

Appendix 4

Some Famous Geelong Yachts

Over the years some hundreds of yachts have graced the waters of Corio Bay under the burgee of the Geelong Yacht Club and, from 1924 onwards, the Royal Geelong Yacht Club. Some have been ordinary performers, some mediocre performers and some great performers .

In this appendix details, so far as they are known, are given of some of the better performed or, perhaps, better known yachts which have been on the Club register .

MAYFLOWER

The Mayflower was built in 1890 in Geelong by Mr Clem Blunt for Mr H.P. Douglass who was later to become Commodore of the Geelong Yacht Club.

A gaff rigged cutter with a straight stem from which protruded a 7'6" bowsprit, Mayflower was about 30 feet overall with a 27'6" waterline . Her beam was about 7'6" and she drew 4'9".

First evidence of her racing was on January 26, 1892 when she competed in an open race for yachts not exceeding 30 feet in length conducted by the Geelong Club. The race was sailed over a 27 mile course but the Mayflower and the other three Geelong yachts in the 13 boat fleet failed to complete the course.

She raced again, unsuccessfully, in the 1894 regatta and again in 1896, when Mr Douglass was Commodore, in an event for Cruising yachts. She is next mentioned as a competitor in the 1900 Regatta.

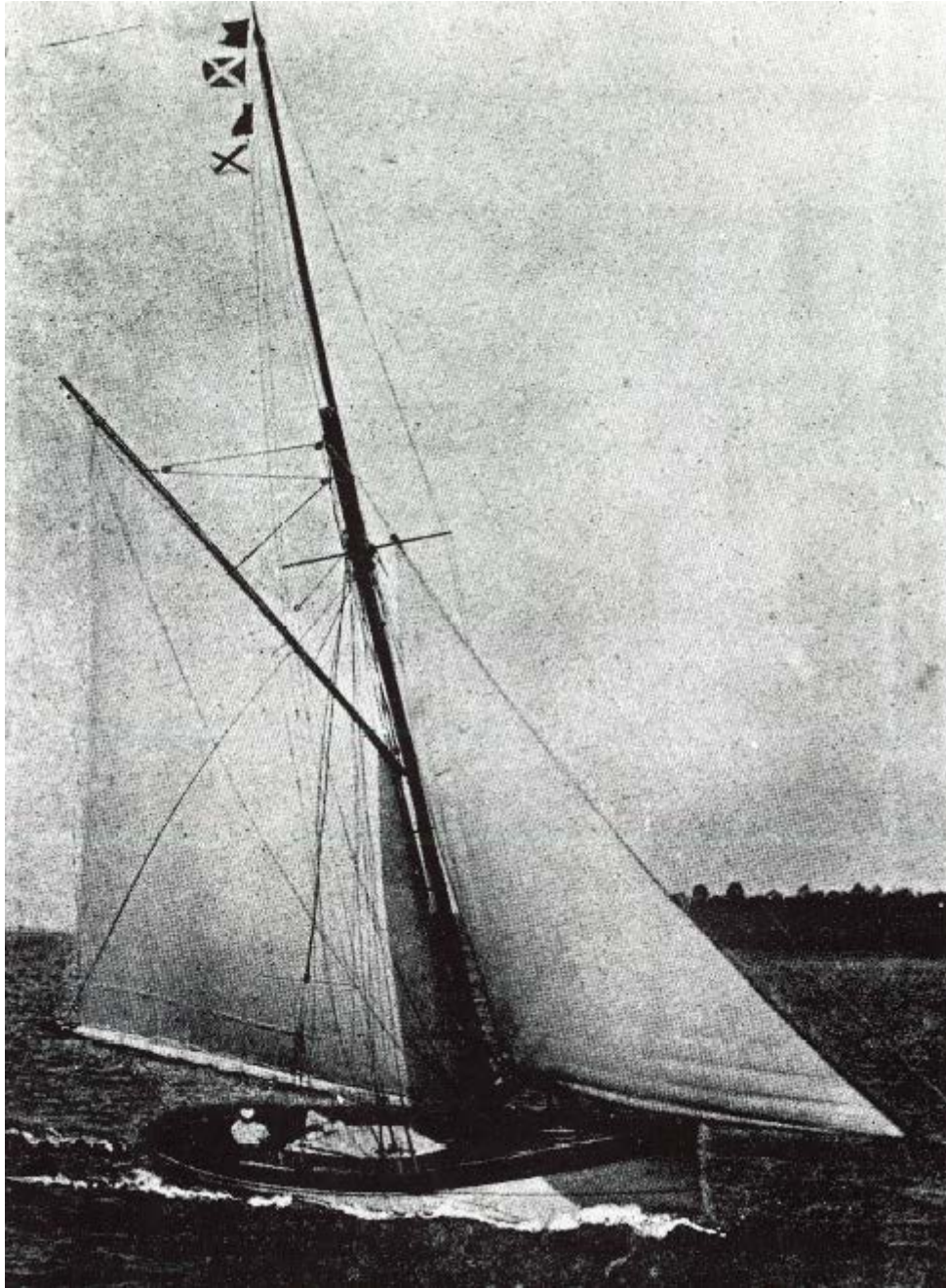
The first evidence on Mayflower winning a race came in a Club event on February 22, 1902 when she won on handicap from Shamrock and Caress.

Whilst it is apparent that Mayflower could not be considered to be a highly competitive racing yacht, there is no doubt that she was a comfortable, seaworthy cruiser and Mr. Douglass made full use of her in this capacity.

When Mr. Douglass's son was killed in the 1914-18 war he decided to relinquish control of the Mayflower and handed her over to the family of Griffiths' boys: Don, Bob, Jack and Allan, together with their cousin, Peter. This was in the early 1920's and the family had some wonderful times in her, mainly cruising but occasionally racing

Her next owner, so far as is known, was Mr. Fred Trethowan, who took her over about 1938. Later she was owned by Messrs Gillies and Doak until she was acquired by Mr David Wane in 1956. David retained the fine old lady until he sold her in 1964.

Sadly, shortly afterwards, the Mayflower was destroyed by fire.



"THE MAYFLOWER"

Circa 1896

Commodore H.P. Douglass, Geelong Yacht Club

From a photograph by Mr. C.O. Dentry , Geelong

SJS

The S.J.S. was built in 1902 at the Port Melbourne Yacht Club by a Swiss watchmaker, Mr. W.LeBallion, for a Mr. Stenneken. She was named after the owner's daughter, Sarah Jane Stenneken.

Originally an open cockpit plate boat, she was about 32'6" overall, with approximately a 6 foot beam

Of light displacement, the S.J.S. was extremely fast for her size and her record of wins in Melbourne waters is impressive. Apart from winning literally dozens of club races, she won the coveted La Carabine Cup in 1908 and followed this up by winning the V.Y.R.A. Perpetual Cup every year from 1908 until 1913. She won the Northcote Cup for Interstate Competition in 1909, and before coming to Geelong in 1921 she won the Association Cup (forerunner to the Geelong Advertiser Trophy), three times.

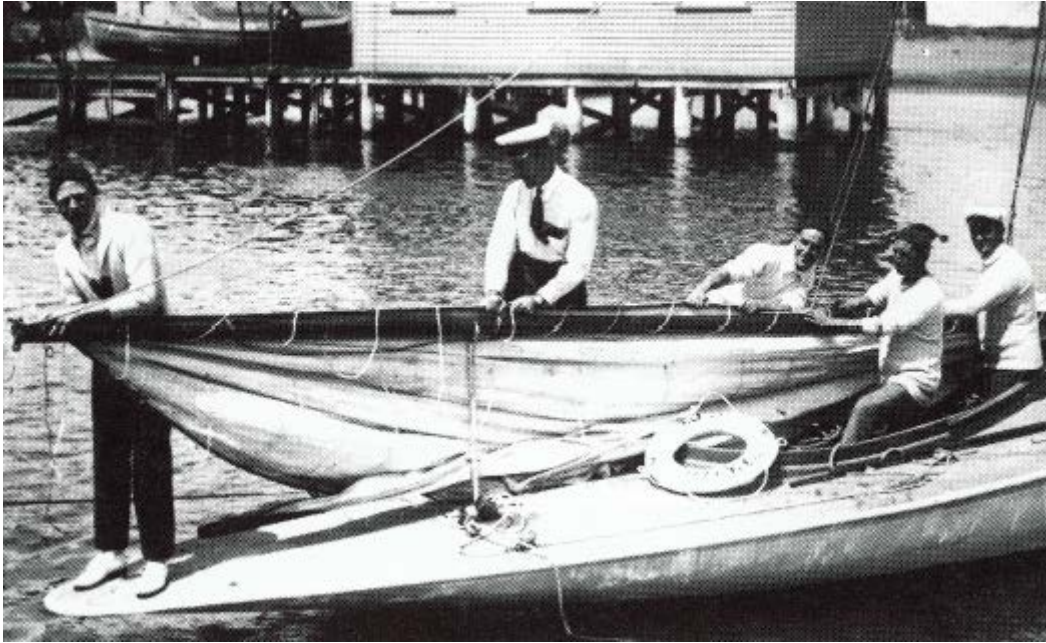
Purchased by Mr. Wilfred Libby, she started racing in Geelong in February 1921. Here she went on to win many races and took first placing in the "A" Class Aggregate for the Howard Hitchcock Perpetual Shield no fewer than seven times, in 1923, 1928, 1929, 1931, 1934, 1937 and 1939: a record for any yacht under the same ownership.

When Wilfred Libby passed away in 1945, his son, Bill, took over as owner / skipper of the S.J.S.. In the meantime, in the mid 30's, she had been converted to a keel boat and fitted with a cabin. Bill Libby sailed the famous old boat until 1952, when she was sold to Howard Glover. In 1954 Jack Champ became the owner and raced her, with a modicum of success, until she was sold to Melbourne in 1957.

Soon after that she was sold to a Sydney buyer and, so far as is known, she is still a familiar sight on the waters of Sydney Harbour



Part of the R.G.Y.C. fleet, circa 1950. Left to right: "SJS", "Gannet", "Merlan II".



Preparing Wilfred Libby's yacht, S.J.S. for a race in 1922.

Left to right: Snowy Johnston, Wilfred Libby , David English , Max Henderson, Bill Exstedt

PETREL

Petrel was built by the famous Logan Brothers in Auckland, New Zealand, for Mr. Sid Demster of Sydney in 1900. She was 42'9" overall, 29' 11" on the waterline, had an 8 foot beam and drew 6'3". She was rated at 7.52 metres.

Shipped to Sydney on the S.S. Waihora, Petrel arrived there on November 3, 1900. In no time she made a name for herself by winning the much coveted Gascoine Cup in seasons 1901-2, 1902-3 and again in 1910, when later owned by Mr. Charles Trebeck. In 1913 she went ashore at Bradley's Heads and was badly damaged

After a wonderful racing record in Sydney, Petrel was sold, in 1915, to Mr. E. Webster of Hobart, who retained her until November 1918, when he sailed her to Melbourne with the idea of selling her.

Petrel's next owner was the then Commodore of the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria, Mr. Bill Smith, also a past Commodore and still a member of the Geelong Yacht Club. And in 1919, representing the Geelong Yacht Club, Petrel won the prestigious Association Cup and then successfully defended it in the following season on Corio Bay. Mr. Smith had many successes with Petrel on Port Phillip Bay, until he swapped her for Faidie 11 with Mr. Stan Gamble of the Royal St. Kilda Yacht Club in 1928.

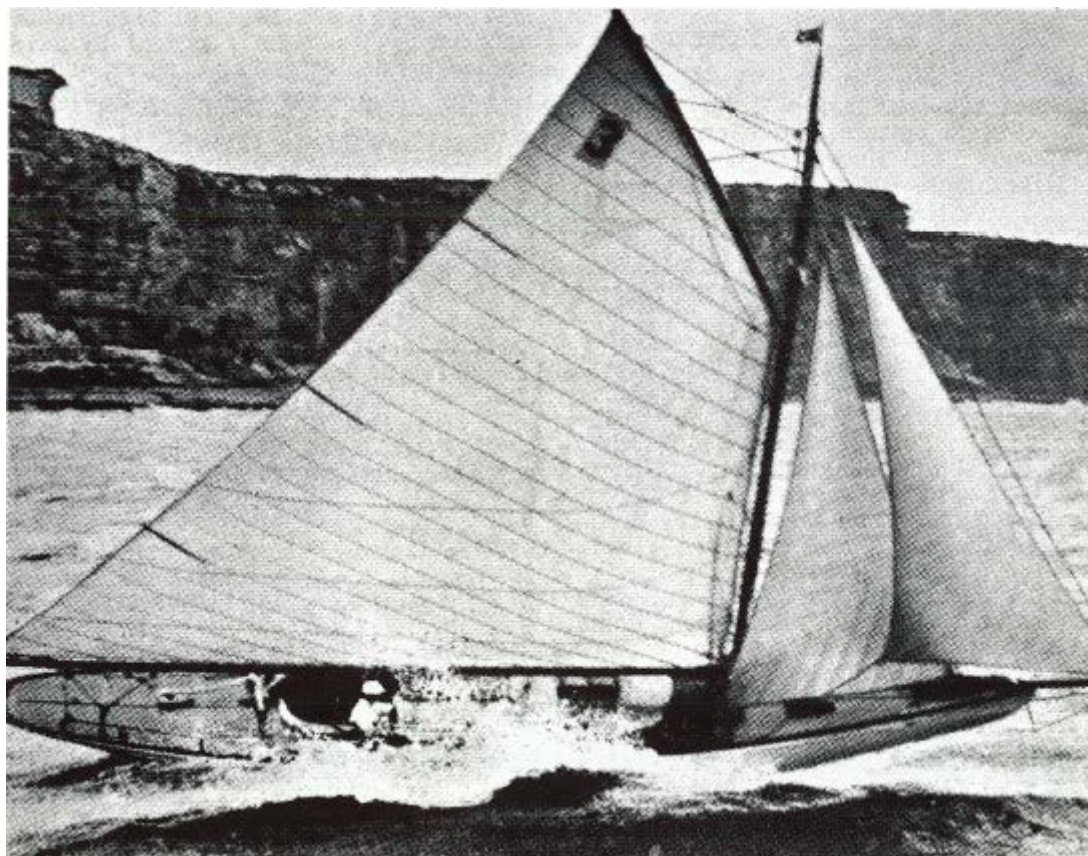
In 1932 she was converted to Marconi rig, firstly as a cutter, but as her performance was not the best, her rig was altered to sloop concept and she became outstanding the following season

Petrel was rebuilt after a collision with Uira in 1934, her topsides were raised 102 mm. and her beam increased by the same amount. Despite her age her record was a creditable one as she became the Royal St. Kilda Yacht Club Champion in 1935-36 and 1936-37. And season 1937-38 was undoubtedly one of her best to again become the club champion. Regarded as one of the outstanding yachts on the Bay, she continued to race successfully up till World War II when, due to crew shortages, Petrel was laid up at the Royal St. Kilda Yacht Club.

In season 1946-47, Petrel was purchased by Mr. Henry Jacobs of the R.G.Y.C. She had several other owners in Geelong, including Mr. Bill Gray, Mr. Ranald McAllister and, finally, Mr. Eustace Wilson, who retained her until January 1972, when she was sold out of the State.

She was eventually sailed to Townsville in Queensland where, so far as is known, she remains today.

Petrel won the R.G.Y.C. Division One Aggregate in 1948-49, skippered by Reg White and also in seasons 1958-59 and 1968-69, when owned and skippered by Eustace Wilson.



"Petrel" racing on Sydney Harbour in 1912.

KILIARA

Killara (aboriginal for "Always There"), was built by Mr. J. Savage of the Yarra Boat Works, Yarra Bank, South Yarra specifically to contest the Interstate match for six metre, yachts. She was launched on March 2, 1910. She was 8.69 metres overall, 6.1 metres on the waterline and had a 1.7 metre beam. She had a jarrah back-bone, kauri planks and a yellow pine deck.

A few weeks later, skippered by Mr. R. Edwards, a wizard at the helm, with crew of G. Beauchamp, N. Crick and A. Packerie (reserve), "Killara" lived up to her name.

In very light conditions she defeated the fuller bodied Sydney challenger, Culwulla II, by 17 minutes in the first heat of the Northcote Cup. The second heat started in light conditions, but the breeze freshened considerably as the race progressed. This suited the Sydney boat, which closed the margin to a few boat lengths. However Killara drew away again and finally won by a mere 17 seconds.

The Northcote Cup was not contested in 1911, but in 1912, Culwulla II now under new ownership and renamed Rawhiti II, again challenged.

For this series the course was changed to a 3 mile windward / leeward twice round for the first race, and a square course with sides 1.2 miles long, twice round for the second race. The course for the third race, should one be necessary, was to be similar to that of the first day's race.

This time Killara was skippered by Mr. Bert Crick, with Messers. F. Appleton and W.G. Jackson as crew.

In a two reef breeze Killara won the first heat by 4 min. 5 secs., and the second race by 1 min. 24 secs., thus easily retaining the Northcote Cup for Victoria.

Killara went on to win the Northcote Cup on two more occasions in 1915 and 1918. After losing the Cup in Sydney in 1921, she was sold to Mr. S. Steaine of Royal Brighton. He sold her to Mr. J. Solomon of Geelong in season 1924-25. She remained in Geelong, until 1948 under various owners including Mr. Bill Smith, Mr. Bill MacKinlay, Mr. Henry Jacobs, the Fitzgerald Brothers, Mr. Lance Curtis and finally Mr. Maurice Jacobs in 1946.

Killara was sold back to the northern end of the Bay in 1948, where she remained until tragically, she went ashore in a violent storm at Blairgowrie in 1969 and became a total wreck.

Killara won the R.G.Y.C. B Class Aggregate when owned by Mr. Maurice Jacobs, in season 1949-50



"Killara" winning the second heat of the Northcote Cup, February 10, 1912

ENU-NA-MRA

Eun-na-Mara, meaning "bird of the sea", was undoubtedly one of the most beautiful and graceful yachts ever to sail on Port Phillip Bay.

She was designed by the famous Scottish designer, William Fyfe, Junior, of Fairlie, Scotland for Mr. A. Saxton of Sydney, whose only request was for a yacht of up to date class. In his wisdom Fyfe, knowing that the old Linear Rating Rule was due to be superseded, decided to design her to the new 10metre rule which was to be introduced in a few years' time.

Built by Ford of Sydney, she was launched as Awanue on February 16, 1907. She was 50'7" overall, 33'6" on the waterline, had an 11'2" beam and drew 6'5". With 6.09 tons of lead on her keel she had a rating at that time of 41.65.

In no time the new yacht proved herself by defeating all opposition, Thelma, Rawhiti, White Wings and Bona on Sydney Harbour

Having monetary problems due to his timber yard being burnt out, Mr. Saxton sold her to the well-known yachtsman, Mr. Walter Marks in 1910, who renamed her Culwalla III.

Mr. Marks immediately successfully applied to be eligible to challenge for the famous Sayonara Cup. On her way to Melbourne for the contest, he sailed her to Hobart for the Regatta, there winning the feature race on the programme as well as the Brunni Island 100 mile race. After cruising to Brisbane in 1913 in the record time of 69 hours, she returned to be sold to Mr. A. Wilson, who renamed her Eun-na-Mara.

Then on June 14, 1919, she was bought by Mr. L. Randerson of the Brighton Yacht Club and sailed to Victoria at the start of A. Class yachting in that State.

In no time she proved to Victorians that she was a flyer, then in 1922 she won for the Brighton Yacht Club, the Blue Riband event of the Port Phillip Bay -the Association Cup.

In 1927 after consulting William Fyfe, her owner had her replanked, her keel altered, added 762 kg. of lead and her rig re-designed. This transformation was undertaken by well-known Victorian boat builder, Mr. Jack Guitierrez.

On completion of this transformation, rating at 41.65, she made an unsuccessful bid to win back for Victoria the Sayonara Cup from Mr. Y. Arnott's Vanessa on Sydney Harbour, with Mr. J. Douglas as skipper.

Returning to Melbourne she continued to be scratch boat of the Victorian fleet and, in 1931, was sold to Mr. H. Crawford, a member of the Royal St. Kilda Yacht Club, who retained her on the register of the R. B. Y. C. After further alterations, which included the lengthening of her mast by 3 metres, she was again raced under the capable hands of her former skipper, Mr. W. Higgins.

In November 1933, she was sold to Mr. Barney Snider, a well-known member of the R.St.K.Y.C., who brought her to St. Kilda.

Removing the 762 kg. of lead which had been added to her keel, Mr. Snider raced her with much success against her greatest rivals, Aerospire IV, Defiance, Independence, Vanessa and later, Frances and was successful in winning the Association Cup in 1933- 34 -Eu-na-mara's second Cup win.

In about 1944, Mr. Les Walker purchased a half share in the boat and later became sole owner until he sold her to Mr. Lionel Windsor of the Royal Geelong Yacht Club in 1947. After converting her to Marconi rig, Mr. Windsor later sold her to Mr. Neil McAllister, who completely re-fitted her by fitting a new cabin top, dog house and engine.

Transferred by the Ford Motor Co. to West Australia in 1956. Neil McAllister took Eun-na-mara with him where she had a most creditable record in both local and ocean races.

Building his new boat, Starfire of Perth, Neil sold Eun-na-mara locally. Her new owners altered her to yawl rig and this grand old lady still graces the waters of West Australia today



"Enu-Na-Mara" racing on Port Phillip circa 1936

SHAMROCK

Shamrock was built in 1907 for the then Commodore of the Geelong Yacht Club, Mr. T. A. Dickson. She was completed in time to take part in the inaugural race across Bass Strait from Queenscliff to Tamar Heads, starting on December 26, 1907

The yacht was built to an American design published in the American magazine, "The Rudder". She was 38'6" overall, 31' on the waterline, with a 12' beam. Originally designed as a centre-boarder, Dickson had Shamrock built with an external keel to allow more cabin space. She had a draft of four feet.

She was equipped with a Yankee yawl rig. This placed the main mast well forward, allowing her to carry one large headsail as opposed to two headsails which were common at that time. Her lines were similar to the famous Sea Bird design which had proven sea going qualities.

In a field of four Shamrock was placed second in this first Australian ocean race.

Dickson sold Shamrock to Mr. Ted Slater, who raced and cruised her for many years through the 1920's and 1930's. Under Slater's command she competed in the second race across Bass Strait in 1929, coming second in a field of six.

Sold to Melbourne, Shamrock again raced across Bass Strait in 1947, this time under the ownership of Mr. L. Cooke.

Mr. Cooke sold Shamrock to Sydney in 1953. Her whereabouts today are unknown.

GANNET

Gannet was built in 1911 for Mr. Charles Shannon and had her first race to Portarlington on December 9 that year. The newspaper report on the race said, in part, "Considerable interest centred in Mr. C. Shannon's new yacht, Gannet. She carried only cruising rig, but was stated to have shown herself as a fine boat with promise of better things in the future."

Gannet was about 35 feet overall with a 7 foot beam and a lead keel. Originally cutter rigged, she was later converted to a Bermudian rigged sloop. Her roomy cabin enabled her to be used for many years as a fast racer-cruiser

In about 1918 she was taken over by Mr. J. F. S. (Ford) Shannon, who raced her with considerable success, winning the "A" Class Aggregate in 1919, 1920, 1927, 1930 and 1935.

Her next owner was Mr. Harold Anderson who won the Aggregate in 1946-47. And her last Geelong owner was Mr. Jack Fitzgerald, who was successful in the 1952-53 Aggregate.

Fitzgerald turned to the Dragon Class in 1955 and Gannet was sold to Melbourne.

Her present whereabouts are unknown



Ford Shannon's famous yacht, "Gannett"



Crew of the Gannett, circa 1952.

Back row, left to right: John Clatworthy, Jack Fitzgerald (owner), Reg White (Skipper), Des Allen.

Front row: Nita Allen, Russell Purdey, Dorrie White.

ILE-OLA

Without doubt the Royal Geelong Yacht Club's most extensively ocean raced yacht is Past Commodore and Life Member, Geoff Wood's three-masted schooner, Ile Ola.

Launched in October 1953, Ile Ola took Geoff and a band of helpers six years to build on a vacant block of land in Fyans Street, Chilwell

Geoff obtained the design when the American magazine "Rudder" featured Francis Herreshoff's famed Marco Polo, a 16 metre three masted schooner designed expressly for extended ocean voyages.

Sixteen metres overall, with a canoe stern and a three metre beam, the hull has sweet lines and supreme seaworthiness. She has comfortable accommodation for eight, with galley, shower, toilet and television. Auxiliary power comes from a 65h.p. Gardiner diesel.

In all, Ile Ola has competed in some 66 ocean races. Her impressive record is as follows:-

Sydney-Hobart	1
Melbourne-Hobart	15
Queenscliff-Devonport	17
Sydney-Suva	3
Sydney-Noumea	8
Sydney-Port Vila, Vanuatu	2
Other shorter races	20

In addition to all of this she has been a regular contestant in R.G.Y.C. Bay races and for a number of years, acted as the radio communications ship for the Geelong Advertiser station 3 G.L. in the Williamstown to Geelong race

She won the "B" Class or Division 2 Aggregate in 1963-64. During her 34 years of racing and cruising, Ile Ola has logged no fewer than an astounding 510,000 sea miles



Ile-Ola "leaps" from the water as she departs Port Phillip Heads at the start of the 12th Melbourne – Hobart (West Coaster) race, December 1983.

VENGER

There is little doubt that the most outstanding best performed yacht on the R.G.Y.C. register in the post-World War 2 era was Messrs. Bill and Aurel Smith's beautiful six metre sloop, Venger.

Acquired by the father/son combination in 1954 from Mr. Hedley Ladd of the Royal St.Kilda Yacht Club and skippered by Aurel Smith, Venger won the R.G.Y.C. "A" Class Aggregate four times, in 1955-56, 1956-57, 1957-58 and 1961-62.

She won the prestigious Geelong Advertiser Trophy for the Club, then an individual yacht, one race event sailed over a windward and return course in Corio Bay at A.N .A. weekend, no fewer than six times in 1958, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964 and 1965.

She was the only Geelong yacht to ever win the famous Northcote Cup, a perpetual trophy established in 1907 by the then Governor General of Australia, Lord Northcote , for competition among yachts rated up to six metres on the register of recognised yacht clubs in the Commonwealth of Australia . And this she did twice, in 1962 and 1963.

Her most outstanding season was probably that of 1961-62. In that season, Venger won the Northcote Cup, The Geelong Advertiser Trophy , The Howard Hitchcock Memorial Shield for the "A" Class Aggregate, The "A" Class Division of the Williamstown to Geelong race, the H.P. Douglas Memorial Shield (for the greatest number of points in Portarlington races) , two "A" Class events at the A.N .A. Regatta and three "A" Class Club races.

An outstanding performance never equalled by any other Geelong yacht.

Designed by B.J. Aas of Sweden, Venger is 37'6" overall, 25 '6" on the waterline , has a 6' beam and draws 5'4".

Built by Mr. Griffin, Boat Builder at Church Point in Sydney in 1945, she has Queensland yellow wood ribs, full length aeroplane spruce planks and a teak deck. Her hollow mast towers 44 feet above the deck.

Aurel Smith describes Venger as a good all-weather boat, but an outstanding performer in light airs. When tuned to top pitch and racing in light conditions, the crew found that the yacht went to weather at maximum speed with the genoajust touching the middle cross-tree. And it was the constant task of cockpit hand, John Nielson, to maintain this condition. At times this necessitated easing or bringing in the sheet as little as two inches!

In 1965 Venger was sold to Mr. David Petley of Melbourne. Today she is based at the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club on the Pittwater in Sydney where she still races regularly, and, according to Aurel, she still looks a picture.



"Venger" close hauled on the last leg of the course to win the 1962 Geelong Advertiser Trophy for the R.G.Y.C. for the fourth time in six years.



Venger Crew. Geelong Advertiser Trophy, January 28, 1962.

Top left: Robert Phillippe

Lower Left, John Shaw

Then, Skipper Aurel Smith, John Nielson , Trevor Collins.