

Alpha Presentation Night for Season 2008-2009

To the skirl of pipes, the Royal Geelong Yacht Club Commodore, Graeme Ritchie, flanked by Cadet Captain Nikola Dixon and Vice Captain James Hunt bearing the Royal Blue Ensign and the Club Burgee, led the distinguished guests into the dining area to start the last event of the sailing season.

Master of Ceremonies, Tony Bull, soon had the ball rolling in his own inimitable style listing the successful members and yachts in competition outside normal club events.

Some of the names mentioned included: Tim Davis, as part of the world champion Farr 30 crew, Brendan Garner, who put in a top effort in the Etchells World Championships, Ian Murray and his successful Sydney 38 yacht, 'Cinquante' and Paul Buchholz and the crew of 'eXtasea' who wrapped up the IRC championship for the second year in succession. Paul has been nominated by the Ocean Racing Club of Victoria as 'Yachtsman of the Year' which caps off a successful season, not only for Paul and his crew, but for every club member who has sailed in competition away from the club. Amongst many gags, handicapping was mentioned as being like dancing with one's sister. It all looks very good, but doesn't really mean much!

Proposing a toast to 'Kindred Clubs', Rear Commodore Andrew Neilson noted the difficult times clubs are facing today with economic challenges and the greater demand on staff and volunteers, the many events that are enjoyed by all clubs and 'the simple pleasure of messing about in boats'. These link all clubs and we all share the common bond of boating.

In responding, Commodore Phillip Burn, of the Sandringham Yacht Club, spoke of the history of the Royal Geelong Yacht Club and its enormous achievement with the development of Skandia Geelong Week. Commodore Burn said that he actually started his international cadet sailing at RGYC as his children did in later years and congratulated the RGYC on its fabulous 150 years.

The guest speaker was 'ex-pat' RGYC member Brendan Hunt of VicSail. Speaking of his early years in sail, Brendan mentioned the club's early yacht owners such as Geoff Wood and his yacht 'Ileola', of his (Brendan's) first boat and his involvement in so many ways with members of the past. As each name was mentioned, memories came flooding back for many of the listeners. Humorous stories followed of his sailing career across the oceans of the world using quite primitive instruments and the dubious delight of skipping an all girl crew and winning 'The Cock of the Bay'! Brendan Hunt's very fine address almost brought a laugh a minute and was very well received by a very appreciative audience.

Following the presentation of trophies, the toast to yachting was tendered by Peter Spear who explained that the word 'Yacht' originated from a Dutch word that translates to 'Fast Pirate Ship' which was followed by an 'Olde' Sea Dog's (Bob Appleton OAM) explanation of how yachts are quite different to ladies!

At the end of the proceedings a collectors' item was given



Peter Spear with Bob Appleton OAM

to all present. It was a beautifully presented copy of the Official Programme of the Geelong Jubilee Regatta 65th Anniversary (1844) and the 50th Anniversary of Geelong Yacht Club (1859), Foundation Day February 1st 1909! A truly wonderful gift from the club's historian, Ruth Plummer.



Ruth Plummer

The Commodore presented three commendations. One was awarded to Val Farnell for services to the Club with her help and ongoing support in major activities at the club. A dual award was then presented to very surprised members of the Race Committee, Kerry Ryan and Ray Jones for their personal efforts and enthusiasm in maintaining 'Skandia Princess'.



Ray Jones and Kerry Ryan

The Club's most 'Prestigious' awards went to the following members:

Ian Murray was popularly named as 'The member considered to have done the most for yachting for the season' following his many sailing successes with 'Cinquante' including the outstanding performance in winning the Sydney 38 division of the Sydney to Hobart race, the winning of that class event during Skandia Geelong Week and many other events. Ian was awarded the Verfurth Perpetual Trophy.



Commodore Graeme Ritchie congratulates Ian Murray for his Verfurth Perpetual Trophy