



## April 2026

And just like that our main summer sailing season is finished! While we have had some unpredictable weather to work around this season, there are still many highlights to share and celebrate. A massive thank you to all those that contributed reports for this newsletter and we hope you enjoy the read.

While our club hibernates over winter, keep an eye on the BYC group chat for casual sailing opportunities that may arise. Of course, we look forward to seeing everyone again at the AGM, 6 June 😊

### Oyster Regatta Weekend: *A Feast Despite the Weather*

Report by Jacqui: While the wind had other plans and kept our boats firmly on land, the Oyster Regatta weekend was far from a disappointment. If anything, it became a celebration of great food, good company and the generous spirit of our club.

Festivities kicked off on Friday evening with a warm and hearty spread. Members enjoyed a delicious broccoli and blue cheese soup, followed later by fresh mussels and Geoff's ever-popular seafood chowder – all best paired of course, with a couple of well-earned beers.

Saturday morning saw those who stayed overnight treated to Geoff's famous Kiwi breakfast, with bacon and eggs setting everyone up for the day ahead.

The highlight of the weekend was undoubtedly Saturday nights feast, attended by 46 people. This incredible spread was made possible through the generous support of our sponsors: Autoplex, First National Real Estate Bluff, PBS Plumbing and Electrical, Tenner Specialists, Harbour Fish, and Southern Seafood. We are hugely grateful for their contributions.

The meal was also a true club effort, with members providing an abundance of salads, venison, and salmon, as well as coming together to harvest toheroa earlier in the week – a special touch, which made the evening even more memorable.

It was fantastic to see people coming together from as far away as Dunedin clubs to enjoy the occasion, despite the change in plans.

A big thank you to everyone who contributed, cooked, organised, and simply showed up to make the weekend such a big success. While we may not have been out on the water, the spirit of the regatta was certainly alive and well at the table.



## SYA Southland Annual Regional Sailing Champs

Report by Eloise: We arrived in Te Anau to a mirror-like lake and low cloud draped over the mountains. Beautiful—but not quite the conditions Not-the-Easter Regatta sailors had been hoping for. Still, optimism held as we kept a close eye on the water over morning coffee on the yacht club deck, searching for the slightest ripple.

With little wind in sight, there wasn't much early rigging—no one wanted to jinx it. Sailors and support crews waited for the call at briefing, and at around 11am it came: racing would be attempted.

With a good number of dinghies to prepare and plenty of enthusiasm to make the most of it, we launched and worked our way around the course. The first race took close to an hour. Light winds bring a different kind of challenge—less about speed, more about strategy, patience, and no small amount of contortion.

The adage says smooth seas never made a skilled sailor, but that arguably underestimates the skill required to get the most out of a boat in light conditions.

The afternoon remained settled and warm, with the wind teasingly filling in between races before fading again just in time for each start. By the final race, most of us were hot, hungry, and ready to trade light-wind tactics for a barbecue and a well-earned drink. While the racing may have lacked the usual drama, there was still plenty to debrief and discuss ashore.

Day 2 brought slightly steadier conditions, allowing all classes to complete their races before an early return to shore for the raffle and prizegiving.

A big thank you to MYC for the warm welcome to our BYC crew, and to the race officers, organisers, and volunteers who made the weekend possible. In sailing, the wind will always do its own thing—but it's the people who make a regatta truly memorable.



### We had some amazing BYC results at the Southland champs to celebrate:

Gage Habgood – 1<sup>st</sup> in the Open Skiff Gold Fleet

Ron Vermeulen – 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Open Dinghy Fleet in his Hobie 14

Eloise Wallace – 3<sup>rd</sup> in the ILCA6 Fleet in *Moody Blew*

Sylvia and Kobe Habgood – 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Open Dinghy Fleet, in aptly named *Double Trouble*, a Phase II (and survived their first time sailing together!!)

Geoff Gorrie – 4<sup>th</sup> in the Open Dinghy Fleet in *Spitfire*, an A Class

Tony Kennard – 5<sup>th</sup> in the Open Dinghy Fleet in *White Elephant*, a paper tiger



## YNZ Briefings

Did you know that Yachting New Zealand sends out a regular newsletter? These are always an interesting read and it is great to know that our wee club is part of a bigger picture!

You can go to <https://www.yachtingnz.org.nz/news#newslettersignup> and sign up to get the YNZ newsletter directly to your inbox.

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### Extract from the YNZ Briefings 10 February 2026 – Headgear

#### How to choose the right protective headgear

Clubs, classes, and elite sailors are increasingly adopting helmets. We explore why they're gaining popularity, what they protect, and how to select the right model. [Keep reading.](#)

Did you know that Bluff Yacht Club has two different sized helmets that people can borrow as part of the learn-to-sail programme? As a learner sailor you may be more prone to getting bumped by that boom!! If you would like to trial using a helmet, you are welcome to use a BYC helmets to see if this is something that will be helpful for you.

## BYC Submission on the Environment Southland Navigation Safety Bylaw

The BYC Committee recently reviewed the Environment Southland Navigation Safety Bylaw and considered that a submission was required. The BYC submission made the following key points:

1. that there be no fees and charges set for recreational use of the Bluff Boat Ramp and Trailer Park;
2. that moorings in the area in front of Bluff Yacht Club be managed to ensure navigational safety of vessel movements in this area; and
3. that static fishing equipment (such as craypots, coffpots, buoys and related lines) not be placed in the part of Bluff Harbour most suitable for sailing activities.

The submission noted that the BYC is happy to discuss our submission points with Environment Southland, as well as any other stakeholders that may have an interest.

Bruce Conway has kindly offered to represent BYC at the Environment Southland hearings, 23 April 2026. If anyone else is available and would like to support Bruce, please get in touch.

## Southport wind monitoring beacons

You may have noticed some maps that have been printed out and located near the briefing whiteboard. These are to assist with visualising the location of the wind monitoring beacons.

Live information for these beacons can be found on the Southport website, which is really useful to check before any BYC club sailing session:

<https://southport.co.nz/>



## 2026/27 BYC Sailing Calendar

Mark these important dates in your calendars now!

SYA	Coaching the Coaches – Day at Bluff with Eric Stibbe	19 April
BYC	<i>Casual winter sailing – keep an eye on the BYC chat group</i>	TBA
BYC	Annual General Meeting – ALL WELCOME (venue to be confirmed)	6 June
BYC	Open day for the new 2026 summer season, yay!	10 October
BYC	Weekend family sailing adventure – Lake Manapouri	7/8 Nov (TBC)

### Sailing opportunity: Waikawa Women's Regatta – September 2026

Some fun for the women! The Waikawa Boating Club in the Marlborough Sounds host a Women's regatta biannually. The next one is being held 12-13 September 2026. It will be a new and improved event format with two divisions, a "Racing Division" for experienced crews and skippers and "Mermaid Division" for less experienced sailors and skippers looking to grow their skills.

If this opportunity sounds like something you would like to know more about, you can look up: <https://waikawaboatingclub.co.nz/womens-regatta/> and if you are interested in a girls weekend, please let Anke know.



### Sailing opportunity: BYC weekend adventure on Lake Manapouri – 7/8 November 2026 (TBC)

At a recent BYC Committee meeting a suggestion was made that perhaps our club would like to start the off our next sailing season with a family adventure on Lake Manapouri?

We could take a couple RIBs with camping gear, sail across the lake and camp somewhere on the other side, perhaps at Shallow Bay. Perhaps a shared dinner and breakfast and then sailing back the following morning.

Possible back-up dates if needed: 14/15 November.

**Who is keen?!?** Please let James or Geoff know.



### Update: Sailing opportunity: Kawau Island – December 2026

Following the advertising of this opportunity in the two most recent BYC newsletters, it became apparent that BYC does not have enough interest on its own, to send a BYC team to the RNZYS National Youth Training Week on Kawau Island in early December: <https://rnzys.org.nz/youthtraining/youthtrainingweek/>

Instead at the Southland Sailing Champs hosted by MYC at the end of March, it was quite exciting to have 12 teenagers noting their interest to become a part of an inter-club Southland team – combining BYC with MYC and WYC.

The week of training gives young sailors the opportunity to sail on Elliott 7 training yachts at Kawau Island. Sailors will receive theoretical and practical instruction in the various aspects of competitive keelboat racing. Teams stay on location at Kawau Island (camping), with everything provided during the week. Teams should consist of 4-5 sailors (helm, main, trim & bow), aged between 14 – 20 years and have a reasonable standard of sailing competency and experience.

If you are an interested teenager, please register your interest now, by 23 April 2026 on the following google form: <https://forms.gle/KgkibTTLcWwVwepz7>

The due date for this initial registration has been set to enable collated information to inform a discussion at the next SYA meeting, which is scheduled for 28 April 2026. Following the SYA meeting, the club reps will then know more about how we are best able to structure an inter-club team and what the next steps might be.

## BYC Annual General Meeting – 6 June 2026

BYC usually has its AGM mid-winter, which is also a good chance to catch up with everyone over a pot luck. Please mark 6 June in your calendars and keep an eye on the email or group chat for more details closer to the time.

The current Committee roles are Commodore, Rear Commodore, Treasurer, Secretary, Adult Learn-to-Sail, Youth Learn-to-Sail and the Southland Yachting Association representative, though these roles can be discussed at the AGM. The committee would welcome fresh faces to join and assist with setting the direction for the club. If you would like more information, please reach out to any of the committee members.

### Introducing: James Quaid

After two years leading our club, James is stepping down as our esteemed BYC Commodore at the upcoming AGM. It is therefore timely for him to be profiled in this newsletter and celebrate the fun we have with James in the lead role.

Here goes a few Q&A's with James 😊



What do you sail? *Sailing has always been a big part of my life – I love being on the water in any form, whether it's in a dingy, my keeler, or the catamaran. There's something about getting out there with mates where things never quite go to plan, but those moments – especially the chaotic ones – always end up being the best stories and the most fun.*

What do you dream about sailing? *Looking ahead, I'm keen to spend more time ocean sailing, even doing some solo passages, and passing that passion on by teaching my kids to sail and enjoy the water, however they choose.*

What has been your highlight as our esteemed BYC Commodore? *One of the real highlights of being Commodore has been seeing people from all walks of life come together through sailing, and watching the Bluff Yacht Club build a reputation as the club that shows up – bringing boats, energy and a great atmosphere to regattas.*

### The next issue of 'Turn the Tide' is due September 2026!

If you have any special winter sailing adventures planned, please get in touch with Grace and/or Anke, as we would love to hear all about it in the next issue!

In the meantime, keep warm over winter, take the opportunity to do some boat maintenance and make sure you are ready to go for next season!

See you all at the AGM in June!! 😊

#### BYC Committee members:

James – Commodore  
Grace – Rear Commodore  
Anders – Treasurer  
Craig – Youth Learn to Sail  
Bruce – Adult Learn to Sail  
  
Geoff, Ron, Tony, Anke,  
Michelle, Annaleise, Roger

