

Humbug - Autumn 2019

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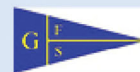
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Greenwich Flying Squadron



HUMBUG



This great shot of the Sabots rounding the mark at GFS was snapped by member **Richard Hawkins**. GFS Junior sailor **Sophie Hawkins** is in the lead, followed by **Olivia and Tim Kannegieter**, with **Ayden** and **Tristan** not far behind. GFS owns four Sabots that can be lent to newcomers as well as some Lasers for older children. If you have kids or grandchildren interested in learning to sail, please bring them along at 12.30pm any Sunday during the sailing season. A professional coach is on hand to provide advice and training. Parents are able to assist on the water with the rescue boats. It's a great afternoon out in the fresh air and away from computers. You can read about the adventures of GFS Junior Sabot sailor **Olivia Kannegieter** [later](#) in this issue.

Call for Volunteers – Winter Sailing Start Boat

GFS needs volunteers to assist on the start boat for the Winter sailing series.

The races will be held every second Sunday (5, 19 May; 2, 16, 30 June; 14 July)

Please help support GFS by letting either **Danni Birchall** or **Phil Hare** know when you will be available.

Commodore's Compass

The Twilight season is coming to an end and once again it seems that we have had “the wettest season ever”.

While only one race was abandoned due to a severe weather warning, we had multiple nights of light winds and /or wet conditions. We continued to have good size fleets and healthy competition in all divisions, but fewer sailors braved the rain and stayed back for dinner. Hopefully, our next Twilight season will bring a return of fine weather, 10 to 15-knot breezes, stunning sunsets and wonderful nights on the deck.

Congratulations again to all GFS sailors who have competed in major sailing events over the past season. In particular, well done to *Ausreo*, *Infotrack* and *Jackpot* for achieving such impressive results in the Sydney to Hobart race. We have a large number of GFS yachts entered in the Port Stephens Regatta this year. Good luck to all those sailors competing in this event.

Although the Twilight season is drawing to a close, the Combined West Harbour Winter series starting in May gives us the chance to continue with some great winter racing. Balmain Sailing Club is responsible for race organisation, Drummoyne Sailing Club provides the start boat and GFS provides support crew on the start boat. This is a great opportunity for sailors (male and female) to learn about start and race procedures and to enjoy a few hours on the Harbour on what is usually a sunny afternoon.

I look forward to seeing you at the prize presentation on 25 May.



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

GFS News

Skippers' Safety Survey

Thank you to **Julian Todd** and the GFS safety subcommittee for undertaking a very successful survey of skippers' views on issues related to the safety of the start line and entry into Humbug. The participation rate was extremely high (92%) and there was positive feedback from skippers who appreciated the opportunity to have their views heard. The results have been published separately and details of final recommendations will be put on the [GFS website](#) once the committee has completed its review of the findings.

Dinghy Storage Waitlist

Under our dinghy storage policy, GFS gives priority to sailors active in GFS races. Following a review of tenders stored in the club, we have been able to reallocate a number of racks. There are also four new spots on the side of the ramp. These two developments have significantly reduced the number of people on our waitlist for dinghy storage. Details of the waitlist and applications for tender storage are now available on the [GFS website](#).

Clubhouse Refurbishment and Trophy Display

The GFS Clubhouse refurbishment is almost complete, and our trophies have been returned to the display area. Following the arson attack at Lane Cove Skiff Club last September we made a decision to store our trophies offsite while we reviewed our security and fire protection needs. An upgrade of the security system will be undertaken and we are currently investigating the feasibility of a sprinkler system. While our trophies were off-site we had the opportunity to refurbish the Clubhouse display area. A big thank you goes to **Adrian Van Bellen** for the time and effort he has put into redesigning the display area, choosing a colour scheme and doing the painting. Thanks also to **Rosalie Lucas**, who spent many hours cleaning and polishing trophies and providing invaluable information regarding the history and significance of individual items.

You can read about the history of the Gore Creek trophy [later](#) in this issue of *Humbug*.

Learning How to Sail

Eight-year-old **Olivia Kannegieter** shares her sailing experiences and what she loves about GFS



Sabots racing in a triangle course in front of the club

Learning how to sail is scary but also fun.

My Dad has been sailing as long as I remember. I went down to the club and watched the boats sail on the harbour. I knew someday I would be sailing on the water too. Before I could sail, my Dad told me I had to be able to swim 25 metres. So I had lots of swimming lessons.

Last winter I started going out on the dinghy to the boat to help Dad fix things up. It was a big climb to get onto the boat. In the spring, I started sailing on Force Four on Wednesday evenings. At first, it was scary. I had to get used to the boat heeling over. But once I got used to it wasn't so scary. Sometimes Dad lets me steer the boat and I have started helping skirt the sail.

After sailing on Wednesday, I talk to my grandma and friends. I eat chips and crackers with dip. I have sausages for dinner and sometimes Daddy lets me have an ice cream. I would like to stay for prize giving but Daddy makes me go home to sleep.

After Christmas, I started Sabot sailing on Sundays. My dad sails on the Sabot with me and sometimes I bring a friend. I have learnt how to do the main sheet and the tiller. I'm good at doing 360s. The sabot is called *Miss Behaving*. My dad just got a new sail for her.

We do little races in a triangle in front of the club. I have won most of the races, but Daddy helps me a bit. It's mainly because we are at the start line on time when the others are still mucking around. After Sabot sailing, we play games on the deck and the older kids jump into the water. The mums and dads bring food. I like brownies, rockmelon and chips. It is so much fun!

Olivia Kannegieter sails on Force Four in the Twilights and Sabots on Sundays.



Olivia (L) and Tim Kannegieter on the water

GFS Member Benefits at Longueville Sporting Club

The Longueville Sporting Club (The Diddy) generously provided storage and display facilities during the GFS Clubhouse refurbishment. GFS greatly appreciates their support and welcomes an affiliation between our two clubs. As part of this affiliation the Diddy will offer GFS members:

1. Free one-year membership
2. 10% discount on beverage sales
3. Free use of facilities for meetings and functions

Membership application forms are available on the GFS noticeboard.

An Epic Voyage

GFS guest, **Isabel Zwicker**, shares her adventurous journey across the Pacific from Seattle to Sydney.



Inside passage, Canada (photo: Isabel Zwicker)

It took us a while to realize that we would actually live the dream that has evolved over almost two years. We said we would be small heroes if we bought a boat and went cruising for a couple of months, and big heroes if we could make it across the Pacific. Now here we are in beautiful Sydney having the privilege to become friends with **Maree** and **Adrian Van Bellen** and be able to race with wonderful people in Sydney Harbour.

We met Adrian in December last year in one of the lovely bays at Pittwater when cruising down the coast from Brisbane where before making landfall in Sydney. Thanks to our Swiss flag we soon found out that our neighbour for the night (Adrian) speaks a little Swiss German from when he lived and worked in Switzerland close to our home town during his younger years.

Tom and I both spent most of our lives in a landlocked country, so sailing the Pacific was not the obvious choice when looking for an adventure. Our experience grew from sailing on Lake Zurich and sailing holidays in the Baltic Sea, Mediterranean and North Sea in recent years. After these holidays, it was clear to me that I would not go on another sailing trip unless we could make our own decisions about where and at what pace we wanted to go. Even though Tom was becoming very enthusiastic about sailing, it still took us more than a year to progress from talking about options to making our dream come true.

Jade Akka, our 54-foot steel cutter rig, was our home since we bought her in Seattle in June 2017 and started our epic journey. Setting off into the wild of the rugged and sometimes isolated landscape of the Canadian coasts, we didn't know what challenges and great experiences lay ahead of us. We felt pretty intimidated by the name given to the capes of the west coast of Vancouver Island: *graveyards of the Pacific*. But our tension and concerns were dispelled by the sight of migrating whales close to our hull. Luckily these weren't the last peaceful giants we saw on our journey. We were spoiled by the abundance of Canadian wildlife. Who needs a TV if you can watch bald eagles hunting and seals playing? Not to mention listening to howling wolves in a safe anchorage with nobody around – just you and the stunning natural scenery.



Jade Akka in Canada



... and in Mexico

We could not get rid of the goosebumps, racing hearts, and grinning faces caused by all the excitement. After spending the summer in Canada, we slowly made our way southwards along the west coast of the US. We stayed in San Francisco for about one month to catch up with family and friends. With the seasons changing and our US visa expiry dates in mind, we headed towards Baja California of Mexico.

Where would we go from there? Did we want to go north again for summer, or would we dare to do the puddle jump? The decision was quickly made after three months relaxing in stunning anchorages, snorkelling, spearfishing with other cruisers, and enjoying the friendly atmosphere of the Mexican communities. So we jumped knowing *Jade Akka* was in good shape again after some minor repairs, all necessary information was written down and we had our storage full of food to make it a successful, event-free crossing.

The excitement got a bit too much for our taste after our whisker pole broke, and our only choice was to go down-wind. Luckily Tom managed to fix it on the way and we were pretty confident that we would cross the equator on Tom's birthday.

It is hard to describe the feeling of making landfall in paradise after 21 days of open-ocean sailing. We slowly made our way along the French Polynesian Island chain toward Tonga. *Adios* whales, burritos and sombreros, hello sharks, *poisson cru* and hula skirts. We understand why many cruisers do not want to leave this paradise. The warmth of the people and the relaxed and simple lifestyle can suck you in. But there is much more to see out there. Tonga and Fiji. Maybe the last paradise? Before the journey turned south into colder climates we enjoyed more scenic beaches, steep reefs, big fish, manta rays and local hospitality. But every exciting journey has to come to an end. We learned in Fiji that Tom got an excellent job offer in Sydney which we could not turn down. Eight years ago we had looked for jobs in Sydney without luck, but this time we might make it our new home.

We are grateful that our backpacks are filled with experiences and wonderful memories. Our journey included difficult situations when we thought *why are we doing this?* But looking back we would not want to miss a single moment, and are looking forward to adding more of those great moments to our lives here in Australia. Hopefully, *Jade Akka* will be a part of our future adventures.

You can read more about Isabel's adventures on her [blog](#).



Isabel and Tom at the Tuamotu Islands in French Polynesia

“The Westerly Wind asserting his sway from the southwest is often like a monarch gone mad, driving forth with wild imprecations the most faithful of his courtiers to shipwreck, disaster, and death.”

- Joseph Conrad, *The Mirror of the Sea*

Editor's Note: Member John Amos suggested this description could be applied to a 30-knot Sou'wester at GFS

My Neighbour Keith

Marianne Urth shares her memories of our late Patron **Keith Tierney**, her neighbour, who helped her find her feet when she moved to Greenwich from Chile.