

Chapter 8

PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT

1. THE ROYAL WARRANT

It was to be over two years before the result of the Club's application to the Admiralty for a warrant to fly the blue ensign and adopt the title Royal Geelong Yacht Club would be known.

Then at a meeting of the Committee held at the club house on June 16, 1924 a letter was received from the Secretary to the Premier stating that His Majesty the King had been graciously pleased to grant permission to the Geelong Yacht Club to assume the title, Royal, and enclosing copy of despatch and Admiralty Warrant.

Copy of Warrant.

By the Commissioners for executing the office of the Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland etc..

Whereby we deem it expedient that vessels belonging to the Royal Geelong Yacht Club shall be permitted to wear the Blue Ensign of His Majesty's Fleet.

We do, by virtue of the Power and Authority vested in us, hereby warrant and authorise the Blue Ensign of His Majesty's Fleet to be worn on board the respective vessels belonging to the Royal Geelong Yacht Club.

Given under Our Hands and the Seal of the Office of Admiralty this Twenty-seventh day of March one thousand and nine hundred and twenty-four.

By Command of their Lordships.

O. Murray A. Boyle
H. F. Oliver.

At this same meeting letters of congratulations on the granting of the Royal Warrant were received from:-

The Port Melbourne Yacht Club
The Brighton Yacht Club
The St. Kilda Yacht Club
The Royal Yacht Club of Victoria.

And the Commodore congratulated the members on the honour bestowed on the Club to assume the title Royal Geelong Yacht Club.

Both St. Kilda and Brighton clubs were also granted Royal Warrants in 1924, making a total of four Royal Clubs in Port Phillip, a distinction not shared elsewhere, where usually one body of water or indeed, one country might have a single Royal club. Later the addition of the Royal Motor Yacht Squadron at Williamstown set the "Royal" Seal on Port Phillip more firmly than anywhere else in Australia -or indeed, anywhere comparable in the world.

At a special general meeting held on October 15, 1924 the rules adopted in 1919 were rescinded and a set of revised rules presented to members.

At the beginning of the rules the following statement was made:-

"By Admiralty Warrant of date 27th March, 1924, the privilege of wearing the Blue Ensign of His Majesty's Navy has been extended to yachts of this Club, but, notwithstanding this general authority, no yacht can fly the Blue Ensign unless she has a specific warrant from the Admiralty authorising her to do so; and no warrant will be issued by the Admiralty unless the yacht be registered under the Merchant Shipping Act".

And Rule One read as follows:-

"1. The Geelong Yacht Club was formed in March 1859. Under the Warrant of His Majesty, King George, dated 27th day of March, 1924 the name was altered to 'Royal Geelong Yacht Club'."

There is little doubt that the granting of the Royal Warrant was, in no small way due to the untiring efforts of Commodore Grimwade over a period of several years.

And on June 2, 1924 the Club presented Dr. Grimwade with a beautiful leather bound souvenir as a memento of the members' appreciation of his service. This volume contained a beautifully illustrated illuminated address together with the signatures of all Flag Officers and members. In addition it contained studio photographs of the Committee as well as photos of all yachts in the register and their crews. The address read as follows:-

"To DR. A. SHEPPARD GRIMWADE:

Dear Sir,

It is the unanimous and whole-hearted wish of the Royal Geelong Yacht Club Members to assure you of their sincere appreciation of all that you and Mrs. Grimwade did for them during your term of three years as Commodore of the Club, and further to let you know in what high esteem they hold you.

In recognition of all your many kindnesses and thoughtful acts to the members, they ask your kind acceptance of this Souvenir as a slight memento of their regard.

During your Commodoreship we had very happy times together, and we will not soon forget the many gracious acts we received at your hands and those of your most excellent wife.

We were proud to have the "Katandra" lead us for three years, and invariably found you to be a true sport in every sense of the term.

In conclusion, we wish you and Mrs. Grimwade a long, useful and happy life together, and trust that the R.G.Y.C.'s burgee will ever fly at the masthead of your boat.

With every good wish and our kindest regards,

On behalf of the Club Members, we subscribe ourselves.

<i>J. F.S. Shannon</i>	<i>Aurel J. Jus</i>	<i>W. H. Blunt</i>
<i>T. A. Dickson</i>	<i>E. W. Parsons</i>	<i>W. H. List</i>
<i>Ernest Brockman</i>	<i>J. Solomon</i>	<i>W. M. Nash</i>
<i>Horace J. Alexander</i>	<i>S. W. Buckland</i>	<i>H. C. Otway</i>
<i>Hans Brockman</i>	<i>Harry Bechervaise</i>	<i>R. E. Lowday</i>
<i>Leslie Bechervaise</i>	<i>Charles H. Hart</i>	<i>O. A. Usher</i>
<i>P. Bleasdale</i>	<i>Philip Farrow</i>	<i>H. Giles</i>
<i>B. J. Freeman</i>	<i>C. A. Campbell</i>	<i>D. F. Griffiths</i>
<i>J. I. Hamilton</i>	<i>Les J. Humble</i>	<i>R. W. Meakin</i>
<i>W. E. Thacker</i>	<i>J. J. Sheridan</i>	<i>G. E. Woods</i>
<i>L. Roy Giles</i>	<i>William H. Petrass</i>	<i>Wilfred Libby</i>
<i>Thomas A. Woods</i>	<i>Walter T. Wiggs</i>	<i>L. D. Duvoisin</i>
<i>H. Brennan</i>	<i>E.V. Powell</i>	<i>Hector MacDonald</i>
<i>E. J. McGee</i>	<i>W.G. McCartin</i>	<i>I. Hammerton</i>
<i>David L. Butterworth</i>	<i>H.C. McInnes</i>	<i>Wm. J. Griffiths</i>
<i>J. B. Dickson</i>	<i>R. Bennett</i>	<i>Howard Hitchcock</i>
<i>W. J. K. Rollins</i>	<i>Ramsay Y. Cook</i>	<i>E. E. Wilson</i>
<i>T. F. Hunter</i>	<i>Morris Jacobs Jnr.</i>	<i>G. B. Hope</i>
<i>S. S. Jobling</i>	<i>S. H. Thacker</i>	<i>W. Taylor</i>
<i>T.W. Bailey</i>	<i>W.G. Redden</i>	<i>C. F. Bartlett</i>

2. THE NEW CLUB HOUSE

In the mid-twenties and particularly after the granting of the Royal warrant it was apparent that something positive had to be done about rebuilding the existing club house. So at the same committee meeting when the notification of the granting of the Warrant was announced, June 16, 1924, a building committee was appointed to prepare plans etc. of a club house and yard on site granted by the Harbour Trust.

This committee consisted of the Commodore, Vice-Commodore, Rear- Commodore, Captain, Secretary and Mr. Wm. Smith.

At a subsequent committee meeting on August 28, 1924, another sub-committee was formed to revise the rules and "to draw up a scheme for raising money to complete the proposed new club house." This committee consisted of the Commodore, Treasurer and Secretary.

Then at the Annual Meeting of members on October 15, 1924, the Hon. Treasurer brought forward a Debenture Scheme designed to finance the new club house and slipway. This scheme was fully discussed and the meeting authorised the committee to issue debentures to the amount of £1500 at 6%, such debentures to be made a first charge on the assets of the club. It was also decided at this meeting to pay out of the Building Fund the sum of £228 owing to present debenture holders.

Led by Commodore Grimwade with £50, 21 members immediately promised to take up debentures to a total sum of £280, and a plan of the new club house presented to the meeting was approved.

A debenture prospectus asking for £1500 at 6% was approved by the Committee on October 22, 1924. This prospectus contained a "tear off" Form of Application for debentures of £5 each with a deposit of 10% and the balance in nine equal monthly instalments. The debentures were to be redeemable not later than 19 years from December 15, 1925.

At a committee meeting on February 23, 1925, at which the plan of the new building and staging was discussed, it was decided to ask the Captain to prepare a plan for a new jetty with 8feet of water, to be submitted to the next meeting. However there is no further record of this subject although the Harbour Trust agreed to carry out some improvements at a cost to the Club of £225 and it is assumed that this was in regard to the jetty.

But it was May 1926 before the Committee was authorised to proceed with the erection of the new clubhouse, and at the same time to circularise members for the issue of debentures to cover the cost. It would appear, therefore, that the 1924 debenture issue had not been totally successful.

It would seem that the erection of the new club house was in the doldrums for some time because at a committee meeting on June 27 1927, over 12 months after the committee were authorised to proceed with the building, it was decided to request a Mr. H. Trigg to prepare plans of a club house, up to a cost of £700. These plans were presented to the July committee meeting when it was decided to place them before a General Meeting of members. This was done at the half yearly meeting in August and a decision made to call tenders and in response to a call for more debenture holders, the sum of £230 was promised.

Then at the August 1927 committee meeting it was resolved to accept the tender of E. Beach and Sons of £985-10-0d.

Things evidently moved on from there because at the January 1928 committee meeting it was decided to paint the new club house cream with brown facings and a red roof.

Club finances were apparently in a somewhat precarious state, due no doubt to early signs of the oncoming economic depression. This is evidenced by a report of a Special General Meeting held on February 29, 1928 when the treasurer stressed the urgent need for subscriptions to be paid and the necessity for more debentures to be taken up.

But things were obviously moving because at a committee meeting in April, 1928, a vote of appreciation was recorded to the Commodore and Mrs. Grimwade for their hospitality to the Committee by placing their home at its disposal during the period between the demolition of the old and the erection of the new club house.

It is apparent that work on the building project was under way in 1928 and in July of that year Mr. R. Wyett offered to furnish the club house with blinds. This offer was gratefully accepted and, at the same time, the Secretary was instructed to obtain some better arrangement in regard to the club's tenure of the site of the club house and yard than that existing.

Concern over the financial position of the club was expressed at a committee meeting on July 16 1928 and it was decided to obtain an overdraft of £200 from the club's bankers to tide it over for the remainder of the season.

However, in late 1928 the Two storied club house was finally completed. (These days the home of the Cadet Dinghy Squadron as well as housing the club's radio tower, the marina office and race equipment such as inflatable and other buoys, ropes, anchors etc.)

The next year a piano was purchased and in early 1930 the billiard table was moved upstairs.

The new club house was to serve until such time as more land was acquired and the first stage of the present structure completed in 1960.

While all of this was taking place the club continued to make steady progress. The Regatta, now a well-established annual fixture on each Australia Day weekend, continued to be a popular event with both Melbourne and Geelong yachtsmen. Regular racing took place on Corio Bay each Saturday during the summer season.

At the Annual Meeting in October, 1925, Dr. A. Shepherd Grimwade was again elected Commodore with Mr. W. Libby Vice-Commodore and Mr. J. F. S. Shannon Rear-Commodore.

The good doctor was elected Commodore again in 1926, but this time with Mr. Shannon as Vice-Commodore and Mr. Rupert H. Meakin as Rear-Commodore. However Mr. Libby remained on the Committee.

The Flag Officer remained unchanged in 1927 but at the Annual Meeting on October 15, 1928 Dr. Grimwade, after seven sterling years as Commodore, during which a great deal had been accomplished, stood down. Mr. Shannon was elected Commodore with Mr. Meakin Vice-Commodore, Mr. M. Jacobs Rear-Commodore and the redoubtable Mr. E. Brockman, Captain.

It is apparent that the club was not only progressing satisfactorily but was also being conducted strictly according to the rules. This is evidenced by an incident in 1924, when a certain member was asked to appear before the Committee to face charges relating to using the club telephone for making trunk line calls for which he did not pay. At the meeting the Secretary submitted a detailed account showing the time, number and cost of calls made, also a daily statement of money received from the telephone box during the months of June and July.

The member concerned admitted having made use of the telephone but stated that he had no idea that it was so expensive. He asked for leniency and for the committee to place him on good behaviour for twelve months. It was then determined that in accordance with Rule 18 which dealt with dishonourable conduct that the matter be dealt with by a Special General Meeting of members to be called on August 5. Under this rule one black ball in three would expel.

However, the matter never reached this stage as the member tendered his resignation on July 30. At the Committee Meeting when this letter of resignation was received a letter was also received from the offending member's wife. This letter sought information regarding the telephone number called by the member! There is no record of any reply being made to this second letter.

At the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting in October 1928, when Dr. Grimwade stood down as Commodore, the doctor offered the club as a gift from Mrs. Grimwade and himself, an electric winch. Mr. Shannon accepted the gift and expressed the gratification of the Club to the Doctor and Mrs. Grimwade. At the December committee meeting the installation of the winch by Messrs. Aikman and Co. was left in the hands of Messrs. Meakin, Slater and Brockman. In March 1929 the Captain was instructed to purchase the necessary wire cable and the Secretary was asked to, if possible, arrange with the donors to officially hand over the winch on Saturday, April 6 at 2 p.m.

This ceremony duly took place and it is of interest to note that this same winch is in service today.

In recognition of their service, Doctor and Mrs. Grimwade were both elected to Honorary Life Membership in May 1930.

As an additional gesture several members, led by David English and "Jockey" Jones built an open fireplace in the upstairs room of the club house in the Grimwades' honour. A suitable plaque was fixed to the fireplace which is still in existence today.

Talking to Dave English recently, he told me an amusing story of a fund raising effort which he and several other members participated in during the weekend of the 1934 Australia Day regatta. Here is the story as Dave told it:-

There was this chap, you see, a member of the club who owned a motor boat. I don't remember his name, but anyway he was a keen shark fisherman. He used to go out in his motor boat and set a shark line out near the channel. He attached the lines to a four gallon drum so that when the shark was hooked it couldn't go far because the drum prevented it from diving and eventually it drowned. Well, anyway, it so happened that just before a regatta he catches this big shark, must have been 9 or 10 feet long. So I got this idea to make a few bob for the club and asked this chap, can't remember his name, if we could have the shark. He said yes and that it was tied to a pile near the Stoney pier. So then I went to the fishermen and asked them could we have the loan of their shed on the end of their jetty until Monday as we wanted to display a shark. The fishermen said that would be alright, so two or three of us got a dinghy, this was on the Saturday morning when the boats were racing down from Melbourne, got the shark up and laid it out on a trestle table in the shed. We stuck a stick in its mouth so that its jaws were open and it really looked ferocious. Then we got some sand and some rocks and some seaweed which we packed around the shark to give the effect of the sea.

Well, there was this chap, I can't remember his name, but he lived up in Little Ryrie Street and he was one of those blokes who would stand outside a tent on Gala Day and shout out things like 'who's going to fight the champ?' or 'Come and see the tattooed lady.' think he was called a spruiker. Anyway I went and saw this chap and asked him if he would give us a hand to advertise the shark.

So down he came, can't remember his name, and he walked up and down ringing a bell calling out to the crowd along the water front and in Transvaal Square - 'Come and see the man-eating shark, come and see the monster of the deep. Ladies, this will make you aware of the terrors of the sea. 6 pence to see the shark' and so on.

Well, of course, most of these people had never seen a shark and they simply flocked into the shed. We got so busy we had to put on a couple of extra blokes.

Well anyway it was such a success we decided to keep it going on the Sunday. But the weather warmed up and when I got down there about 9 o'clock on Sunday morning, shark was a bit on the nose. In fact it stank and also the flies had woken up to the fact that it was there. So we had a problem. We wanted to keep the crowd coming in but how were we going to do it? So, I had another brainwave. Fly sprays. That was the answer. So the owner of the shark, I can't remember his name, rushed off and came back with four huge fly sprays. And soon, not only had the flies gone but the air smelt a lot better, sort of like a disinfectant.

So business continued and in the end we finished up making about thirty quid for the club -a lot of money in those days when the basic wage was only about three quid. So that meant that about 1200 people had seen the shark and all it cost us was the price of four fly sprays.

Of course we had to buy the chap who did the spruiking; I can't remember his name, a few beers up at the pub. But he bought us a few too so I suppose it was about square.

'But what happened to the shark, Dave?' I asked.

'Oh, the shark. Well, we gave it back to the bloke who had caught it, I can't remember his name, and he towed it back out into the channel and disposed of it. A sort of thirty quid three day cycle, you know.'"

Thanks David for that little bit of 'lightness' into our Club History.

In January, 1929, the Royal Geelong Yacht Club conducted the first night race to Mornington and return. This was the forerunner of this regular feature race which is still in the club sailing programme today. The following extracts from the Geelong Advertiser give details of the notice of race as well as the race itself:-

"YACHTING - ROYAL GEELONG YACHT CLUB

With the object of giving the various skippers the opportunity to apply their knowledge of navigation, tides and variations in winds, the Royal Geelong Yacht Club is staging a race to Mornington and back tomorrow.

The yachts will not start until 6 p.m. on Saturday, so that the race will be conducted during the hours of darkness. It is anticipated that with a fair wind the yachts will be back in Geelong during Sunday morning, after completing the course.

The course will be as follows:-

From the starting line at Yarra Street Pier to 3 pile beacon in Hopetoun Channel, passing same on starboard hand, thence through Hopetoun Channel, keeping all beacons on correct hands to Richard's Bank buoy, passing same on starboard hand, thence to George's Bank buoy, passing same on starboard hand, thence round mark at Mornington, rounding same on starboard hand, thence back to George 's Bank and Richard 's Bank buoys, passing same on port hand, thence through Hopetoun Channel to 3 mile beacon, keeping Channel beacons as passed on correct hands, and 3 pile beacon on port hand, thence across finishing line at Yarra Street Pier.

The mark at Mornington will be a buoy with a white flag. It will be placed approximately 50 yards to the north of the end of the Mornington Pier. It is expected that with the flash of the Mornington Pier light it will be possible for skippers to pick up the white flag on the buoy.

Mr. Taylor, of the Mornington Motor Garage, has kindly arranged to place the mark in position before dusk.

The handicaps will be as follow:-

	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Lead & Beat</i>
Corwa	Scratch	Scratch
Niree	30 minutes	Scratch
Shamrock	54 minutes	19 minutes
Fairlie	66 minutes	15 minutes
Gannet	72 minutes	15 minutes
S.J.S.	96 minutes	53 minutes
Irena	120 minutes	104 minutes

The yachts will start together with a flying start, and the handicaps will be deducted at the finish of the race.

A race for motor yachts from Geelong to Mornington only will also be staged. It would be appreciated if the skipper of the first motor yacht to arrive at Mornington would note his time of arrival and also note the arrival times of the other motor yachts. The motor yachts will make a flying start from Geelong at 2 p.m., and should arrive at Mornington before dark. It will be noted that the motor yachts race is only from Geelong to Mornington and not from Geelong to Mornington and return.

The course for Motor yachts will be the same as that mentioned above for the sailing yachts, and the handicaps will be as follow:-

Sagittas	Scratch
Bundarra	104 minutes
Ngarita	130 minutes
Lorraine	140 minutes
Romance	153 minutes

“

Monday, January 14, 1929

“LONG DISTANCE YACHTING

Geelong-Mornington Race

The Royal Geelong Yacht Club on Saturday and Sunday held its first long distance race, from Geelong to Mornington and back. For the past 25 years the Royal Geelong Yacht Club has participated in the annual race from Williamstown to Geelong, held under the auspices of the Victorian Yacht Club. The race to Mornington however was the first held by the Royal Geelong Club, the distance being approximately 70 miles. In 1907 yachts from Geelong participated in the race to Tasmania for the Rudder Cup. Since then, however, comparatively little long distance yachting has been done, and the event on Saturday and Sunday was, therefore, unique. The idea of the race was to test skippers' knowledge of night sailing, tides, the reading of marks and lights in Port Phillip, and sailing under variations of wind.

Conditions were almost ideal for the majority of the participants, but the two largest boats, the Shamrock and the Corwa, were retarded through insufficient wind. A noticeable fact was that every suitable boat in the club entered for the event, and the only withdrawals were the Niree, the skipper (W. Smith), being detained in Tasmania and the S.J.S.

The first boat to finish was the Fairlie II. The time taken by this craft (12hours 49 minutes), was so exceptional that officials were not at the finishing line to give her the gun, the journey being expected to take about 16 hours. The corrected times were as follows: - Fairlie II, 11 hours, 43 minutes; Gannet, 12 hours, 28 minutes; Shamrock, 12 hours, 42 minutes, 40 seconds; Irena, 13 hours, 4 minutes, 5·5 seconds.

The wind was a light south-easterly when a good start was made at 6 p.m. on Saturday. The Gannet, Shamrock and Fairlie II got away together, the Corwa being left owing to failing wind. The breeze carried the boats on to the three-pile beacon in the Hopetoun Channel in 25 minutes, the boats still being in the same order. The Shamrock reached the half-way buoy to Portarlington at 7.7 p.m., with the Gannet 20 seconds behind, the Fairlie II three minutes behind. Still with a light south-easterly wind, the Shamrock led at Richard's Bank buoy, off Portarlington, at 7.50, closely followed by the Gannet and Fairlie II. The Corwa and Irena

reached this mark at 8 p.m.. At 8.30 Gannet was dead off Portarlinton, passing a steamer from Geelong. The next mark on the course, George's Bank buoy, was passed with the Shamrock still leading, two minutes ahead, with Gannet and Fairlie II some distance back. The Corwa and Irena could not be sighted by the leading boats at this stage. At 9.05 Shamrock was still leading on a course east half south east, with the west channel pile light to starboard.

Owing to the excellent manner in which Mr. Walker of Mornington, had arranged the buoy off Mornington, it was visible to the yachtsmen some distance out. Mr. Arthur Holden, in the Sagittas, was moored near the buoy, and he played his searchlight upon it. The leading boat the Gannet, rounded the buoy at

11.26 p.m., followed by Fairlie II six minutes later. Shamrock, which had worked well to windward, then ran down the buoy, the Irena following closely. A large crowd of people from Mornington was gathered on the pier to watch the progress of the yachts. Again Mr. Walker rendered valuable assistance with the aid of a spotlight.

The Fairlie II passed the George's Bank buoy at 2 a.m., followed by Gannet, Shamrock, Irena, and Corwa at this time could not be picked up by the leading boats. Portarlinton was reached, and the wind, which had been a light south- easterly from the start, veered to the south-west. The Gannet took in her topsail, and shortly afterwards the wind carried away her peak halyards. This was a disappointing mishap for the crew. The Gannet was forced to anchor off Richard's Bank buoy for more than 50 minutes to repair the damage. At this stage Shamrock took the lead, closely followed by Fairlie II, Irena being about three miles back. At 4.30 Gannet was again under sail to the leeward of Shamrock, which was still leading. Fairlie II then took charge, and showed the way to the Hopetoun Channel and to the finishing line at 6.49 a.m. Shamrock finished at 7.36 a.m., Gannet being four minutes later, and Irena finishing at 9.04. The Irena, being the smallest boat, had approximately an extra three miles to beat home as wind changed to westerly.

The Corwa was skippered by L. Becharvaise and had on board a number of sea scouts. A good run was experienced across to Mornington, the buoy being rounded at 1.15 a.m.. A nice south-easterly favoured the craft for an hour and a half after leaving Mornington, but the wind then veered to starboard and just before daybreak the Corwa was facing a head wind. The Corwa withdrew from the race off the George's Buoy at 8 o'clock, and reached Geelong at 4 o'clock under engine power.

The crews were as follows:-

Fairlie II; George Laird (skipper), "Ike" Woods, "Chick" M'Gee. A Logan, T. Staggard, G. Ross, Rupert Wilson, J. Madigan and S.P. McLennan.

Gannet: J.F.S. Shannon (skipper), Walter Wiggs, W. Walker and Neil Shannon.

Irena: Chester Otway (skipper), I. and J. Mathews and Wilks.

Shamrock: E.B. Slater (skipper), A. Meadows, "Buster" Stevens, R. McAllister, V. Andersen, R.H. Meakin and Dr. Pillow.

The handicapper was Mr. T. A. Woods, who again proved his knowledge of yachting. He handicapped without the assistance of records, rating being impossible owing to the variations in the classes of the craft, the smallest boat, the Irena, being about an eighth the size of the Corwa. Starting was in the capable hands of Captain E. Brockman.

The race will do much to encourage long distance yacht racing in Victoria, Melbourne skippers regretted they could not race owing to the time it would take for them to first proceed to Geelong for the start. Although the race will not count for points in the club aggregate, a special trophy will be given the winner by Mrs. Hope Rollins, wife of the secretary of the club."

Later that year, 1929, Frank "Doc" Bennell decided to revive the Rudder up which had not been contested since the original race in 1907. "Doc" Bennell, a member of Royal St. Kilda, owned the famous old ketch Oimara which still sails regularly for the Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron as Royal St. Kilda has become. The handling of the race went from Geelong to Royal St. Kilda and there were six entries for the event: Maysie, Oimara, Ppyllis, Sagittas Shamrock and the Sydney yacht Wanderer.

The race began on December 27 and the Oimara won, taking 36 hours for the crossing, Shamrock was second and Phyllis third. The other boats returned to Victoria.

The extraordinary thing about this race was that the yachts were allowed to use their motors. As Shamrock was not fitted with a proper inboard engine (to comply with the rules she carried an outboard in the cabin), she obviously sailed the whole course and then was only beaten over the line by five hours.

On his return to Geelong Mr. Ted Slater, owner skipper of the Shamrock was interviewed by the Geelong Advertiser. Here is the report of that interview:-

"BASS STRAIT RACE

Return of The Shamrock

Mr. E. B. Slater Relates Crew's Experiences.

"I did my very best and I am sorry I did not win for Geelong. I am proud of the Shamrock and her crew." Thus Mr. E. B. Slater, acknowledging a greeting from the secretary of the Royal Geelong Yacht Club (Mr. W. T. Wiggs) when the Shamrock, which finished second in the Queenscliff-Tasmania race during Christmas week returned to Geelong yesterday .

Since the race the Shamrock had been cruising around Wilson's Promontory and Westernport. Yesterday morning she left Portarlington on the last stage of the homeward journey .As soon as they sighted the Shamrock entering the channel officials of the Royal Geelong Yacht Club hoisted flags to convey the message "Welcome Home." Mr. W.T. Wiggs and a party of admirers of the Shamrock and her crew met the yacht in a motor launch and after firing a salute from the club's starting gun, escorted her to the Yacht Club's jetty .There was a cheer from the crowd of about fifty waiting persons as the Shamrock tied up. Bronzed by the sun during their two weeks' cruise the crew look the picture of health. Its personnel was: Messrs. E.B. Slater, Geo. Laird (Rear Commodore of the Royal Geelong Yacht Club), J. Jones, R. J. Walker (St. Kilda Yacht Club), Jack Taylor and Tom Staggard. The navigator (Captain Donald McLean) left the Shamrock in Tasmania.

Greeted and congratulated by Mr. W. T. Wiggs, Mr. Slater said he had done his best in the race, and he was sorry he did not win. He was proud of the Shamrock and her crew.

Recounting his experiences in the race, Mr. Slater said the six competing yachts started from Queenscliff at 9 a.m. on December 27. The start had been delayed a day by the late arrival of the Wanderer from Sydney. The Shamrock left the starting line with all sails set. Every yacht was travelling under power except Shamrock. A course had been set to clear King island by 20 miles east.

The air was light till the evening when it freshened. At midnight the crew of the Shamrock decided to reef down and while this was being done the mizzen was blown to ribbons.

The crew set a storm mizzen and with this the Shamrock carried on till 2 a.m., when, as Mr. Slater said, "the wind blew great guns and the sea was very large."

Till dawn the yacht hove to as the sea was "big". Still under storm canvas, that night she picked up the Three Hummocks Island off the north-west coast of Tasmania. Heavy seas pounded the yacht, spray saturated the men and their belongings, the night was black and the men were tired and hungry, for the boisterous weather made it impossible to prepare a meal. None of the other yachts in the race had been seen for many hours and the crew had no idea how the Shamrock was faring in the race. They felt pretty certain that they had been beaten out of a place. The next day somewhat better conditions were experienced and fairly good headway was made, so that towards nightfall lights were visible on the north-west coast of Tasmania. By daylight Devonport could be distinguished. At this stage the wind lessened and the crew was able to put up full sail. This was 48 hours after leaving Queenscliff, yet none of the other competing yachts had been seen. At 9 a.m. on the third day - Sunday December, 30 - the Shamrock's arrival was signalled by the keeper of the lighthouse off Low Head. The Geelong yacht was sailing down the Tamar towards Georgetown when the crew was informed by men on a pilot boat that second place had been gained. The Oimaru had reached Low Head five hours earlier.

"While naturally we were elated at having done so well after a hazardous voyage we were anxious about the welfare of the rest of the yachts in the race," remarked Mr. Slater. He did not wish to take away any merit from the performance of the winner, but he alleged that she travelled under power for many hours, whereas the Shamrock had sailed for the whole of the way. Twenty-four hours after the Shamrock finished the Phyllis reached Low Head, and got third place. Anxious about the safety of the two missing yachts, the Maisie and the Wanderer, Mr. Slater telegraphed to St. Kilda and learned that the former was in Westernport in a damaged condition and the latter, by this time a derelict, was at Cape Paterson. Mr. Slater said the party on the Shamrock was glad to hear that all competitors had been accounted for.

"In view of the heavy weather experienced were you confident you would reach your goal?" Mr. Slater was asked. To which came the, reply characteristic of the spirit that eventually enabled them to pull through - At no time did any of the crew with the possible exception of the inexperienced boys, have any fear that the Shamrock would not get there in the end. The crew was a wonderful lot," he said, "determined, plucky and skilful. I would not hesitate to attempt a round the world cruise with the same crew and the Shamrock." he added.

"A hot bath and a sleep were the first things we asked for when we reached Low Head," said Mr. Slater, reverting to the time of the finish of the race. The spray had made the bedclothes damp, and the weather was against the preparation of meals.

In slow stages the Shamrock made the return journey to Geelong. Bad weather was experienced for the first few days, and the yacht sheltered at Wilson's Promontory and later at Westernport. Refuge Cove, is, according to Mr. Slater, "a wonderful haven- just about the best in the world." There the Shamrock exchanged greetings' with the Stradbroke, Dr. A. Sheppard Grimwade's motor yacht. Aboard the Stradbroke were Dr. and Mrs. Grimwade and their two sons,