



Maroochy Sailing Club

A Brief History

A meeting of sailing enthusiasts under a tree at Cotton Tree in 1959 resolved to form the Maroochy All Boats Sailing Club—the first organized Sailing on the Maroochy River. Races were held at Cotton Tree between a variety of Sailing Boats—Moths, Trainees, Sabots, Gwen12 and a variety of other designs including the *Darkie Mystery*, a modified 14 foot dinghy design with a very wide beam.

Within two years, the name had shortened to the Maroochy Sailing Club, and the venue shifted upstream to “The Oaks” - River Oaks along the southern shore of the river, with sailing between Picnic Point and the Cod Hole.

In 1963, the Maroochy Shire Council approved the Club's application for a site at the western end of Chambers Island, and built a 100 metre footbridge to the island. The next year, Club members prepared their site and started on their clubhouse—with materials such as concrete being barrowed over the footbridge. Membership increased and fleets of Sharpies, Cherubs and Catamarans joined the Moths and Trainees.



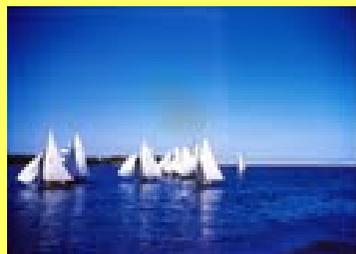
By 1970, boat storage and a Time-keepers box had been added to the Clubhouse, and Maroochy sailors were participating in National regattas. The Trainees evolved into the lighter and faster Thorpe 12 dinghies, and the Moths maintained their popularity.

By the mid 1970's, growing membership led club Officials to decide to construct a Hall above the existing boat storage. An ambitious fund-raising saw the Club involved in ventures such

as Christmas Carnival Chocolate wheels, Raffles, and sponsorship of a Judith Durham concert. The sailing fleet continued to expand, with separate fleets of Moths, Thorpes, Corsairs, Catamarans and Sabots and an All Boat Fleet.

In 1978 –79, the Club was the venue for the 12th Australian Thorpe 12 Championships which was won by local lads David Etherton and Mike Rimmington, with Ian O'Rourke and John Cash placing third. These crews dominated Thorpe 12 Championships for the next few years as part of a strong Maroochy contingent.

Construction of the Hall was commenced, largely with voluntary labour under the supervision of Ian Keals. With typical Maroochy ingenuity, cane train tracks were



laid across the footbridge and the materials arrived on the island by rail—the trolleys pulled by teams of younger members. The Hall was opened with much celebration in November 1979.

The 1980's saw a decline in membership as families grew up and moved



on, and competition from the attraction of the beach and surfing. A partnership with Burnside High School saw students using Club facilities during the week as part of their Marine Studies, and sailing at weekends. A fleet of OK Dinghies was established as a single handed boat, while Catamarans were popular.

The 1990's saw the establishment of a Club-run Sailing School in an attempt to attract more Junior members. While many youngsters were taught to sail, it was

more difficult to transition them to our racing Fleet. However, the Club successfully established a fleet of Lasers replacing the OK Dinghies, and attracted new adult members. We welcomed the Sunshine Coast Rowing Club as sub tenants when they built an annex onto our clubhouse.

The new century saw a major rebuilding of Club showering and toilet facilities while the Laser fleet continued to grow in various configurations. Several State Laser River Titles have been conducted on our sailing course, and the Club has hosted major regattas on the open waters off Mooloolaba.

Since our Silver Jubilee in 2009, our popular canteen has been redesigned and renovated, while our Sailing fleet has grown with the addition of fleets of Sabres and Pacers, with Optimist dinghies for youth.



In addition to our traditional Racing focus, we have introduced a popular non-competitive sailing format – Adventure Sailing - to provide a pathway into the sport for both children and adults. Recently our Support Boat Fleet has been upgraded with RIBs to better assist sailors on the water.

The Club has been certified as a Discover Sailing Training Centre and a fleet of Tacker Training dinghies purchased for youth Sail Training, while the Club rigging lawn has been re-laid to improve our facilities and member comfort., while building maintenance is an on-going task.

