

## *DID YOU KNOW*

From the earliest days there was a shortage of moorings in Manly Boat Harbour. At the time of the opening of the Harbour in November 1962, concrete mooring pens had been constructed in the north western corner for 54 boats of up to 14 meters in length. I had boats in the pens from the early 1970s to 1978 and then had to move up the River, when I acquired a larger boat.

Over time, swing moorings were installed in the Harbour and eventually, pile berths also.

The Greg Cavill Building was completed in March 1964 and following the official opening in September of that year, it became popular with Members and was well patronised. However, it was stated in the 1965 Annual Report ..... ***“The progress of the Clubhouse has been to some extent offset by the lack of further dredging and mooring accommodation in the vicinity of the amenity but we are assured that will be remedied in the near future”*** .....

What was a solution to the shortage of moorings?

## *SQUADRON HARBOUR*

Unfortunately and over many years, the lack of mooring facilities wasn't remedied as was hoped when the 1965 Annual Report was published. The first aerial photograph which appears at the end of this article was taken circa 1973 and shows the limited moorings then available in Manly Boat Harbour.

Because the lack of mooring facilities in the Harbour was having an adverse impact on the viability of the overall operations at Manly, in 1975 at the suggestion of the late P/C John Hattrick I made submissions to the Department of Harbours & Marine for the Squadron to build a floating Marina in the Harbour.

The first floating Marina as we now know them was developed by the late Keith Lawrie in Jessica Haven at Buddina on the Sunshine Coast. It provided moorings for forty odd boats of up to 10m in length and opened at Easter in 1973. I had the good fortune to work with Keith on waterfront projects for many years and in another article, I'll explain how he adapted technology he had seen on the west coast of the USA for use in Australian conditions.

The proposals I put forward in 1975 for the Squadron to build its own mooring facilities were rejected on the basis it was contrary to Government policy for there to be a private Marina in the Harbour. It was for public use.

Following extensive research and investigations, including sediment testing and bottom material sampling, proposals were developed and submitted to the various authorities for the Squadron to build a harbour for a 500 vessel Marina on a site to the immediate south of its premises and what is now Davenport Drive.

Much of the research, investigations and planning for the Squadron harbour was done by the late Mike Thurlow, an Engineer who later became interested in East Coast Marina and Selwyn Loynes, an Architect who lived on “the Hill”. Both Mike Thurlow and Selwyn Loynes were members of the then Panning & Maintenance Committee in the mid to late 1970s and over many months they were regularly seen on the mud flats at low tide taking samples with a hand auger.

On 27 June 1976 the late Sir Gordon Chalk, then Deputy Premier and Treasurer, was a guest on my boat at a regatta conducted at the Squadron under the auspices of the Australian American Association. I was able to have a discussion with Sir Gordon in which I outlined ways in which I believed then underutilized State assets could be used to provide the foundation from which to develop marine

related recreational infrastructure. I gave brief details of how I believed it could be done at limited cost to Government, be used to develop the then fledgling Tourist Industry and also, to provide recreational infrastructure in regional areas, with a view to making employment in them more appealing.

At Sir Gordon's invitation, over the next year I had a series of meetings with him and representatives of various Government Departments, including officers from the Land Tenures Branch of the then Land Administration Commission, about titling issues and the Parliamentary Draftsman, about legislative requirements.

In, to the best of my recollection, July or August 1977 Sir Gordon took submissions I had prepared for a system of freehold title over water areas to Cabinet. In November 1977, Cabinet rejected the submissions for freehold title over water areas as being too ambitious.

However I was subsequently informed by P/C David Bowly he had been given to understand that if I could devise processes to allow marine related recreational infrastructure to be developed under a system of leasehold tenure, support would be available. I made a series of changes to use leasehold tenures and the necessary approvals were received.

While there was a level of support from some in Government for the proposals I had put forward, it was far from universal and there was stiff opposition to making any change in Government policy about no private Marinas being built in Manly Boat Harbour.

Planning for a Squadron Harbour continued and the front cover of the June 1978 Mainsheet was an aerial photograph of Manly Boat Harbour. The planned Squadron Harbour was shown in white and cross – hatching and a copy of the aerial photograph appears at the end of this article.

In the August 1978 edition of Mainsheet it was announced ..... ***“Approval in principle has been received from Harbours and Marine as well as the Port Authority with regards to the RQYS proposal to build a new harbour at Manly, south of the Squadron premises. Construction is expected to commence early in the New Year.”***

Early in 1979 it became known there had been a change in Government policy concerning private Marinas being built in Manly Boat Harbour and following a request not to proceed with the project, in May 1979 information was passed on to the Members that the plans for the Squadron to build its own Harbour were being scrapped.

It's not beyond the bounds of possibility the Squadron obtaining approval in principle to build its own harbour may have had a bearing on the change in Government policy. Following the change in policy, tenders were called for the development of a Marina in an area in the south western corner of the Harbour and P/C Tony Love was one of those involved in the preparation of tenders and many other things at the time.

Messrs Clayton & Clough were the successful tenderers for what was the first area in the Harbour offered for development and that became the site of what is now East Coast Marina. Efforts to obtain the use of the second site which became available were successful and in 1981 it was developed as Stage 1 of Marina 1. The second site was far more suitable for Squadron use than the first one and information concerning the project will be provided in another article.

*Bill Kirby*



This photograph was taken circa 1973 and shows the limited number of moorings in addition to the pens in the north western section. The Greg Cavill Building is the white structure towards the top left of centre. When RQYS Marina Limited undertook the major reclamation in 1983, the inner southern wall was extended to join the eastern wall. Also, to increase the size of the peninsula from in the order of 2.5 to about 10 hectares, the outer southern wall was moved by RQYS Marina Limited about 50 to 60 meters south to its present position.

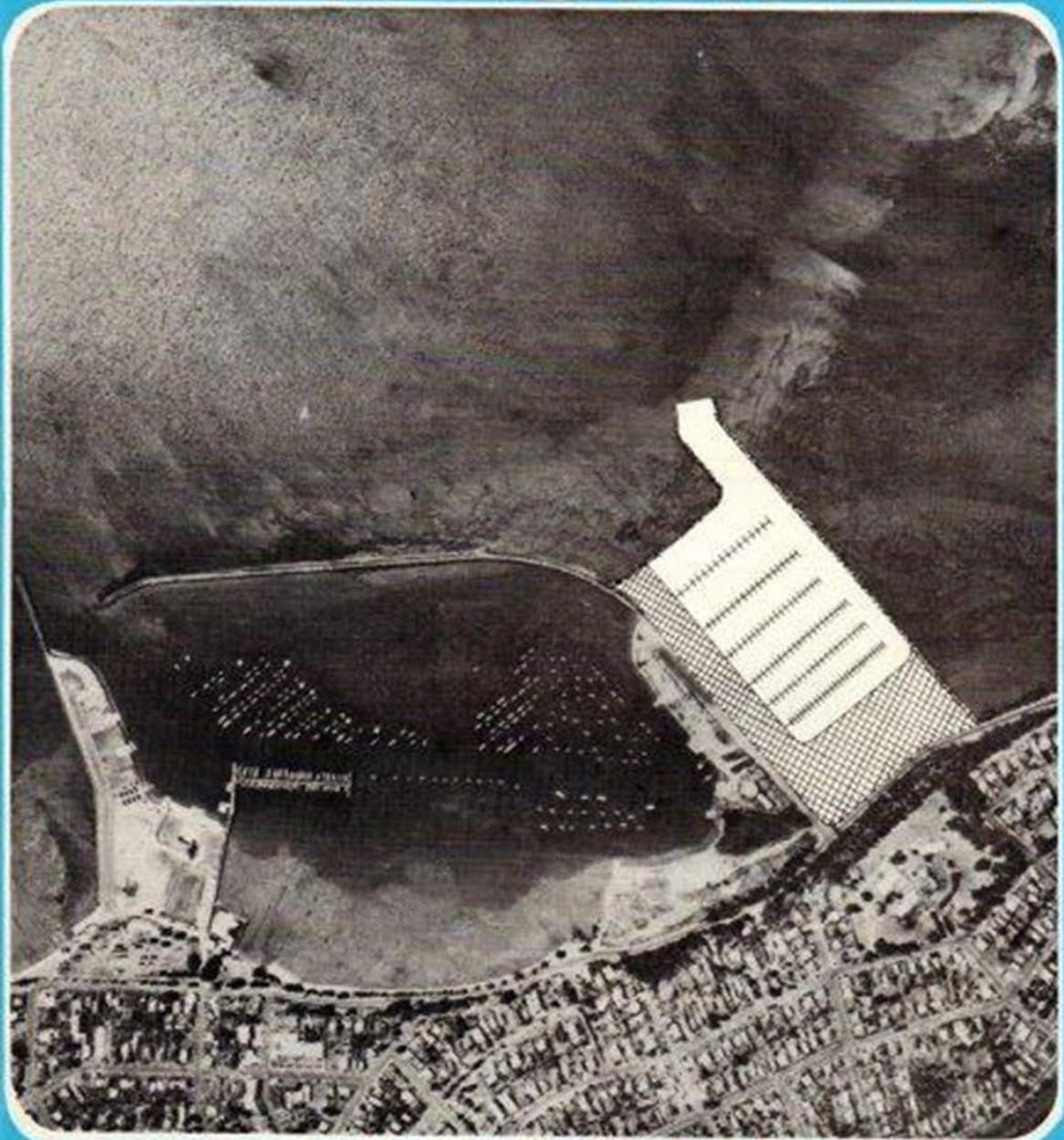
*The Planned Squadron Harbour*



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