



**ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA**

## **OFFICE BEARERS 1977**

**President:** Ross Corben,  
161 O'Connor Road, Knoxfield, Vic., 3180.  
Phone: 763 7732

**Vice President:** Alby McCracken,  
13 Antares Avenue, Sale, Vic., 3850

**Secretary:** Bruce Lewis,  
33 McGhee Street, Sale, Vic., 3850

**Treasurer:** Geoff Olney,  
Silvan Road, P.O. Box 202, Mount Evelyn, Vic., 3796

**Measurers (Vic)**  
Bruce Castles, 12 Willow Court, Sale, Vic., 3850  
Peter Trigger, 54 Saxonwood Drive, East Doncaster, Vic., 3109

### Australian Titles 1977

The sudden and mysterious appearance of a new island in the Gippsland Lakes was attributed by the Melbourne press to a meteorite which supposedly thumped into the Earth during the night. This theory is, of course, absurd as anyone who was at Lake Wellington in January will know that it was shock waves generated by the fast and furious RL24 Championships at Marlay Point which created the island.

A total of 27 entries were received representing all states except W.A. and Tasmania. Peter Jackman with *Stella Maris* (Sail No. 160) easily won the trophy for the greatest distance travelled, coming as he did, from Ingham, Q'ld. Peter's epic journey is the more remarkable when account is taken of the battalions of demons and evil spirits which he swears attack his trailer and try to drag it off the road.

From the outset, defending champion Barry Arnold sailing *Coolibah* (Sail No. 79) served notice that it would be no easy task to take his title. In fairly fresh conditions Barry won the first heat although Rob Legg (*Geronimo* — Sail No. 1) and Ken Hackett (*Sasha* — Sail No. 102) were never far behind and kept *Coolibah* under constant pressure. A highlight of the race was a dramatic shy spinnaker reach put in by *Cavalier* (Sail No. 74) which flew from near the tail of the field at the windward mark to be mixing it with the leaders by the end of the leg. She finished the race in fifth position and everyone remarked on how she was obviously rigged for a big blow but she'd be killed in the light stuff. They had their chance the next morning when Heat 2 began in very light airs but to the astonishment of most *Cavalier* ghosted away to come home first from *Coolibah* and Jim Wassel sailing *Garuda* (Sail No. 4).

Heat 3 was sailed in moderate winds and after a tense struggle *Coolibah* again emerged the victor from *Cavalier* and *Sasha*. Bruce Castles had *Pegasus* (Sail No. 152) really screwing up to windward and in fact took the honours to the first windward mark but a misbehaving spinnaker made life difficult on the free legs. Nevertheless *Pegasus* finished a creditable fourth.

A most welcome lay-day followed after which the fleet re-assembled for Heat 4. This was a race around Lake Wellington covering a distance of some 40 km. The race began in virtually drifting conditions although soon after the 1st mark *Huey* favoured a select bunch of boats (including *Timbarri* I'm pleased to say) with a funnel of wind which soon had them well ahead of the remainder. During the afternoon the wind gradually piped and swung to the south which favoured boats at the rear and towards the end of the second leg the fleet began to bunch up. In the meantime *Garuda* had been brawling furiously with *Coolibah* and *Geronimo* and the battle continued all the way back across the lake with Jim Wassel successfully fighting off his challengers as they crossed the line. Shortly after, the rest of the fleet arrived with only minutes separating 16 or 18 boats — very close and exciting stuff.

Heat 5 was another *Coolibah*—*Sasha* pas de deux with *Cavalier* third. *Geronimo* had hit the dust and was giving Rob lots to think about until he realized his plate was attached to a pile of mud and weed (or at least that's his story!) Once he'd shaken the garbage off he carved his way back through the fleet but it was too late and he had to settle for seventh.

Heat 6 was again won by *Coolibah* but this time it was the Old Fox from Southport, Bill McIntosh, who harassed Barry across the line. Bill didn't enjoy the best of luck during the series but judging from his continuous broad grin it was clear that no-one was having more fun than he. I find it extraordinary that someone can travel 2,000 miles, break a rudder before the first race and still manage to laugh a lot. Such is sailing and sailors.

The final race was sailed in fairly fresh conditions and, need it be said *Coolibah* once more won from *Sasha* with *Geronimo* third. A good account of this race and some graphic pics appear in *Australian SEASPRAY* of 11th February 1977 (page 39). It's well worth buying.

Incidentally, the remarks attributed to Rob Legg were NOT made by him and in fact Rob has dissociated himself from them. It seems that someone took an inebriated and very personalized view of why *Geronimo* had not done better and, claiming to be one Robert Legg, had shot their mouth off to the unsuspecting press.

Anyway, in winning Heat 7, Barry found himself in the enviable position of having a second place as his worst result to discard. Most of us would have been delighted to have a second place to count. A score sheet is attached, and it illustrates clearly *Coolibah's* superiority for which Barry and his crew are to be congratulated. But so too are all skippers because without their spirited participation there would be no championship.

Apart from *Coolibah's* domination of the racing the series was notable for its friendliness and much of the credit for this must go to the LWYC members who worked so hard for the success of the event. Special thanks must go to Derek Hale and his team of officials who conducted the racing meticulously and to Ruth Hackett, Pam Bourbaud, Barb. Castles and all the other ladies who kept up a constant supply of hot coffee, cold beer and salad rolls. It was a performance very much appreciated.

\* \* \* \*

### Business Arising . . .

Attached to this Newsletter is a copy of the Minutes of the A.G.M. held at Sale on 10/1/77. As you will see, the meeting passed a resolution invalidating the 1975 referendum which allowed the use of one trapeze per boat. In respect of all hiking devices the class rules now revert to those applying before the 1975 referendum. As AYF Rule 66 states, among other things, that trapezes or other hiking devices are not permitted unless class rules specifically allow them, the committee has been instructed to hold a further referendum to determine whether or not the class rules should permit the use of a trapeze. Accordingly, a questionnaire has been prepared and is enclosed. Members are urged to give this matter careful consideration and to return the questionnaire to the Class Secretary, Bruce Lewis, 33 McGhee Street, Sale, 3850, by 31.3.77.

\* \* \* \*

### Mast Dimension

The A.G.M. also passed a resolution which amends the class rules to the extent that "the maximum fore and aft dimension of the mast shall be limited to 120 mm excluding normal fittings." Revised copies of the class rules will be made available as soon as possible.

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### Sailboat 77

Riddell Promotions Pty Ltd and the Victorian Yachting Council will again combine to present the third annual all-yacht boat show in Melbourne's Exhibition Buildings from 15th May to 22nd May 1977. Geoff Olney has generously agreed to co-ordinate the Association's display effort and Rob Legg has offered to provide a boat and pick up the tab. Further details will be available soon when Geoff has finalized the plans for our best yet presentation but it is fairly certain that he will need assistance to man the stand. That's a hint to volunteers to note the dates in their diaries now! Incidentally, if anyone has access to the services of a graphic artist or someone with expertise in the display area, Geoff would be pleased to know about it. He can be phoned on (03) 736 2651.

\* \* \* \*

### N.S.W. Association

At a meeting held at Lake Macquarie recently the RL24 Association of N.S.W. was formed and the following office bearers elected.

President:	Dick Lees
Secretary:	Lou Bray
Publicity:	Paul Hopkins

N.S.W. owners wishing to make contact with their State Association can write to Lou at 114 Lorraine Street, Peakhurst, 2210. Lou, incidentally, is a member of the Botany Bay Y.C. which has 5 RL's on its register.

\* \* \* \*

## Gone Fishin'!

Doug Laity (*Streaker* — Sail No. 104) who is well known for his habit of falling out of trees reckoned his boat had the stitch after the Nationals and didn't front up for the first heat of the Victorian Championships on the ANA weekend. Instead, he wet a line at a local surf fishing competition — and won a boat, outboard and trailer combination for his trouble. It seems that among Doug's catch was a finny friend which met the competition's secret weight and secret species specifications. Some blokes have all the luck.

\* \* \* \*

## RL 24's Dominate

(a) **Geelong.** The Geelong Trailable Yacht Club conducted its inaugural Geelong—Queenscliff race early in December and seven RL's joined the fleet which numbered in excess of 100 boats. Practically all T/Y classes were represented including a couple which are "rumoured" to be knocking off RL's but nobody's been able to find out where. They certainly couldn't produce the goods on this occasion as RL's scooped up the first three places across the line as follows:—

1st	<i>Yogi Bear</i>	Peter Trigger	(Sail No. 107)
2nd	<i>Pegasus</i>	Bruce Castles	(Sail No. 152)
3rd	<i>Lowana III</i>	Mick Shannon	(Sail No. 415)

According to our boys it was great sport to watch the lumbering displacement-type boats rounding up, their enormous kites thrashing frantically each time the wind gusts or varied a point or two. In the meantime, of course, our lads were disappearing over the horizon.

(b) **Black Rock.** In an Invitation Race for RL24's, Boomerangs and an assortment of other T/T's and small keelers held at the Black Rock Y.C. on 12.2.77, Roy Martin (*Almitra* — Sail No. 126) and Barry Reaby (*Walu* — Sail No. 106) turned in a spectacular performance over the 25 mile course to be first and third across the line respectively. Starting 30 minutes behind the Boomerang fleet and 1½ hours behind the first division away, they were joined by Pat Mahon (*Mundora* — Sail No. 244) and Peter Trigger (*Yogi Bear*) in conditions which were ideal to begin with but which progressively deteriorated to a hard blow in excess of 25 knots. Despite the nasty sea running during the latter half of the event, the boats handled well and *Almitra* had the distinction of being rousingly applauded as she thrashed past the leading Boomerang hotly pursued by *Walu*.

Congratulations and thanks to all RL skippers who competed in these events as your participation gave the class a valuable P.R. boost.

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## Towboat 77!

Bruce Lewis sailing *Electra* (Sail No. 110) recently left Loch Sport on Lake Victoria in company with a Hartley 21, both vessels bound for Spermwhale Head. About a mile out from Loch Sport they came across a power boat which had run out of fuel leaving its "operator" somewhat distressed. Ever the Good Samaritan and, I suspect, relishing the opportunity to turn the tables on the powerboat brigade, Bruce came alongside the inert machine and took it in tow — entirely under sail. The good breeze held and Bruce reports they made excellent progress back to shore, the cumbersome handicap making no difference to *Electra's* handling.

In the meantime, the Hartley had continued on towards Spermwhale Head so casting his salvage rights to the wind Bruce dropped the towline and set out in pursuit of his erstwhile companion. I have no details of the chase but Bruce does record that he arrived at his anchorage some 30 minutes ahead of his cruising companion — and all done without the aid of a trapeze, of course!

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## Cruising Corner

Jo Robjohn's account of her trip up the Queensland coast with Merv Allwood in *Falcon* has aroused the cruising passions of a good number of people and among those proposing to poke about the Whitsunday area this year are Ruth and Ken Hackett, Lois and Alby McCracken, Rae and Pat Mahon, ourselves (a 2 month old baby per-

mitting) and Geoff and Arch Olney. This will be the Olneys' second trip and when asked to give us the benefit of his previous experiences, Geoff kindly prepared the following.

"The Whitsunday area of Queensland as described in the tourist brochures can be believed or considered gilded. This depends on the reader's viewpoint. Our opinion is to plagiarise a Chinese proverb, a thousand brochures do not exceed one seeing! The adjectives so freely used are inadequate but it is not proposed to try to outdo the brochures but rather to make a few observations which may serve as a basis for planning your cruise.

## Ground Tackle

We took a "pseudo" Danforth 13 type anchor, 50 feet of ½" x 1" gal. chain and 120 ft of rope and a 15 lb C.Q.R. anchor on 12' 5/16" chain and 120 ft of rope. Initially we used the former combination but when moored at Airlie Beach in 2 metres of water with 7 metres of chain we returned from a shopping expedition to find *Scud* several hundred metres to leeward. A friendly Hartley skipper had seen her drift past and had gone aboard and let out more chain. The lesson would seem to be — take 50 ft of chain and use it. Subsequently we transferred the C.Q.R. to the long chain and did not experience any further trouble. A genuine 13S Danforth (as recommended by the V.Y.C.) with sufficient chain may be adequate but our experience casts doubt on the locally designed imitation. We also took a home made reef anchor which wasn't used as we didn't moor over a reef. However we will take it this year as the few Travely we caught were so delicious we will be trying for bigger and better varieties.

## Dinghy

After extensive questioning and investigation we elected to purchase an inflatable 8'x4' dinghy. It was inflated on the day of launching and towed, rowed and thoroughly enjoyed until the day of retrieving when it was subjected to the indignity of deflation and stowed in the car. It towed behind *Scud* uneventfully on a short painter although it did slow the boat when tacking but what matter when cruising? It has been said that a dinghy is not essential when cruising these parts and some landings are suitable for beaching but without a dinghy one's activities are very restricted geographically.

## Communication

We elected to rely on the usual distress sheets and flare signals in case of emergency. There is so much activity on the water in the area that help should never be far away. For weather reports we relied on a transistor radio and found early morning reports from ABC stations comprehensive and fairly accurate. Experienced cruising people expressed the view that since the advent of satellite data this was the norm.

## Sails

A storm main was used with or without either of the two standard headsails for the first few days. After gaining a little local experience the full main was used, again varying the total area by changing headsails as necessary. We didn't use a spinnaker but there were occasions when a run of 8-10 n. miles would have been possible.

## Car and Trailer Parking

Outdoor parking is available at \$3 per week. Under cover parking at Shute Harbour is available at \$6 per day — advance booking required.

Airlie Beach is the main postal address and provisioning port though limited provisions and fuel are available at the resort islands. Finally today's trailable yachtsman is made welcome at all resorts."

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## Personal Pars

\* \* \* Barry Arnold's campaign to win the Australian Titles nearly ended disastrously before it began. His trailer shed a wheel about 100 miles east of Melbourne and the first Barry knew of it was when the offending object overtook him down the road. As someone said after he'd won the last three heats "It must have been the only bloody thing to pass him all week!"

\* \* \* The Hard Luck Story of The Series must surely belong to Col. Murray who sails *Pamero*. Col had spent some time and money on a new rig layout and was really wound up to go but the very week of the series, Col's huge barley crop had to be harvested and while we sailed he crewed on a tractor.

\* \* \* It's reliably reported that the next issue of *Australian Boating* carries an article by Merv. Allwood who writes of his cruising experience with *Falcon* on the northern coast of Queensland. But, remember, you read about it first in "Cruising Corner"!

\* \* \* What did Santa bring you? Christine and Mick Shannon were given a new crewman for *Lowana III* — Peter Michael who was born on Christmas Day and is the image of his Mum.

\* \* \* The first heat of the 1977 Vic. Championships saw the fleet spreadeagled seconds after the start by a tremendous gust which came out of nowhere. Sadly, Bruce Bowman's *Finisterre* was a casualty when her mast broke at the hounds.

\* \* \* At last it can be told! As from 4th March next Rob and June will be on baked beans and toast while they put Rob Legg Yachts Pty Ltd on its feet. The new company will be manufacturing RL 24's and RL 28's exclusively and they take the best wishes of the Association with them into their new venture. Incidentally, members wishing to contact the Leggs can do so at their new home address which is 21 Howard Street, Hollywell, 4216.

\* \* \* Also from Queensland comes tragic news that Carla and Phil Elford lost their daughter Lisa, aged 6, recently. The Association offers its heartfelt condolences to the Elford family on this sad bereavement. Kelvin Mills from Mullwillimbah, N.S.W., lost his brother and crewman Wayne very suddenly and to Kelvin also, go our sincere thoughts.

Knoxfield,  
Feb. 77.

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BOAT NAME	SAIL NO	SKIPPER	HEAT 1		HEAT 2		HEAT 3		HEAT 4		HEAT 5		HEAT 6		HEAT 7		FINAL			
			PLAC	PTS	PLAC	PTS	PLAC	PTS	PLAC	PTS	PLAC	PTS	PLAC	PTS	PLAC	PTS	TOT. PTS	TOT. PLAC	PTS	PLAC
Geronimo	1	Rob Legg	2	3	5	10	5	10	3	5.7	7	13	7	13	5.7	3	5.7	60.4	13	47.4
Garuda	4	Jim Wassel	11	17	3	5.7	7	13	35.7	1	0	35.7	6	11.7	47.4	4	8	55.4	17	52.4
Valentine	20	Ralph Higgins	9	15	19	25	40	10	16	56	25	31	87	14	20	107	16	123	15	144
Aquila	31	Bill Macintosh	DNF	31	6	11.7	42.7	6	11.7	54.4	8	14	68.4	8	14	82.4	2	85.4	7	98.4
Scud	35	Geoff Olney	19	25	16	22	47	20	26	73	18	24	97	23	29	126	17	149	18	173
Cavalier	74	Ron Mutton	5	10	1	0	10	2	3	13	7	13	26	3	5.7	31.7	4	46.7	4	8
Yecats	76	Ross Stacey	15	21	14	20	41	19	25	66	15	21	87	19	25	112	13	131	17	154
Coolibah	79	Barry Arnold	1	0	2	3	3	1	0	3	2	3	6	1	0	6	1	0	6	3
Yun Khan	95	Matt Daddo	DNF	33	15	21	54	21	27	81	16	22	102	21	27	130	19	155	19	25
Mr. Christian	101	Alby McCracken	DNF	31	20	26	57	22	28	85	20	26	111	15	21	132	21	159	13	19
Sasha	102	Ken Hackett	3	5.7	7	13	18.7	3	5.7	24.4	5	10	34.4	2	3	37.4	3	5.7	43.1	2
Streaker	104	Doug Laity	17	23	18	24	47	14	20	67	23	29	96	16	22	118	20	144	DNF	31
Timbarri	105	Ross Corben	7	13	21	27	40	12	18	58	6	11.7	69.7	9	15	84.7	DNF	31	115.7	9
Walu	106	Barrie Reaby	DNF	31	11	17	48	13	19	67	11	17	84	13	19	103	DNF	31	130.7	31
Yogi Bear	107	Peter Trigger	16	22	9	15	37	17	23	60	12	18	78	18	24	102	DNF	31	137	34
Pampero	108	Col Murray	DNF	33	DNF	33	66	DNF	33	99	DNF	33	132	DNF	33	165	DNF	33	192	33
Electra	110	Bruce Lewis	13	19	17	23	42	15	21	63	21	27	90	20	26	116	14	136	DNF	31
Safari	111	Neil Bourbaud	6	11.7	4	8	19.7	8	14	33.7	4	8	44.7	5	10	51.7	8	65.7	6	11.7
Lady Jane	112	Michael Laird	10	16	DNF	31	47	DNF	33	80	22	28	108	10	16	124	6	117	185.7	14
Lowana	115	Michael Shannon	12	18	DNF	31	49	11	17	66	17	23	89	12	18	107	12	125	10	16
Almitra	126	Roy Martin	18	24	13	19	43	18	24	67	9	15	82	22	28	110	11	127	16	22
Caprice	127	Alan Thorpe	14	20	22	28	48	16	22	70	14	20	90	17	23	113	16	135	11	17
Pegasus	152	Bruce Castles	4	8	10	16	24	4	8	32	13	19	51	4	8	59	5	69	5	10
Happy Days	158	Bruce Avery	8	14	8	14	28	9	15	43	10	16	59	11	17	76	15	97	DNF	31
Stella Maris	160	P. Jackman	21	27	DNF	33	60	24	30	90	24	30	120	25	31	157	DNF	33	185	34
Tapui	201	David Cameron	DNF	31	22	29	60	25	31	91	26	32	123	26	32	155	22	183	DNF	31
Mundora	244	Pat Mahon	20	26	12	18	44	23	29	73	19	25	97	18	24	128	18	152	DNF	31