

## Restored ketch to feature at festival

WORK has progressed on a restoration project in Sydney introduced on this page earlier this year and of considerable interest to Tasmanians.

It is a Herreshoff-designed 18m ketch built by Canadian tuna fisherman Douglas Baron in 1974 in Sidney, Vancouver, and will be featured at the 2019 Australian Wooden Boat Festival.

Originally called the Mercator, the renamed Wright of Passage Mercator completed four Pacific Ocean crossings from Vancouver to Hong Kong and twice from Hong Kong to New Zealand. In 2002, a new owner sailed it from Thailand to Sydney, where it has been ever since.

But it is its recent history that will make Wright of Passage Mercator a featured attraction at the festival.

The vessel was in a state of disrepair when it was donated to the charity Sailors with disabilities in January this year. Since then, a major restoration project has been underway at Woolwich Dock in Sydney with the work being done by young people who may be challenged by a disability, geographic or social disadvantage.

Participants learn about tools, carpentry, electronics, mechanics, general boat maintenance and the work of a shipwright under the guidance of skilled mentors. Their involvement in the program can lead to trade apprenticeships and employment in the marine and allied industries.

Wright of Passage Mercator was originally built using oak frames, a western red cedar hull and a deck constructed of beech on ply. Its restoration has been a major undertaking and has included rebuilding the main mast, splining and regluing the mizzen mast, completely refastening the hull, installing some sister frames and applying epoxy sheaving from the water line down. Major work has been done in the engine room and the accommodation has been modified to meet the specific needs of sailors with disabilities.

Leading the project is David Pescud who, despite leaving school at the age of 15 unable to read or write, ran successful businesses and was able to retire in his early 40s and to devote his life to his first love, sailing, with a focus on creating an opportunity for disabled young people to learn to sail.

The ultimate aim of the current Wright of Passage Program is to sail the vessel to Hobart and proudly display their achievements at the wooden boat festival.

For more details and offers of help for the project, phone 0421 725 170 or email info@sailorswithdisabilities.com

## Vessel's long and thrilling history told

THE long and varied life of a Scandinavian vessel that now calls Tasmania home will be the subject of the next lunch-time talk arranged by the Maritime Museum of Tasmania.

Yukon is a pole masted, gaff rigged ketch measuring 17 metres on the deck, with a beam of 4.7 metres. Originally named Elly, it was built in 1930

at Hjørne and Jacobsen's shipyard in Fredrikshavn, north of Jutland, Denmark.

Oak on oak, ketch rigged with a 67 hp auxiliary Tuxham motor, it is a member of the first generation of Danish fishing trawlers that were built with an engine.

Yukon fished commercially up to 1974, apart from being

commandeered by the German navy during World War II. In 1951, it got its current name as a result of a fishing family that struck it lucky in the goldfields of Alaska on the banks of the Yukon River.

From 1974 to 1997, Yukon sailed as a pleasure boat and became well known in various regattas around Denmark be-

fore being discovered and recovered by David Nash and Ea Lassen, sunk in a harbour near Copenhagen.

From 1997 to 2004, the vessel underwent a major restoration, with a new engine, electrics and systems. After sailing charters in Scandinavia for five years, Yukon came to Australia in 2010.

Today it is based at Franklin and its crew offer a range of sailing cruises around Tasmania. The talk on August 7 will look at Yukon's history, the massive restoration effort and its new life in Tasmania.

The talk in the Royal Society Room at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery in Davey St will start at 12 noon.



AT THE HELM: Derwent Sailing Squadron commodore Steve Chau, left, and Bellerive Yacht Club commodore Graham Mansfield at the Combined Clubs Series prizegiving; below, Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania commodore Tracy Matthews. Pictures: PETER CAMPBELL

## Commodores return

THE commodores of Hobart's three major yacht clubs have been re-elected at their recent annual general meetings but there are some new faces on the boards of the clubs.

Tracy Matthews was re-elected unopposed as commodore at the AGM of the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania, as were Stephen McCullum as vice-commodore and Richard Bevan as rear commodore.

Returning directors re-

-elected were Tony Cowley, Will Logan and Gavin Adamson while new directors are Peter Martin and Neil Shephard.

Fifty-year members announced at the AGM were Geoffrey Abell, Peter Bristow, Geoffrey Fader, Matthew Foster, David Gourlay, Ross de Little, John Mills, Greg Muir, Charles Rex, Barry Simpson, Nicholas Tall and Graham Woodward.

At Bellerive Yacht Club's

AGM commodore Graham Mansfield was re-elected commodore, Ian Marshall as new vice commodore and Richard Gilbert as rear commodore.

BYC board members are: Jeff Cordell, Danny Cunningham, Fiona Harvey, Stephen Knight, Drew Meincke, Penny Stewart and James Thorpe.

At the Derwent Sailing Squadron, Steve Chau continues as commodore,

while Nick Connor is new vice commodore and Colleen McCulloch continues as rear commodore, as does Diane Barkas as treasurer. Board members include David Brett, James Bayly-Stark, Sue Allison-Rogers and Ron Bugg.

The Cruising Yacht Club of Australia has a new commodore with Paul Billingham taking over the senior flag role from John Markos, who has completed his two-year term.



## Wooden boats event gets own film fest

AN exciting new feature is being added to the next Australian Wooden Boat Festival program.

Entries are now open for a film festival focusing on, or highlighting, wooden boats which is to be part of the

greater festival in February 2019.

The AWBF Film Festival carries a prize of \$500 for the winning film and a further \$250 prize is offered for a people's choice short film award.

For 24 years the award-win-

ning four-day festival has brought together the largest and most beautiful collection of wooden boats in the southern hemisphere.

Film makers are invited to submit short or feature-length films under three broad cate-

gories: documentary, narrative or animated. The only stipulation is that the film must embrace the common theme of wooden boats.

The competition is now open with an early-bird deadline on August 3 and the final

closing date for submissions on September 17. Films are to be uploaded through the Filmfreeway portal at filmfreeway.com/AustralianWoodenBoatFilmFestival where filmmakers can also find full details and competition rules.