

R H Binnie

Ten years before L. Herbert Beecroft painted the caricature of R. Herbert Binnie in 1909, he was at work in his hometown of Reading in England. Here is a reference to him in the local rag.

Saturday, 30th December, 1899 - Reading Mercury MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY.

*It is estimated that over 70,000 persons visited the Reading Museum and Art Gallery during the past twelve months, fully confirming the public's appreciation of this excellent Institution. The Art Gallery opened the year with a very successful exhibition, under the auspices of the Berkshire Art Society, of paintings in oil and water colours, by Berkshire Artists. There were about 250 works exhibited, a number of which found purchasers. This being the first exhibition of the kind, it must be considered most satisfactory. The works, taken collectively, were of good standard, and spoke well for the artistic taste of Berkshire artist residents. During the early part of the year a collection of engravings, prints, and water colours, illustrating old Reading and neighbourhood, was formed. This has since been handsomely added to by Mr. Councillor McIlroy, who presented ten watercolour paintings of old Reading, by **Mr. Herbert Beecroft**.*

By the time he undertook the painting of Mr. Binnie, Beecroft had completed almost a dozen paintings. I have always wondered in what order he chose the subjects. Most of them are in "portrait" format but some are "landscape" and these are the ones displayed on the eastern wall of the northern entrance to the Squadron.

The painting of Mr. Binnie has him at the helm of his beloved "Bona", sail number 19. A full set of sails are flying, including a spinnaker and the Squadron burgee is flying from the top of the mast. In the top left hand corner is a crest showing a gent in a red striped bathing suit wading into the ocean. The caption says "Salis



bene in Mare” which in literal Latin means “salt well in sea.” Alternatively, the word “bene” meaning well, could be a pun on Binnie so a less literal translation could be “Salty Binnie in the ocean.” Alternatively, it could simply be “A fine Salt on the sea.”

Comparison of the profile of Mr. Binnie in the painting to the frontal head shot I located in “**Sydney Sails**” once again demonstrates the accuracy of Beecroft’s brush. In spite of the completely different angles, the resemblance is remarkable.



The “Bona” was a 36 footer built in Auckland, New Zealand, of kauri, which was ‘seasoned’ in salt water for at least two years before construction. The yacht was designed and built by New Zealand boat designer and craftsman Charles Bailey. She was brought to Australia by Mr. J. E. Chinnery and purchased by Mr. Binnie in 1903. He sold her in 1917 during the 1st World War. The photo of the “Bona” comes courtesy of **The State Library of NSW**.

Wednesday, 6th January, 1904 - Evening News

The Yacht Race.

BONA GETTING READY.

*As the time for the great yacht race between the Victorian craft Sayonara and the Sydney owned Bona approaches, every effort is being taken to have the latter vessel in readiness for the contest. The vessel is now on the slip at Blue's Point and being overhauled. Dominey is looking after the sails, while Mr. Walter Reeks is superintending other alterations. A number of hands are engaged, and the work is being carried out with all speed. It is hoped that she will be in the water tomorrow, so that the crew may have a field day, for the purpose of "finding out" their ship. The Bona was built at Auckland, in 1900, for Mr. Chinnery, of Sydney, and only changed hands within the past few weeks, the owner being **Mr. H. Binnie**. A number of alterations have had to be carried out since it was decided that she would be the N.S.W. defender against the Sayonara. There is a vast difference between the boats. It is anticipated that the Bona will race about 40 rating, while her opponent will measure about 42. Bona will, therefore, be conceded 2min 40sec in a 20 mile contest, and 2min 48sec in 21 miles: Approximately the Bona carries 1400ft of canvas, and the Sayonara 2100ft. Another difference, too, may strike yachtsmen as being significant. Both vessels are to sail cutter rigged - the Bona has a polemast while the other carries a topmast. The Sayonara's rig is described by sailing authorities as the finest fit out ever seen here. A comparison cannot be drawn in this direction as regards Bona's fit out. This is a matter which must wait until she leaves the slip at Blue's Point. Prior to being taken in hand by the sailmaker, riggers, and so on, the Bona was taken out for a couple of turns. She proceeded outside for several miles, and behaved fairly well. There is every reason to believe that she will give a good account of herself, and cross the line first. The crew selected for the N.S.W. boat numbers nine hands, eight of whom are amateurs. The names are as follow: — S.*

M. Dempster (skipper), H. Binnie (owner), Arthur C. Jewett, J. W. Manson, R. L. Massie, J. N. Roxburghe, F. W. Smith, J. L. Milson, and J. Evans (paid hand). In fairness to the crew— which is a good one, by-the-way— it must be said that for the first race they will be somewhat at a disadvantage. They will have on board a lot of untried gear, while the alterations which will have been carried out will also have to be got used to. The first race takes place on Saturday over a course 10 miles to windward from Sydney Heads. The boats will get away at 1 p.m., and must finish within six hours of starting. The steamer Cobar will be the umpire's boat, and the Newcastle Company's steamer Newcastle will also follow the race.

Saturday, 20th April, 1907 - The Australasian (Melbourne)

Social Doings in Sydney

*As a wind-up to the yachting season, the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron gave an afternoon party at "Carabella" on Saturday last, when the members entertained some of their friends quite informally at tea — a very pleasant gathering. Chairs were placed on the lawns, and the various races watched in a desultory fashion by the ladies, who did not understand in the least what was happening, except that guns denoting the finish of various events boomed forth from a little launch at odd and unexpected moments. The boats, motor launches, cutters, and yachts in Careening Cove shone brightly in the sun, and the waters gleamed blue and serene. The flag staff in the grounds was gay with flags, a band played on the lawn, and on the upper lawn tea was served about 4 at small tables from a large tent. Sir James Fairfax (commodore) presented the Lady Rawson Cup to **Mr. Herbert Binnie**, who having for three years in succession been successful with his yacht Bona, is now the owner of the prize. Mr. Binnie modestly responded. Cheers were given by a posse of Sobraon boys present. Mr. Walter Reeks (vice commodore), Lady Fairfax, Mr. and Mrs. Macfarlane, Mr. and Mrs. R. Old, Mrs. Burton Dibbs, Mr. Collard. R. N., Mr. and Mrs. James Ross, Captain and Mrs. St. John George, Miss Blanche Curnow, Mr. and Mrs. S. A. Milson and Mr. O. Bauer were at the squadron afternoon. Mr. Herbert Binnie, winner of the cup, went for a trip to England via Vancouver in the Manuka on Monday, April 15, and will be away about nine months.*

Mr. Binnie retired to Berry on the south coast and died 21st October, 1954.

Friday, 26th March, 1954 - Sydney Morning Herald

£42,000 Sale of City Building

*The Farmers and Settlers' Association of N.S.W. has purchased Binnie Building, 10 Castlereagh Street, for reception and Club rooms. Purchase price was £42,000. The building, which is between Martin Place and Hunter Street, consists of a basement, ground floor and six upper floors. It is on land having a 27ft frontage on to Castlereagh Street. The sale was made by Richardson and Wrench Ltd. for Permanent Trustee Co. of N.S.W. Ltd., as attorneys for the English executor of the will of **Herbert Binnie**.*

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