

Dear members,

Club! What *is* a Club? A **club** is an **association** of two or more people **united** by a common interest or goal. But, what does it mean to belong to a club? Well that's a far more complicated answer, but I'd be happy to share with you what being a member of this club means to me. I've been a member of the Safety Beach Sailing Club since 1973, when my Mum and Dad, my two brothers Campbell and Ross joined in December of that year. We started out sailing a *Mirror* dinghy, number 11402.

We sailed every weekend, regardless of the weather, my parents turned up every Sunday to ensure there was never an excuse for not sailing. My family are sailing tragics. Mum and Dad were very active members of this club, Dad was Rear Commodore and Mum ran the canteen and social committee for many many years without due recognition. For me, this club has helped shape who I am today, rightly or wrongly, this club means a hell of a lot to me. My best friend David Brewer and I met here when we were kids and we remain good friends today, sharing the ownership of a holiday house in McCrae. David is also the god-father of my daughter Aurelia. My summers were spent with friends down here at the beach at time when life was much simpler. I couldn't wait for the weekend to catch up with my friends and get up to all sorts of mischief, by god we had fun. I look at my two girls today and remember fondly upon my friendships and see my girls forging the same friendships through the same activity of sailing.

As an adult, I felt an obligation to put back into the club, to return the favour so to speak for all the wonderful years I had enjoyed sailing from this very small and sometimes troubled sailing club. You see Safety Beach was changing and years of speculation about a proposed marina was finally gathering some legitimacy and steam. In the early 2000's the SBSC had about 48 members with about 3-4 yachts sailing each week. Things were bleak and we were on the brink of collapse financially. I recall a General Committee meeting when we decided to buy a TV for the clubhouse, but we simply couldn't find the funds or the justification for doing so. There were arguments over the running of the bar because the income didn't match to stock sold and the canteen was being run by the same person Trish Doughton for years and she'd had enough. Trying to find volunteers to manage the day to day operations of the club were at an all time low. Some weeks, we couldn't race due to not having anyone on rescue boats. It was grim.

Ross and I decided that we'd leave and join McCrae Y.C which felt like an act of betrayal, almost as bad as supporting the Tigers one year and then the Pies the next, unthinkable! Realising we couldn't leave, as we'd only just scattered my parents ashes out the front of the club in an effort to keep them close to us, at least every Sunday during the sailing season, we decided to rally what troops were left and get this club back on track. Ross wrote a heartfelt letter to members in the newsletter imploring all remaining members to dust off their boats and get on the water otherwise this club would cease to exist. It worked! The following weekend we had 8 boats! however we were far from having critical mass.

In early 2005 negotiations with the Shire and developers was in full swing. However the club was still playing with funds we just didn't have access to and we were still in danger of losing control of our destiny. It took 3 years of planning, negotiating, begging, threatening, cajoling, and finally succeeding to get to where we are as a club today, still troubled, but still a club. We have come from the brink of oblivion to become the envy of many clubs around the bay, until my call for the SGM last year.

My decision to call for an SGM last year was based on fear. The fear of losing my club. The club that has shaped who I am today and continues to define me as a person. My fear was based on the club losing the culture that has been fostered and has been the cornerstone of the club's more recent success. The culture of the Safety Beach Sailing Club is based on the fear of losing members. Success has never come easily for this club and we have had to work so hard to retain members. It's the reason we're so friendly, we're just so happy you've decided to join our club and we don't want to lose you. So we tend to bend over backwards to make you feel welcome. People join clubs and remain at clubs for how a club makes them feel, part of a community of like minded people, part of a bigger picture. It is only when communication with members of a club breaks down, do members then lose that feel of connection and security. I could exhume recent events, but I believe it to be unhealthy. It is up to you the members, on what the future of this club looks like and how we as a club proceed into the future.

I believe that the future looks bright, I believe that the club has a great future, because there are many great likeminded members, hellbent on keeping this club a friendly and inclusive club. A club that is a beacon for community engagement and activity, a club that communicates with its

members on what it's committee intends to do and a club that promotes the sport to young kids and allows them to run around, be kids in a friendly safe and happy environment. This season has been a difficult one for so many reasons, but thankfully and despite the hand that was dealt to us early in the season with many resignations, great people have stepped up to fill the void and incredibly have succeeded in delivering stunning outcomes for you, the members. The committee this year have delivered the following:

- A signed contract with Snooks Catering
- A signed Lease with the Shire for 21 years
- A successful running of Sail Peninsula 2019
- A revamped Constitution
- Plans to renovate the bar and clubrooms
- A plan to dramatically lower our overheads with the plan of installing solar panels.
- Developing great relations with Martha Cove and our Co-Tennent the Coast Guard (Including having a Coast Guard member on the Executive Committee)
- Developed a great relationship with the MPSC
- Sound financials
- New website development plan

As a life member of this club, I am proud of the difference my family has made to the positive outcomes for this club. The suggestion that there was a perceived war between Off the Beach Sailors and Keel Boat sailors is totally abhorrent to me and is at total odds with the culture fostered at this club. The formation of the MCYS is a fact and it is here to stay and will remain a competitor in this space. We need to live with that. What we as a club need to concentrate on, is what we want to be as a club? Who will steer the club on a course that makes potential members join this club and not the other club. What are our differentiators? What sets us apart from other clubs? I think we know many of the answers to these questions. Competition is healthy and so long as we focus our efforts on being Inclusive, tolerant, approachable, friendly and relevant, we'll make the decision to join our club an easy one.

I would like to thank the committee this year for their work in often trying circumstances and for never losing faith that, we would ultimately succeed by sticking to the script and focusing our energy on the only outcome that mattered and that is what was best for the SBSC. My sincere thanks to Drew Mattingley, who has been a rock as Secretary and a great sounding board. Drew's dedication to the club has been exemplary and although minutes were not his strength, we are happy that Di Jackson stepped up to that role to ensure that, what was said at meetings was accurately recorded and acted upon. Thanks Drew and Di.

Sincere thanks to Graeme our Treasurer who has put the financials in great shape. Graeme has gone above and beyond to ensure we get better deals. Don't argue with Graeme, he's rarely wrong!

My sincere thanks to Rod Smallman, although not on committee, he has been a constant presence in trying to help patch things up with all concerned, with little reward. His enthusiasm for the club is unquestioned and his efforts greatly appreciated by myself.

Thanks to Mark McAuliffe for stepping into the role as Keel Boat Captain and rallying the troops. His efforts with the e-news and MC work for the end of season celebration were first class.

To Brian and Lisa Marklew who have put in an extraordinary amount of time. Lisa has put in countless hours with her social committee for sometimes, it felt, not commensurate reward. Stick with it Lisa, this year was a tough one! Lisa's design work and generously donated time, will ensure the club interior will make members want to spend more time at the club. To Brian, whom I have had the pleasure of dealing with for a raft of things, Brian's knowledge and seemingly unflappable style has helped the club to achieve some great outcomes including the lease, bar redevelopment as well as chairing the strategic planning committee. Lastly my thanks to Bill Manning who stepped up to again be the Rear Commodore, possibly the most difficult job in any sailing club. It is a complex position and requires great sailing knowledge and club knowledge. Bill has enjoyed the support of a great committee and we look forward to another great sailing season in 2019/20.

It would be remiss of me, to not mention recent developments regarding the hosting of the Optimist Dinghy National Titles. I would like to thank firstly the committee who spent 6 months organising this event and in particular Duncan McColl for stepping into the chair for the organising

committee comprising of, Deirdre Snooks, Geoff Eldridge, Ross Martin, Duncan and myself. This was a particularly frustrating process and one that gave the club no other option than to pull out from hosting the regatta due to our relationship becoming untenable. Communication with the association broke down to the point that we couldn't get the hosting agreement signed by AIODA, a document that they produced, however refused to follow. This refusal set the tone for negotiations and productive discussion and severely impeded progress. We regret the outcome, however it was the best outcome for the SBSC.

I would like to thank my wife Alexis for being my sounding board for the last 12 months in particular. Her acceptance and understanding of my time with my family again being impacted is appreciated. To those who assisted my two girls getting on the water each Sunday morning as I was in meetings, my sincere thanks. It has been a very trying 12 months and it has taken its toll. If I had my time over again, I would not have done anything differently.

Fair winds!

Mono.