



'Wingnut' Mesmerises a Full House By John Hancox



L to R: John Taylor (JT), Sir James Hardy, Gordon Ingate, Richard Lawson

Gordon Ingate, OAM and recipient of the Squadron's Lifetime Achievement Award, was at his best on 22 August when he kept 160 guests in the Carabella room entertained recounting his life and experiences of 85 years sailing and racing yachts. Having arrived back from his annual trip to the USA for the NY Yacht Club Cruise he was electrifying. Speaking without notes for almost 80 minutes, he commenced his story at a young age through Sea Scouts at Mosman, Vee Jays and progressed quickly to yacht racing, including Dragons and 5.5 Metre classics, which he campaigned internationally and nationally for many years.

In 1950 Gordon was invited by Colonel AE Saalfield, the owner of *Jasner*, to race his 27' double ended boat to Hobart. There were two provisos: sail the boat safely south and take his daughter Sally in the crew. Ostensibly Sally was the cook on board, but in reality, she was an excellent crew hand and one of the first women to compete in the Sydney Hobart. The story goes that after *Jasner* safely reached Hobart, 10th in the 16 boat fleet, Gordon sent a telegram to Colonel Saalfield, saying in part: 'Arrived safely...may I marry your daughter?' To which the Colonel replied: 'Which one?' Gordon had proposed to Sally on the tow into Constitution dock having sailed *Jasner* to Hobart without an engine.

Then his campaign in *Caprice of Huon* as a member of the Australian Team to compete for the second time and win the Admiral's Cup in Cowes in 1967. Australia's reputation as a sailing nation and Gordon's profile sky-rocketed at this achievement by the yachties from the Antipodes. *Caprice of Huon*, with Gordon as skipper, competed in the 1972 Sydney to Hobart and finished a close second to *American Eagle*.



Gordon with family members

The evening finished with a story of his purchase of the famous *Grete/ 2* from Alan Bond, an entertaining event that will undoubtedly lead to episode two of Gordon's exceptional life. What other Yacht club anywhere in the world can skate that one of their members holds the National Yachting Championship at 93 years age?

Footnotes:

- The presentation was recorded and will be made available for Members to view/download shortly.
- Gordon's biography 'The Fortunate Life of Yachtsman Gordon "Wingnut" Ingate' authored by Bob Ross is now published by Boatswain Books.