



COMMODORE'S WELCOME

2016

Welcome to this edition of "Corinthian", Royal Geelong Yacht Club's reflection on the past sailing season and the activities of the club. We are fortunate to have such a wonderful location and the sailing and boating assets to enjoy in the heart of Geelong.

The Board of Royal Geelong Yacht Club continues to focus on the stated purpose of the association: "To be one of Australia's cornerstone yachting and boating clubs, hosting world class events and home to the nation's best sailors."

The RGYC Board believes that the interests of Members in the future will be served by considering how we can take advantage of changes as they arise and how we can use them to enhance the sailing, boating and social activities we offer to Members and visitors. The Board's activities involve strategic thinking for the medium and longer term. The Board is an innovative team and I thank each member for their skilful and tireless work in the interests of the Club.

The Geelong Waterfront Safe Harbour Precinct Project is a key example of the way the Board is working to develop the Club's facilities and ensure its place on the waterfront. We have already obtained funding for Stage 1A from the City of Greater Geelong (\$3 million) Government of Victoria (\$4 million) and we are pursuing \$9 million through the National Stronger Regions Fund. If we are successful in this last application the Club will contribute \$3 million to the total of \$19 million.

The State Government has recently released the **Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan** and the Safe Harbour Project and the Festival of Sails are part of the plan as two of the "catalyst projects".

It is expected that the wave attenuator (to replace the west wall of the marina) will be the first element of the project to be constructed.

Sailing and boating programs have been provided by many highly skilled volunteers and I thank them on behalf of all the participants. The calibre of our volunteers is reflected in the recognition of Tony Bull as the Yachting Victoria Coach the Year and Geoff Searle as the YV Race Official of the year. I invite all Members to consider becoming active volunteers in the Club to ensure the continued success of our sailing and boating programs.

RGYC Members have been very successful at the highest levels of competition. We have a World Champion in Open Bic Teams event, Michael Parks, Sydney 38 National Champion Brenton and Jen Carnell and many successful sailors in State, National and World championships.

Thomas Alexander competed in the 29er Worlds in Europe and Dominic Randall and his crew Elliot Hughes will be heading to Argentina for the Cadet Worlds in 2017.

Festival of Sails 2016 had increased entries, a successful racing program and an entertaining shoreside festival. The RGYC clubhouse was very busy until late into each night with sailors and friends enjoying the bands and the hospitality after their days on the water. The initial development of the regatta village concept was well received and will be expanded next year.

Festival of Sails 2017 will be a week of sailing events beginning with the Passage Race which will always be on a Saturday and Australia Day will feature racing events. The revised calendar and the expanded sailing program will ensure that it stands strong in Australia's sailing calendar and remains as one of Victoria's major events.

Our Wooden Boat Festival continued to develop its unique style and excellent activity program this year. The organising committee engages the interest of

the Geelong community and the more than 100 boat owners and numerous crew who participated in the displays and activities at the Club. The inaugural Quick and Dirty boat building competition was a hit and will be a much bigger event at the next Wooden Boat Festival in 2018.

The next few months will see RGYC hosting Viper World Championships, Festival of Sails, Optimist States, HANSA Asia Pacifics and we have proposals for more events. Enthusiastic volunteers will be needed to ensure these events run well.

There are many activities run by volunteers for the Off the Beach sailors. Our Off the Beach Working Group coordinates numerous events at the club and organises many trips to other clubs so that young sailors are able to experience the competition and the social activities accompanying them. There is also a new interest in dinghy sailing by older members who enjoy the close competition of one design racing.

The RGYC Foundation is gradually building its funds as part of the long term support for Club activities. Please consider joining the Foundation as a member and participate in its activities.

Our staff team led by General Manager Phil Clohesy, has provided the essential support services required to run the daily activities of the Club and the large feature events. I commend Phil and the team for their service to our Members and visitors to the Club.

I look forward to working with RGYC Members as we seek to implement the plans for the future success of Royal Geelong Yacht Club.

Chris Williams
Commodore