

Humbug - Autumn 2017

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Greenwich Flying Squadron



HUMBUG



This great shot of the GFS Twilight races was taken by member **James Kearney** on 18 January. Other images from James' Twilight shoot are available for download [here](#).

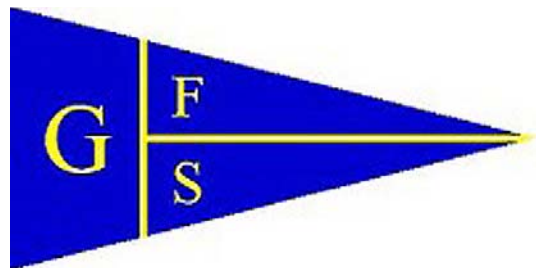
Editor's Quiz

Can you dig up clues in the articles below? Scroll to the end for answers.

1. Which two naval officers organised a harbour regatta in 1827?
2. What is the definition of the nautical term "bottomry"?
3. Who designed the prototype for David Edmiston's new yacht, *Passion X*, and in which year was the prototype launched?

Humbug Needs Your Salty Tales!

We are looking for personal or historical tales that reflect the character and spirit of the club, between 100 and 800 words in length. Please email your contributions to Humbug Editor Tim Kannegieter: humbug@gfs.org.au.



Commodore's Compass

The Twilight season is drawing to a close after one of the wettest series of races in many years but thanks to the enthusiasm of our Twilight sailors there have been good fleet numbers and the after race BBQs have been surprisingly well attended. A big membership drive by our new Membership Officer **Chris Gaskell** has been very successful and that should show up in the financial results.

We have a number of active sailors who are on the waiting list for tender storage in the clubhouse. Priority has to be given to active sailors in GFS races who use their tenders to access their yacht for Saturday or Twilight races. I recently visited Double Bay Sailing Club and asked about their dinghy storage policy, and was surprised to find that they actively monitor race participation and reallocate storage on a two-monthly basis.

The end of another sailing year is fast approaching and we have a lot to be thankful for. For the Sunday youth we have an additional smaller RIB, which is improving race management and being enjoyed by the young sailors. **Phil Hare** is maintaining a steady stream of posts on the [GFS website](#) about the Saturday racing, and it would be great to receive contributions from the Twilights and Sunday sailing to showcase the diversity of sailing at GFS. Please email your contributions to GFS Webmaster **Harvey Porter**: gfswebmaster@gmail.com.



David Edmiston - GFS commodore, is skipper on *Passion*.

GFS News

GFS Members Sailing Port Stephens

Some GFS crews are hoping to finish this season with a finale at the Sail Port Stephens regatta. *Passion X*, *Agrovation* and *Gwhizz* have entered, and next year we might get a fourth entry from *Meridian*. After that, the West Harbour Winter Series beckons – and who could resist a drift around the islands on a warm winter's afternoon?

Book Your Table for the Twilight Season Final

The Twilight Season Final Night will be held on **Wednesday 29 March**. Table bookings are essential to reserve your place: please email glenjcs@bigpond.com OR text 0419 983 680.

Sailing regattas have graced Sydney Harbour for almost two centuries. In 1827, a regatta organised by naval officers Captain Rous and Captain Stirling boasted a generous prize purse of fifty Spanish dollars.

New Member Perspective

Patrick Medley became a financial member of GFS just after Christmas 2016, but has been racing as occasional crew at the club for about ten years, and sailing most of his life: originally on Mirrors and Stars in the UK, and Hobie Cats in Australia.



Patrick Medley at the helm, **Graeme Kennedy** (joint owner) on the main sheet bringing *Vesille* down to Sydney from Lake Macquarie before Christmas.

When Patrick and fellow sailor **Graeme Kennedy** ran out of GFS boats to crew on, they decided that they needed to buy their own. They purchased their four-year-old Dehler 32 from a Finnish couple at Lake Macquarie just before Christmas last year, and kept her original name, *Vesille*, which means 'waters' in Finnish. *Vesille*'s regular GFS crew are: **Gary Honson**, **Brett Hawke**, and joint owners Graeme and Patrick. They are sometimes joined by Graeme's wife Sharron, Dan Adams, and Patrick's daughter Philippa. In Patrick's words: "I am very lucky to have a lovely boat, fantastic crew and a wonderful club. My Wednesday evenings couldn't be more perfect."

Vesille has competed in Green Division during the last few races of the summer Twilight series, and through the autumn series. Although skippers and crew have been taking it easy, and claim they were originally given a 'brutal' handicap by **Harvey Porter**, *Vesille* managed to place third in one race. The catch was that only three boats finished.

During his time as a new financial member and boat owner, Patrick has enjoyed the camaraderie of GFS, and the fact that members don't 'race for sheep stations'. He has particularly appreciated the assistance of **John Veale**, who owns *Hasta la Vista*, also a Dehler 32. John was very helpful to Patrick and Graeme in navigating the process of getting *Vesille* ready for racing.

Bottomry: Using a ship as the collateral for a sea voyage. The term comes from borrowing money on the "bottom" or keel of the boat, which might be required when the master was unable to contact the owner to pay for urgent repairs.

Enduring Passion

GFS was recently graced by a new yacht, **Passion X**, owned and skippered by the club Commodore, **David Edmiston**. This was no ordinary yacht, David built **Passion X** in his backyard in West Pennant Hills.

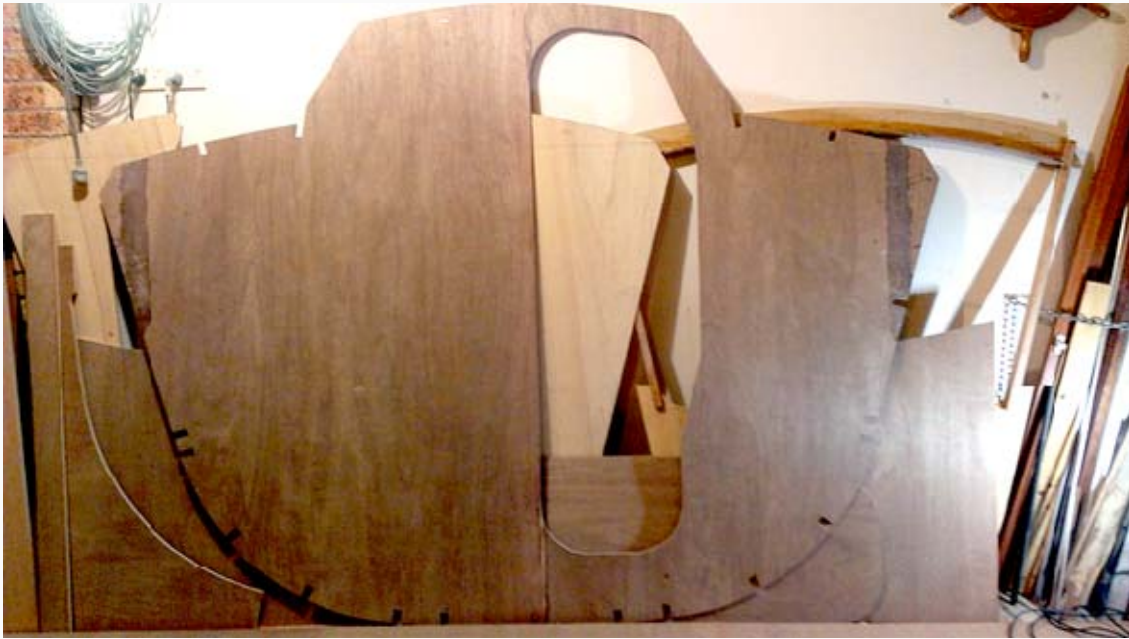


Passion X in David Edmiston's backyard. L to R: Geoff Lucas (past GFS Commodore), Bruce Chappell, David Edmiston, Kevin Phillips, Ron Beament.

David has been building yachts since his teens, including: many Moth Class yachts, a 28 ft cruiser, and many NS14 class yachts. His first yachts were built with the help of his father, Ted, who was an accountant but also a very capable wood worker. David's first project after leaving home was a Moth class yacht built in three weeks of after work time.

Office hours and the long Sydney commutes put an end to David's boat building and he started buying production Lasers, which he sailed at Hunters Hill with Past Commodore **Geoff Lucas**. It was the connection with Geoff that brought David to GFS when he bought the Jeanneau SO37, *Passion*, in 2006. It was retirement and the need for a grand project, plus the desire for a faster yacht, that lead David to the Dudley Dix Didi 40 design. David chose the design because, being epoxy ply, it was more neighbour friendly than most other boat building construction methods.

The prototype for David's new yacht was the Didi 38, *Black Cat*, launched by Dudley Dix in 1995 for the Cape to Rio yacht race. This was the first of many designs by Dudley Dix to use the radius chine construction method that gives a very fair hull. The construction techniques are very similar to those David used back in the 1960s for building moulded ply Moth class yachts – just on a larger scale.



Passion X first frames

David wanted to update the appearance of the 1995 design and to improve on the performance, so he bought plans for the extended version – the Didi 40 Cr – in April 2014. He also negotiated with Dudley for the appearance updates – a deeper keel with more righting moment and a slightly larger sail plan. By the end of June 2014 all the design work was completed and David purchased his first lot of plywood.

Once all the frames were lofted, cut, and epoxy coated, they had to be set out on a building frame. David says that one of his best choices was to use Laminated Veneer Lumber (LVL) for the building stock. It is very straight and stiff and once the top edge is sealed with epoxy it is very durable.

One of the biggest challenges was setting all the frames up on the building stock, as the plywood is very flexible and moves around very easily. David solved this problem by screwing 90 x 30 beams to the frames across the full 3.4m width of the hull. Later in the project most of the timber was recovered and used for the internal furniture.

None of the jobs in boat building are particularly challenging, but the sum of all the tasks means acquiring skills in a vast range of trades. During the construction it helped David to have his Jeanneau 37 as a model for what he wanted to achieve in the finished product.



Passion X being lifted to have the keel attached

The biggest challenges were:

- acquiring the quality timber for the stringers, keel and chines. David cut most of the timber from long planks on a home saw bench
- getting the epoxy to cure in winter and not cure too fast in summer
- fairing the finished hull
- grinding cured epoxy glass.

David says that he got a lot of enjoyment from finishing each task to a high standard. He purchased a laser level to do the final alignment and used it for aligning the keel, rudder stock, and drive shaft bearings. David says you have to know when to stop, or rather, when the boat it is as good as you are going to get.

"Passion X was launched on Wednesday, the rig fitted on Thursday and it was sailed on Friday for the first time. It was a mighty effort by the crew."

The crew helped David with many tasks, and while David did most of the work, he and Elaine enjoyed the company of the crew on busy bee days and their moral support through the project. David is lucky that Elaine supports his boat building and sailing, and he appreciated her roles of social secretary and gardener during the project. Their family also takes an active interest in progress, and David says that the support of family in these projects is very important.

For the first two years David progressed the build at a measured pace so that he was not running machinery too early in the mornings or too late at night. From the new year, however, David doubled his efforts so as to be ready for this season and the Sail Port Stephens regatta. That meant working some

twelve hour days and giving up sailing his Laser on Sundays. David and Elaine have made major project milestones a crew social occasion including turning the hull on 22 February 2016.



Passion X in the water

In the first race, David and the crew had wide grins as they snuck out of Humbug in light airs and got a handy lead on the fleet. *Meridian* did run them down but David was pleased with the debut performance. The second race was a bit stronger, and David and crew managed to score another second fastest to *Meridian*. The third race was stronger again, and *Passion X* finished mid-fleet behind *Meridian*, a visiting Sydney 36 CR, *Calliban*, and *Soundtrack*.

David and his crew are looking forward to seeing how they fare in the Sail Port Stephens regatta. David has just received his ORCi Club rating, and while he is shocked that *Passion X* is rated at 1.11, he is keen to see if they can sail to the rating.

David says that it will take a season or two to learn to sail such a light yacht to its potential. There is also some finishing trim needed to present the interior to the standard he wishes. But after that, what will he do?

Finally, David wants to thank all the club members who have taken an interest in the project and been supportive of the choice he made. It is just this interest that keeps us all motivated. For more information on the construction of *Passion X* read through [David's detailed blog](#).

David would especially like to thank:

Abacus Shade Structures - who built the awning over the hull at West Pennant Hills

and designed it to take the load of the hull when it was turned. They also gave priority to remove the roof for the lift out and put it back the same day

David Grey - the electrician who fitted in with the build program and supported David while he ran the diesel for the first time. David Grey then dropped everything to connect the mast electrics in time for the first twilight race at GFS

Joe Walsh Rigging - for getting all the essentials done on time, including: life lines, running backstays, spinnaker sheets, and blocks

Steve Jackson - for altering the sails from *Passion*. These were used on *Passion* in one week and then serviced and changed to hanks to be used on *Passion X* the next week.

"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the men to gather wood, divide the work and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea..."

- Antoine de Saint Exupery

Editor's Quiz Answers

1. Captains Rous and Stirling.

2. Using a ship as the collateral for a sea voyage.

3. Dudley Dix, 1995.

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