

UNDER *current*



THE BALMAIN SAILING CLUB NEWSLETTER

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Spring 2012



Commodore's Report September 2012

Welcome to the new quarterly issue of Undercurrent, our Club newsletter first published in 1995. The new Undercurrent aims to have interesting articles on events and sailing stories beyond the Club's own program, so if you have a contribution, email it to our editor Bob Jackson at ✉ undercurrent@balmainsailingclub.com.au.

At our recent annual general meeting we admitted two new committee members, so a special welcome to Chantelle Hodgson and Suze Chalmers. Chantelle is the chair of our Balmain Regatta and Suze is responsible for Club Communications. Serving on the committee is a great way to energise the club and shape its future and we heartily encourage new volunteers to get involved, so I invite you to check the list of committee and crew members, if for no other reason than to see just how many your fellow sailors are contributing to the smooth running of our club.

The Balmain Regatta, being held on Sunday 28 October, is our one, big community event for the year and it requires plenty of organisation and support, so I urge all our members to get behind it. If you don't intend to race, you may wish to help out on the day, especially on the shore-side activities. A Regatta highlight will be the inaugural Cockatoo Island Classic Yacht Race, which is being organised by both BSC and the inaugural Cockatoo Island Film Festival. The Classic yachts will race around Cockatoo Island, the location of the film festival, in conjunction with the other Regatta races. BSC and the Balmain Regatta will gain valuable extra exposure as well as revenue benefits from this spectacular event.

Our sailing program is also doing very well with recent record entries for the Winter series races and we would like to continue this momentum into the Spring Series. A special thank you here goes to Dave Stenhouse, whose canvassing of skippers and enthusiastic support for the Winter Series ensured its success.

Now that we have more boats sailing, safety and safety compliance is more important than ever and all skippers must ensure that they are compliant to at least Category 7 standard. If you still haven't been inspected, there will be another inspection on the morning of Saturday 22 September from 08:00hrs. Category 7 is not onerous and is hardly any more than is required by Roads and Maritime Services. Please check the rules for Cat 7 though before you turn up to be inspected.

Fair winds, clear skies, close racing and see you on the water.

John Blair
Commodore

Key Dates for your diary...

15-16 Sep	Sailaway
19-Sep	Fundraiser Screening of <i>MENTAL</i>
22 Sep	Safety Audit inspections
23 Sep	Spring Sunday Series - Race 2
29-30 Sep	Heaven Can Wait Regatta
6 Oct	Pre Twilight Working Bee
7 Oct	Spring Sunday Series - Race 3
12 Oct	Friday Twilight Races start
28 Oct	Balmain Regatta
4-Nov	Spring Sunday Series - Race 4

Club Membership

The Balmain Sailing Club depends on sponsorship and membership to deliver its fabulous programs and facilities including:

- ✓ Balmain Regatta
- ✓ Sunday races
- ✓ sailing school
- ✓ rescue tenders & ramp
- ✓ Spring and Summer twilight races
- ✓ friendliest clubhouse in Balmain with sunset & water views

Please take a moment now to join or, if you're an existing member*, to renew
(*for those who have not yet done so)

 [Click here to download the Membership Form](#)



Your 2012-2013 BSC Committee and Crew

Commodore	John Blair	Directors	Bob Connolly
Vice Commodore	David Stenhouse		Hannah Heath
Secretary	Mark Cherrington		Suze Chalmers
Treasurer	Arthur King		Chantelle Hodgson
Crew positions			
Crew Captain:	David Cutcliffe	Building Captain:	Tony Bailey
Yacht Captain:	Alan Clark	Building Committee:	Brendon Stewart
Dinghy Captain:	Poppy Moore		David Bennett
Boatyard Captain:	Peter Martin	Hall Hire:	Linda Bell
Safety Officer:	Denis Speyer		Nunik Alexander
Starters:	David Thurlow	Club Communications:	Suze Chalmers
	Maggie McLaren		Charlie Chan
	Philip Johnson	PR & Marketing:	John McCarl
	Poppy Moore	Undercurrent:	Bob Jackson
	Brian Wood	Webmaster:	Dave Clark-Duff
Regatta Chair:	Chantelle Hodgson		Suze Chalmers
Regatta Committee:	Wanda Carter	Sailing School Principal:	David Blackwell
	Neil Hamilton	Sailing School Assistant:	Megan Gayler
Protest Committee:	Erica Kirby (chair)	Administration Assistant:	Erica Kirby
	Philip Grove		
	Brian Wood		
Social Captain:	Sue Carrick		
Bar Manager:	Tommy Richardson		
House Captain:	Frans Tkatchew		

We are still looking to fill a couple of positions - and we are always looking for volunteers to help out on subcommittees. If you are available to assist in any capacity, please talk to any of the committee members or email [✉ info@balmainsailingclub.com](mailto:info@balmainsailingclub.com).



Volunteers are still needed for the Balmain Regatta.

3 really good Reasons why you should Volunteer:

1. It won't hurt (much),
2. We'd really appreciate it, and
3. You'll feel really good for doing it!

Oh yeah, we've might just have some special goodies for our volunteers too... Email now to find out more...

✉ volunteer@balmainregatta.com.au

2012 Balmain Regatta - Sunday October 28

proudly sponsored by Cobden & Hayson

The Balmain Regatta is one of Sydney's oldest sporting events, on our waterways. It was first held in 1849 and continued until 1934, when for reasons now lost it was discontinued. However it was revived in 1995 by the Balmain Sailing club in conjunction with the Wooden Boat Association.

The Balmain Regatta is now a permanent and key focal point of the Balmain Sailing Club calendar, and is eagerly awaited each year as it heralds the start of summer sailing season. The Regatta is also a real celebration of Balmain, its maritime heritage and of sailing on the western harbour. In recent years the event has attracted more than 100 yachts, skiffs and dinghies on the water, making it one of the great annual spectacles around Balmain.

Once again this year's event will incorporate a full day of sailing and boating fun, including classic ten feet and 18 feet skiff races, along with modern dinghies, as well as classic and modern yachts. The 2012 Regatta program and notice of race (NOR) includes two divisions for Open Yachts as well as One Design starts for many of the yacht classes that sail regularly in the upper harbour including, wet sailed Etchells, Cavalier 28s, J24s, Hood 23s, Young 88s, Flying Tigers and Super 30s. In addition, crews representing Balmain's local pubs and Community Services Groups will once again be invited to continue their annual battle for Pub sailing supremacy.

Of particular interest this year will be the inaugural "**Cockatoo Island Classic Yacht Race**" for Metre Boats and Classic Yachts. This new event is being conducted as part of the Balmain Regatta program and is being sponsored by the [Cockatoo Island Film Festival](#).

The "Cockatoo Island Classic" will provide the opportunity for those Classic Yachts that normally sail in the Balmain Regatta to compete for prize money against a wide range of Metre Boats and Classic yachts from Sailing Clubs throughout the Harbour. A separate finish line on the North Eastern side of Cockatoo Island will be used for the "Cockatoo Island Classic" and the presentation of prizes for this event only, will be carried out on Cockatoo Island. It is anticipated that this widely publicised event will further lift the profile of the Balmain Regatta amongst the enthusiastic owners and skippers of these beautifully presented Classic Yachts and Metre Boats.

Along with Balmain Sailing Club entrants, boats representing surrounding clubs are encouraged to participate. The Balmain Sailing Club also welcomes families, friends and visitors to join in the activities at the club during the day, with the waterfront park next door providing an excellent vantage point and making a great picnic area.

The NOR and Entry Form are currently available on the Balmain Sailing Club web site www.balmainsailingclub.com

We're expecting an increase in interest this year, so our advice is to get your race entries in early to avoid any disappointment!

Lastly, the Regatta organising committee is looking for a few more volunteers to assist with various aspects of the Regatta, both on the day and as part of the planning and pre-race activities.

If you can be of assistance please get in touch:

✉ volunteer@balmainregatta.com.au

For Regatta racing information contact: Neil Hamilton

✉ neil_hamo@yahoo.com.au



Call for photos and videos of the Balmain Regatta (past and present), for publication of the BSC website and the new, soon to be launched, [Balmain Regatta website](#).

Please send enquiries to
✉ web@balmainsailingclub.com.au

Cheap haul-out at your local yacht club

You would probably not get away with this in Sydney with our environmental rules. This photo was taken during a visit to Ireland in late June.

I spoke to the owner who said he had to get up at 3AM so he could take advantage of the high tide to tie off to the club pylons next to the marina.

The adjacent yacht club is the Royal Cork Yacht club, which is actually at Crosshaven, about 20km southeast of Cork on Ireland's southeast coast. I was told the tide range is only 3m, which I guess is modest, when you consider the range just across the sea in England's Bristol Channel is around 8m.

This keen sailor told me he was getting ready for Cork Week, which along with events like Cowes Week and Kiele Woche, are major European race weeks.

The clubhouse and general ambience of the Royal Cork Yacht Club is not that much different from any of the well-established clubs here, but its main claim to fame is that it is the world's oldest yacht club.

It was founded in 1720.

Photo: Ilse Dittes Text: Bob Jackson



CCA A sailaway to Blackwattle Bay

The next CCA A sailaway is to Blackwattle Bay, Glebe **15-16 September** (Saturday and Sunday). There is always a good turnout of yachties that turn up at these events and they are very welcoming of other yachties that turn up and want to join in the fun.

The usual routine is that on Saturday we meet ashore for drinks and nibbles (bring your own and share nibbles). Then there will be either a BBQ ashore or host boats will be provided, where three to four couples go to a yacht and take their own food and wine and then you all share it like a picnic. Being Blackwattle Bay where we have the BBQ facilities it could well be dinner in the park.

If the Balmain members would like to join in they are always most welcome. If they choose to come along and join in the nibbles and then have their own dinner on their yachts, that's fine too. But the programme of the CCA A is one that really works.

For more information contact Susan at ✉ hq@iinet.net.au

Carole & Susan

Les Girls II

Sydney to Airlie Beach July 2012

On the horizon for many coastal cruisers is the pilgrimage from Sydney to the Whitsunday Islands on the central Queensland coast. Here is the account of one club member, Michael Meehan, who recently crewed on the voyage north with Arthur King (owner and skipper), Peter Sinclair and Mitch, a sailor from north Queensland.



Wave Nine off the northern NSW coast

YACHT – FARR 1220 – WAVE NINE

Tuesday 17 July: We finished preparations at BSC wharf and departed at 1400, leaving North Head at 1500. The wind was light so we continued motoring for the next 48 hours and had an uneventful trip until just past Swansea when we had to navigate past quite a few anchored bulk cargo ships. The radar and AIS (automatic identification system) proved to be very useful in letting us know which route to take, which ship was anchored and which were moving.

Wednesday 18 July: By 1400 we had travelled 151 nautical miles (Nm) with pretty flat seas.

A low pressure system was forming and this was a bit of a concern due to the unpredictable nature of these east coast lows. We debated going into Coffs Harbour but decided to sail so raised twin furling headsails in about 20 knots (kn) of southerly wind. Overnight the wind picked up to around 30kn and the seas also grew to around 3m with a 2.5m southerly swell.

Thursday 19 July: During the night the wind picked up and we regularly had 33 to 36kn with a corresponding lift in wave height. Although the noise and look of the sea was a bit disconcerting we felt relatively comfortable with the progress, but we were getting a lot of tail slides and surfing down some of the bigger waves. At about 0730 Arthur was at the navigation table when wave and wind caused the boat to jerk sideways down a wave, throwing him across the cabin and hitting the oven. The wind was 43kn and waves started to stand up quite steeply. Our boat speed was about 9kn, increasing to 15.3kn when surfing down the waves.

Arthur believed he had dislocated a shoulder so we pulled down sail and checked him to make sure he was ok, then decided to head into Southport on the Gold Coast, as we were just south and about 35Nm east.

It took about five hours to reach the entrance seaway and we had radioed for assistance in navigating the bar. The water police launch met us at the entrance and we followed them in with no drama. The marine rescue arranged a berth at the Southport Yacht Club and we docked.

Arthur was x-rayed and was relieved to find no breaks or dislocations – only a very large area of bruising.

Friday 20 and Saturday 21 July: The weather reports were for a strong wind warning so we decided to stay for two days. Facilities at the club were great.

Sunday 22 July: We reviewed the weather reports and pressure maps, spoke to a lot of local sailors and decided we could continue, so we motored to the seaway entrance and asked the rescue tower for visual guidance out over the bar. While they were helpful it was clear they did not approve us going and rang our mobile to be sure we were aware of the strong wind forecast.

The waves were quite big over the bar but we avoided the nasty ones and made it to sea with no mishaps. The wind was 25kn to 30kn from the south and the waves around 2.5m to 3m.

Heading north with twin headsails but only unfurled about halfway the boat was sailing quite well albeit with a lot of motion. We were doing eight to nine knots and the boat felt good.



Sailing Feature

As dusk came we decided to shorten sail and boat speed dropped a couple of knots. In the dark you can't really see the waves but you can hear them coming and feel them go by. You just get used to it and after a while it seems the normal thing to be doing.

Monday 23 July: By 1030 we had done a further 168Nm and still had a southerly wind at 25kn to 30kn. We were heading further away from land to try and avoid the big waves caused by shallow depths.

Tuesday 24 July: By 1030 a further 171Nm had passed by – our best day yet.

The wind was holding about 25kn to 30kn from the south and seas were a little bigger and continued to rise as we passed Fraser Island (where waves are refracted). As well as the southerly swell we were getting a cross swell from the southwest and this allowed the seas to build to about 4.5m. The seas were quite sharp and confused leading to an uncomfortable ride. Although we were used to the motion, every now and then a big wave came and we surfed at around 16kn. Going down the face of the wave was like looking down an elevator shaft!

There was a lot of noise from the waves, the wind and the boat surfing – this kept the heart rate up.

Wednesday 25 July: By 0900 a further 174Nm had passed and we continued to go offshore to get away from the confused sea, so that by Rockhampton we were 66Nm offshore. We could not get phone or data reception. Winds were from the south to south east at 20kn to 25kn. After we entered the Whitsunday Passage, the seas calmed down to less than 2m with winds at 18kn to 25kn – easy sailing.

We were well into the channel and started to pass by the islands. We had been trailing a line and caught our first, and as it turned out, our only fish – a Tuna about 700mm long. This was bled and filleted and put into the fridge for later. For dinner Sinkers and Mitch made sashimi, lightly fried salt and pepper tuna pieces and then a main of tuna, tomatoes, beans and many herbs – really good and tasty dishes.

By this time we were passing Hamilton Island and making good speed up the channel with a helping tide. We pulled into the marina at 2230 and after tying up had a beer and went to bed.

Thursday 26 July: Up at 0600 had a shower and bacon and egg rolls from the café.

We tidied up the boat and then took it out to a mooring where it stayed until race week.

The total distance travelled was 1070Nm.

We then took the ferry to Hamilton Island to catch the plane back to Sydney.

General comments

Provisioning: Arthur's wife Jean had prepared some frozen dishes such as cardamom chicken and these were fantastic. We managed to have bacon and eggs a few times for breakfast and this was no small feat in pretty big seas. The stove was gimballed and it was the safest place to have food – anywhere else and it just took off.

Shifts: At the start of the trip we set out a shift pattern of 2 hours on / 2 hours off between 1800 and 0600. This worked ok in calm weather but it was difficult to get much sleep.

After the Southport stop we set a new watch schedule of 3 hours on and 3 hours off with a staggered start so that a fresh person was on deck every 1.5 hours, with always two on deck. This proved to be the best as we got some sleep, felt better with another person with you and could do other tasks like do rig adjustments and make coffee.

Final comments: Wave Nine felt safe and there were no breakages. Waves only came on board three times and this was in confused seas.

No mainsail was used on the whole trip as wind was from the south. Twin furling headsails, each poled out, were very good for this wind.

All in all it was a great experience and showed just what a boat and crew can handle.



Michael Meehan in relaxed mode at Airlie Beach Marina.

Meet... John Lang

The face of Balmain Sailing Club is very much the sum total of all the men and women who participate in its sailing and social life. With this in mind Undercurrent is profiling, at random, a different club member in each issue.

One of our long-standing members is John Lang. John has campaigned his yacht in club races since the club was reformed in 1995.

Deck-stop interview with John Lang following the last of the Winter Series Sunday races.

Q What is the name of your boat and what races do you typically sail in?

A My boat's name is Rogate, a Marauder 27, and I have sailed her in the C Division in most of the Sunday and twilight series races.

Q Have you owned any other boats and can you tell us about them?

A Well, I owned a 24-foot Marauder, called Fugelman, before I bought

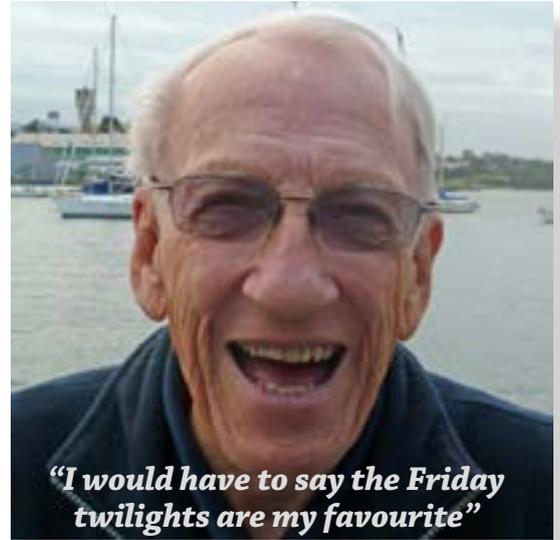
Rogate. I would have owned Fugelman for about ten years and have had Rogate more than 12 years.

Q How long have you been sailing and what previous clubs have you belonged to?

A I have been sailing one way or another for about 30 years and prior to the reforming of Balmain sailing Club, was a member of the former Birkenhead Yacht Club, and at one stage was the secretary of Beaumaris Yacht Club in Melbourne.

Q Do you have any comments regarding the current race schedule?

A Well, the Winter Series this year has been great with the increased fleet numbers. In prior years the Sunday races have been a bit quiet, often with well under 20 yachts competing. However, I would have to say the Friday twilights are my favourite.



"I would have to say the Friday twilights are my favourite"

Q What do you like most about twilight races John?

A I like the fact that so many boats race, the sense of fun and the socialising after the race.

Q So the camaraderie of sailors is an important aspect of sailing with Balmain?

A Yes, I would definitely say so. Also, the club is a good size, has a pleasant and relaxing atmosphere and is not too flash, a bit like RANSA actually.

Thanks John! And all the best for the next series!

BSC is seeking expressions of interest for twilight child minding

We're looking for expressions of interest from Club Members who would find value in a child minding service during BSC twilight races. Fees and logistics still to be confirmed.

Interested? Please send an email to ✉ info@balmainsailingclub.com – with the age and gender of your children and expected frequency of use.

We're also seeking expressions of interest from prospective child minders and Members with child-friendly houses who would be willing to cater for small groups of children if required.

New Pontoon Planned

Hard on the heels of our recently completed and stunningly successful dinghy access ramp, a major new infrastructure development is in the pipeline.

Joining forces with Leichhardt Council (LMC), the club has submitted a joint application to Roads & Maritime for major funding under the [Sharing Sydney Harbour Access program](#).

In brief, LMC and the BSC will construct a walkway connecting the public disabled access lift adjacent to the club with the waterfront. This walkway will link up with a ramp leading down to a new pontoon system, to be jointly funded by Maritime and the BSC. The system consists of three conjoined pontoons: two positioned end to end and running along and out from the southern side of the existing deck, with the third set at right angles to the other two. The three conjoined pontoons thus form an inverted "L".

Sharing Sydney Harbour's principal objective is just that – opening up the harbour to the public. To access the funding available, the Club must be willing to share these new facilities with the public. According

to Maritime, our plan "ticks all the access boxes." The public – both able and disabled – will have access from Water St via the Hopetown Quays lift to the waterfront and pontoons. Public access to the BSC deck however, will be controlled by a gate system.

Aside from public access, the pontoon system will also mean a new deal for the club's long suffering yacht fleet. Yachts mooring within the enclosure formed by the "L" shaped configuration will have unprecedented shelter from prevailing winds.

The application is now being assessed, and as the club worked closely with both Maritime and the LMC, we have high hopes it will be approved. The budgeted cost of the entire scheme is \$300,000, to be shared by Maritime, LMC and the BSC.

When the application is approved, your club committee will launch a major fund raising drive.

For further details please contact Bob Connolly or Arthur King via ✉ info@balmiansailingclub.com

Exclusive Advance Screening

Exclusive Australian sneak preview screening of "MENTAL" written & directed by PJ Hogan.

Be the first to see this exciting new comedy from the creators of Muriel's Wedding:

**Wednesday 19th September, 7pm
at Hoyts Entertainment Quarter,
Moore Park.**

Tickets are \$25 (limited seats) and all proceeds from ticket sales go directly to

Giant Steps — Book Now!

www.giantsteps.net.au.




 Other Sailing News


Sailors helping kids with autism



new horizons for children with Autism

Recently we sent an email asking for additional volunteers to help kids with autism, who attend the Giant Steps school in Gladesville. Balmain Sailing Club gives these children some support by taking them out on the water.

As a result of this email request, we now have a total of 12 boats, plus additional crew volunteering for this task. Thank you very much to those club members who have come forward.

This initiative goes back about six months, when a small group of BSC sailors started taking students with autism from the Giant Steps school (located near Gladesville Bridge) out on their boats most Friday mornings for an hour or so (subject to weather).

Those who have provided their boats so far include Bob Connolly, Neil Hamilton and Mark Cherrington, with additional crew assistance from John Blair, Brendon Stewart, and Linda Bell.

How it Works

Typically we take out four very high-needs kids, along with a teacher and three carers (there is one adult per child, with each adult being totally responsible for "their" child). The kids need assistance getting on and off the boats; they all wear life jackets and safety harnesses, and are clipped onto jack lines. They are unable to participate in any sailing or boat handling, but they very much enjoy their time on the water.

BSC provides a boat, a skipper (who needs to remain totally focused on driving the boat), plus at

least one support crew person, whose main task is assisting with helping handle the boat leaving and returning to the pontoon next to Dawn Fraser Pool, releasing and re-attaching the mooring lines, plus providing any emergency or other assistance as required.

Usually, we pick up the kids between 11am and 11.30am from Dawn Fraser Pontoon, and drop them off before 1pm. The outing involves going to the likes of Birkenhead, around Cockatoo/Snapper/Spectacle Islands, up the Lane Cove River, or around Goat Island — almost always just motoring quietly; so far we have only unfurled a headsail once.

If it's raining (or a chance of rain) or too windy (especially from the west), we don't go—although the new Hunters Hill Sailing Club has been identified as an alternative option in westerly breezes.

Maximum total time commitment for a boat moored fairly close to the club is 2 to 2½ hours, from about 10.30am to 1pm.

Interested in Helping?

We can always use more crew and boats (there's another class of higher-functioning kids who'd be interested in coming out on Fridays as well, if we can provide the boats/crews).

If you are interested in assisting in any way, please give me a call on 0419 236 704 or drop me an email at [✉ markpcherrington@gmail.com](mailto:markpcherrington@gmail.com)

Mark Cherrington
Secretary



Club Support

Our FABULOUS Sponsors - please support them, as they support us!



Having fun and doing good at the same time

If you have a sailing boat and sympathy for cancer research, then Lake Macquarie on the New South Wales coast is the place to be on September 29-30, the Labour Day long weekend. It's called racing, but it's really only an excuse to have fun with fellow sailors and benefit a good cause in the Heaven Can Wait Charity Regatta.

The Notices of Race (NORs) for the 2012 Heaven Can Wait Charity Yacht Regatta are up on the event's website at www.heavencanwait.com.au, and this year the Regatta includes a new event, the 12 Hour Challenge. It will have the same course and start time (1100 hours) as the 24 Hour race, but will finish at 2300 hours on Saturday September 29.

The event has always received strong support from Balmain sailors; a number have done it every year since it started – this year is the "Seventh Heaven" – including six boats a few years back.

There is good news about the Swansea Channel situation. The channel has been dredged over the summer of 2011-2012, with minimum depths throughout currently around 2.5 to 3 metres --

and dredging is continuing, so the organisers are confident it will have adequate depths up until well after this year's event. In addition, the NSW government and the Boat Owners Association are working on a long-term solution to the channel issue.

The regatta is being hosted out of the Royal Motor Yacht Club Toronto, which can arrange moorings and other facilities for out-of-lake boats who are participating.

Remember too that crew, family, friends and colleagues can support any boat competing in the 2012 Heaven Can Wait charity yacht race, raising funds for men's cancer research and support. All funds raised are donated to the Cancer Council NSW, along with up to \$5000 going to Marine Rescue NSW.

In 2011, the event raised over \$35,000 for men's cancer research and support programs. The organisers aim to beat that target this year — and help beat the scourge of cancer!

You can Enter the Regatta on the website www.heavencanwait.com.au (look for the ENTER RACE HERE button).



MAKE THE
RIGHT MOVE

ch.com.au

cobden & hayson