



RGYC FOUNDATION

Assisting Royal Geelong Yacht Club to foster the sport of sailing & give back to our community

SPRING (NINTH) QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

AKA CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25 FINANCIAL YEAR

The RGYC Foundation Trustees have had a very busy and productive year and much has been happening for the RGYC Foundation.

We were all saddened to hear of the passing of RGYC Life Member and RGYC Foundation past Hon. Secretary, Ruth Plummer. Many were in attendance at her Funeral Service and Celebration of Life at RGYC. Much has been written about Ruth's contributions to the Foundation and RGYC over so many years. She was a devoted member of the club and the Foundation and gave willingly of her time and energy to both. She is sorely missed. She certainly helped build the legacy. There will be a Tribute to Ruth in this year's Corinthian.

I was not able to attend Ruth's Celebration of Life at RGYC but, in addition to reading the Tribute from RGYC and RGYC Foundation at her funeral service, Past Commodore and Life Member of RGYC and current Trustee of the Foundation, Guyon Wilson read a short piece on my behalf:

"I have known Ruth since the mid-sixties when she sailed on Elizabeth II against my two sisters in Cadets. Many years later it was Ruth who asked me to join the Foundation when I was made a 50 year member of RGYC.

It is with a mix of emotions that we farewell Ruth today. Of course there is sadness because of her passing, though that is tempered by the sense of relief that she is now at peace. Overwhelmingly, there is a very strong feeling of gratitude for her time with us and for her energetic involvement in our lives.

She was a lovely person with time for everybody and she was a great friend to many. She gave so willingly of her time and energy to make a difference, particularly in and around this club.

She took responsibility for things and for the future, taking up leadership positions in the club and Foundation and pushing for improvements with persistence, determination and good humour. She managed to facilitate change in a then male-dominated environment and helped to make that environment more inclusive, welcoming and more egalitarian. She acted as a good role model for club members, showing that with commitment, teamwork and energy, much can be achieved.

*Ruth, along with like-minded others, had a vision of what the RGYC Foundation could be and could achieve and set about realising that vision. She **helped build the legacy**. I think that she would be very pleased to see the 20% growth in Foundation membership over the past two years.*

*So it is with appreciation and much gratitude that we celebrate her life and look to continue the good work that she has done. We hope to see many more members coming on board to **help build the legacy**."*

This was followed by a toast to Ruth.

As I mentioned in the previous paragraphs our membership, having shown slow but steady growth over a number of years, has shown a very significant growth over the past two years. With Gus Hein, Mark Neilson, Suzanne Lanyan, Brendon Lee, Stephen Blackburn, Len Kint, Roger McLennan, Barry Walker, Keryn Levick, Jan Neeson-Marshman, David Strauss, Henry Frieze and Joan Whistance (*in memoriam*), and Corporate memberships Geelong Travel (Stuart Coffield), European Affair (Paul Loughnan), Tuckers F &BS (Mark Osbourne) and Discount Yachting (Will Baum), joining recently our growth has been very gratifying. It was also pleasing to recognise our first Foundation Centenarian, Jack Anderson whose birthday was on 26th April.



THE MEMBERSHIP BOARD

The Trustees will be considering raising the donation amount for which membership is recognised. It has been at \$1,000 for 13 years and it is probably time for an increase. If you know anyone thinking of joining, advise them to get in quickly before the price rise! It is the case that the Australian Sports Foundation, through which we obtain tax deductibility for our donors, has recently raised their administration fees so donations through this channel need to be \$1075 to cover their fees and make the \$1,000 donation to the Foundation.

Our Hon. Treasurer, Michael Carroll, has provided a detailed set of audited figures in his report and I thank Mike Kelly for his auditing of our accounts. However, I want to emphasise the success of our investments through Ord Minnett this past year. We are invested very conservatively but, despite the ups and downs of the share market and the extent of global uncertainty with respect to international economics, our capital is now over \$800,000 and we earned over \$30,000 in interest and dividends in the past year. In simple terms we earned 7.73% after fees. This is excellent. It is one of our Rules that we do not spend capital but build for the long term future. We limit ourselves to annual distribution of \$2,000 plus up to 80% of interest and dividends (NOT capital) earned in the previous financial year.

In the 2024 /25 financial year we gave our support to the RS21 fleet through an \$11,000 sponsorship and also \$1,000 per boat (\$5,000 total) to the Cadet team and Conall Green travelling to World Championships overseas. It is great to see the IMPACT OF YOUR GIVING in helping our young sailors further their experiences in this way. Conall's report can be read on our website. He was beset by very light winds and a lot of floating seaweed but finished 27th overall but was the top Australian performer. He clearly expresses his gratitude to the Foundation for the financial help that we provided.

We also provided the platform (through our website and our relationship with the Australian Sports Foundation) for tax-deductible donations to go to supporting the RGYC Cadets to compete in the Australian team for the World Championships in the Czech Republic (Lake Lipno) in July. In particular, Bart Newman's Solstice Swimmers, who take the early morning plunge into the marina on 22nd June, took this opportunity and raised over \$700. Overall, \$2172 was raised from RGYC members through the ASF link to our website.

In the Cadet World Championships, in a fleet of 79 boats, Jack Benyan and Louis Davis came third and Jack won the Wilson Trophy for best performing skipper Under 16 and the Ellis Trophy for best performing skipper Under 15. A great effort in his first year on the helm. Charley Stephens and Jack O'Brien came 7th, Will Garner and Jack Jones, the youngest team competing, came 12th. Grace Lockhead-Caddy and Rohan Turaga came 38th. In the promotional Fleet, Lucy Stephens came 13th. Again, all are very grateful for the support that we provided.



Conall Green on the Foil.



The RGYC Cadet team before departure.

The Trustees have recently been in discussion with the RGYC General Manager, Steve Harper, Sailing and Boating Manager, Drew Malcolm and the Partnerships Manager, Ben Potter, about how the Foundation might support the RGYC Sailing Academy. Therefore it might be that, rather than sponsor an RS21 again we look to supporting the broader programme on offer in the RGYC Sailing Academy. Note that this is NOT the Education Department's Victorian Sailing School. Discussion is ongoing.

As part of the RS21 sponsorship the Foundation was able to use all six RS21's, plus volunteer skippers and a crash boat, to host OBERON Primary School for a Day on Corio Bay. Of the sixty grade five and six students and their twelve teachers, only six had previously been out on a boat, none of them sailing. They had a wonderful time and some will no doubt go sailing again. Our thanks go to Hon Secretary Lynne Johnston for her energetic persistence to get this Oberon Day to take place. The Trustees would like to broaden this to make it available to more primary schools in the future.



Oberon students. Robbie Miller dinner attendees. Inverlochy Barometer.

We held the Robbie Miller Dinner at the end of March and enjoyed a presentation from RGYC Life Member (and past Trustee of RGYC Foundation) Murray McRae about his adventurous trip to Antarctica and South America. The evening was well attended and we enjoyed sponsorship from Stuart Coffield (Geelong Travel) and Scenic Cruises. The RGYC Foundation's Robbie

Miller Twilight Series Trophy was awarded to “WOTEVA” – Huw Provis in Division 1 and “MAGIC” – Steve Hassell in Division 2.

Two of our members, Past Commodore and Life Member (and Deputy Chair of the Foundation) Harry Farnell and RGYC Life Member Noel Robertson saw the need to restore the Inverlochy barometer to its former excellent state. This barometer had been presented to the club by John Taylor who, in turn, had it bequeathed to him by Morrie Jacobs. Noel’s persistence sees it restored and mounted in the secured cabinets in the main lounge. The Foundation organised a celebratory dinner and sent invitations out into the broader Geelong community. The dinner was well attended and we heard about the INVERLOCHY (and more besides) from Eric Messer who proved to be an excellent raconteur. He has promised to speak to us on another topic in the future.

The matter of growing membership has been a challenge for us but now that we are more obvious in our impact in the RGYC, we are hopeful that more RGYC Members will want to get on board and help build the legacy. Certainly, Gus commented to me that he joined “because he likes what he sees us doing”! I encourage all Foundation Members to consider those around them and ask if they would like to join and support the RGYC Foundation. The Social Proof that comes from word-of-mouth recommendations to potential members is very powerful!

I continue to be grateful for assistance from the RGYC Administration staff, particularly Ash at the front desk and Ann who deals with our meat raffle proceeds, dinner accounts and such like. Ben Potter has also been very helpful as Partnerships Manager. I am also very grateful for the enthusiastic assistance of the Hon. Secretary Lynne Johnston and the Hon. Treasurer Mike Carroll in their portfolios and also Trustee Morgan Cornelius who has been putting a lot of time and effort into our website, banners and modernised pamphlets. I thank particularly Deputy Chair Harry Farnell for his diligence and persistence with the Ruth Plummer meat raffles each Friday evening. I thank all Trustees for their involvement and good discussion at our meetings. I remind all Foundation members that there is a vacancy on our Trustee board. Please let me know if you are keen to take it up.

We are looking to the future with a strong sense of optimism. We see the gratifying increase in memberships, resources, community contacts and influences and a growing sense of the Foundation's importance in our community. We have been reaching out into the Geelong Community for support for the RGYC Foundation. If you know of likely supporters do please let us know. It is a future that all Foundation Members can contribute towards. We can all **HELP BUILD THE LEGACY!**

Jonathan Apted

Chair of Trustees