

ELWOOD SEAHORSE ANNUAL DINNER



Season 1941 – 1942 Magazine Cover

MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE

2011 ANNUAL DINNER WILL BE HELD ON
TUESDAY 8TH NOVEMBER 2011
AT THE ELWOOD SAILING CLUB FORESHORE, ELWOOD
COMMENCING 1800 HOURS

ELWOOD SEAHORSE ANNUAL REUNION
9th NOVEMBER 2010
AT THE ELWOOD SAILING CLUB

PRESENT

Brian Adeney
Ted Montfort
Brian Carroll
Mark White
Henry Simpson
Stan Kurth
John Gill
Sandra Feeney
Glen Norton
Ted Masur
Will Jones
Ted Roache
Robert Stamp

Rob Anderson
Croften Dawson
Russell Darbyshire
John Dodd
Daelene East
Ian Frey
John Hanby
Prosper Labb
Les Wright
Bruce McPhail
John Stamp
Alan Richardson
Joseph Piccone

Andrew Barnett
John Broderick
Rick De Jong
John Douglas
Graeme East
John Frey
Gary Sheard
Barbara
Daryl Martin
Bryan Proven
Bob Roache
Ken Robinson
Frank Weir
Steve Wright

APOLOGIES

Andrew Dodd
Bob Brown
Mark Foster
Brian Cole
Robert Corke
Bruce Fitcher
John McDonald
Trevor Hewitt
John Pruden
Dennis Mercovich
Davan West
Bud Bacon

Ian Atkinson
Steve Burnham
Robert McQuade
Alison Penington
John Pyers
Geoff Taylor
Jamie Harrison
Tim Dorning
Malcolm Wilding
Alan Swann
Tony Watt
Paul Peeler
Robert Brunton

Ross Hammond
Don McDonald
Paul Carver
Krystal Weir
John Shepard
Michael Golding
Andrew Helmore
Paul Inman
Mark Mulvaney
Tony Watt
Chris Wilson
Ian Thompson

STOP PRESS

The Committee of the Elwood Sailing Club voted unanimously at a meeting this year that the Seahorse Old Boys Group should be affiliated with the club and allow reciprocal/honorary social membership. They believe that this is an important move in keeping the history of the club alive for present & future members. All secretarial & administration needs will be carried out by the club.

TRAINING GROUP DONATION

Members were invited to purchase old Elwood Sailing Club lapel badges that were discovered in the committee room recently. The meeting agreed that the cash raised was to be put with the balance of the Old Boys money to eventually purchase a training boat. This boat would be suitably noted as a donated by the group.

2010 DINNER

40 members attended our 2010 dinner at the Elwood Sailing Club. Once again the fellowship, food & drinks combined to make it another memorable night. Members were given their name tags on arrival and enjoyed a starter. The club rooms were well prepared in readiness for the event & as usual was in excellent condition.

Our food was supplied by John & his staff from Black Kettle catering. The entrees alternated between pumpkin & sweet potato or zucchini & bacon soups. The main courses were char-grilled marinated chicken fillet with tomato, basil cream sauce or roast sirloin of beef with a herb & mustard crust and red wine sauce. Chat potatoes & seasonal vegetables complemented the main course. The meal finished with either mini pavlova or chocolate mud cake & cream with strawberries served with both. Coffee or tea followed. The food of course was complemented by white & red wine and beer under the control of our Vice Commodore Rob Anderson.

After the usual opening & welcome including the Toast to the Elwood Sailing Club, all stood for one minutes silence in remembrance of our late member Peter Smith who had passed on since our last meeting.

DENNIS MERCOVICH /BOB BROWN INTERVIEW

The Entrée was followed by a CD of members Dennis Mercovich & Quickcat Australian Champion & Club Identity, Bob Brown reminiscing about their time during the Quickcat era. Bob recounted that he and a few others began sailing with their Cunningham designed plywood Quickies off the beach near Cole Street in the late 1950s. As the numbers increased Norm Maguiness (who was the official starter at the club) offered a start for the *Quickies* after the Seahorses. This continued for some years until in the early 60s when the Seahorse numbers began to decrease & they were welcomed into the club. One of the big impetuses was the installation of wooden racks for the Quickcats which increased the number of boats in the building dramatically. They were also much lighter and easier to move around than the heavier Seahorses which could only be stored on the ground. Some of the early members of this era were Richard Fahkry, Graham & Ian McDonald, John Shepard, Pros Labb, Ian Thompson, Ian Harris & Jack Shortridge. Later people who joined were Max Beck, Rob Corke & Bruce Fitcher.

Another reason for the explosion of the class was that the club allowed the construction of boats in the building over winter. Eventually there were over 40 boats racing each Saturday. This breathed new life into the club which had been slowly ossifying.

The member numbers also increased with new classes at the club including 125s, Sailfish (Jack Carroll & Bruce Scott), Herons & Paper Tigers along with Rob Ferris in the patrol boat. Bob went on to say that the yachtsmen enjoyed south-easterly winds as they could get to North Road on port tack in slight seas compared with the stronger south-westerlies that produced larger waves and the need to beat into them to the windward mark.

He and Dennis then described the old clock face on the front of the club that was used to start the races. The clock face was marked at the 4 quarter points with a large external hand being moved internally by the starter. The pointer would start at 12 o'clock and mark off the first 4 minutes as it traversed the face. The last minute was counted down by a complete rotation of the hand until it reached the midnight position which signified the start. The axle holding the hand had a sprocket gear on the end that was connected internally with a bicycle chain to a wooden wheel that was rotated by hand by the starter. The system was prone to the chain slipping off when it was rotated quickly creating panic & pandemonium for the skippers on the start line that was directly off the club.

Bob said that at the time all the yachties thought that they were indestructible & would sail in all weathers and would often capsize their boats just for practice so that when this happened in a race they would lose little time righting them.

He ended by saying his experiences at the club finished in 1970 when he left Melbourne for a new life in Queensland.

It was interesting to note that on the desk during the interview there were two Australian Quickcat Championship Trophies on his desk.

It was the first time that Bob has given an interview and both he & Dennis are to be congratulated on detailing their time at the ESC.

TED MONTFORT

Another speaker on the night was member & ex President Ted Montfort who talked about the reasons for joining the Elwood Sailing Club & recounted some of his experiences.

Ted started by explaining that at the time it was a single gender club & all the boats were stored there. Most members walked, rode bicycles or used public transport. The club was **strictly** "dry" and if yachties wanted a drink they went to the Elsternwick Hotel. However, on Friday nights they assembled at the club and those with cars drove to the Berwick Hotel that was 25 miles from the city and was thus allowed to serve alcohol to "bona fide" travelers.

The front of the club was improved by removing dangerous rocks from the water and using them to construct low boundary walls at each end of a new grass lawn.

Activities did not stop in winter as that's when repairs were made to boats such as: replacing wooden ribs by steaming them (broken by children rocking yachts on the beach) & renewing hull canvas torn by rocks in the water. Masts & gaffs were replaced along with stays & fittings. (Ronstan only started making fittings in 1959. They later bought Fico & other companies). If you required a new mast you repaired one of the 13 broken ones above John Bennet's boat "Nomad". Rigging which was originally galvanized was replaced with stainless steel wire & rod. Mum's rotary clothes hoist at home with its gal. wire was no longer needed & would now be left just to hang drying clothes. Rope lashings were replaced with turnbuckles and cotton & japara sails with synthetics.

It wasn't all sailing & repairs as Elwood also played a few football matches against the Fourteen Footers from Brookes' Jetty StKilda.

Easter & Christmas holidays were often spent sailing the boats around the bay to various places. On one occasion three boats left the club at midnight without navigation lights & with the crew sitting on the gunwhales for 15 hours eventually arriving in Sorrento at 3pm. On these trips they slept in rotundas, on picnic tables, on the beach, in tents, bathing boxes or in hammocks -whatever was available! Each Easter they sailed to Frankston for the regatta with the Fourteen Footers from StKilda & the Sharpies from Black Rock & Mordialloc. All these boats were easily passed by the Payne-Mortlock Canoes with their double hiking planks.

A high point for the club was the hosting of the 12 Square Metre Sharpies during the 1956 Melbourne Olympics.

Characters remembered included: Geoff Smith, Essie Prior & Joh Johanssen, Jamie Harrison & his 1912 vintage car, Jim Pritchard, Ken Bisney, Fred Green (Captain Coach of StKilda Football Club, Nearenu, Geoff Stahl (who made a lot of trophies & fittings), Don Atkins, Paul Mellody & his crew, Russell Wilson, Geoff Challenor, Jim Shortell, McGuinness brothers, Ray Cromb, Gary Sheard, Chris Wilson, John Dodd & many more. Friendships made at Elwood have remained to this day.

He suggested that members look around the club to see what had been achieved since the demise of the Seahorse Class. It includes the use of different materials such as bondwood, fibreglass, aluminium & carbon fibre spars & masts, stainless steel rigging & fittings, Dacron sails & synthetic cordage. As well as the evolution of not only catamarans but also monohull yachts.

Ted finished his talk by commenting that through hard work the committees over the years had made the club what it is today—a well run, financial, viable & friendly, very competitive club to which all of us should be proud to belong.

VICE COMMODORES REPORT

Vice Commodore Rob Anderson welcomed members to the club advising them that this was his first report in lieu of John Dodd being the ESC Commodore & probably biased.

In general the club was in good condition financially although membership was static. For the first time in its history a club manager has been appointed to carry out the day to day administration of the club. The appointee is a club member Mark White.

To increase membership the committee offered training places to one boy & one girl year 9 student at Elwood Secondary College. This is now a major policy of the club to encourage junior sailors. Club training groups were still operating on both Saturdays & Sundays.

The Angling club jetty has now been removed and construction of a new rock groyne, launch ramp & beach re-nourishment is expected to be completed by the opening of the 2011/2012 sailing season.

The members applauded Rob & his committee for the fine work they have done over the past years.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from 37 members as listed and we acknowledge the following donation.

Tony Watt \$30

BANK BALANCE

Our bank balance at the 7th October 2011 was \$2526.97

From last years replies

Robert Brunton: Thanks for the email. I am very sorry that I didn't attend the last Annual Dinner and sorry that I didn't have the good grace to tender an apology. There is no excuse other than the fact that I seem to be rapidly turning into one of those silly old buggers that forget important things. I enjoy reading the newsletter and although it is a bit too early for me to be certain, I will do my best to come to this year's dinner. Please keep me on your contact list, there are a number of names there that I'm proud to be associated with.
Regards, Robert Brunton OAM (E26 "Venture" 54-59)

John Pruden: Prudo will be away Regards, JP

John Shepard: See you next year!

Chris Wilson: Hi John, Thanks for all the info on the Elwood Seahorse Old Boys function next Tuesday. Unfortunately I will be once again an apology. The dinner again clashes with a meeting of the YV Race Officials Committee (of which I am a member) which is always the second Tuesday in each month. Good luck with the dinner, give my best regards to the "old gang" and have a great time.

Steven Burnham: I'd like to offer my apologies for the 9th as I won't be able to attend (actually going fishing, so a good excuse in my opinion!) I have put the Seahorse story on the internet however, so perhaps if you could pass this web address on maybe some of the Old Boys may like to have a look & even share it around.
Here is the link Steve Burnham Wordpedia, go to Classic Boats then The Elwood Seahorse
I hope all the guys have a wonderful night and all my best for the coming festive season to you all.

Davan West: Thanks John for the cordial invite for Nov 9 night at Elwood. Unfortunately this year will be unable to attend-am overseas (South India) from this Sunday for 2 ½ weeks.

Paul Inman: Paul has asked me to email you with his apologies as he won't be able to attend the Dinner. His health is not good and he has trouble getting around. He said he hopes the evening goes well, as I'm sure it will, and a good time will be had by all. Kindest Regards, Betty Inman

Don McDonald: Hi John, I trust you and the club are doing well.

I have enjoyed meeting up with the members in the past however I seem to only be available each second year, once again I will not be able to attend as we will be overseas.

Trust the evening will be the success it's been in the past.

Peter Fielding: I will be unable to attend the dinner this year as I will be away. Hope that I will be included in next year's list. I wish Doddy and all the attendees a happy reunion and only wish that I was there too. Many thanks and regards to all.

Steve Burnham: Just wanted to make sure the old boys got my apology for not attending on the 10th. Please pass on my best, and that is great to see them still getting together, and from all accounts having a good old time doing so. Good on them! All my very best.

Alan Swann (Circa 86): Travel a problem. Enjoy the report each year, my only contact with ESC now.

Tony Watt (OBE): Years ESC member – can't remember!

Trevor Hewitt (Hamilton Island): I would love to come down for the reunion but unfortunately I can not get away from here at the moment. Mid week is bad for me at any time of the year and very hard to get a stand-in to do buggy repairs at short notice. Hope you all have a great time and may be I can make it next year.

Michael Franck: Sorry can't make it – it's my birthday and they want me somewhere else. Please tender my apologies.

Elections

John Dodd was re-elected to the position of President for the year ending 8th November 2011.

Statistics

A total of 126 invitations were sent to members who we have had contact with in the last 5 years. 91 were sent by email, 35 sent by post. We received 72 replies. It is now our policy to stop sending invitations by post or email to anyone who has not made contact in the last 3 years. We also prefer to send the annual invitation by email.

Next Years Meeting

It is suggested by the club that next & future years meetings should be held on Thursday nights in future. This would eliminate the need to purchase a special licence for serving of alcohol which is at a significant cost. The club's current licence is valid from Thursday to Sunday & requires no additional fee. This would mean that next year's Seahorse Reunion would be held on **Thursday 15th November 2012**. This is the Thursday after the second Tuesday in November.

VALE

Peter Reid
Rob Terry



Commodore & President John Dodd & City of Port Phillip councillor Serge Thomann at Elwood Sailing Club Opening Day on 2nd October 2011



The access road to the club during recent beach renourishment works.



Entry to car park near club during recent beach works



View from balcony of club during beach renourishment & new groyne & ramp works



The two teams for an Elwood v Parkdale Quickcat Challenge.



We need the name of this mystery member outside the club and in front of the old starting clock.

PHOTOS FROM 2010 ANNUAL DINNER



The Girls & Boys together



President John Dodd rambles on!

I will / will not be present at the ELWOOD SAILING CLUB on
Tuesday 8th November 2011
Annual Dinner and Reunion.

Please advise by Friday 4th of November 2011

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

@ _____

Years ESC Member: _____

\$45.00 is enclosed and covers:

3 Course Meal only

Drinks will be available at bar prices

**N.B. Please note your age if over 75. Make all cheques payable to;
ELWOOD SEAHORSE OLD BOYS**

Post to:

John Dodd
14 Birdwood Avenue
Brighton Vic 3186

OR Email: jadodd@iinet.net.au