



Largs Bay Sailing Club

Recollections of the early days at LBSC

Articles courtesy of Doug Hogg

How I got into sailing.

In the late thirties 1939, my father was a Railway Detective and during weekends, he was responsible for guarding the huge amount of Railways freight at Port Adelaide. He took me there on Sundays, and during lunch hour, we went to the wharfs.

Two incidents set me on a course of boating.

A dinghy was moored at the foot of steps running down to the river. I asked whether I could step aboard the boat, and he said "Yes but be careful". I stepped aboard and a strange feeling came over me. I felt that I had done that before, but I never had and was quite comfortable standing inside the boat.

Later, a group of boys arrived in tin canoes, and were picking up floating beer bottles. This was a great idea, apart from a bully who pressed down the bow of one of the canoes, sinking it and then taking all the bottles. I had never seen tin canoes and later, I managed to find sheets of corrugated galvanised iron and built my first "boats" after stamping out the corrugations bending it in halves and nailing wood inside each end, tarring each with tar scraped off the road in front of our house. I named it "Pelican" using Dad's paint.

Later tin canoes were improved .

On one canoe I installed a wooden mast, a square sail and a rudder. The sail was an old bed sheet. Sitting inside the canoe, I could not see ahead, so I cut a hole in the "sail". My sisters went into hysterics. However, I carried the "yacht" to the river Torrens under the Railway Bridge near the Weir. While sitting in the "yacht" a gust of wind shot it up the river at speed.

I was thereafter hooked on boats and sailing.

Doug Hogg

Building sailing boats.

When I was 14, "The SA Farmers Union" company sent me to Urrbrae Agricultural College before I started work at their factory. With all the farmer's sons and teachers raving on about the Land, I found a refuge in the college library. Among the books was the American editions of "Popular Science" and "Popular Mechanics".

I was thrilled to find a multi-page article about a small plywood dinghy, with the plans and all the details explaining how easy it was to build. I still have the plans and that was the best thing I learned at the agricultural college. I showed my Father the plans and he said we were not able to build a boat.

My first step was to visit a derelict army camp in the sand hills near Lockleys, where waste timber was laying about. I hand sawed the timber for the frames according to the plans, and nailed them together and stood them up in sequence in the back yard. When Dad arrived home I took him to see the "boat" and he exclaimed "We can build that!"

Recollections of the early days at LBSC – by Doug Hogg (2011)

We completed the frame and it was pulled up to the rafters in the shed until cladding materials became available as the war was still on. We later finished the boat and then later again we stretched the plans to build better versions. One later version of the boats was traded with J. N. Taylors & Co in exchange for a brand new gaff rigged mainsail for my first 12 Square Metre Sharpie.

Over the years, I built two 12 Square Metre Sharpies, Six Lightweight Sharpies, including one for Robin Wright, who won the Club Championship and also one for Robert McPharlin, who won a first and fastest in the first heat of the Nationals in Melbourne. Robin Murrin and I jointly built the above boats plus our boat "Sheer Guts and Determination", which won the Club Championship in 1980; proving that these boats were up to the standard of all the others.

Both the McPharlin and the Wright boats were built just for the fun of building them and without payment to keep up the number of Sharpies at the Largs bay Club. I later built a series of Holdfast Trainers and six Herons all adding up to about 50 boats built by me during my lifetime. The Holdfast Trainers were the easiest to build and in former days required only several pieces of scrap timber, and three sheets of 3/16 inch thick plywood.

I still don't know why boats are not built in timber by those who wish to sail. Look at the price of boats these days and all that fibreglass!

Doug Hogg

Some early memories of Somerton, Brighton and Largs Bay

I joined the Largs Bay Sailing Club on Saturday, April 3 1954. Previously I had sailed at Brighton & Seacliff Yacht Club and before that at the Somerton Yacht Club. I was a member at Somerton when the clubhouse was destroyed by a "hurricane" in May 1953.

I first raced in a small VJ (Vaucluse Junior) for two years, and then built my first Sharpie in 1951. I took my Sharpie home a week before the Somerton Yacht Club was washed away. Some older members of Largs Bay may remember some of the ten boats that were destroyed. They were the Sharpies named Miranda, Britania, Flash, Little Sport, Cloverlea (1), Radiant, and Valkyrie and also the Cadet dinghies named Seagull, Urana, and Taiping. The Sharpie "Kismet" was saved but badly damaged

My sailing log book includes the following entry:

After all the trouble of getting bogged at Brighton on the sandy road existing at that time, I decided to try Largs Bay. Laurie Deacon talked me into joining the club. I found that I had no trouble taking the car and boat right to the water's edge.

My first day at Largs turned out to be a rough sea, and we easily planed down each wave, and when coming ashore after the race, a mob of members helped me to put the boat onto my very high home-made trailer. After on the dance floor area, a young girl was playing the piano and a couple were dancing to the music. I was impressed with the social atmosphere and immediately joined the club. We were living at Woodville at the time and after joining the LBSC, I did not have to drive to Brighton each week end

Doug Hogg!

Funny incidents at Largs Bay Sailing club

Winter at the club brought forth repairs to boats down in the boat shed included repainting became a busy time. Look at the remaining names on the rafters.

One episode was the painting of Harry Hewitt's Heavy-weight Sharpie. Harry arrived with a spray gun set, and sprayed his Sharpie in the boat shed.

Arnie Deed's Heavy-weight Sharpie, "Wingin" which had been re-varnished and looked like a million Dollars, was also stored in the shed.

You have guessed it Harry's SHARPIE WAS BEAUTIFULLY PAINTED, BUT SO were all the other boats, including WINGIN. Arnie was not amused.

When the Light-weight Sharpies were introduced, Harry Line said that the Heavy-weight Sharpies could be stripped down to nearly the same weight as the Light-weights.

Harry Howett took the idea to heart, and began to strip his boat. It was at the time I was considering stripping my beautiful new H/W Sharpie, but changed my mind. At the time I was short of one crew-member. I called at the shed to see what was going on and I found a very young Robin Murrin inside Harry's boat with a lever, pulling out frames, filling the boat with sawdust and splintered timber.

Later, Harry changed his mind and sold the Sharpie. As Harry was now out of a boat, I took Robin to crew with me. Robin stayed with me in all my later boats for 40 years and was a member of LBSC until his death on June 10, at 6pm Saturday 2000.

Arnie Deed stripped the "Wingin" down to nearly the weight of the Light-weight Sharpies, and began winning races. He was taken to task by the SA Association that the boat was not a Light-weight, because it was not built of ply-wood. Arnie appealed the decision on the description of plywood. Because, when he built the Wingin, he planked it with two layers of timber, making the width of the required 9/16th inch planking which when staggered, avoided the open seams of each plank. He lost the fight, and then produced a new ply-wood Light-weight called Zero. He again blitzed the field.

Doug Hogg