

# The Beginning

By Ray Kiely

For most people the year 1929 is the year of the Wall Street crash heralding the beginning of the Great Depression from which worldwide, some people never recovered. It was also the year of the founding of Lake Macquarie Yacht Club and perhaps there may be members who would like to know a little about that historical event.

In the following pages is a copy of the original minutes and whilst the flowery wording is there the beautiful copperplate handwriting in the original minutes is not available to us. It was a delight to read them and reflects the pace of the time. The inaugural meeting was held in G & W Campbell's shop in Hunter St. They were Tobacconists and Hairdressers and the shop was on the southern side, between Bolton and Newcommen Streets.

Wal Campbell was profoundly deaf but notwithstanding this handicap, served on the board and as Club-Captain for 23 years continuously, 29-30 to 51-52. Quite an achievement! Gordon Campbell served as Commodore for 2 years, 35-36-37.

A number of the founding fathers had a background in Skiffs, mostly at Toronto and this explains the position of a club president in the first year. This position was considered to outrank that of commodore and AV (Vic ) Toll was elected the first chairman and the first and only President. Robert Gardiner was elected as the first commodore. This arrangement lasted but one year, with Vic relinquishing the presidency and assuming that of commodore, a position he held for the next 5 years. He was commodore again in 48-49-50 making 7 years at the helm. The next best is 5. Vic took the sail number 9 as this was his footy jumper number but on quite reflection he could see the prestige in being number 1, and 83 years latter it is still in the family through his granddaughter, and a Dragon called *Bunyip*. (This was true at the time of compilation in March 2013)



Robert Gardiner had been a deck officer in the Merchant Service and I believe he served on hospital ships during WW1. He is shown here in the uniform of a second officer.



Vic Toll was a son of AF Toll, a very dour Scots emigrant who had started a business with a horse and cart delivering coal, moving into general carrying under Vic's influence. He is shown here in the uniform of OC, Naval Auxiliary Patrol, Newcastle circa 1942. Many LMYC members supplied and crewed NAP boats which were painted grey and armed with a .45 Colt pistol. Throughout this period all other yachts and boats were impounded in Fennell's Bay.

Minutes of the inaugural meeting.

Minutes of meeting of proposed amateur sailing club at the shop of G. Campbell at 83 Hunter Street, Newcastle on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>. September, 1929 at 8pm.

**Present:** Messrs A.V.Toll, G.Campbell, W.Campbell, A.Young, R..Gardiner, J.Bennett, J.F.Biddlecombe, and J.G.Biddlecombe, Dr.G. Blumer and Dr.R. Pittar.

**Chair:** Mr. A.V.Toll was unanimously elected to the chair.

**Secretary :** Mr. J.G.Biddlecombe was elected Secretary *pro-tem*.

**Proposal to form Amateur Sailing Club:** The Chairman reported having convened the meeting at the request of several boat owners, and a full discussion took place as to the advisability of forming an amateur sailing club for yachts. It was recorded on the motion of Mr.J.F.Biddlecomb, seconded by Mr. J. Bennett and carried unanimously that a club be formed to be called " Lake Macquarie Yacht Club"

**Rules:** The matter of Rules for the running of the club and regulations governing the races was fully discussed. It was moved by G.Campbell, seconded by Mr.R.Gardiner and carried that the Secretary obtain a copy of the Rules and Regulations of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club and the British Yacht Racing Association for submission to the next meeting of members.

**Membership:** It was moved by Mr.J.F.Biddlecomb seconded by Dr.G.Blumer and carried that the membership fee be fixed at five shillings (5/-) per member and that those present be registered as members on payment of the fee fixed. All future members to be duly proposed and seconded by members of the club and elected at a meeting for members. It was subsequently moved by Mr.G.Campbell and seconded by Mr.A.Young that boys and youths up to 18 years of age be admitted as Junior Members at an annual subscription of two shillings and sixpence and that the annual subscription of all lady members be two shillings and sixpence. Carried.

The membership subscription of all those present was duly received by the Secretary and they were declared elected.

**Election of Officers:** A full discussion took place as to the advisability of electing all the officers of the club and it was resolved that only those offices necessary for the conducting of the club's affairs be filled, the remainder to be held over to a later meeting. The following officers were then duly elected.

<b>President:</b>	Mr.A.V.Toll
<b>Commodore:</b>	Mr.R.Gardiner
<b>Vice-Commodore:</b>	Dr. G.Blumer
<b>Secretary:</b>	Mr.J.G.Biddlecombe
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Mr.J.G.Biddlecombe <i>pro-tem</i>
<b>Handicapper:</b>	Mr.J.F. Biddlecombe

It was also resolved that the gentlemen present form a committee for the time being with Mr.A.V.Toll as Chairman.

**Quorum:** It was resolved on the motion of Mr.J.F.Biddlecombe seconded by Mr.G.Campbell and carried that five (5) members of the committee personally present form a quorum for the transaction of all business.

**Meeting Place:** Mr.W.Campbell kindly offered the use of his shop as a meeting place for the club and it was decided that his offer be availed of.

**Registration of Boats:** It was recorded on the motion of Mr.G.Campbell and seconded by Mr.A.Young that the acceptance of all boats to be placed on the Club's register be left in the hands of the Committee, but that all 16ft.skiffs registered with a recognized 16ft.Sailing Club be excluded and that for the time being no "extras" be allowed in races. Carried. The following boats were then accepted and placed on the Club's register.

<b>Boat</b>	<b>Owner or Owners</b>
"Rover"	Messrs W& G.Campbell
"Sirius"	DR.G.Blumer
"Geraldine"	Mr.R.Gardiner
"Thelma"	Mr.A.Young
"Frolic"	Mr.A.V.Toll
"Flibbittigibbet"	Mr.J.Bennett
"Jago"	Mr.J.G.Biddlecombe

It was also resolved that no fee for the registration of boats with the Club be charged.

**Programme for Races:** It was resolved on the motion of Mr.R.Gardiner seconded by Dr.G.Blumer that a race be held every third week-end with the club cruises during the intervening week ends. A full discussion took place as to the date of the commencement of the season and it was decided that the matter be left over to the next meeting.

**Trophy:** Mr.AV.Toll stated that he would donate a cup for a Handicap Point Score competition and he was thanked for his offer.

**Burgee of the Club:** The matter of the selection of a Burgee design for the Club was discussed and it was resolved that designs be submitted by the members at the next meeting.

**Selection of Course for Races:** The matter of the selection of a course for races to be held by the club was fully discussed and it was resolved on the motion of Mr. G. Campbell seconded by Mr. R Gardiner and carried that the matter be left in the hands of the committee.

**Date of next meeting:** It was resolved on the Motion of Dr. G. Blumer seconded by Mr. A Young that that the next meeting be held at the Mr.G. Campbell's shop on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup>.October 1929 at 8 p.m.

**General Business:** The Clubs affairs generally were discussed and the meeting then terminated.