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newcastle cruising
yacht club journal

SUMMER 2025

CRUISING FABULOUS FIJI
CLUB AND SAILING NEWS
WOMEN'S KEELBOAT RACING



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NEWCASTLE CRUISING YACHT CLUB

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Opinions of contributors do not necessarily
reflect those of the Board or the Club.

While articles and correspondence
are welcomed, the Editor reserves
the right to decline to publish.





At the time I'm writing, carpark works are complete and we are testing and validating the number plate reading system. I urge you to let us know the plate number of your nominated vehicle and charging details to ensure you don't get delayed on exit, won't be charged as a non-member, and that you receive your

membership time entitlement.

We took all the feedback received into account in arriving at the final parking parameters which we will review in six months. We accept that it's impossible to get everything right, for everybody, all the time but we're striving for the best possible outcome.

OPERATIONS

We are conscious that business conditions are tough in Australia, especially for the higher leveraged (not us), and for those in the discretionary sectors (partly us). So, I thank you for continuing to support your club.

We're quite optimistic about 2025 as we have had substantial capital expenditure and repairs to equipment as the older parts of our assets age. Despite these expenses being well into six figures, we have managed to fund these from free cashflow and budgeting. Well done to Paul and Julie for this great outcome.

CLUBHOUSE

When the weather cooperates, we are seeing large numbers in the bar and restaurant. Our annual budget is "on the line" in this department, which is great to see. Our functions revenue is a great contributor to this result. To help in this area, we have upgraded the upper floor food preparation area. My thanks to Rebecca and her team. The October long weekend activities and our Melbourne Cup functions were huge successes.

Electricity is gradually edging up, so we are evaluating our options in this area.

MEMBERSHIP

We are busier than most similar establishments in our area. I think everyone who attended "Dockfest" during the October long weekend would agree it was a huge success. Perfect weather, great music and good friends – it doesn't get much better! Additionally, both Melbourne Cup functions were full in a closed club.

Our membership has had a substantial uptick in the past three months. The Board has approved approximately 100 names in our September, October, and November meetings combined. We are exploring ways to increase our General (Voting) members.

SAILING

We had a fantastic result at the Australian Sailing NSW and ACT awards ceremony on 21st September. The winners were:

- Bella Jones (Instructor of the Year)
- Peter Mansbridge (Volunteer of the Year)
- Women's Sailing Course - SheSails
- Jack Buchan (Sport Professional Award)
- NCYC Club of the Year (Category A) – Large Club

All these individuals, groups and our Club represented our state at the National awards on 1st November in Sydney.

I would like to personally mention Ethan Tucker and congratulate him on being a finalist in the NSW Awards. During an Olympic year it was particularly difficult to compete against those covering that event.

There were so many fine examples of sailing promotion and coverage that just to be selected as one of the final four in our state is an absolute honour for Ethan, and for us. We are extremely proud.

Our CEO Paul O'Rourke, Peta Rose (She Sails), Jack Buchan and I attended the Australian Sailing Awards (National) in Sydney on 1st November. While we did not win this year, just to be nominated in the Club of the Year (Category A), She Sails Award, and Sport Professional Award meant we were in the top three of these categories nationally! This is no small achievement.

MARINA

Restoration works continue to the marina pylons as the tides allow. This requires (where necessary) stripping the pylon near the waterline, re-encasing, and an airtight plastic weld. This is done from a barge.

The travel-lift runway steel plate repairs have been progressively installed and are now complete on the upper surface. We will commence the lower surfaces soon. This is a more complex task and will need some planning to ensure we meet our environmental and safety obligations.

Marina occupancy and income has started its seasonal increase and remains above budget.



– Barry Kelly

"Perfect weather, great music and good friends – it doesn't get much better!"



It has been a huge start to summer at the club so far, and there is plenty more to come.

Offshore sailing was in full swing with Sundays, Wednesdays, and the Ocean Point score. Twilights have been popular with jazz music and Pizza specials.

The free try racing on Wednesday nights in the Force 24's has also introduced new members to the twilight experience. We hope to continue that in Feb/Mar.

Inshore Elliot sailing has been very competitive on Thursdays and Lasers on a Friday. The Bay Sailing Centre has also started its point score with good numbers.

As always, the volunteer race management team have done a great job conducting races up to five times a week. The Academy is as busy as ever with Learn to Sail programs, Masterclass series, and Community programs.

We have two NCYC boats racing the Sydney to Hobart this year – Vérité and Mako – along with a host of our sailors crewing on other boats. We wish all a safe trip south.

The club has been running a sweep and will be showing the start on the big screens Boxing Day.

We have started preparations for hosting SailFest in March which will include TP52 Gold Cup, Australian Sailing Champion League final, Cock of the Harbour, and an Offshore fleet.



We then relocate our race management to Port Stephens where we are the Organising Authority for Sail Port Stephens.

The clubhouse is extremely busy with the summer menu proving a big hit. We also having lots of members choosing the club for their end-of-year celebrations which is much appreciated.

I would like to thank all the staff here at NCYC for their commitment and effort at this very busy time of year. I hope all our members can enjoy sailing, boating and socialising over the summer.

– Paul O'Rourke





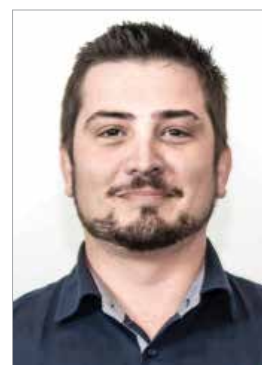
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Spring brought a wave of energy and activity to the Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club (NCYC), and it's been a pleasure to see our clubhouse thriving!

The bar and restaurant have been busier than ever, with members and guests enjoying our vibrant atmosphere, delicious food, and top service.

Our function spaces have also been in high demand, hosting a variety of events from celebrations to corporate gatherings, showcasing the versatility of our club.

A special highlight of the season was the success of our Dockfest Music Festival during the October long weekend. The festival brought incredible talent, enthusiastic crowds, and a fantastic vibe to the club, making it one of our standout events of the year.

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported this event – it's your participation that makes these occasions so memorable. And thank you to the NSW Government and its support with the Live Performance Venue Grant, which has allowed us to enhance our live performance offering at the Club.

Keep an eye out for 'Yacht Rock on the Dock' Music Festival on Saturday 25th January here at NCYC.

Looking ahead, we're excited to continue our Masterclasses, which are becoming a firm favourite. Held once a month, these sessions offer something for everyone, from honing sailing skills to indulging in the artistry of winemaking.

If you haven't attended one yet, I highly recommend checking them out!

Our calendar was jam-packed with events in spring, and it's no surprise that nearly all of them, including our Melbourne Cup Luncheon, Members' Christmas Party, and New Year's Eve celebrations, have sold out well in advance. If you missed out this time, be sure to keep an eye on our upcoming events and secure your tickets early – we hate for anyone to miss out on the fun!

As the year draws to a close, I'd like to wish everyone a safe and Merry Christmas, as well as a Happy New Year. Thank you for your continued support of the club—it's our members who make NCYC the incredible community it is.

– Matt Stamp

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Ahoy, and welcome to the summer of 2025! We've had a strong start to the boating season so far with lots of members sailing and racing, and cruising visitors utilising the marina.

SAILING REPORT:

On Wednesday evenings we've welcomed back offshore twilight

races with the return of daylight savings. This season, twilight racing has seen pursuit starts with staggered start times to help get all the competitors finishing together before they come back to the clubhouse.

Back at the clubhouse we've seen the 'Breeze' jazz band playing every week after sailing on our new floating stage.

On Thursday evenings, we've been racing the Members League in the club's inshore fleet of Elliott 6 race yachts. The six-week series was generally raced in light SE and NW breezes often influenced by passing storm systems.

Overall, in first place was Joe de Kock sailing with Kyle Hancock and Harry Miller from Midcoast Boatyard. In second place was Toby Whittle sailing with Dean Nissen and Mark Alderton from our Laser sailing fleet. In third place was Dennis Hume sailing with Tim Peachey and Ross Bell from Bay Sailing Centre.

The Elliott fleet is now on the hardstand at Carrington until the next Members League series commences in February.

On Friday evenings our Laser fleet has been out racing. There are sixteen entrants, with 6-10 boats racing regularly. After 27 races, we're now halfway through the annual pointscore.

In the lead is first placed Dean Nissen (1st PHS, 2nd Scratch), followed by second place Toby Whittle (2nd PHS, 1st scratch), and third place Scott Charlton (3rd PHS, 3rd scratch).

On Sundays, we've had our offshore pointscore racing including the Spring Short Ocean Pointscore, Ocean Pointscore, and the Hunter 100 offshore overnight race...



Spring Short Ocean Pointscore (final results)

PHS Div.1

1st - *This Way Up* (James Macken)

2nd - *Ataraxia* (Scott Knights)

3rd - *Uprising Brightside Marine* (Andrew Miller)

PHS Div.2

1st - *Betty D* (John Burrows)

2nd - *Neverland* (Kyle Hancock)

3rd - *Nyssa* (Mark Smith)

IRC

1st - *Summer Salt* (Peter Sinclair)

2nd - *KDI* (Joe de Kock)

3rd - *Marta Jean* (Steve Rae)

Ocean Pointscore (current results)

PHS Div.1

1st - *51st Project* (Julian Bell)

2nd - *Saltwater Wine* (Tom Woods)

3rd - *Summer Salt* (John Searl)

IRC

1st - *Saltwater Wine* (Tom Woods)

2nd - *Frantic* (Michael Martin)

3rd - *Summer Salt* (John Searl)

Hunter 100 offshore overnight race

PHS Div.1

1st - *51st Project* (Julian Bell)

2nd - *Saltwater Wine* (Tom Woods)

3rd - *Mako* (Simon Glover)

IRC

1st - *KDI* (Joe de Kock)

2nd - *Saltwater Wine* (Tom Woods)

3rd - *Frantic* (Michael Martin)

At the Bay Sailing Centre we've also been running club racing for dinghies and yachts once per month. The Laser results are, first place, Tim Peachey (1st PHS, 3rd scratch), followed by second place Neil Edwards (2nd PHS, 1st scratch), and third place Dennis Hume (3rd PHS, 2nd scratch). Then our Bay keelboat racing has results with first place *Knot Ready* (Paul O'Rourke), and then equal second/third place are *Una Vita* (David Rundle) and *Cipriani* (Geoff Campbell).



MARINA REPORT:

In the peak of summer, we're seeing a lot of casual visitors passing through the marina from week to week and regular cruising groups from other clubs. As always, general housekeeping remains important to keep our docks and walkways clear of obstacles and presented at their best for the safety of everyone.

The car park boom gate project is also nearing completion with the boom gates now installed and ready to activate – promising to make the club and marina precinct more accessible to everyone.

As we start to see some lower tides, we'll continue removing growth from marina piles and when the wind is light, we'll continue repainting berth numbers on the marina walkways.

The marina team (myself, Hamish and Matt) are regularly out on the dock so we invite you to introduce yourself and to let us know if there's anything of concern for us to keep an eye on or to follow up.

As we sail into the next quarter, let us continue to uphold the spirit of friendship, sportsmanship, and camaraderie that defines our club.

– Jack Buchan

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As the summer sun graces the shores of Newcastle, the vibrant buzz of festive cheer has taken over our Club.

This summer promises to be one for the books, with a full line-up of Christmas parties, exciting upcoming events, and the promise of more fun as we sail into 2025.

NCYC is the place to be for those looking to soak up the season, enjoy the company of good friends, and experience unforgettable parties on the water.

Whether you're looking to host a wedding, birthday, conference or just a special dinner, be sure to check out the different room offerings and our fantastic function packages, just by jumping onto the club's website (ncyc.net.au/functions).

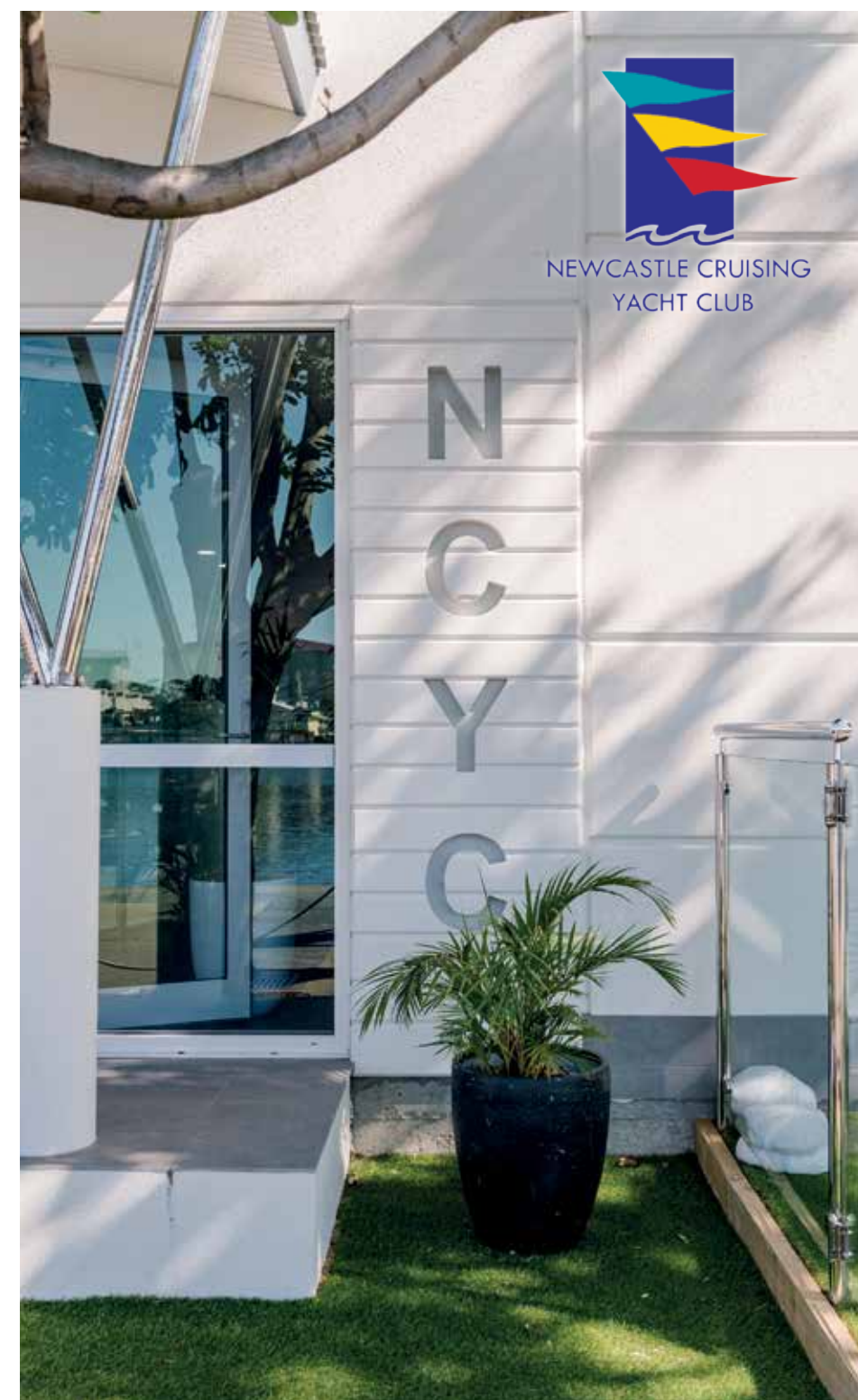
As the season unfolds, the Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club continues to shine as a vibrant community hub, offering not just amazing events and parties, but also opportunities to explore the waters, meet new people, and indulge in the best of what Newcastle has to offer.

The team at NCYC is already planning even more activities to keep the fun going well into the year. So, whether you're new to the club or a seasoned member, there's always something exciting on the horizon.

From Christmas cheer to Yacht Rock party and Margarita month, it's time to enjoy the best of summer at NCYC.

Cheers to an unforgettable holiday season, and here's to sailing into 2025 in style!

– Rebecca Frost



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South Australian Women's Keelboat Regatta

Over the October long weekend, Ellie Knorre, Emma Byrne, and I (Courtney Smith) headed across to South Australia with one thing in mind – bringing our A-game to the South Australian Women's Keelboat Regatta on a VX One named *Get Yer Ya-Yas Out*.

Hosted by the Cruising Yacht Club of South Australia, the regatta welcomed us with wind, waves, and just

enough wild weather to keep things interesting!

Saturday's races were memorable: a solid breeze of 15 knots gusting to 25, with heavy swells and scattered showers, provided a challenging but exhilarating learning curve for our first races on the VX One.

Racing alongside yachts twice our size with reefs in, we kept our full rig, opting for a "bow down and send it" attitude. Each run with the kite up was a thrill, and we managed to secure two wins.

We even left a few spectator boats in awe as we carved down the waves!

Charlie Ryan-Kane, Commodore of the Adelaide University Sailing Club and Member of the CYCSA Racing Executive, commented: "These girls showed incredible skill and demonstrated complete control over their boats, surfing down waves in conditions that saw other boats capsized or heading for the marina.

"Their performance in those conditions was talked about incredibly highly by all for the rest of the regatta. It was a pleasure to meet these three fantastic sailors, and I hope we see them back in South Australian waters soon."

A quick call to our super-coach Jack Buchan at the end of the first day of racing had us glowing with pride and ready to tackle the rest of the regatta.

Day 2 brought a change of pace. The gulf was still choppy, but the breeze had eased to around 8 knots, gusting to 15. This "cork bobbing" kind of day saw us battling through three races, facing a few tough starts and some fierce competition.

After a crowded first start, we found ourselves



fighting for clear air behind the larger yachts. To keep things exciting, we threw in a protest after one of our competitors barged in at the start line!

Although our results weren't what we'd hoped for, the team spirit was still high, and the laughter kept us going.

On Day 3, we woke up to sunshine and a mill-pond sea, with only a gentle 4-8 knots of breeze. Cue dance parties and laughter as we waited for the AP flag to drop!

Ellie summed up the final race perfectly: "It was a challenge, with lots of concentration needed to pick the right side of the course, where one mistake could cost the race."

A late wind shift caught us on the wrong side, and in the light breeze, we didn't quite have the sail area to keep up with the bigger boats.

The friendly vibes of the regatta and the rest of the competitors, along with plenty of South Australian food and wine, more than made up for any missed podium finishes. This regatta was an amazing experience, made even better thanks to Christine Rootsey and Mark Reed, who kindly loaned their boat to us.

Although it was our first time racing at CYCSA, the club made us feel right at home with our very own SA shore crew cheering us on! A big thank you to NCYC for supporting us as NCYC Youth Squad Alumni!

We are looking forward to the opportunity to go back next year!

– Courtney Smith

Above: Ellie Knorre, Emma Byrne and Courtney Smith in action aboard the VX One sportsboat.

Opposite bottom left: A millpond start to Day 3.



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For further information, contact our Sailing Academy
Tel: (02) 4940 8188 or
email: sailingacademy@ncyc.net.au

Skylark – Sailing in Fiji

“Bula!” – GSC/NCYC members Andrew and Claire Heenan have been cruising *Skylark*, their Moody 41 Classic, in the Pacific since March. Having sailed to New Zealand, Minerva Reef, and Tonga, *Skylark* made her way to Fiji.

A gaggle of boats departed Tonga for Fiji in the same weather window in mid-July. The ever-present fresh South-East trade winds make for excellent mileage for the 410nm journey.

There are many reefs and islands to avoid enroute – charted and uncharted, requiring extreme care. Fijian navigational charts are notoriously poor with reefs and islands missing or misplaced by hundreds of meters and often with missing navigation marks.

Already we knew of one yacht lost and three more that had ‘reshaped’ themselves on reefs. Satellite imagery is a must for this part of the world.

Fiji is, quite simply, the most welcoming place we have every visited. Everyone is friendly! Fiji is a collection of 330+ islands, with roughly one-third inhabited.

The largest island is Vitu Levu and includes the only city, Suva, which is home to over 10 per cent of the Fijian population, the rest living in small townships or villages on the islands.



Fijian village customs remain very strong, and for much of the nation, life is subsistence living. The day is taken up with the plantation (bananas, plantain, breadfruit, kava, cassava/tapioca, yams, papaya, etc), fishing, tending the pigs and chickens, or improving the dwellings – weaving mats, roof thatching, craftwork, and all the associated material preparation to do this.

As with Tonga, Sunday is a day of devotion, rest, and family. No one undertakes any other activities, not even visiting yachties.

When anchoring in a bay or lagoon, each yacht needs to undertake “Sevusevu” – greeting the village chief



with a portion of kava root to request permission to stay, fish, swim, etc. The chief grants honorary village membership and often allocates a villager to assist during your stay – going hiking, acquiring supplies.

Whenever in a village, we must dress modestly in sarongs (women) or sulus (men) – covered shoulders and knees, no hats or sunglasses.

Kava root is ceremoniously ground and mixed with water as a muddy tasting drink that brings on a mellow disposition – an afternoon ritual for some villages.

Fiji is hilly and lavishly green with copious coral reefs and white sandy cays. The cruising grounds are extensive and would require years of exploration to fully appreciate.

There are only a few official ports of entry for yachts, all in the northwest of the nation. To enjoy the very beautiful southeastern ‘Lau group’, you need to backtrack 250nm (typically upwind) after completing official entry procedures.

We took advantage of a northerly weather window to head south-east, stopping in Vanua Balavu (Bay of Islands). A truly magnificent spot inside a reef-ringed island group that required careful navigation between the coral heads/bommies to enter and anchor (we witnessed some less than successful efforts from other yachts).

Limestone caves, colourful fish, and turtles abound. We spent time with the local villagers by attending church and lunching together, hiring local boats and guides to explore the surrounding islands and caves. We also piled 10 yachties into the back of a ute for a trip to the main town, Lomolomo, to buy vegetables and fruit. Five days passed quickly. Island life!



Blue Lagoon Resort (Yasawa Islands) is 3nm from Blue Lagoon where the movie was filmed.

Opposite: Perfect waters for wing foiling

With another northerly breeze window, we sailed to the far south-eastern island of Fulaga, crescent shaped with a huge central lagoon filled with many smaller mushroom-shaped islands (motus).

This is the island where the Fijian Navy recently wrecked a newly Australian-donated naval vessel on its maiden voyage. The only lagoon entry, measuring 50m wide and half a mile long, can get metre-high standing waves under certain conditions.

Once in the lagoon, there are numerous coral heads and shallows that require navigation. Picturesque turquoise-blue water, white sandy beaches, abundant corals and fish, endless anchorage sites, and perfect conditions for water sports like kite boarding and wing foiling. Bliss!

This is a very financially poor island (but rich in spirit). Being a long way from Suva the supply ship ‘may’ come once a month. Their only income is derived from wood carvings sold to visiting yachties and any fish that can be sold in Suva via the ship.

There are no cars or roads, running water, mobile phone service, or electricity except for solar-fed battery banks (house lighting). There is one communal freezer that runs off solar, charged per kilo of stored goods. Our host family took us hiking to the lookouts,



exploring the village, and generously providing us with lunch after church. We reciprocated with some small gifts (solar lights, books, fishing tackle) and lunch on board *Skylark*.

It was quite levelling to realise that *Skylark* had more modern conveniences than this island has ever had (hot and cold running water, water maker, flushing toilet, refrigeration, and freezer).

Ten days at anchor was not long enough. We snorkelled, wing-foiled, walked, swam, socialised, and dreamt of returning soon.



During our time in Fiji, we were boarded by Fijian authorities three times – the Navy, the police, and the US Coast Guard with Fijian officials.

There is a concerted effort to reduce the transportation of drugs through Fiji and on to Australia. Using a RIB and not chancing to bring the only remaining Navy ship into the Fulaga lagoon, the Navy boarded every yacht. The Navy officials were imposing in stature but smiling and very polite.

One yacht that arrived late the previous day decided to not wait for the authorities and rapidly departed, complete with dinghy in tow. They were promptly apprehended outside of the lagoon by the Navy ship, heavily searched and fined for not having yet checked in to Fiji after leaving Tonga.

They were lucky to not have been immediately deported. Understandably, Fijian officials take a dim view of stopping at outlying islands prior to checking in.

Our journey west took us via the stunning Matuku Island. Another narrow, shallow and wiggly lagoon entry where satellite imagery, overhead sun, and a keen look out from the bow is an absolute must. But the satisfaction of putting down anchor in such a stunning location makes up for the stress of entry.

The village was very welcoming, and young Judah was our guide to the top of the mountain for 360-degree views. He was fantastic, taking us exploring, explaining village life, and harvesting coconuts and oranges for us.

The weather plays such a huge part in cruising. We continued travelling west with the trade winds to Astrolabe reef and Kadavu Island. However, these same breezes made it near impossible to enjoy this snorkelling/diving mecca, blowing 25+ knots every day we were there.

We had been spoiled by our time in the Lau group and unless an island, snorkelling, or anchorage was brilliantly spectacular, it was hard to be impressed.

Unlike Tonga, Fiji has a reasonably robust marine industry with marinas, yacht hard stands, cyclone pits, and marine trades making it is possible to get technical help for things we could not fix ourselves. In the Pacific, you need to be very self-sufficient and carry a wide range of spare parts.

Despite our best preventative efforts, *Skylark* was not immune from the odd failure. We had one precarious moment just as we had entered the Fulaga lagoon when the DC panel went dead. No electronics – charts, depth sounder, windlass, refrigeration, etc. in the middle of numerous coral heads and shallows!

Thankfully, we had some friends already at anchor who guided us into safe water and assisted in diagnosing the issue (collapsed main battery switch). Fortunately, one of these friends had a used spare switch that we traded for other boat gear they needed. Without the replacement switch, we were faced with sailing 250nm back to Savusavu with only a binnacle compass and charts on a PC, tablets, or phones until batteries died.



Left: Hiking guides Sharon and Mike at Waya Lailai Island in the Yasawas.

Above: Musket Cove anchorage is often crowded.

The other significant issue was a failed windlass motor. Manually deploying and retrieving the 25kg anchor on 10mm chain in deep anchorages (usually 15+ metres) was not fun. Fortunately, we were able to source a replacement motor in Australia under warranty and (at eye-watering freight costs) fly it into Nadi in under a week. The installation was a seriously ‘high swear factor’ job but now the windlass works brilliantly. They say that cruising is just doing boat maintenance in exotic locations ...

It was quite strange to arrive in the civilisation of Nadi, having been hopping through remote islands for the previous four weeks. It was certainly great to access a wider variety of fresh foods at the local open-air markets and some internet access.

From Nadi, we ventured to the north-western Mamanuca and Yasawa island groups. These are the most popular tourist areas with many private islands and resorts (some don’t welcome yachts anchoring in their space). The Mamanucas are home to famous surfing spots such as Cloudbreak – the only time that Andrew wished he had packed a surfboard, and Musket Cove – home of the Musket Cove Yacht Club and regatta (120 yachts entered this year).

There were copious highlights with many of the islands offering great hill-top hiking, spectacular snorkelling/diving, and even swimming with reef sharks at Navadra Island and with manta rays at Drawaqa Island. With crystal clear water on white sands and copious marine

wildlife, it is easy to understand why these islands are very popular with tourists.

There is such a difference between the life of someone who lives in Suva or Nadi, compared to those on the smaller and more remote islands. Those in towns have paid employment, suburbia as we know it, and modern conveniences such as running water, electricity, sewer, communications, etc. Those on the islands are boiling the kettle on wood stoves, spend their days in subsistence living, and have little to no income.

Life in the islands would be much harder without the tropical temperatures (no heating required), bountiful fishing, abundant rain, and vigorous plant life. Coconuts, bananas, and papaya, and the generous village community ensure that no one goes hungry.

With the improvement in mobile communications, village life does get easier (being able to email an order for the next supply ship, or even knowing when the next ship will arrive) but also brings an acute awareness of how others live. Education is a national priority, with schooling available for every child.

Parents want a bright future for their children but also wish that their villages remain viable by stemming the drain of young people to Suva or even picking fruit in Australia. I wish them luck...

Quite simply, Fiji is a cruisers’ destination. Year upon year can be spent sailing in beautiful islands with little retracing of steps. It is a fishing, diving, and snorkelling wonderland as well as providing perfect conditions for surfing, wing foiling, or kite boarding.

Couple this with the overwhelming generosity and warmth from the locals, what’s not to like?

– Claire Heenan

Hamish Brakell

Hey everyone, I'm Hamish, you may have seen me around the Club or the marina, I am 21 years old, and I originate from the northern beaches of Sydney, however, I also have very strong ties to Central West NSW.

I moved to Newcastle in 2022 in search of a higher education. I have just finished my third of four years of education, studying a Bachelor of Construction (Building) Management.

I have the aspiration to become a well known and trusted project manager within the Newcastle and broader Hunter Valley areas.

My passion for boating and the marine industry stems from countless hours at the beach and on friends' boats. During the two previous University Christmas breaks, I worked on a slipway in Sydney's Middle Harbour, it was here that I learned the ins and outs of boating and picked up a deeper interest for the industry.

Upon moving back to Newcastle for my third year, I reached out to the NCYC and was lucky enough to receive a job offer from Jack.

I have thoroughly liked the dockmaster role and all the opportunities it presents, and hope to continue with this journey while I complete my studies.

Outside of work I am an avid sportsman, playing/participating in a variety of sports and sport roles, and gym facilities.

I play Rugby Union in the Premier 1 men's division for the University of Newcastle Seahorses (no, I don't bleed green), social touch rugby, and enjoy swimming.



"I have thoroughly liked the dockmaster role and all the opportunities it presents ..."

Furthermore, I am a leading junior rugby referee within Newcastle and have been selected multiple times to officiate at NSW junior country competitions.

Thank you for taking the time to learn a little bit about me, and I look forward to meeting you down the track!

Thanks

– Hamish Brakell | Dockmaster

ALWAYS LOOKOUT FOR SEAGOING SHIPS

DO NOT pass within 30 metres of the side or stern of a seagoing ship.

Before heading out check the Daily Vessel Movements at portauthority.com.au/lookoutnewcastle.

Keep monitoring the safety broadcast from Newcastle Harbour VTC (24/7) VHF Channel 09.

STAY FAR AWAY TO BE IN SIGHT

From the ship's bridge it is hard to see smaller boats. Some ships will have blind spots ahead of up to 400 metres. Stay far enough away to be in sight.

Line of vision from bridge

Blind distance ahead

BE AWARE IT'S THE LAW

Under NSW marine legislation you are required to never obstruct, restrict or impede access to:

- any fairway or channel
- any wharf or other landing place
- the safe navigation of a vessel
- the handling of cargo or movement of passengers
- launching, removal, securing of a vessel.

It is an offence to:

- fail to comply with the directions of the harbour master or any person acting under the direction of a harbour master
- operate a vessel in any navigable waters negligently, recklessly or at a speed or in a manner dangerous to the public.

portauthority.com.au/lookoutnewcastle

Disclaimer: The information on this brochure is provided for general information only and is not intended to be a substitute for professional advice.

Know how to check and service your inflatable lifejacket. It could save your life.



Servicing inflatable lifejackets

Inflatable lifejackets should be serviced annually or in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Servicing will ensure all parts of the lifejacket, including the bladder, inflation mechanism and CO² cylinder, are fit for use.



Check the inflation system

- ✓ Following the manufacturer's instructions, reveal the inflation system and use the oral inflation tube to inflate the bladder.
- ✓ Leave overnight.
- ✓ If the bladder loses pressure, take the lifejacket to an accredited service agent for further tests, or replace the lifejacket.
- ✓ Do not attempt to repair your lifejacket by yourself.



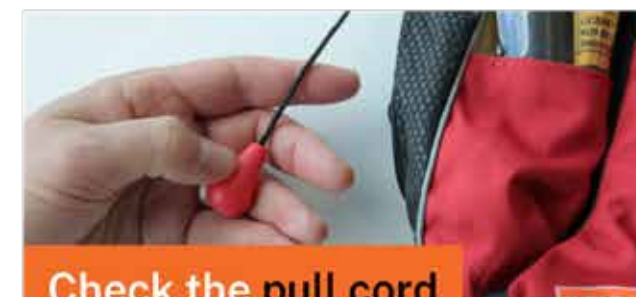
Deflate correctly

- ✓ Invert the cap on the oral inflation tube then press down on the valve inside the tube.
- ✓ Do not insert other objects into the top of the tube as they may damage the valve.
- ✓ Roll or press down to fully deflate the lifejacket.



Check any cylinder/cartridge is full, armed and secured

- ✓ Remove and inspect the CO² cylinder – it should be intact with no rust or corrosion.
- ✓ Weigh the cylinder on scales – it should match the minimum gross weight engraved on the cylinder, or within 2 grams.
- ✓ If the cylinder is rusted, corroded, pierced or is not the correct weight, it should be replaced.
- ✓ On auto-inflating lifejackets, ensure all auto cartridge components are armed and in-date.
- ✓ Re-fit the cylinder to the inflation system and tighten by hand until just firm.
- ✓ Do not over tighten.



Check the pull cord

- ✓ Re-pack the lifejacket as per the manufacturer's instructions.
- ✓ Ensure the pull cord is free from obstruction, accessible and unlikely to catch on anything when worn.



Learn how at
lifejacketwearit.com.au

Respecting one another while out on the water

With the holiday season fast approaching, many of us will be eager to spend this time out on the water with family and friends. December and January represents the peak boating season, so needless to say, there will be plenty of us out enjoying our beautiful waterways.

In NSW there are around over 220,000 recreational vessel registrations, almost 18,000 PWC vessel registrations and an estimated 150,000 additional unregistered vessels such as rowing dinghies, canoes and kayaks.

The variety of vessels and activities on our waterways can unfortunately mean that the potential for conflict and safety risks are heightened.

It is up to all of us to make sure we know how to share the waterway safely and to always look out for one another.

This includes being familiar with right-of-way rules so

when you're approaching another vessel or overtaking, you know what needs to happen to avoid collision.

If you see another vessel in trouble or witness an incident, stop and give as much help as possible. If you need to call for assistance, it's important that you know how to do so, including how to make a mayday call. It's a good idea to brush up on this before you head out.

When passing swimmers, divers, other vessels, structures and the shore always keep a safe distance, and try to minimise your wash. As the skipper, you must constantly judge your distance from other vessels and people around you by considering the circumstances and conditions, for example the weather, your speed and other vessels.

Remember, the skipper is responsible for the safety of everyone on board their vessel. This includes making sure you have the correct safety equipment and lifejackets for everyone on board, knowing the weather and conditions and making good judgement calls while out on the water.

Visit nsw.gov.au/maritimesafety for more tips on how to stay safe on NSW waterways.

Have you planned ahead for your day out?

You're the skipper, you're responsible.

PLAN ○ PREPARE ○ PREDICT



Visit nsw.gov.au/maritimesafety to plan your day and prepare for common risks.



Marine Rescue Newcastle



Welcome aboard Marine Rescue Newcastle.

Our unit has been very busy with both operational assists and rescues as well as training over the last few months.

No doubt you would have heard about the sailor who was

reported missing on a Bulk Carrier awaiting entry to Newcastle harbour.

The vessel was some miles south of the entry when late one Thursday evening the sailor was noticed not aboard.

The next morning (Friday 8 November 2024) Newcastle's Rescue Vessel NC30 and Lake Macquarie's Rescue Vessel LM 30 were on the water on their way to assist the search and rescue, along with Marine Area Command vessels, and were tasked to commence a search off the vicinity of Redhead to Swansea.

Amongst the search and rescue assets other than the rescue vessels were a police helicopter and the fixed wing AMSA aircraft tasked to look for the sailor.

As can be seen in the picture attached, the on-water search pattern was well executed as per standard procedures, but no sign of the missing man was seen by the search and rescue assets.

At around 1830 on Friday 8 November, after a total of some 17 hours in the water, word was transmitted via VHF radio by MAC police that a recreational fishing boat spotted the man just north of Swansea and took him aboard and into Lake Macquarie to be transported to hospital.

A very fortunate outcome for the sailor.

A number of other rescues / assists were also carried out since we last joined you in the journal.

One was soon after the aforementioned rescue where a family ran their cruiser onto an oyster bank near Fullerton Cove.

Along with assistance from Marine Rescue Newcastle, Surf Lifesavers from Stockton unit, local police, and the assistance of a local commercial fisherman, a happy ending was seen with all aboard returned home safe and well.

Training is a big part of all Marine Rescue units throughout the state. One course that we have found to be of an enormous benefit is the Careflight Trauma Care Workshop course that was held at our Stockton base.

Eight members of Marine Rescue Newcastle and Lake Macquarie Units attended the coveted Careflight Trauma Care Workshop at our Marine Rescue Newcastle base. The five paramedic experts that took us through the course were amazing.

Three are serving paramedics, with one an 'intensive care' paramedic, and between the three main trainers, they had a total of about 55 years of service in this field. If you need to be looked after by these and other paramedics with such high levels of training, you will be in good hands.



This course is an advanced level from the Advanced First Aid and Resuscitation course which all qualified Marine Rescue crew must achieve. The Trauma Care Workshop teaches how to deal with more severe trauma on people and 'mass casualty triage treatment'. The scenarios were made so real and follow up debrief well undertaken.

The photograph attached depicts Careflight paramedic instructors and the Marine Rescue personnel who benefited from their excellent training. Many thanks to Liz, Adam, Kylie, Mark, and Lisa from Careflight.



Save the Dates

2025

25 Jan	Yacht Rock the Dock
22-24 Mar	SailFest Newcastle
30 Mar	Newcastle-Port Stephens Race
31 Mar - Apr 5	Sail Port Stephens Passage Series
25-27 Apr	Sail Port Stephens W/L Series
2-4 May	Sail Port Stephens Bay Series

UPCOMING MASTERCLASSES

- Service you own Lifejacket
- Crew overboard prevention and recovery
- Marine Radio 101
- Basics of Sailing Tactics
- Rum and Ropes
- * see ncyc.net.au/masterclass

Security Phone Numbers

Emergency

- Police – (02) 4929 0999
- Water Police – (02) 4984 9012
- Fire Department – 000
- Dockmaster – 0408 299 512

Club Directory

- General Inquiries (9am - 5pm)
(02) 4940 8188 – info@ncyc.net.au
- Licensed Club
(02) 4940 8188 – barmanager@ncyc.net.au
- Marina Manager (8am - 4pm 7 days)
0408 299 512 – dockmaster@ncyc.net.au
- Administration (9am - 5pm 5 days)
(02) 4940 8188 – info@ncyc.net.au
- Functions (9am - 5pm)
(02) 4940 8188 – functions@ncyc.net.au





NEWCASTLE CRUISING YACHT CLUB

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The NCYC's Nautica Dining is a fresh culinary experience in every sense, with award-winning Executive Chef Luke Carpenter leading an eclectic and dynamic kitchen crew

The restaurant offers a superb a la carte menu, bar and lounge classics and a selection of degustation packages for special family and work occasions

Book online at ncyc.net.au

ON THE RIGHT TACK

Looking at getting your kids into sailing? Tackers is the perfect pathway onto the water. We run programs throughout the school terms on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and condensed programs in the school holidays. Bookings are now open, so get in quick as they sell out fast!

sailingacademy@ncyc.net.au

ncyc.net.au/junior-tackers-sailing-7-12yrs

