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## Humbug - Winter 2018

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Greenwich Flying Squadron



# HUMBUG



This photo of *Worlds Apart*, *Saoirse* and *Izzi* was snapped by GFS member (and incoming committee secretary) **James Kearney** in January.

Reminder: don't forget to **renew your GFS membership** for the 2018-19 sailing season.

# Commodore's Compass

*This season, GFS welcomes a new Commodore – Pam Joy. Pam has served as Vice Commodore since 2014.*

Welcome to the first Humbug of the 2018-19 season. I have really enjoyed being on the committee over the last four years and really appreciate the amount of teamwork that goes on behind the scenes to make GFS such a great club. I'd like to welcome new committee members **James Kearney**, **Danni Birchall**, **Martin Kluckow** and **Nick Murphy**. Our new – and some not so new – committee members are profiled [later](#) in this issue of *Humbug*.

The club has flourished under David Edmiston's leadership and is in a strong position financially as our membership continues to grow. I appreciate being given the opportunity to take on the Commodore position and hope to continue our current success. I am also keen to encourage more female participation in racing, club activities, and Committee positions. I look forward to next season and catching up with members on the water and on the deck.



**Pam Joy** - GFS commodore, is skipper on *TANA*.

*You can read more about our new Commodore in [this article](#).*

## Editor's Quiz

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

1. In which field did GFS Commodore Pam Joy work before her retirement in 2010?
2. Baggywrinkle is: A. oversized wet weather gear B. protective coating on ropes and lines, or C. poorly maintained sail fabric
3. Sponsor Joe Walsh had an interesting career before he started sailing and went into the rigging business. What was it?

## GFS News

### Former member wins international medal

Former GFS Sabot sailor Miles Davey won a bronze medal as crew in the 29er class at the [2018 Youth Sailing World Championships](#) held in Corpus Christi, USA, in July. According to a post in the [GFS Facebook group](#), final positions were very close with the top four places determined on count back.

### Skippers' Briefing

Some exciting speakers have been booked for the upcoming annual Skippers' Briefing. Captain Luke Nye from Sydney Ports Authority will be discussing the importance of listening to Channel 13 when out in the harbour – which is vital for understanding commercial traffic movements such as tankers and cruise vessels. We hope to have a patrol vessel alongside the pontoon for the meeting, although this is not yet confirmed. Tracey Ashton will also demonstrate how the defibrillator works. Please note that this meeting is compulsory for all skippers, and will be held in the Clubhouse at 1930 on Thursday 27 September.

### Save the Date: GFS Working Bee

The annual Working Bee will commence at the Clubhouse from 0900 on Saturday 11 August. Other important times, dates and locations for the season can be viewed on the GFS website at this [link](#).

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## Introducing Our New Commodore

GFS Commodore **Pam Joy** shares her sailing experiences, background and interests



*Pam Joy (R) leading the GFS fleet in LeMott.*

I grew up in Longueville in a sailing family and my earliest sailing experience was in Woodford Bay in a Sabot built by my father. My father launched the Sabot for our first sail when my brother Richard and I were six and nine years old respectively. Fortunately, it was an onshore breeze and there were very few moored boats to contend with. So, after some “trial and error”, we succeeded in negotiating our way back to shore.

Formal lessons and racing followed – through Lane Cove Sailing Club. I later graduated to owning my own Moth (wingless variety) and crewing on VJs and Hobie Cats. The latter involved a ‘short’ sail to Manly, several hours of racing, and then a sail back home. While I enjoyed racing, my best memories are of days sailing up the harbour on my own or with friends and then negotiating my way back through Humbug. Something you can never get enough of!

After a break during university and early work years I decided to return to sailing and bought my first yacht – *Tikva*, a Hood 23. My partner Lesley and I decided to try Twilight racing so joined GFS in 1987. Our first season was certainly a challenge. One evening we were hit by a freak storm just off Hunters Hill. It had been a warm, still evening but then the weather suddenly turned and we saw a mini tornado moving rapidly down the Parramatta River. We hauled in the jib and the main but still ended up with the spreaders in the water when it hit. Our outboard was safely stowed in the locker (we always sailed on and off the mooring), but we had good power and steerage all the way back through Humbug under bare spars.

Having survived that, we went on to racing on Saturdays. Uncontrolled spinnaker jibes on a mark at Onions Point provided more memorable learning experiences. After racing the Hood for several

seasons we upgraded to a Mottle 27, which had the luxury of a diesel engine and a furler. It was a great light weather boat and Twilight racer.



*Pam Joy on her current yacht, TANA, a Jeanneau 32.*

The next upgrade was to *Marabou*, a Cavalier 28, which resulted in ten years of class racing with the Cavalier Association out of Sydney Amateurs. Battling 12 or more Cavs for position on a short start line in 15kts of breeze and negotiating spinnaker drops around marks was particularly challenging for the skipper and crew.

Our current yacht, *TANA*, is a Jeanneau 32, which we race in Green Division in Twilights, Blue Division in Down Harbours and Black Division in the Combined Winter Series. The highlights of racing for me are the challenge, competition, teamwork and having fun with friends on the water.

Prior to my retirement in 2010 I had a career in paediatric neuropsychology for more than 20 years. During that time, I worked in a diverse range of clinical, research and post graduate teaching positions at both the Children's Hospital Westmead and Macquarie University. The work was demanding, but collaborating in multidisciplinary teams and mentoring interns was very rewarding.

Since retirement, sailing has stayed top of my list of interests but 'off water' I am an avid reader, belong to a book club and enjoy the challenge of cryptic crosswords. I have taken up golf and am a member of North Ryde Golf Club. Although I enjoy playing in competitions once or twice a week I am definitely a better sailor than golfer. I have been in a wine group for more than 10 years, which encourages Lesley to keep our cellar well stocked. We travel overseas most years and are looking forward to a sailing holiday in Croatia later this year.

I really like being part of the GFS community, which is friendly and very welcoming to all members. There

is always someone who is willing to give advice about rigging – or to help with repairs, share racing tales and pass on news about their about latest boat upgrades.

"The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails."

– William Arthur Ward

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## Meet the GFS Committee

Ever wondered what makes the hard-working GFS committee tick? Find out below...

### Vice Commodore: John Veale



John sails *Hasta La Vista* on Saturdays and in Green Division on Wednesday evening, where one of his main rivals is *TANA*, the Commodore's yacht. Many of the sailors on *Hasta La Vista* are also keen Heron dinghy sailors, a class in which John also sails with his grandson. The crew is very multicultural with members from France, Serbia and the US. He enjoys most things about sailing at GFS except sharing the water with party boats whose skippers do not seem to know any of the rules.

### Treasurer: Martin Kluckow

Martin sails *Rex* in Green Division. He has been sailing at GFS since 1992, and still gets a buzz out of the anticipation of Wednesday Twilight sailing: assessing the weather out of the office window at midday; sneaking off early and getting changed in the car park; meeting up with fellow conspirators; out on the boat racing; and then back for wine and a BBQ. A perfect night repeated each Wednesday in the season. Does it get any better?



### Secretary: James Kearney

James Kearney sails *Red William* in Red Division. His favourite hobby is photography – and was taught the basics as a teenager by his grandfather – a professional photographer. He owned a good camera in his early days, but it was pawned when he was overseas – penniless and too young to know better. Family and career kept James busy until he came back to photography later



in life. He has now learnt the delights of digital cameras and often takes impressive shots of the GFS Fleet in action. This photo is a self-portrait.

#### **Membership Secretary: Chris Gaskell**

Chris races regularly on *Hasta La Vista* on Saturdays and during the Winter Series, and *French Connection* during Twilights. Chris is engaged by GFS's informality, the post-race social activity on the Deck of Knowledge, and being part of an enthusiastic Committee where he can give back whilst enjoying his passion for sailing. Chris is grateful to Dion Weston – the IT Guru who covers for him when he is away travelling; and Grant Sayer, who helps keep the GFS website operating and updated. Chris co-ordinates the annual YOTS (Youth Off The Streets) on Yachts event.



#### **Social Secretary: Danni Birchall**



Danni sails on *Umzimkulu II* in Twilights Division 4. She is convinced that GFS has the best deck for watching sunsets of any sailing club in Sydney, and that the people make the club really special. Danni loves the friendly atmosphere and sense of community as members come together to enjoy the sunshine, have some fun on the boats, and share stories on the deck after the race. Add in a glass of wine and what's not to love!

#### **Rear Commodore – Twilight Sailing: Nick Murphy**

Nick has been sailing with GFS for over 20 years on board *French Connection* in Blue Division. Up until a few years ago, he was also a member of Hunters Hill Sailing Club where he was a coach and rescue boat driver for the junior sailors. Apart from sailing, he enjoys outrigger canoes, dragon boats and mountain bike riding.



#### **Rear Commodore – Saturday Sailing and Sailing Secretary: Phil Hare**

Phil has been a member of GFS since 1994. He graduated from crewing yachts at RPAYC on Pittwater to his first yacht – a Cole 23. He has had his current South Coast Magnum, *Flair*, for 30 years, and sailed at PRSC before joining GFS. Prior to this he



owned a Windrush 14 Catamaran. Since joining GFS Phil has spent several seasons on the GFS committee in a couple of different roles. He sails with the Saturday fleet, and has ventured out in Twilight races in the past, although his work now prevents this. Phil's time outside of sailing involves work, family, an active dog and in summer the beach.

#### **Laser Captain: Iain Suthers**

Iain sails dinghies on Sundays, and in the Twilight series with Geoff Lucas on *Capriole*. He loves the opportunity GFS provides to catch up with the neighbourhood, drink beer, and watch the sun set over the best view in the world. Off the water, he also enjoys various building projects around his house. He is not a fan of powerboats, and thinks they should be banned on Sydney Harbour (or at least those driven by non-sailors). Iain is fascinated by the East Australian Current and is involved with a [system](#) of observing real-time currents off Newcastle and Coffs Harbour out to 150km offshore.



#### **Safety Officer: Julian Todd**



Julian has been sailing since he was five years old and loves the sport, camaraderie and competition. He also loves his new boat: *FAREAST 28R*, but not plastic in the Harbour, which he thinks should be banned. Off the water, he is the managing director of GFS sponsor Black Vintage Wines, and loves visiting wineries (his top picks are Margaret River and McLaren Vale). His favourite things about GFS are that it is a hidden gem – cool, relaxed, and understated – with great people.

#### **Humbug Editor: Tim Kannegieter**

Tim skippers *Force Four* in Red Division. His biggest claim to fame is as a performer in the opening ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Olympics. You might recall the corrugated iron woolsheds? He was a sheet of tin. The thing Tim loves most about sailing at GFS is the row back to the club after a race when the sun is setting and the water turns into a rippling kaleidoscope of colours. Life doesn't get better than that.



#### **Thanks also to:**

**Patron:** Keith Tierney (profiled in the last *Humbug* and [here](#))

**Clubhouse Manager:** Mark Rhodes

**Liquor Licensee:** Michael Murphy

**Webmaster/Handicapper:** Harvey Porter

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## A Taste of GFS Social History

Member **Rosalie Lucas** shares some of her research into historical GFS social activities



*Picnic at Clontarf, mid-1930s (Photo courtesy of Bob Chapman)*

*Back Row, L to R: Kev Gorman, Merv Venables, Norman (Skipper) Brooks, unknown*

*Middle Row: Alexander (Sandy) Cowie, Don Chapman, unknown, unknown*

*Front Row: unknown, Tom Chapman, unknown, unknown*

The 1999 publication *Greenwich Flying Squadron – the First 75 Years* indicates a history of vibrant social activities as an adjunct to the sailing camaraderie of GFS. These included: barbecues and dances at the club and other venues; themed evenings such as Italian nights and reef and beef nights; champagne breakfasts, and picnics. Other highlights were: group sailing to Ashton Park or Killarney Picnic Grounds in Middle Harbour; cruises to Pittwater; end-of-season dinner dances with trophy presentations; and a Sail Past to open each sailing season.

In the very early years, the club hired launches to carry members to picnic outings. An article in the

October 1926 issue of *Sailing* magazine describes Greenwich 12ft Flying Squadron's first picnic, including the hearty appetite of jazz entertainer Fatty Utick:

*"During this function Fatty Utick (who distinguished himself by consuming 33 sandwiches and 27 cakes 'just for practice') was presented by the secretary with a large apple pie, suitably inscribed."*

This outing appeared to be an overnight camp, because the story goes on to relate a sports programme next day on Clarke Island with trophies donated and presented to the winners by the club patron Wesley West.



*Baseball and rounders at Hallett's Beach, Pittwater, Easter 2006*

A tradition not likely to be reinstated, however, is the twice yearly men-only "smoko" evenings held during the 1940s and 1950s!

The club has grown immensely since those days. Geoff and I purchased *Capriole* in 1995, and well into the 2000s we enormously enjoyed the Pittwater Easter cruises to Hallett's Beach or Refuge Bay. It was such fun playing beach cricket, baseball or rounders – not to mention swimming, rowing ashore for drinks and nibbles on the beach at dusk, and bushwalking.

Perhaps some club members outside the hard-working committee would consider banding together to organise an outing or two for the general membership – encompassing Saturday, Sunday and

Wednesday sailors? This may be something to think about between now and the club's fast approaching centenary year in 2024.

Baggywrinkle is the protective covering on shipboard lines and ropes that stops them from damaging the sails when they rub against them.

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## Sponsor Profile: Joe Walsh

Humbug editor **Tim Kannegieter** caught up with GFS sponsor **Joe Walsh** to chat about sailing... and music.



*Joe Walsh in his office.*

Joe Walsh was a professional bicycle racer with Peugeot until he was 22, but got into sailing because it suited his young family better than the high pressure of training, racing and travelling on the bike racing circuit. He went on to sail in six national titles around the country before he started sailing Fireballs and competed in a further five national titles. The sport also took him overseas to England.

After this exciting time, Joe joined the St George sailing club and started sailing 16-footers, which he has now been sailing for 30 years. He mainly sailed his own boat with his son as a fourth hand. Joe's son started sailing as a bucket boy at seven (he was supposed to be eight) and by nine Joe's son was an accomplished sailor. Joe and his son still sail Joe's 16-footer. He has always sailed "good second hand" fibreglass boats, and his latest is all carbon fibre. He has also dabbled in sailing quarter-tonners ("joggy" boats) and dinghies.

No stranger to ocean racing, Joe has 14 Sydney to Hobarts under his belt. He was one of the winning crew in the Melbourne to Hobart in 1996 and came in second across the line in the Brisbane to Osaka race in 1994 on *Future Shock*. Joe narrowly escaped tragedy during the 1998 Sydney to Hobart deadly storm, when *Winston Churchill*, which he sailed on in 1997, sank – drowning three of his mates.

While pursuing this busy sailing schedule, Joe started his career in mast building and rigging with Sparcraft. Thirty-five years ago, he started his own business and hasn't looked back. Joe is one of the select few riggers in Sydney with AYF rigging certification.

Joe says he learnt a lot from the more experienced sailors he sailed with, especially in offshore races. The most famous sailor he worked with was the late New Zealander Sir Peter Blake – who won all six legs of the 1989-90 Whitbread Round the World Race on maxi ketch *Steinlager II*. Joe sailed with Peter in the Trans Tasman race during the late 1980s.



*Joe Walsh sailing the 2015 Sydney to Hobart*

According to Joe, great sailors are cautious and don't make mistakes: "you keep your nose clean, you get a good start, you look for clear air, and you don't get into protests," he says. And a good crew is important too, Joe says:

*“And a good crew is not a world champion crew. You'd never have a world champion on board ... if you're slipping the boat, they'll come and help you antifoul. That's a good crew.”*

For sailors wanting to win races, Joe offers the following advice: learn to sail dinghies first. “Doesn't matter if you're 60 or 70, get into a dinghy and learn to sail it. You make one mistake, you're in the drink,” he says.

Joe has experienced some hair-raising adventures on the water – the strongest wind he's sailed in is 100kts. He said before there were weather computers to warn of strong winds, the first sign was a drop in the barometer. Then all the bird-life disappeared, the water got flat and dark, and the wind came as a cigar. To prepare for a storm, Joe says the crew needs to be fed, the sails taken down, and the on-watch have fresh clothes ready to come back up if needed.

According to Joe, many overly-adventurous boats in the Sydney to Hobart – who put up their No. 5 jib and four reefs in the main rather than dropping sails altogether in a storm – have lost their rigging in Bass Strait. When Joe spoke to *Humbug*, he had just put in a mast for a yacht which had lost its carbon fibre rig and brand-new sails in a storm during the last Sydney to Hobart.

“It cost them a lot of money and they didn't get to Hobart. It's pointless,” Joe said.



*In a sea of masts at Joe Walsh Rigging*

Joe's hardest race was his winning campaign in the 1996 Melbourne to Hobart. He spent 41 hours on the rail: "you steered and did your hour steering, and then back on the rail," he says. And going under the bottom of Tasmania was the coldest he's ever been.

His most interesting race was the Brisbane to Osaka, where he saw fishing fleets with 10-mile long drift

nets. He also got in a lot of bird-watching during this race, as birds would follow the yacht for several days, coasting in the lee of the mainsail. Another spectacle Joe has come across is sharks feeding on schools of tuna –launching themselves into the air with fish in their mouths.

He's also seen plenty of whales and hit three during ocean races. One of these incidents was during the 1995 Sydney to Hobart, when they were coming third, but collided with a whale and ended the race at Eden. Joe says while the yacht was tied up for repairs, there was a queue of parents 400m long waiting to show their kids the boat that hit a whale.

Joe, who reluctantly learned piano as a child, believes sailing and music are very similar:

"In a piece of music, there's ups and downs, louder and softer and a little bit of staccato. And in sailing, there's lifts and knocks. And the work to the finish is up the top of the bottle towards the neck, so your tacks are shorter towards the finishing line. And in music, your music usually builds up towards the end of it, the piece, in tempo and sound to a great end."

Joe says GFS is the best club he's ever sailed out of, because it's family oriented with no poker machines. And he also enjoys the camaraderie:

*"The barbecues are great. And the races are more friendly than any other race of any club I've sailed in."*

Joe's final word of advice was about the Humbug: "You're always better to come into Humbug behind another couple of boats; that's my advice," he says.

## Editor's Quiz Answers

1. Paediatric neuropsychology.
2. B.
3. Professional bicycle racer.

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