

Obituaries

Geoff (Soos) Spedding – elected 1963.

18/3/29 - 1/05/09

'Soos', as he was affectionately known, was born in Dunedin, NZ and started his long media career with the New Zealand Herald. During WW2 Geoff served with the army.

At the age of 23, he came to Australia (1952) continuing in the media at the Melbourne 'Sun'.

In 1961, Geoff joined the Geelong Advertiser and was the Advertiser's first full time photographer. After joining the RGYC in 1963, Geoff voluntarily became the club's photographer. He sailed on Ken Elliott's 43 ft. two masted yawl, 'Landfall' and told Ken that he wanted to do the Sydney/Hobart, mainly to get some good pictures. Ken advised 'Soos', 'To get some ocean sailing under his belt'.

With this advice, Geoff sailed the Portland race, the Port Fairy race and the Apollo Bay race before racing to Sydney for the Sydney/Hobart. His job on board? Cook! Apparently he had good intentions and stocked the boat with plenty of food – but did no cooking! The story is that he flew home with his photographs and didn't sail another Sydney/Hobart!

Geoff also took part in some Noumea races on board 'Ileola' with Geoff Wood and was



the boat's successful cook.

He retired from active work at Geelong Advertiser in March, 1991 but continued as the RGYC's honorary photographer. Even so, no one could take the right photo for Club records! Everything had to be done 'the Geoff way'. Geoff was granted Honorary Life Membership in 1997 and was also an Honorary Life member of the International Cadet No 6 Fleet.

All members knew where to find 'Soos', at the almost reserved spot at the end of the bar complete with his usual half 'G & T'! Although only a lucky few knew him as a sailor, he was considered to be 'someone really special'. Always finding time to share with others, at the bar or in the yard, he'd spin a yarn with flashes of humor and the occasional good natured grumble.

Time was always found for the club's juniors and in return, they always had time for him. Described by some as, 'a cantankerous old bugger', 'Soos' would always be the first to help.

Geoff Spedding's death clearly marks the end of an era. He was loved by so many and will be sorely missed.

Members' quotes;

In my term as a Flag Officer, I would see him at his usual spot at the end of the bar having the usual half G&T. One evening he pulled another stool in for me. I was drinking half scotch and soda but Soos soon taught me you buy splits from the bar, you order your halves for \$1. We still managed to go through two splits each in an evening. He was there at 4pm and would be one up on



me. Most nights I would drive him up to the Riviera Flats where he lived, then find my way home. The most memorable night was when I told him of a certain marital problem. He stuttered for a bit and then said, "I've seen it all before." We continued meeting at Soos' stool until I finished as a Flag Officer. He was a cantankerous old bugger but the first to help. Goodbye old man. John Garner

I rather loved Soos - although he could seem grouchy at times. I did several cartoons of him in action [never successfully catching that face! He once did a favour we have never forgotten - he took a photograph of our little family unit - complete with budgerigar and dog. The photo has pride of place in the boudoir, and is much admired by a select few. He will be missed by many. Jean Lucas [& Bob]

Mal and Yasmin Eaton's Wedding at Hamo Island...

Recipe for a wonderful wedding

Start with a large catamaran, add the Whitsundays with a stunning day of blue sky and sunshine, toss in a sprinkle of good club friends, mix with entertaining words from a tattooed celebrant, garnish with lots of laughter & a few happy tears, moisten with the odd drop of champagne and you get the magical wedding day of Yasmin Warner and Malcom Eaton.

Unfashionably late friends arrived soaked by a "sports boat" dinghy chauffeur added to the gaiety. "Bad Boy" John Garner and Michael Naughton were the attendants (who was bridesmaid??) and the happy Mr & Mrs Eaton honeymooned around the islands with an entourage from RGYC.

For the un-initiated, Yaz and Mal are club regulars with yachts Conrad & Savior Faire plus run Vicsail & Just Wheelie Bins.



If you've got to bite the bullet, it was a beautiful way to go.

Meridien Marina's Airlie Beach Race Week

The 20th Meridien Marina's Airlie Beach Race Week was held in early August, where our local boys outclassed the fleet in the Sports Boat Division to take the Championship. Blazing sunshine and steady winds provided perfect sailing for the fleet on Whitsunday's Pioneer Bay.

In the Sports Boats division, the overall Sports Boats winner for 2009 was Cam Rae's 'Laminar Capital'. Heath Townsend's Melges 24 'What Tha' finished second, with Leon Thomas' T7 'Guilty Pleasures', third. Cameron Rae: 'We drove 2,500 km from Royal Geelong Yacht Club for this series, so the win makes it very worthwhile. We came second here last year, but this is the first time for a while we've remained really consistent for a whole regatta.

She is a 10 years old and she is doing pretty well for an older skinny boat, not nearly as high tech as the newer wider boats. We did well on the beat works and found a good right hand shift on the first down wind and that allowed us to gap the T7 (Guilty Pleasures) and the Melges 24.

'We are happiest on windward/leeward courses. On the island passage races we have not had the experience with tides. But it's a fantastic area to sail and we enjoyed the opportunity to see the Islands and we can't complain about the results.'

Congratulations to Cam and his crew.

Courtesy Sail-World.com

