK passport and forgot to extend his re-entry permit. After heated discussions with immigration officials Mike was allowed home, but was suitably branded an "alien".*

#### **Social gatherings**

New to the fishing calendar was the Club Captains Cup competition, in which the winner was the person who caught the heaviest schnapper any time during the year. It had to be caught in the waters between Cape Colville and Takatu Point, and checked and weighed by the custodian and a member of the executive. After 20 years the Wednesday lunch gatherings at the clubhouse were also still in action. Every week between 1 and 2pm a healthy crowd gathered to discuss club happenings and life in general. On Wednesday nights, courses in boating safety for new members were still held, and due to the increasing popularity of the OBC sports radio, club member Len Stott gave evening lectures to put club members through a radio operators course. Other favourite club activities included the club auction, the gambling night, the commodore's shout and the Christmas social. However, not so well patronised was the annual club picnic. In 1989, a combined picnic with the West Auckland Trailer Boat Club and North Shore OBC at Sandy Bay could only produce 37 boats - a very poor turnout considering the OBC alone had over 1100 members.

In 1988 the past Commodore's flag was introduced and a presentation evening was held to award the flag to all those who had been Commodores of the OBC of Auckland. By awarding the flag the recipient was made a flag officer, and it was seen as a gesture to recognise and remember the work these past Commodores had done for the club. From

1988 onwards the flag was to be presented to every Commodore at the end of his term of service.

***From the diary, 1988:***

*This year will be Des Rankin's 18th and last time he will perform his annual task of lighting the Guy Fawkes bonfire. After drawing the attention of the authorities one too many times, they have announced such bonfires will be banned in the future.*

*How distressing. A number of members have been noticed over Christmas flying their club pennant UPSIDE DOWN! Please don't!!*

*Despite numerous new gear boxes, "Horace" the club tractor has finally died. His death was caused by a salt water overdose. He will be replaced by a new tractor donated by Mr C Parkinson.*

*The best way to get rid of the fish smell from your hands is to rub them with toothpaste and cold water.*

**Progress on stage one of the marina**

In June 1989 the Waitamata Harbour Planning Authority approved planning consent for stage one of the marina project. As well as allowing one month for objections, the club had to gain further consent and approval from the Department of Conservation; a water rights application had to be accepted; the Harbour Board had to grant their permission to allow building, and then the final seal of approval had to be obtained from the Minister of Conservation. Planning approval meant the club could now progress further with the other applications. Exactly one year later, the club had achieved the following:

1. Planning approval from the Waitemata Harbour Maritime Planning Authority, 23rd May 1989.
2. Water rights approval from Auckland Regional Water Board, 4th November 1989.
3. Approval from the Department of Conservation to reclaim 3.4 hectares of seabed, March 1990.

The club had only received one objection to the Maritime Approval and a settlement was negotiated with the objector without causing changes to the proposed marina design. Although the club was to retain the role of developer, the club signed an agreement with Fletcher Development and Construction Ltd which allowed Fletchers to proceed with design details, and prepare outstanding construction and approval applications for the next stage of the marina reclamation development. Soon after, drilling began to collect seabed samples for the geotechnical report to assess the effects of dredging and reclamation on the seabed. The last step in the process was to obtain final planning approval from the Minister of Conservation to ensure the design and engineering of the marina was in accordance with the policy already given to the club. Marina berths for the new development were put on sale. Prices including GST were 10 metre berths, \$32,000; 12 metre berths, \$36,000; 14 metre berths, \$41,000. All new applicants were required to

pay an additional \$600 fee to cover the club's costs and expenses of securing statutory approvals. Stage one was to comprise of 66 berths with 94 car spaces and 40 car and trailer spaces on the new reclamation and the 32 metre wide strip along the railway line.

#### Reason for the marina development:

If the Eastern Highway was built today it would cut across 80% of the club's land and facilities. The council has indicated it intends to reclaim much of the seabed and some of the club's existing land for an Eastern Highway in the future, so the club felt it was necessary to reclaim land from the bay on which to conduct its own activities. The only practical way to raise funds for this development was to build a marina area which could return stable revenue as long as it existed.

#### Other club activities

Although much of the club's funds and efforts were tied up in the marina project, there were still plenty of other things happening. Property upgrading included redecorating the clubhouse interior, renovating the kitchen, refurbishing the custodians' flat, stripping the club house ceiling of asbestos and resurfacing it, and installing an alarm in the clubhouse. The latest annual addition to the social calendar was the Safety Show held at the club in November 1991. The day included a sausage sizzle, firefighting displays, a rescue helicopter display, a talk on safety flares with hands on experience plus there were displays by those in water safety industry. Country FM was broadcasting live from the club. The day was finished off with a spit roast in the evening, but the planned Guy Fawkes celebrations which were to follow were cancelled due to rain. In July the following year club indoor bowls nights were restarted which were so popular in the club's hey-days. Also new were get-togethers on Friday nights at the club. Dinner was the choice of a variety of take-away meals followed by dessert for \$10 each, and drinks were BYO with tea and coffee available. It didn't take long for these nights to become very popular, so theme nights were introduced such as "Mexican Madness", "Yankee Doodle Dander" fancy dress with rock and roll dancers, and the "Western Wing Ding" night with a line dancing demonstration. As well the club was able to present the Police with a \$7000 Palfinger hydraulic lift which was to be attached to the stern of the new vessel Deodar II. The donation was achieved through a voluntary \$5 levy on subscriptions. The hoist could lift up to 1000 kgs.

#### Ramp antics

If you're after a good laugh and a morning of entertainment, I'm told you'll get both if you drop into the club any weekend during January and February and watch the comings and goings on the ramp. "It's better than any TV programme you've seen in your life," says Des Rankin. "It's just unreal. I've seen people step from their boat onto to jetty and fall straight into the water between; I've seen kids left in boats that are supposed to be tied up, but the boat floats away with the kids in it. It's entertainment plus!" The most popular blunder would have to be to forget the bungs, and Des has seen that happen

plenty of times. "One morning I was out working at the club and I had my building gear on and this man drove into the club with his wife and little girl and their brand new 25ft Mason Clipper. It would have been the flashest boat in the club at the time. I said hello but he drove straight past. It was obviously his first time in here and he launched his boat on the McElroy jetty, and the mother held the ropes instead of tying them on like you're supposed to. The little girl started jumping up and down saying "mummy, mummy, the lunch basket's floating. The floor boards have lifted up the lunch basket and its floating." I knew exactly what had happened. When he asked me to help him I said do you want to speak to me now and he just screamed at me saying I had to help him. The little girl was jumping up and down and the mother was yelling. From the time he had launched the boat to the time he got the boat levelled, it had taken on about three tons of water. He wanted to keep pulling the boat all the way out, but I told him if he did that he'd either pull the eye out of the front of the boat, or the wire would break. He finally gave up when the wire started to crack. Luckily for him the tide was going out so the boat started emptying but it took over two hours. That was the end of their boating trip."

#### Construction begins on stage one of the marina

On 17th September 1992, nine and a half years after the project began, the Minister of Conservation awarded the OBC a Coastal Permit which allowed the club to build a seawall and dredge Whakatakataka Bay in accordance with the club's application on 20th September 1991. The Minister also approved the resource consent which the Auckland Regional Council had granted to the club three months earlier. *On Wednesday April 14th 1993 a ceremony was held to mark the commencement of our marina project. Invited guests were the various contractors, past Commodores, life members and berth holders. Our patron Sir Muir Chilwell spoke to the gathering, then he and Sir James Fletcher jointly gave the signal to the truck driver who emptied the first load of scoria into the basin to start the bund wall.* Outboarder, May, 1993.

The first step in the mammoth task that lay ahead was to dismantle and relocate part of the Eade marina to allow the construction of the bund walls. Following this the dredging could begin which would take four to five weeks, and meant closing the channel during the week. Vessels from the Eade marina were to be put on the holding jetties and ramps 1,2,3 and 5. The marina berth construction was Fletcher's "Uni-float" berth system, which uses a concrete envelope around a polystyrene core for the marina floats. The fingers would have electricity and water modules alongside each berth, and each pier would have an alarm and fire hose. Modern sewage pump-out facilities would be installed and boats using the marina would be required to have holding tanks or portable means of retaining waste for on-land disposal. Water depth through the marina was to be a minimum of 1.75m. To achieve this the marina basin was to be dredged, with the spoil being deposited behind the new sea wall to form a reclaimed area. This was to have curbed and sealed areas for 224 cars and 250 car and trailer rigs.

By this stage the club had 58 confirmed applicants who wished to purchase berths and a 35 year licence which was assured by the occupation granted by the ARC. The



*Official opening of Stage 1 of the Marina development  
September 1994  
L. to R. Patron The Hon. Sir Muir Chilwell, Commodore  
John Hager, Minister of Justice The Hon. Doug Graham*

administration and maintenance costs of the marina would be met by the berth holders, and the club was to look after the trailer and car park areas. The construction period was estimated at 12-14 months depending on the settlement of the reclamation. The project so far had been brought together with a construction sub committee chaired by Rod Osmond (life member, past Commodore), Aubrey Ritchie (past Commodore), Graham Reid (past Commodore), Michael Chopping (Commodore), Graham Cox (Solicitor), and Barrie Clark (Quantity Surveyor). Unlike commercially operated marinas there was to be no profit in the sale of berths to members of the public or the club. Berth holders would not have to join the club although the advantages of club membership would be emphasised.

By December 1993 pier A of stage one was installed and functioning providing berths for up to eight boats on a rental basis. During early 1994 piers B,C and D were installed the main channel was dredged and the club was looking at commencing stage two - it had already had an offer from a marketing company to sell all the berths in a block. Ivan Downs' boat McGinty was the first vessel to officially occupy the new marina on July 30th, one and a half months before the official opening ceremony of the new parking complex and marina. This was held on 17th September with patron Sir Muir Chilwell and the Hon Douglas Graham MP speaking and Mr Graham unveiling a small plaque to mark the occasion. By November stage one was virtually complete with only the remaining area of hard seal to be completed when it has stabilised, and the south-eastern motorway reserve would be levelled for parking and hardstand as soon as the weather allowed.

#### ***From the diary, 1994:***

*Recently the custodian gave evidence in court on his day off against a man who was caught in the club grounds by the club's random security patrol last Christmas. The man was convicted on ten counts of burglary and is now awaiting sentence.*

#### **Other worries**

The new marina wasn't the only thing the club had to worry about. The restrictions imposed during the 1994 water crisis meant motors could not be flushed out. The club was contemplating on installing a \$4000 flushing tank system when the Auckland Water Safety Association came to the rescue and loaned its underwater training tank to store water for flushing motors. The tank held 22,000 litres which was filled using the Western Springs and Watercare Services reservoirs and was needed to be topped up every two weeks. The water was non-drinkable and was not used for washing boats and trailers. Security was also an ongoing worry, and regular evening security patrols seemed to do little to deter thieves and vandals. As well as the alarm, dead locks were fastened to all the clubroom doors and windows, and an additional security fence was put in along the railway line and road. However it was recognised that the front gate being left unlocked was a large part of the problem, so a new swipe card system was installed on the access barrier gates. Another more positive change at the club was the decision to move all the club's administration functions onto the site where a computer system had been installed.



In February 1995 the club's Executive Officer took up residence in the clubhouse on weekday mornings.

***From the diary, 1995:***

***All hooked up.***

*While strolling around the grounds of the OBC a short while ago I ran into a well known life member of the club. This most pleasant gentleman was a little worse for wear so I asked him what was wrong with his leg (which was covered with a large sticking plaster), and he muttered something about how fish must feel getting hooked up. I am not allowed to mention his name so please do not ask me. All I can say is that we name a fishing day after him.*

***No thank you, say the custodians.***

*3.30am, our third night in residence, and a visit from a male well dressed in his birthday suit. Thanks to 12 policemen and women, six police cars plus dogs, he was removed from our side of the fence without too much fuss, apart from trying to open the gates.*

**Stage two planning begins**

Even before stage one of the marina was finished, plans for stage two were underway. It was to consist of an extra 150 berths and would see the hardstand area enlarged out to approximately the end of the existing dredge channel. In April 1995 the club called for expressions of interest with \$1000 deposits needed so plans could be put to the ARC by the contractors. However early replies indicated popularity for larger berths which meant redrawing and adjusting berths to accommodate. In June the club's executive confirmed that it would proceed with issuing the prospectus for Stage two. At this time all the 16 metre berths were taken, only four 14 metre berths remained, and half the 12m berths were taken. It was felt the sudden growth in interest was due largely to Team New Zealand's recent America's Cup win. By June only seven more expressions of interest were required to obtain the trigger point of 105 sales totalling \$4.39 million. The club was encouraged by the slight surplus in the marina's operating budget after its first year. As well, the annual operating figure from 1996-96 was set at \$900 which made it the most efficient marina in Auckland.

In November 1995 Fletchers signed the contract for the construction of stage two of the marina and carpark, as the trigger point of 105 berth sales had been reached. Plans were given to the ARC who was allowed three months to approve the intended construction plan. The first stage was to put the toe on Tamaki Drive. The road and foundation had to be stabilised before excavation of the basin could begin. The two northern ramps next to Tamaki Drive were to be used as a driveway constructed along the foreshore. This would need about two months to consolidate then the new channel could be excavated with the spoil being taken by truck around to the new area to be reclaimed. A temporary road was formed around the existing car park as was constructed for stage one. Members were told

that the end result with six new launching ramps gained at no expense to the club would justify any inconvenience caused. Total construction time was estimated at around 12 months, but finishing off work on the reclamation would depend on the rate of settlement.

By May 1996 the roadway along Tamaki Drive had been completed but was left undisturbed for one month to allow engineers to take regular settlement measures. Construction had also begun on the eastern bund wall which was to form pond one. The core wall was to rise to 3.3m before the outside casing of armour rock. Dredging had also commenced on the north of the channel and contractors aimed to dredge 400 cubic meters per day, setting a finishing date in mid October. However the work proceeded slower than expected due to "hard" patches which meant a smaller than normal bucket had to be used. It did mean though that this fill for the reclamation would be firmer and would settle more quickly. The toe on Tamaki Drive had proved very stable and the engineers gave approval to begin rock placement to the lower levels of the new channel when formed. The club agreed with the ARC to clear a channel between the bridge and the breakwater which would be identified with port and starboard floating markers. Under the marina contract a pole would also be inserted to note the outer limit of the reef, just outside the bridge. By this stage only 30 10.5 metre berths were left in stage two.

#### ***From the diary, 1996:***

*We have penguins in the basement. Lovely little creatures except when they nest right under the only bedroom in the clubhouse. By making a sizeable hole in the outside wall we have spoilt their privacy. They have now moved to a quiet area under the office. As Lois does not sleep here at night and doesn't usually have time during the day, the problem is not so great. We have considered going into competition with Kelly Tarltons and making an observation panel in the office floor, but we are led to believe Lois does not want penguins looking up at her.*

#### **Renovating the jetty pontoons**

Back in 1987 began the enormous task of removing each pontoon section of the jetties to replace the old wood-encased flotation units. Each pontoon, with its four or six floats, could weigh up to 3 or 4 tons depending on the size of each unit. They were initially removed by crane but this proved to be too costly. Immediate past Commodore Graeme Reid (who designed the new flotation units - foam encased in pvc) constructed a trolley to go behind the tractor. The pontoons had to be flipped over in the water then floated onto the trolley. The work was done over every winter by the property committee and teams of volunteers. Saturday 22nd June 1996 saw the last of the pontoons on the Kilpatrick jetty returned to the water bringing to an end this long project, and perhaps the last of the way the club was built - hands on by the members. New health and safety regulations that apply to working bees may mean that in future, jobs other than general

tidying up will have to be done by contractors. This is because if someone was injured while working, the club could be liable if proper safety procedures had not been observed. The trolley has survived the ten years of the completion of the project but will require a few repairs before it is used again. *This story pays tribute to the hundreds of members who over the years, have made the club and its facilities what they are today. In the future they can sit back and be proud of all the work they did and know they will always be very much part of the club.* Outboarder, July, 1996.

#### The name debate - again.

Once again a club name change to the Auckland Boating Club was mooted by some members but not well supported. The reply in the Outboarder to their suggestion was simply this: *"The name Outboard Boating Club originated in the USA and that name is still used by many boating organisations in the USA and by other boating clubs around New Zealand. Although a number of OBC members now have launches, in general, those members would have started their powered boating in outboard boats. Members also referred to the proud heritage of the OBC and the members who dug the channel with shovels and wheelbarrows over 40 years ago so they they could launch and retrieve their outboard boats. It appears that those members who want to change the OBC name will have to have very convincing reasons."* Outboarder, July, 1996.

#### ***From the diary, 1996:***

##### ***Custodians' Report - house boat or club house?***

*Ruby's wish almost came true. Ruby has always wanted to live on a house boat and when the storm on July 14th caused a 3.9m high tide which completely surrounded the club house, Auckland's largest house boat was nearly a reality. Several dinghys floated off the dinghy racks, water entered the workshop area at the side of the clubhouse, and the port hand beacon and light at the end of the channel had to be removed for repairs. For the first time the boats on the clubhouse marina were able to see inside the clubhouse.*

#### Conclusion

The Outboard Boating Club of Auckland has been forty years in the making. Forty years of hard work, energy and commitment that for so many members of this club has become a labour of love. Their goal was to have the best facility for outboard boats in Auckland, and undoubtedly this has been achieved. Today they may not be battling the tide to dig a channel by hand, but the battle on paper with proposals and plans is just as difficult. The members of this proud club do it for one reason - it is their passion, their home and their club. It is a place where those who enjoy the sport of boating can come together and share companionship, enjoyment and experiences.

In 1956 the OBC of Auckland had 15 members and nothing else. In 1996 it has 1037 members, a large piece of prime land, a clubhouse and nine ramps and jetties. When stage two of the marina development is complete in July 1997, the club will have a further six ramps, a 216 berth marina, and a sealed carpark for 224 cars and 250 car and trailer rigs. Such a fine facility is something to be proud of, but it is the spirit of those who gave their time and effort, the laughter shared and the memories that have made the OBC of Auckland special to so many people. Forty years of development and progress have come to end. Roll on the next forty years with its challenges, its decisions, its achievements and all the joy that boating brings. Congratulations and happy anniversary to the Outboard Boating Club of Auckland.

## High Heels, Tea Towels and Teapots

*At most meetings there are speeches, votes of thanks, motions, amendments, moments of glory, pats on the back, presentations of ideas and motions for this and that. But long after the lengthy and weighty deliberations have ended and when everyone is chatting amiably over a cup of tea and a biscuit, there are those in the kitchen who have prepared the supper and then will see to the clearing and washing up. Few of us give thought to the work of the ladies who ready the supper, serve it, then tidy up afterwards. We would soon value their support if they went on strike or worked to rule! Let us pay what tribute we can on this page by acknowledging the work they do efficiently and quietly to make our meetings more pleasant.*

Outboarder, August, 1973.

### "Tea ladies"

Right from the club's early days, women have played a big part at the OBC. In the early days of the club when the meetings were held at Tamaki Yacht Club the ladies committee held fashion parades and wine and cheese nights to raise funds for the club. Peggy Hartnell who was convenor for five years during this time also organised Halloween parties and other fun events. Every year since those early days, the ladies committee is elected at the July AGM which is headed by the "ladies convenor". The ladies committee has always been responsible for organising the domestic side of club functions such as the Christmas social and the annual dine and dance, as well as providing rostered "tea-ladies" at the monthly meetings and club functions.

Probably the best known tea lady of the OBC would be Betty Rankin. When Betty's husband Des joined the club in 1969 she knew no-one and found it very hard to "break in" to such a large group of people. Having got to know some members after a club trip to Morton Bay in 1970 Betty decided to volunteer for the ladies tea roster at the upcoming AGM. "As soon as I was in the kitchen behind that big tea pot I was as happy as anyone," said Betty. At that time there was no actual ladies committee, but just a group of "tea ladies" who were rostered on two or three times a year to make the tea at the monthly meetings. Betty then became the ladies convenor, a position she held for five years. "Basically that meant I was in charge of getting out the tea roster and waving the teapot around. It was a great way of getting to know other lady members." Betty attended every meeting while she was the convenor and was assisted by two other rostered helpers. "With one in the sink and one in the cupboard with the tea towels it didn't take long. When I started it was just tea and biscuits which was easy. Later though they got into sandwiches and cakes and savouries but they were made by caterers. We just heated them up and served them. The only dilemma was the odd occasion when the urn boiled over all over the floor and there was loud shrieks and much mopping." Even when she resigned from the convenor position, Betty said she went into the kitchen every time the tea needed to be served anyway. "I don't know why I did it really. Maybe I thought the

others couldn't do it. In the end Toni Chopping said I should retire, but I think she meant it in a nice way." At the 1988 AGM Betty Rankin was made "custodian of the teapot", an honour bestowed on her for her tireless efforts of making tea and organising the food at club meetings and functions for the past 20 years. It wasn't the last of Betty and her teapot though, as she continued to make the tea at every meeting for another five years.

It appears though, that not everyone performed the task of tea making so willingly:

***Letter to the editor: Can women never escape the kitchen sink?***

*Sir, in this day and age of women's liberation, I say it's about time that the men of the OBC showed a little of their boasted chivalry and did something about taking a turn at getting the supper ready at the monthly meetings and doing the washing up afterwards. Do these local sealords understand that we women spend 12 hours a day in the kitchen and then on meeting nights are expected to do another stint at supper time? And why isn't there a representative of the ladies committee on the executive committee? Do men have such a monopoly of brains and administrative ability that they must occupy every seat at the committee table? Let us insist that the self appointed admirals take a turn at the business end of the teapots and dish towels. They can put their imaginary gold braid aside for once and let the boating world see that democracy does prevail at Whakatakataka Bay!*

*Yours faithfully, Germaine.*

*Outboarder, 1974.*

Once a year the OBC sealords did put their gold braid aside and give the tea ladies a break. One monthly meeting a year was "ladies night" when the men donned the aprons and waved the teapots. More recently too, men have also volunteered to go on the tea roster. (The addition of a club dishwasher in the kitchen in 1986 may have helped make the task more appealing.)

Coffee and outings

For the ladies who were not so keen to be tea ladies, the monthly ladies coffee mornings that started at the club in 1974 were a great way to meet other members, but unfortunately these died out due to poor patronage. Two years later Solita Lincoln began writing the "ladies pages" in the monthly Outboarder. These focussed on the female members of the club and included interviews, news on female matters, a "seen around" section and boating recipes.

***From the ladies page, June 1977:***

*Water from Auckland's tap supply, taken on board for holiday weekends tastes uniformly ghastly. The combination of chlorine and chloride, enclosed and sitting for a time, results in a very bitter taste. There are two ways to get rid of it: You can boil the water before using it - a time wasting and expensive method; or you can simply add a few drops of vanilla essence. It works every time.*



In March 1978, ladies coffee mornings returned with a vengeance. Every month a guest entertained those present, revealing the fashions for the coming season, how to decorate the Christmas cake, or how to pick your colours and apply make-up properly. The same year the first ladies annual Christmas champagne lunch was held at the club. In 1980 as well as the monthly coffee mornings, mystery bus trips were held several times a year.

### ***Our bus trip***

*It was very pleasant both weather and company-wise. We went to visit a historical house and a health studio in the morning. After a smorgasbord lunch at Drake's Den we went to see greenstone jewellery being made, and we finished off with a drive around the top of the harbour to a glass blowing factory. By the time we returned to the clubhouse at 3pm everyone was quiet having run out of chatter and feeling well satisfied if not a little weary after their day out. Outboarder, October, 1982.*

### **Gaining authority**

Not all ladies have been content with coffee, cake and bus trips. The first female to hold a position of office at the OBC of Auckland was Mrs Jo Pinker, who was the club secretary from 1963 until 1965. Since then, only four other females have been club officials: Mary Armitage and Sharon Prentice who have both served on the club's executive committee, Mary from 1981 to 1983, and Sharon from 1995 to 1996. Tricia Moore was the club's executive officer between 1981 and 1984, and Lois Badham has held the same position since 1995. Up until 1974, wives of members were not able to vote at monthly meetings. At that year's AGM the suggestion was put forward that women should be allowed to vote, which caused a huge debate. It appears that the fuss was not over the fact that women could vote, but the fact that there should be only one vote per subscription. (Traditionally the husband was the only one who belonged and voted, even though the wife was just as active and attended all the meetings.) As a result of this debate, "special associate membership" was introduced which allowed spouses of members to join at a reduced rate. These members were not allowed to stand for office but were allowed to vote.

Today there are no more coffee mornings, ladies pages or bus trips, but there are a few more female members and wives who double as skippers. Over time women may have challenged their traditional roles and fought for more authority, but there's one thing you can be sure of at the OBC: there will still be females waving tea towels, teapots and wearing high heels for a few years yet.

# Memories of Great OBC Members

## Evan Thomas, December 1977

Dynamic, energetic, enthusiastic, friendly, hardworking, logical - all strong words, but all words that could be fairly attributed to Evan Thomas. To all who knew and worked with Evan Thomas during the 1960s, the news of his sudden death on December 28th 1977 brought both sadness and memories of a great club member. The list of new club members admitted to the club in February 1960 included the name of Evan Thomas of Epsom, owner of a 19" Marlin with an 85 Scripps motor. Little did the secretary know when making this entry what a great service the club would receive over the next decade from this man. Just 17 months later, Evan was elected Treasurer of the club, and for the next seven years he faithfully recorded subscriptions, addresses, new membership enquires and boat details with unerring accuracy.

A regular fixture on the marina in the sixties was Evan and his old Chev and its boot full of tools, nails, bolts and paint. As well as designing and constructing the entrance gates, he invented a combination lock that automatically spun the dials when the gate was shut. Twenty nine years later the lock was still in place. Evan also designed and built the club's first jetties; the original Thomas jetty was a prototype for future designs and was applauded for its functional design. As a member of the property committee during this time, Evan was also involved with, and often the centre of work such as the clubhouse planning and construction, and the dredging of an all-tide channel. Evan was the club's voluntary full-time "do it yourself" man. To fill in his spare time, he served on the executive of the Boat Show, and even squeezed in time for his other passion, fishing. One of his most useful devices was the towbar on the front of his Chev, and Evan was an keen demonstrator at boat shows at the then novelty of trailer boat launching.

Evan's dedication to the club was recognised in 1967 when he was awarded with life membership, an honour not usually bestowed on those still in service. At 73 years of age when he died, Evan was still interested in the club and could offer useful advice to those who sought it. In the Outboarder obituary, it stated the club was richer for his membership, and his family and friends the poorer for his passing.

## Len Pollard, April 1988

Within 18 months of joining the club Len's ability had been noted and in July 1962 he was elected to the property committee. Two years later he became the chairman of that committee. In total Len served on the executive for 17 years, making him the longest serving executive member in the history of the club.

While giving his time to club matters, Len still found time to modify his own boat. The change to an inboard drive made the boat stern heavy so with meticulous care Len constructed an extension on both sides of the drive unit on the stern of the boat. The work was a masterpiece with fine ribs like the wing of an aircraft and the finish was perfect.

As with most clubs there have been times when clashes of personality have caused major upsets and temper became frayed. In these situations Len's quiet communication with members on both sides often resulted in quick solutions. Always ready to listen and only giving advice when sought is a rare quality but Len had it in abundance. Club members could be excused for thinking the Pollards had a larger family. There were many picnics when Len would arrive with a boat load of boys - his own three plus the local soccer team. This was Len, always out to give others enjoyment and help.

Len's advice was still sought long after his life membership was bestowed and he ceased to be on the property committee. Even in the final days of his illness Len was inquiring on progress at the club. His quiet, retiring manner often gave the impression of indecision - how wrong was this impression. Always gently spoken but with firm ideas and a friendly attitude to others, Len Pollard could be truly called - "a club member par excellence".

#### **Sir Dove-Myer Robinson, August 1988**

Sir Dove-Myer Robinson took up the position of the club's patron in 1956 when asked by his friend and Commodore at the time, Stan Gleadow. Although he was mayor of Auckland at the time, Sir Dove-Myer gave much of his time and worked extremely hard for the club, especially pushing for the club's development proposals that were before the council. How many members are aware that because of his efforts the Tamaki Drive handrail was actually the water pipe to supply the club's water? Sir Dove-Myers's interest in boating stemmed from an early age. A man of endless action, Robbbie, as he was affectionately known, even attended fibreglass demonstrations with his chauffeur taking notes on the process so the two of them could build his boat together. The boat was launched at the OBC and he was so proud of the little 14ft runabout he wouldn't think twice about taking his most distinguished guests out in it with their picnic baskets and straw hats.

#### **Aubrey Ritchie, December 1995**

On Boxing Day 1995 Aubrey Ritchie died suddenly on his launch Exacta at Whitianga Marina. Aubrey joined the club in 1982 and moored his 32 foot Vindex Trazzara in Hobson Bay. During this time Aubrey and his wife Beatrice became known around the club through participating in its activities. It was quickly acknowledged Aubrey would be an asset to the executive and in July 1983 he was duly elected. The club had just completed the Eade Marina and Aubrey, who had a long trip to and from his mooring,

could see the advantages of a launch marina in the bay. At the November meeting a motion proposed by Aubrey was passed that we form a sub-committee to investigate such a policy. Aubrey was a member of that committee until his passing.

Despite owning two other launches which Aubrey kept at Westhaven and later at his own marina in Pine Harbour, he continued his involvement with the club and you could always find Aubrey in the kitchen at Des Rankin's cook-ups making sure the fish and chips were cooked correctly.

Those who worked with Aubrey on the committees knew his facts and figures would always be correct; his attention to detail was an example to all. Aubrey would listen to the various opinions expressed on a particular subject at club meetings, and then pass on his own comments which would often see a motion passed or lost. The loss of one of the club's most active Commodores and life members was indeed a sad one.

### **Ron Grant, May 1996**

Members of the OBC in 1960 little knew of the debt of gratitude they would owe to this new member over the next 36 years. Within two years of joining Ron was fully involved in the programme committee and a year later became the chairman of that group. Those involved with Ron will remember his enthusiasm coupled with hard work and good planning. Outings were well organised and attended, which was really a tribute to Ron's leadership. After two years of loyal support as Vice Commodore, Ron was elected Commodore of the club in 1967. Within a year the first clubhouse was opened - without Ron's guidance and persistence the whole project could have fallen over.

Back in 1962 the club was a partner in the Boat Show with quarter of the profits going to the club. Hard work from the members with Ron up front resulted in \$3000 going into the club funds in 1962. In 1965 Ron became chairman of the Boat Show committee and over the years gave freely of his time and expertise to build the show up until the point where in 1979 the club received \$19,500 from its profits. This source of income was the foundation of the club's present day financial strength and Ron was one of a small band responsible for this great start.

He led from the front and was rightly honoured with life membership in 1970. Ron was the OBC delegate to the trailer Boat Federation for many years and while president he closely monitored the interests of the OBC in the wider boating world. With all the club work Ron still had time to boat with his family and for a period to be on the executive of the Power Boat race committee and compete in what was then the "Atlantic 100" race. As was said at his funeral service his life could be summed up in these four words: "Well done faithful friend."

### **Stan Gleadow, August 1996**

Stan was one of the prime movers in the mid 1950s who were keen to set up an outboard boating club. As the club's first commodore, Stan played an active part in getting the club off the ground and finding a site to base itself. After deciding on the rubbish dump at Whakatakataka Bay, Stan arranged the club's first patron Sir Dove-Myer Robinson, and organised leases of council and railway land at peppercorn rentals.

Weekend after weekend Stan and his men worked on the channel and ate picnic lunches at the club grounds to save time; he studied plans of marinas then got to work to build the club's first; he organised the club's first boat show, and then found time to arrange club outings. As chairman of the Metropolitan Fire Service, Stan often had the crews engaged in hose practice at the club which kept the mud off the ramps, and he also used the Fire Brigade's hose pressure system to install the jetty guide poles.

Stan stepped down as Commodore in 1962 after six years. Seeing the need for a national body to represent trailer boat clubs throughout New Zealand, Stan was a prime mover in setting up the Trailer Boat Federation.

Boating though, was not all hard work. There were many boat trips including the Christmas holiday to a favourite spot on Lake Rotoiti which often had 26 members' boats and families present. The most popular fishing spot was a headland called Stan's Point. The water was so deep that anchoring was not possible so the overhanging tree branches were utilised. Numerous hours were spent here, many cups of tea and refreshments which led on to happy hour, but also only one trout in perhaps five hours fishing. Stan always took his piano accordion on these trips and the evening sing-a-longs were very popular. At the appropriate time Stan would send the children (little humps he called them) to bed after singing them "The laughing policeman".

Members were very keen for Stan to attend the club's 40th AGM but it took considerable persuading by Michael Chopping before he agreed. "On the drive to the club Stan became confused where he was going and why. I remembered that once Stan had told me what the letters OBC stood for, so I told him we were going to the Old Bastards Club. An enormous smile came across his face and he patted me on the shoulder," said Michael. Stan addressed the meeting and cut the anniversary cake to mark the occasion. Sadly Stan passed away three days later, aged 89. Club members will always be grateful for the time and effort their esteemed and respected foundation Commodore and life member put into getting the club started.

(All based on obituaries in various Outboarder magazines)

|             |                  |
|-------------|------------------|
| 1987 - 1989 | Rod Osmond       |
| 1984 - 1987 | Graham Reid      |
| 1983 - 1984 | Wayne Lester     |
| 1982 - 1983 | Allan Alsweiler  |
| 1981 - 1982 | Trevor Kelly     |
| 1978 - 1981 | Barry Eade       |
| 1977 - 1978 | Peter Collins    |
| 1974 - 1977 | Barry Eade       |
| 1973 - 1974 | Barry Gee        |
| 1970 - 1973 | Graham Lincoln   |
| 1969 - 1970 | Bert Jones       |
| 1967 - 1969 | Ron Grant        |
| 1966 - 1967 | Noel Kirkpatrick |
| 1964 - 1966 | Nelson McElroy   |
| 1962 - 1964 | Bill Hitchcock   |
| 1956 - 1962 | Stan Gleadow     |

### **Vice Commodores**

|             |                  |
|-------------|------------------|
| 1996-       | Graeme Martin    |
| 1994 - 1996 | Steve Burrett    |
| 1993 - 1994 | Graham Haycock   |
| 1991 - 1993 | John Hager       |
| 1989 - 1991 | Michael Chopping |
| 1988 - 1989 | Aubrey Ritchie   |
| 1987 - 1988 | Graham Scott     |
| 1984 - 1987 | Rod Osmond       |
| 1983 - 1984 | Graham Reid      |
| 1982 - 1983 | Wayne Lester     |
| 1981 - 1982 | Allan Alsweiler  |
| 1979 - 1981 | Trevor Kelly     |
| 1978 - 1979 | Gray Irwin       |
| 1977 - 1978 | Jim Harris       |
| 1976 - 1977 | Peter Collins    |
| 1975 - 1976 | Gary Irwin       |
| 1974 - 1975 | Warwick Paterson |
| 1973 - 1974 | Barry Eade       |
| 1971 - 1973 | Barry Gee        |
| 1969 - 1971 | Reg Mogford      |
| 1968 - 1969 | Tony Krause      |
| 1967 - 1968 | John Hicks       |
| 1965 - 1967 | Ron Grant        |
| 1963 - 1965 | Fred Walker      |
| 1962 - 1963 | Nelson McElroy   |



1961 – 1962 Bill Hitchcock

### **Secretary/Treasurers**

1993 - John Laurence  
1988 – 1993 Graham Haycock  
1986 – 1988 Mike McCowan  
1983 – 1986 Barrie Clark  
1978 – 1983 John Curlett  
1972 – 1978 Dennis Perkins  
1970 – 1972 Lloyd McGrevy  
1959 – 1961 Ron Martin  
1956 Gore Fisher

### **Treasurers**

1961 – 1968 Evan Thomas

### **Secretaries**

1968 – 1970 Lloyd McGrevy  
1965 – 1968 Harvey Sheppard  
1963 – 1965 Mrs J Pinker  
1962 – 1963 Noel Kirkpatrick  
1961 – 1962 Ron Martin

### **Club Captains**

1996 - Gary Bromley  
1996 1996 Richard Lamb  
1995 – 1996 Peter Flatt  
1993 – 1995 Bob Franklin  
1991 – 1993 Stuart Askew  
1989 – 1991 Fred James  
1987 – 1989 Michael Chopping  
1985 – 1987 John Wilson  
1983 – 1985 Lou Hocken  
1982 – 1983 Dick Lawson  
1979 – 1982 Brian Clough  
1978 – 1979 Ken Orton  
1977 – 1978 Gary Irwin  
1976 – 1977 Michael Cameron  
1975 – 1976 Maurice Petchell

|             |                  |
|-------------|------------------|
| 1974 - 1975 | Gary Irwin       |
| 1973 - 1974 | Bruce Howard     |
| 1972 - 1973 | Warwick Peterson |
| 1970 - 1972 | Barry Gee        |
| 1969 - 1970 | Aubrey Breckon ✕ |
| 1967 - 1969 | Bert Jones       |
| 1966 - 1967 | Reg Mogford      |
| 1965 - 1966 | John Cross       |
| 1964 - 1965 | Alf Pinker       |
| 1962 - 1964 | Jack White       |
| 1961 - 1962 | Bill Hall        |
| 1959 - 1961 | Dick Hillary     |
| 1957 - 1959 | Jack Stewart     |
| 1956 - 1957 | Bob McRae        |

### **Executive Officers**

|             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1994 -      | Lois Badham    |
| 1984 - 1994 | Michael Grace  |
| 1981 - 1984 | Patricia Moore |
| 1973 - 1981 | Harold Harmon  |
| 1970 - 1973 | Phil Bryers    |

### **Custodians**

|             |                           |
|-------------|---------------------------|
| 1994 -      | Barry & Ruby McKay        |
| 1993 - 1994 | Jack & Ann Blucher        |
| 1991 - 1993 | Terry & Jude Final        |
| 1986 - 1991 | Ian & Betty Valentine     |
| 1985 - 1986 | Brian & Margaret Clough   |
| 1983 - 1985 | Ian & Johanna Mc Donald   |
| 1982 - 1983 | Bert and Elizabeth Palmer |
| 1981 - 1982 | A & K Golstone            |
| 1980 - 1981 | F & P Horsfall            |
| 1971 - 1980 | Laurie & Ethell Young     |
| 1969 - 1971 | Mr & Mrs Rowe             |
| 1968 - 1969 | Mr & Mrs Gillespie        |
| 1967 - 1968 | Bill Newton               |
| 1966 - 1967 | Ken Weis                  |
| 1966        | Mr H Wrightman            |
| 1965        | Bob Stade                 |
| 1965        | Neill O'Connell           |
| 1964        | Mr J Mores                |
| 1960        | Mr Matthews               |

- Spot checks on members' boats were a feature of summer weekends.
- Bruce Duncan's Monday fishing meetings saw steadily increasing attendances.
- Members were given the opportunity to vote on the committee's recommendation that the club apply for a full liquor licence.
- Flo and Norm Wilson continued the popular Indoor Bowls nights, which had restarted seven years before. Attendances varied from 10 – 24 players.
- The Riverhead trip was over-subscribed with a waiting list set up.
- A well attended 43rd AGM saw more nominations than committee positions, necessitating a ballot. It was reported that the club had seen an unprecedented growth in new members over the past financial year.

## *2000*

- More than 150 members attended the AGM. For life member, Noel Kirkpatrick, it was his 41st consecutive AGM.
- To mark two years since the Outboarder changed to the 16 page A5 format, the Executive hosted an informal evening function for the Advertisers who support OBC.
- Past Commodore, Graham Reid, was made a life member in recognition of his services to OBC.
- Custodians Barry and Ruby Mackay left after six years with the club to enjoy a well earned retirement at Ngunguru. They were farewelled at a function at the Club in April.
- Mike Jarvie started work as operations manager in June.
- The administration committee was kept busy with the change over from live-in custodian to day-time operations manager. The transitional period was made easier with great support from Nick Edwards, Jim Laurenson and Graham Lincoln.
- The OBC was a hive of activity during the America's Cup Defence when it became the shore base for the AC 2000 Course Marshals and the fleet of patrol craft. Peter Carr of AC 2000 presented the club with a framed photograph in appreciation for the club's hospitality.
- The Technical Committee provided a comprehensive programme of training courses for members. Member response to some of the courses was disappointing numbers-wise.
- Sgt. Martin Paget of the NZ Police Maritime Unit presented the club with a commemorative plaque to recognise the club's support and assistance with "Operation Marlin", the policing of America's Cup 2000

- June saw a successful supper dance with a live Scottish band.
- OBC retained the Burnsco Fishing Trophy for another year.
- The club's application for a temporary liquor licence was turned down and the executive then decided to apply for a full licence.
- The Club's Five Year Planning and Infrastructure committees were active through the year.
- Regular spot inspections by boat inspectors were a feature of weekends at the club.
- A picnic held in the club grounds in March was poorly attended but enjoyed by those who took part.
- February saw a successful overnight trip to Rocky Bay. Fifteen vessels and 35 enthusiasts enjoyed great weather and great food.
- Richard Lamb took on the role of Outboarder co-ordinator.
- Vice commodore, Phillip Franklin, resigned from the executive after four and half years due to work commitments in Wellington.
- The Club commissioned a 12 foot Fyran dinghy for use in and around the marina and for towing disabled vessels from the wave break and under the bridge if required. The vessel was appropriately named "OBC Recovery".

## *2001*

- Auckland Mayor, John Banks, officially opened the refurbished club rooms with a ribbon cutting ceremony at the November general meeting. Costs totalled about \$200,000 for the work, which included toilets, entrance, office, committee room, kitchen, roof repairs and exterior painting.
- 124 members attended the Christmas dine and dance.
- Contractors with a long reach digger were brought in to remove silt around launching ramps 1 to 9 inclusive. The silt was then spread out over the lower reclamation.
- One of Bruce Duncan's Monday night fishing meetings attracted nearly 250 fishos.
- The club's Youth Group organised a variety of activities for 15 to 25 year olds. Activities included a BBQ, pool tournament, wakeboard instruction, kayaking and other day trips. Their regular meetings attracted around 30 persons.
- Top Catch bait and salt water ice were available on site on summer weekends.

- The technical committee held a popular demonstration of fire extinguishers and their use.
- 100 members turned up for a working bee at the club in October.
- The “Brass Monkey” fishing contest at Kawau Island was a great event, with more than 60 people participating.
- In August contractors started work to transform the old custodian’s quarters into bigger and better facilities. Every effort was made to limit disruption to members.
- Stabilisers were fitted to the ends of the jetties in the front of the clubhouse.
- Two additional security cameras were installed, one on top of the toilet block and one on the hardstand.
- Technical committee members were involved in drafting the final submissions on the new trailer towing regulations through the NZ Trailer Boat Federation.
- The electronic access system database was upgraded.
- Closer links were forged with the Royal Akarana Yacht Club and OBC members were offered the privilege of using the RAYC bar and bistro facilities on Friday and Sunday nights.
- OBC retained the coveted Burnsco Fishing Trophy for another year.
- In June the operations manager, Mark Jarvie, had completed 12 months in the position.
- The Technical Committee organised an impressive array of training courses for the year. They included Day Skipper, Boat Master, VHF Radio, Marine First Aid and a Night Navigation trip.
- Club negotiations with DOC for the purchase of Lot 2 land were still in progress.
- The first Family Fishing Competition was an outstanding success with 199 boats and 678 anglers competing on the day.

*April 2001 marked the opening of “Café OBC”. This was the tangible result of much hard work by executive members to secure a liquor licence.*

## **2002**



- Approximately 80 boat/trailer/vehicle combinations were weighed at the club in an exercise held in conjunction with the police to assist members in complying with the current towing regulations.

- The first Motuihe Island “volunteer work day” was held in December and they were scheduled for the second Sunday of each month in 2003.
- Membership continued to grow and at the end of October stood at 1696. There were 252 trailer boats parked on the hard stand with another 188 on the waiting list. Almost half of the 213 marina owners were club members.
- The technical committee team, chaired by Allan Duffy, continued its focus on marine safety. They ran monthly training nights for new members as well as specialist courses for members who wished to brush up on their seamanship knowledge.
- Bruce Duncan’s fishing meetings drew numbers well in excess of 100. Bruce also organized the very popular “brass monkey” weekend fishing competition at Kawau Island.
- The club was pleased to approve a request from the Police Maritime Unit to park two 12 meter RHIB patrol boats in the grounds. The two police boats joined the Auckland Coastguard and the Marine Ambulance RHIBs which were also based at OBC.
- Promotions committee was in overdrive with regular Friday night dinners and also several Saturday night family dinners.
- Both club tractors were refurbished and painted.
- Lois Badham was promoted to the position of club manager.
- The commodore, secretary and members of the executive attended three Auckland City Council meetings and continued to lobby hard for the needs of the OBC to be recognised when council considered options for the Eastern Arterial Route.
- The annual club marine auction attracted 100 members.
- October saw a well attended working bee to tidy up the club grounds and carry out minor maintenance.
- The November Christmas Party was a sell-out success.
- A record 139 under 12s filled the club rooms to overflowing for the annual Children’s Christmas party in December.
- Five OBC delegates attended the NZ Trailer Boat Federation AGM. Don Glass, who had recently been elected onto the Board of Directors of the NZ Recreational Fishing Council, was also elected as the NZTBF delegate to the NZRFC. He could then represent OBC directly and via the NZTBF as well.
- After 15 years of dedicated service as an OBC delegate, life member Des Rankin stood down



from the NZ Trailer Boat Federation.

- Marina improvements included the installation of emergency buttons inside each gateway, outboard wash units for each marina and new fenders on the fuel jetty.
- Motuihe Island was closed to the public from June to September while rabbit poisoning was carried out.
- Louis Vuiton Cup racing started in October.
- Operations Manager, Mike Jarvie, resigned in May after two years in the position.
- The Burnsco Trophy was retained for another year.
- The annual family fishing day was a “roaring success” and a tribute to the many members who volunteered their services on the day. The event was reputed to be Auckland’s third largest one-day fishing competition and the prize pool topped \$15,000.
- The annual Riverhead trip attracted 42 vessels carrying 135 happy people.

## **2003**

- Once again OBC provided the land base for the America’s Cup Course Marshals. From mid January there were 23 course marshal boats moored at the club. A number of club members were involved as volunteer skippers or crew on the patrol boats. Club members were welcome to sit in on the race day briefing sessions and then, after the racing, to join the marshals for refreshments in the club bar.
- The annual Riverhead trip was a great success with 148 members, families and friends attending.
- Executive member Don Glass kept members up to date with a regular column highlighting fisheries management issues. Don was a director of the NZ Recreational Fishing Council and delegate to the NZ Trailer Boat Federation.
- Bruce Duncan continued his regular fishing column in the Outboarder. Bruce also coordinated a big team of volunteers on the Family Fishing Day, which attracted 185 vessels with more than 380 fish weighed in.
- June marked five years since the Outboarder production had been taken over by Advance Publishing and its format changed to A5.
- At the AGM three long serving members (John Laurence, Graham Scott and Graeme Martin) were awarded life memberships.
- 120 volunteers and supporters descended on Motuihe Island in September for the official

opening of the native tree nursery.

- September saw a successful Casino Evening which raised funds for the West Auckland Hospice.
- The club hosted a reunion for past commodores, life members and past executive members. The gathering provided an opportunity for old friends and colleagues to chat to others, who in some cases, they had not seen for 30 years.

## **2004**

- Because of poor attendances at monthly general meetings, the Executive decided to hold general meetings on a quarterly basis.
- Club Manager Lois Badham completed ten years service to the Club as an employee. Lois was originally appointed to the position of Executive Officer.
- Membership continued to grow and in October stood at 1819. There were 269 trailer boats on the hard stand and another 271 on a waiting list.
- 100 members attended the annual club auction. 220 items changed hands and the auction lasted until 11.00 p.m. A major item was a 12-month hard stand space. The proceeds of the hard stand sale were donated to the Westpac Rescue Trust.
- Richard Lamb stood down after four years of coordinating the Outboarder magazine. He had been responsible for advertising, liaison with Shirley and Alistair of Advance Publishing and the OBC Executive. He also proof read the magazine.
- The NZ Trailer Boat Federation set up a website [www.nztbfb.org.nz](http://www.nztbfb.org.nz). OBC Executive member Eddie Metz was current president of the federation.
- Motuihe Island was declared free of all mammalian pests other than rabbits.
- OBC gained a permit from the Auckland City Council to have a bonfire and fireworks display in the grounds to mark Guy Fawkes Day.
- Santa arrived for the annual Children's Christmas party on a big red fire engine.
- Advance Publishing Limited (Alistair Davidson and Shirley Haslam) notched up six years involvement with the Outboarder magazine.
- The local authority elections in October resulted in the majority of councillors elected who were opposed to the proposed highway across Hobson Bay. It therefore appeared that the OBC would not lose out to the highway which had been under consideration for more than 40 years. Over the past three years the OBC had consulted with Auckland city and had engaged

its own team of expert advisors to highlight the potential effects of the Eastern Corridor options on the OBC facilities.

- John Laurence notched up his 12th year as secretary/treasurer of the club.
- Sixteen OBC members made a winter trip to Queensland which included a visit to the Moreton Bay Trailer Boat Club and to the Sanctuary Club boat show. The OBC and the Moreton Bay Club have links which go back to the early days of the OBC.
- Gaye Houston replaced Barbara as OBC administration assistant.

## **2005**

- Vehicle speeds in the club grounds continued to be of concern and drew frequent reminders from the executive and custodian.
- The Minister of Conservation launched the formal Motuihe Island Restoration Plan in February. He acknowledged the work carried out by OBC members over the last two years and looked forward to members' continued voluntary work during the restoration process which would take place over the next five to ten years.
- The Riverhead boat trip went ahead in good weather after last year's event was cancelled due to bad weather on the two dates.
- Auckland Regional Council announced that it intended to impose a "Coastal Occupation Charge" for the use of public coastal space. The club asked ARC to consult OBC directly on behalf of members and berth owners.
- The mid winter dinner was a sell out with 108 persons attending.
- A successful "Nauti Girls Fishing Day" and hilarious evening party raised substantial funds for the "Look Good, Feel Better" charity, which works for women with cancer.
- Two successful outboard maintenance evenings for members were provided by Ovlov Marine and Yamaha Motors NZ.
- The NZ Recreational Fishing Council and the NZ Big Game Fishing Council filed a case in the High Court over allocation decisions for kahawai. The hearing date was expected to be in 2006.
- A well attended children's Christmas party saw Santa arriving by vintage car.
- The 20th annual OBC auction was again conducted by life member Graham Scott, who has been auctioneer at every event.
- A staggering 24,500 native trees were planted on Motuihe Island. Volunteers also potted

20,000 tree seedlings for planting in 2006. Large numbers of non-native trees and weeds were killed by volunteers using a variety of methods. Twenty adult Saddleback birds were transferred to the island from Tiritiri Matangi Island.

- On November 5 several hundred members and families turn out for the club's bonfire and fireworks display.
- November also marked the biggest Monday night fishing meeting ever.

*In March 2005 the OBC held another hugely successful family fishing competition.*



## **2006**

- Planning and preparations were in full swing for the club's 50th anniversary celebrations in August.
- The Mad Hatter's dinner party was a great success.
- A special general meeting was held in May to seek approval for expenditure on A pier /launching ramp reconstruction and on the 50 year anniversary event.
- A pier and the launching ramps on the south side of the clubhouse were closed for major reconstruction.
- The family fishing contest was cancelled due to bad weather but the BBQ and prize draw went ahead with over 90 per cent of the registered boats/crews turning up.
- Following an interesting presentation by the NZ Guide Dog Foundation to a general meeting, the club made a donation towards the work of the foundation.
- Around 90 members took part in a successful Casino Evening.
- The club outing to the Forresters' Arms hotel at Riverhead was fully booked and 125 members and their families enjoyed a great day on the water, and a BBQ lunch.
- The Motuihe Island Restoration Project continued its impressive progress. Saddlebacks released on the Island produced chicks and it was planned to release Kiwis during the year. Volunteer days were held on the second and fourth Sunday of each month.

# Club Officials and Life Members

## 1997 – 2006

### Patron

1990 - 2006                      The Hon. Sir Muir Chilwell

### Life Members

|      |              |
|------|--------------|
| 1998 | J.E. Hager   |
| 2000 | G.S. Reid    |
| 2001 | J.S. Burrett |
| 2003 | G.N. Martin  |
|      | G.J. Scott   |
|      | J. Laurence  |
| 2005 | B.L. Duncan  |

### Commodores

|             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1996 - 1999 | J.S. Burrett  |
| 1999 - 2001 | G.N. Martin   |
| 2001 - 2003 | P.K. Hawkins  |
| 2003 - 2005 | J.L. Bradley  |
| 2005-       | O.L. Braddock |

### Vice Commodores

|             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1996 - 1999 | G.W. Martin  |
| 1999 - 2000 | P. Franklin  |
| 2000 - 2001 | P.K.Hawkins  |
| 2001 - 2003 | J.L. Bradley |
| 2003 - 2005 | J.B.Whiting  |
| 2005 -      | F.M. Elder   |

### Secretary/Treasurer

1993 -                      J. Laurence

### Club Captains

|             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1996 - 1999 | G. Bromley   |
| 1999 - 2001 | J.L. Bradley |
| 2001 - 2003 | J.B. Whiting |
| 2003 - 2005 | F.M. Elder   |
| 2005 -      | D.C. Glass   |

### Executive Officer/Club Manager

1994 -                      L.J. Badham

### Custodians

1994 - 2000                      B. and R. McKay

# COMMODORES



S.A. GLEADOW  
1956-1961

S.A. GLEADOW  
W.HITCHCOCK  
N. McELROY  
N. KIRKPATRICK  
R. GRANT  
A.F. JONES  
G.H. LINCOLN  
B.J. GEE  
B.J. EADE

1956-1961  
1961-1962  
1962-1964  
1964-1966  
1966-1969  
1969-1970  
1970-1973  
1973-1974  
1974-1977



John Mallitte – who called  
the first meeting which  
started the club in 1956



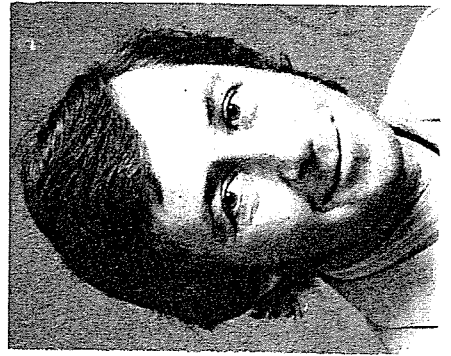
N. McELROY  
1962-1964



R. GRANT  
1966-1969



N. KIRKPATRICK  
1964-1966



B.T. GEE  
1973-1974



G.H. LINCOLN  
1970-1973



B.J. Eade  
1974-1977



A.F. JONES  
1969-1970

### **OBC Prayer**

*Lord grant me a steady hand and a watchful eye,  
That no man may be hurt when I pass by.  
Thou gavest Life, I pray no act of mine  
May take away or mar that act of Thine.  
Shelter those, dear Lord, who bear me company,  
From evil of fire and all calamity.  
Teach me to use my boat to meet their needs,  
Nor miss through love of speed  
The beauty of this world; that thus I may  
With joy and courtesy go on my way.*