

DID YOU KNOW?

The Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron was one of the first, if not the first, of the major Clubs in our community where full membership was available to Ladies.

To the best of my recollection the changes at the Squadron allowing Ladies to be members occurred in mid 1975, during the time the late Past Commodore John Hattrick held office. That was a very long time before female participation in Clubs became an issue in Australia. The question of female membership remains a subject still being grappled with in some institutions today – 45 years after it was dealt with at the Squadron.

To read more [click here](#).

A QUESTION

On a different subject, the only information I have about the Squadron's first premises, located on Kingsford Smith Drive Hamilton immediately downstream of the Game Fishing Wharf, is what appears in "Up the River and Down the Bay." I understand the building was destroyed in the second of the 1893 floods when it was struck by a coal barge which had broken free from its moorings in the Bremer River and wasn't rebuilt.

Does anyone have a photograph, painting, sketch or other information about the Kingsford Drive property I could copy?

Bill Kirby

I well remember the late P/C John Hattrick meeting with P/C David Bowly and myself early in 1975 and telling us it simply wasn't acceptable for the Squadron not to welcome Ladies into our midst and for them not to be able to take part in all facets of Club life. David was Vice Commodore at the time and I was the Rear.

P/C John's proposals were enthusiastically approved at a Special General Meeting of the Members and as they say, "The rest is history."

An early project undertaken by the Ladies' Committee was to raise the money for the Snack Bar in the lower area of the Greg Cavill Building. After the Snack Bar was built, the Ladies "manned it" for quite a long time.

Sailing Classes for the children during school holidays started in December 1975. Trish Anderson was among those involved in organizing the Classes and the late Geoff Christoe was the Volunteer Coach. The classes were the forerunner of the RQYS Sailing School, established nineteen years later in 1994 and now known as the RQYS Sailing Academy.

Among many other functions, the Ladies conducted the "ArtArama" - an Arts and Crafts Festival - at Manly on an annual basis for a number of years. In the August/September 1977 edition of Mainsheet, then Commodore David Bowly reported that in addition to increasing turnover during the weekend, the "Artarama" had generated a profit of \$1,700:00 which was directed to the addition of Squadron facilities. In 2020 terms, \$1,700:00 in 1977 was in the order of \$9,791.28

The following article appeared in the Social Notes in the Courier Mail on 10 August 1975.

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Talking of the Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron, I have to announce the fall of a great male bastion.

The battlements have been breached, the drawbridge forced down and women are now allowed into the hallowed halls of that aforesaid institution.

The males can cry and grind their teeth, but the deed has been done and Commodore John Hattrick has doffed his yachting cap to the women and allowed them to form themselves into a Ladies' Committee.

This means that women can be admitted to the City Clubhouse as freely as they have been to the Manly Branch of the operation.

They'll now be able to partake of all the delights previously available only to men.

They'll be Melbourne Cup lunches and Bridge Parties.

Women will be able to take friends along to admire the lunches and dinners produced by the Chef the Club is so proud of, a Frenchman Andre Pichelin, and his good wife.

It'll never be the same again – for the blokes. But for the women it's a great and glorious breakthrough and one of our greatest triumphs in International Women's Year.

President of the Inaugural Committee whose names will go down in history is Margot Kirby, wife of Rear-Commodore Bill. Then Shirley Perrins, Maureen Thompson, Glenn McDonald, Joan Brooke and Judy Cantamassa.

Commodore Hattrick has circularized all the members about the change, and included entrée cards for wives and girlfriends.

The Women's first function will be the French Evening, snails etc etc and a fashion parade, on August 22.

They've also announced that there will be a happy hour every Friday from August 22.

It's about time all of this happened, of course Women are messing around in boats just as much as the men. The sailing world is no longer exclusively all male.

The other all-male Clubs in our midst had better be warned. The girls are on the war path.

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Bill Kirby