

Paul Ross

Among the many skills of L. Herbert Beecroft, the water colour painter of the caricatures on display at the northern entrance of the Club, was hand writing. In fact, Beecroft was often professionally employed in this capacity and the following reference demonstrates that he was still active at age 67.

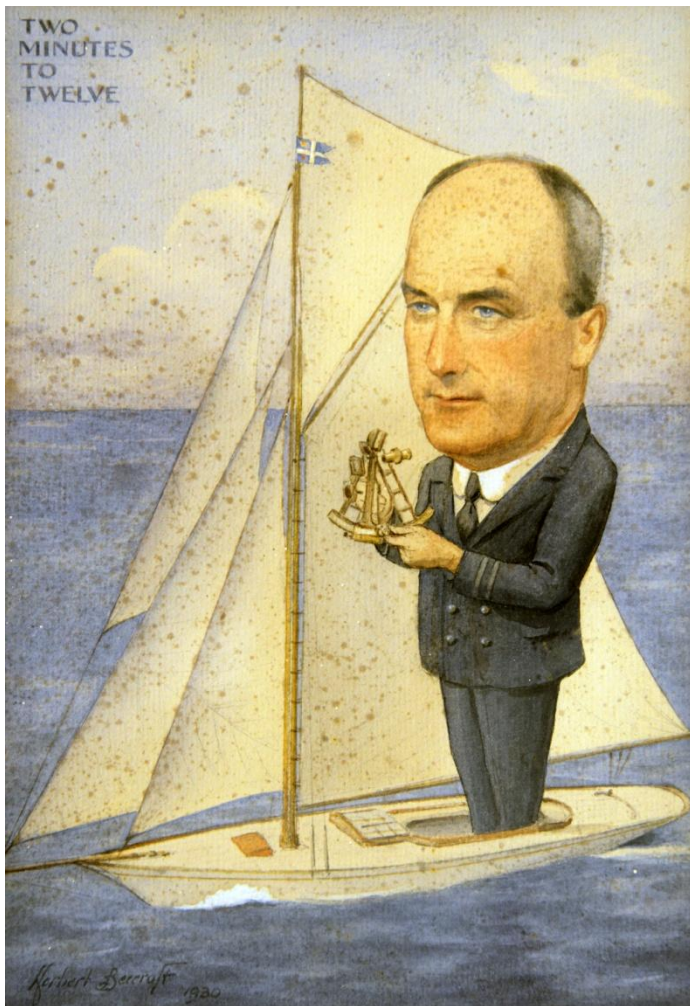
Tuesday, 13th October, 1931 - Lismore Northern Star

COMMITTED FOR TRIAL,

SYDNEY, Monday

*At the Central Police Court Alice Dunn (34), wife of Senator Dunn, was committed for trial on a charge of false pretences. **Herbert Beecroft**, hand writing expert, expressed the opinion that the signature, James P. Dunn on certain documents was written by Alice Dunn.*

It was around this time that Beecroft produced his last paintings for the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron. In 1930, at age 66, his skill had not diminished. The subject of this essay is Paul Alfred Ross who at the time was the Commodore of the Club. Mr. Ross also was an ex-Commodore of the Royal Prince Alfreds, which was not uncommon because the Clubs were so closely allied.



The yacht on which Mr. Ross stands is “Sayonara”, which he had owned for almost 20 years in 1930. This is the same “Sayonara” which has been magnificently restored and appeared in Sydney in the last decade at Classic Boat events around the harbour. She currently resides in Melbourne.

Mr. Ross holds a sextant in his hands and with the caption at the top left hand side, “Two minutes to Twelve”,

he is on standby to get his noon sights. He clearly was a navigator and I note that he was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. The skills required to use a sextant are now gone as GPS and Satellite navigation have superseded the ancient art.

The Squadron burgee flies from the top of the mast and the surroundings indicate that Mr. Ross is off the coast.

This caricature is one of quite a few which is in need of restoration. In John Jeremy's photo, foxing is clearly evident and the colours are not as vivid as they once were.

"Sayonara" was such an important vessel at the turn of the last century that I have been able to locate many articles with reference to her. Here are some examples.

Thursday, 21st March, 1912 - Evening News

THE SAYONARA WEATHER BOUND.

The yacht Sayonara, which has been purchased from Mr. Dickson, of Victoria, by Mr. Paul Ross, of Sydney, was weather-bound at Oberon Bay, Wilson's Promontory, on Wednesday at 5 p.m. and reported 'all well.' The yacht left Queenscliffe on Saturday morning last for Sydney, with a crew of six, in charge of Mr. W. Parker. The owner is represented by Mr. W. E. Moore. If she gets away to-day, and is favored by good weather, she may reach Port Jackson in about five or six days.

Wednesday, 28th May, 1913 - Evening News

THE BIG REGATTA.

KEENNESS OF THE VICTORIANS SAYONARA'S SKIPPER EXPLAINS.

Mr. Paul Ross, owner and skipper of the yacht Sayonara, has returned to Sydney from Melbourne, and when seen by an 'Evening News' reporter spoke of the prospects of the proposed Australian regatta which the Victorian yachtsmen are organising. Mr. Ross said, 'I was in Melbourne on private business, and naturally was interested in the scheme, and desired to find out all I could. For this reason I accepted an invitation to a big meeting of delegates from the various sailing Clubs, held in Melbourne last week. There is no doubt about the spirit of the thing; these men are determined on making the regatta a success. Personally, I gave them all the encouragement possible; but also gave them clearly to understand that I was not speaking on behalf of anybody else. I was not a delegate.' Mr. Ross then mentioned that in addition to the races to be provided for visiting boats to the big regatta, other Clubs were prepared to place events on for their particular day before or after regatta; while the Brighton Club would have a regatta on its own, offering inducements to visitors. 'There is one statement I wish to contradict,' said Sayonara's owner and skipper. 'It has been stated in some of the papers that I have appointed Mr. W. H. Parker of Melbourne, as skipper of my vessel, and that he is coming to Sydney to take charge. Now, this is pure imagination on somebody's part. I have not appointed anybody, nor do I intend asking anyone to take the tiller. If the boat goes to Melbourne I will be there, and will sail her, too. That is why I bought the boat. I don't know how such a statement originated. Then, again, it is said a purse of sovereigns is being arranged for a race from Sydney to Melbourne. That, too, is moonshine.'

The following extract from "Sydney Sails" indicates a direction for the Club which is still evolving 100 years later.

"Again, in 1914, there was an unofficial race, under Squadron auspices, for yachts with ladies at the helm. Mrs. Paul Ross steered Sayonara to victory, with Mrs. R. Adams second in Culwulla III, and Mrs. T. W. Bremner third in Scotia. At this time, as from its foundation, membership of the Squadron was a male prerogative. However, from its earliest years, a delightful aspect of cruising and other outings in Squadron yachts had been the presence of ladies on board, some of whom became adept in handling sail and tillers. The Ladies' Races of 1911 and 1914 indicated the shape of things to come, when ladies would eventually be admitted as associate members of the Squadron."

The next reference indicates that Mr. Ross must have learnt significant navigation skills.

Friday, 6th July, 1923 - Sydney Morning Herald

Mr. Paul Ross, commodore of the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club, has passed the Board of Trade examination for a certificate as master of a foreign-going yacht.

Tuesday, 21st October, 1930 - Sydney Morning Herald

YACHT SQUADRON.

FLAG OFFICERS.

On the departure of Lord Stonehaven, who, during his term of office in Australia, was commodore of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, the position of senior flag officer became vacant. At the general meeting, held in the Clubhouse, Kirribilli Point, Mr. Paul Ross was elected commodore, Mr. E. J. Bayly-Macarthur was appointed vice-commodore, and Mr. James L. Milson rear-commodore. The commodore, Mr. Paul Ross, commenced his yachting career 27 years ago, when as owner of the half-rater Corella he raced with the Sydney Amateurs and the Neutral Bay Amateur Sailing Club. Three years later, in partnership with the late Professor S. J. Johnstone, he became owner of the 26ft coach-house cruiser 'Canita'. In 1911, he purchased his present yacht, the Sayonara, which had up to that date, represented Victoria in all the Sayonara Cup races. Mr. Ross took possession of her in Melbourne, and brought her to Sydney, racing until a few years ago with the various Clubs. Joining the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron in 1911, he was elected rear-commodore in 1925, and in 1928 took office as vice-commodore. Mr. Ross has always taken a keen interest in all yachting activities, having been a member of the committee of the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club for the past 19 years and commodore in 1920-22. He has been one of the representatives of the Prince Edward Yacht Club on the Sydney Yacht Racing Association since 1927. In 1922, Mr. Ross qualified for a foreign-going master's certificate, and is one of the few Sydney yachtsmen so qualified.

Here are 2 pictures of "Sayonara", then and now.



Tuesday, 22nd June, 1937 - Sydney Morning Herald

OPENING OF SEASON.

ROYAL SYDNEY YACHT SQUADRON.

The beautiful old garden at the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, Kirribilli, which forms a natural amphitheatre with its gentle slope towards the water's edge, was well filled with an audience of three hundred guests on Saturday afternoon, who gathered to watch the races held to celebrate the opening of the sailing season. Other guests preferred vantage points on the yachts moored alongside the squadron's wharf, which were gaily dressed in honour of the occasion. The garden party is one given annually by the members of the squadron to mark the beginning of the summer season, and is much looked forward to by the guests, as the Clubhouse is noted as a perfect setting for parties.

Tea was served at small tables on the lawn, and afterwards there was dancing on the wide verandah. The associates' Clubroom, as well as the other Clubrooms, were also well patronised later in the afternoon, when the chill wind drove many of the guests indoors.

Mr. Paul Ross (commodore of the squadron) and Mrs. Ross were among those who brought parties, Mrs. Ross wearing a black tailored suit and a small black bowler hat. Mr. E. J. Bayly-Macarthur (vice-commodore), was accompanied by Mrs. Macarthur, who was in a tobacco brown frock and coat and a brown hat. Mr. J. L. Milson (rear-commodore) and Mrs. Milson and Mr. J. Murray (hon. treasurer) also entertained parties.....

Mr. Ross died on the 20th of June, 1937, and the following obituary appeared 2 days later.

Tuesday, 22nd June, 1937 - Sydney Morning Herald

MR. PAUL ROSS.

Mr. Paul A. Ross, aged 58, who died at his home in the Appian Way, Burwood, on Sunday, was a director of Ross Brothers, Ltd., printers, Kent-street, Sydney. After leaving school he joined his elder brothers, Messrs. Hector L. and Albert Ross, in carrying on the business founded by his father, the late Mr. Hector Ross in 1862. The business was transferred to Kent-street in 1875, and was incorporated in 1905.

Mr. Ross was one of Sydney's best-known yachtsmen. He began his racing career in 1903 with the Sydney Amateur and Neutral Bay Amateur Sailing Clubs. In 1911 he became the owner of the Sayonara, which, up to that date, had represented Victoria, in all the Sayonara Cup races. He took possession of the craft in Melbourne and sailed her to Sydney.

He was rear-commodore of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron in 1925, vice-commodore in 1928, and commodore in 1930. He retained the latter rank until last year, when Lord Gowrie was appointed to the senior office and Mr. Ross became vice-commodore. For 19 years he was on the committee of the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club. In 1924, he was elected a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

Mr. Ross was interested in tennis and was president of the Appian Way Club. He is survived by Mrs. Ross.

April, 2015