



RGYC FOUNDATION

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

WINTER (TWELFTH) QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER September 11th 2026

This Winter newsletter was held over because of the postponement of the Robbie Miller Dinner. Our guest speaker, Eric Messer, who had spoken so well at the “Inverlochy” dinner last year, had been invited back to speak at the Robbie Miller Dinner in July. However, a small operation and some overseas travel meant that Eric could not make it until 5th September. We were very glad that we postponed and stuck with Eric as he spoke so easily and well about his course through life on the water and the changes to that course due to various circumstances. From a fishing trawler in the North Sea to the Master of the Victorian Emergency Rescue Vessel it was an interesting journey.



Some of Eric’s remarkable and frightening pictures.

We had about 50 at the dinner and about half were Foundation members. Another has joined since!

We started the dinner with a short speech from Finn Buckley who spoke with gratitude over the Foundation's support of him competing in Ireland just a few weeks ago. Having won the Victorian title he qualified to attend the ILCA 7 World Championships and he commented on his observation of the approach of some of Australia's best sailors to this competition.

We also helped our RGYC Cadet members competing in their World Championships in Italy (Lake Garda). Club Captain and Foundation member Brendan Garner sent me a report and I include it here:

Subject: Fwd: RGYC cadet success.

Just wanted to send you a quick email to pass onto the foundation regarding the RGYC cadets at the recent world championships in Italy.

Firstly a huge thank you to the RGYC Foundation and the members of RGYC for the amazing support shown for the 2026 team.

The event was held at Circolo Vela Torbole, Lake Garda, Italy from the 30th July to 7th August 2026.

RGYC had 3 & 1/2 teams in the worlds fleet (65 boats) and 1 in the promotional fleet (52 boats).

And the Australian team coach- Tony (Bully) Bull

10 countries were represented at the event.

Worlds fleet representatives:

Mischief Managed- Walter Howard & Will Smith

Kachow- Will Garner & Jack O'Brien

Ringo- Jack Benyan & Farrell Meegan

Foto- crew Rohan Taruga sailing with Calin Went from ASC

Promotionals fleet representatives:

Ocean Warrior- Matilda Groves sailing with Poppy Loftus RYCV

As you may be aware our sailors represented RGYC magnificently as always both on and off the water.

The event was hit by two 40-45 knot weather events known as the rare Ponale' wind. The

RGYC sailors were integral in helping sailors return to shore safely during both weather events, they even saved a German boat from washing up on the rocks on race day 1.

On the racecourse the composure of the RGYC sailors shone through in difficult and trying conditions over the 11 completed races. R8 was abandoned post finish due the conditions being so bad the finish boat could not hold station and record the finishes.

In the end the results were as follows:

Worlds:

Kachow- Will Garner & Jack O'Brien: 2nd overall (2 x race wins) Will 1st U15/16 skipper

Ringo- Jack Benyan & Farrell Meegan: 3rd overall (moved from 6th to 3rd on the final day of racing)

Foto- Calin Went (ASC) & Rohan Taruga: 16th overall

Mischief Managed- Walter Howard & Will Smith: 37th overall

Promotionals:

Ocean Warrior- Maltida Groves & Poppy Loftus (RYCV): 1st overall (winning the last race to take the title on a count back)

So as a wrap up: Australia took out 3 of the possible 6 podium positions at the event, those 3 boats were all proudly from RGYC.

A few pics of our RGYC team:



World Championship Podium



Promotional Fleet Podium



Hot racing Australia leads India and Poland.



RGYC Cadets helping tidy up after the big squall.

Thank you very much Brendan for sharing and showing the results of the Foundation's support.

As part of my speech at the Robbie Miller dinner I said:

It is important that the RESULTS are NOT just defined by the placings but the growth in the human being that is being supported. The growth in self-confidence, resilience and persistence that takes place when one is confronted with a challenge, a daunting prospect which one then gets through, is life-changing and we see this when people take up the challenge of sailing.

A favourite educationist of mine is Kurt Hahn- his theories and practice were responsible for Outward Bound, Gordonstoun, The Duke of Edinburgh Scheme and Timbertop amongst others. His philosophy was that we must impel young people into challenging experiences through which they will grow – **Plus est en vous – There is more in you (than you thought).**

It is for this reason that the Foundation has been working hard to get primary school students exposed to the joys and challenges of sailing. With her connections to various primary schools and her considerable drive as Hon Secretary to the Trustees, Lynne has organised three different schools through a Day on Corio Bay where year 5/6 students come as a school group to RGYC for a day. They learn some knots and learn a bit about the club and they go out in teams of 4 or 5 with a teacher and a skipper (usually a volunteer or one of the junior instructors from the RGYC SAILING ACADEMY) on an RS21- quite a small frisky keelboat which is as wet as a dinghy! The Squeals of delight, tinged with some apprehension at times, are wonderful to hear. The children usually have a go at the helm and the beaming smiles as they manage what they thought they could not do are GOLD! We asked the Oberon group of 60 how many of them had been on a boat 60! On a sailing boat ZERO! The need here is obvious. We are finding that some then sign up for the holiday programmes like Tackers and this should translate into future sailors at RGYC (or elsewhere) in time.

We are a young foundation but we are making a difference in the club and in the Geelong Community. We want to do more, and we will, but we also want greater PARTICIPATION from RGYC Members. We have kept the (Tax deductible) donation amount which is recognised by Membership at \$1,000 for 15 years because we don't want that cost to be a barrier to joining but we are also looking to donations and bequests to help us grow financially and we encourage all, after looking after your family and loved ones to consider leaving a bequest (OF ANY SIZE) to the RGYC Foundation.

Robbie Miller's bequest was munificent and beyond most of us, but I am encouraged for my part that \$500 thousand is 50 times \$10 or 10 times \$50! I have been pleasantly surprised in recent conversations by the number of people expressing their intent and the Trustees will be working on this over the next twelve months.

Now the Spring Newsletter will come out in the next few days following this evening's Annual General Meeting. Happy Sailing !

Jonathan Apted

Chair of Trustees