

## ALISTAIR MURRAY AM

Nomination for Life Membership Tasar Association of Victoria Inc – March 2019



I FIRST MET ALISTAIR ABOUT 1971 OR 1972 AT ALBURY YACHT CLUB, WHILST HE WAS SAILING A CORSAIR WITH HIS FATHER ALAN AND BROTHER NICK. AT THE TIME, I WAS CREWING FOR KEN STALLARD AND THE THREE OF US BECAME VERY FIRM FRIENDS FROM THEN, OFTEN SAILING AGAINST EACH OTHER AT MORDIALLOC SAILING CLUB AND MANY INLAND WATER REGATTAS.

SOON AFTER, I STARTED SAILING WITH ALISTAIR AND SHAUGHAN BROWN IN CORSAIR BLUEBOTTLE AND WE CAME 2<sup>ND</sup> IN THE NATIONALS AT MAROOCHYDORE IN 1977, FAMOUSLY WINNING THE INVITATION RACE AND BEING PHOTOGRAPHED BY THE LOCAL PAPER. THIS WOULD NOT BE THE LAST TIME ALISTAIR WOULD GET HIS PICTURE IN THE PAPER.

LATER IN 1976, THE TASAR FIRST MADE AN APPEARANCE IN VICTORIA AT ST LEONARDS YC, WHERE ALISTAIR WAS A MEMBER. I BOUGHT TASAR 915 ON AUST DAY 1978 AT YARRAWONGA AND AL BOUGHT 761 'MADMAN' LATER THAT YEAR. HE LATER UPGRADED TO TASAR 1781 CHRISTENING HER 'INSANITY CLAUSE' AFTER A FAMOUS MARX BROTHERS FILM.

I REMEMBER US SAILING A TASAR TOGETHER IN ABOUT 1980 WHEN HE OFFERED TO DRIVE FROM MELBOURNE TO INDENTED HEAD, WE WENT SAILING ALL DAY, DRINKING TO EXCESS THAT NIGHT, THEN HE THREW ME THE KEYS AND SAID 'YOU DRIVE HOME'. I CLEARLY REMEMBER HIS

HEAD BANGING AGAINST THE PASSENGER WINDOW ON THE WAY HOME, HOPING INDEED THAT HE WOULD HAVE AN INDENTED HEAD.

AL SAILED THE TASAR WITH HIS WIFE JENNI FOR A FEW YEARS UNTIL HIS FAMILY CAME ALONG, STARTING WITH LAUREN IN 1984, THEN CLARE WHO WOULD LATER BECOME HIS CREW AND FINALLY ELEANOR. I STARTED CREWING FOR ALISTAIR THEN SAILING FROM CHELSEA YACHT CLUB WHERE WE FIRST MET TAV LIFE MEMBER AND RECENTLY DEPARTED GEOFF DAWSON AND LATER ON, THE OTHER TAV LIFE MEMBER ROB GILPIN. OUR MAIN COMPETITION WAS ALWAYS GLENN COLLINGS WITH VANESSA DAWSON, LATER TO BECOME VANESSA COLLINGS. WE SAILED TOGETHER ON TASARS 2122 'UPWARDLY MOBILE' AND TASAR 771 'OUTWARDLY HOSTILE'.

AL HAD GREAT SUCCESS WINNING MANY STATE TITLES INCLUDING AT ROYAL GEELONG, CHELSEA AND WESTERNPORT YACHT CLUBS. HIS CROWNING SUCCESS WAS WINNING THE NATIONAL TITLES AT HUMPYBONG QLD IN 1990/91 WITH MYSELF AS CREW, BECOMING THE ONLY VICTORIANS TO HAVE DONE SO – A RECORD WHICH HELD FOR MANY YEARS UNTIL THE RIDGWAYS WON IN 2014.

SUFFICE TO SAY, AL IS AN EXCELLENT YACHTIE AND HAS GONE ON TO RACE AND WIN IN MANY OTHER CLASSES INCLUDING 11METRES IN SAN FRANCISCO, B14S HERE AT HOME AND VARIOUS KEEL BOATS AT HAMILTON ISLAND AND AT SANDRINGHAM WHERE HE CURRENTLY RACES HIS 31 FOOT ACHAMBAULT EVERY WEEK.

BUT IT IS IN THE TASAR CLASS THAT ALISTAIR IS BEST KNOWN – FOR HIS EXCEPTIONAL DEDICATION TO SUPPORTING THE CLASS ON THE WATER AS A SAILOR AND OFF THE WATER THROUGH HIS LIFELONG ASSOCIATION WITH RONSTAN.

AL STARTED WORKING AS A COUNTER SALESMAN AT THE INGLIS SMITH CHANDLERY IN ABOUT 1974. THROUGH SELLING THEIR PRODUCTS, AL BECAME KNOWN TO RONSTAN AND APPLIED TO FOUNDERS RON AND STAN FOR THE VACANT VICTORIAN SALES JOB. AL HAD PREPARED WELL FOR THE JOB INCLUDING TRIMMING HIS GOLDEN FLOWING HAIR AT THE BARBERS. RON OFFERED THE JOB TO ALISTAIR ON ONE CONDITION – THAT HE GET A HAIRCUT! SO AL GOT ANOTHER HAIRCUT THE SAME DAY AND GOT THE JOB.

OVER THE YEARS ALISTAIR PROGRESSED THROUGH THE RANKS AT RONSTAN THROUGH A SUCCESSION OF OWNERS, UNTIL THE OPPORTUNITY FOR HIM AND OTHER SENIOR EXECUTIVES TO EXERCISE A MANAGEMENT BUY OUT, WHICH THEY DID. ALISTAIR DULY ACQUIRED A SIZABLE OWNERSHIP IN RONSTAN SHARES, BECAME ITS CEO AND IS NOW ITS CHAIRMAN AFTER RETIRING IN 2016. FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, AL WAS AND REMAINS THE SPIRIT OF RONSTAN.

BUT BACK TO THE TAV.

SINCE OWNING HIS FIRST TASAR ALISTAIR HAS ALWAYS BEEN ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE TAV. IN THE DAYS BEFORE FACEBOOK, TWITTER AND THE INTERNET, ALISTAIR WAS NEWSLETTER EDITOR FOR THE TAV AND THIS WAS AT THE TIME, THE ONLY METHOD OF COMMUNICATING EVENTS AND NEWS TO MEMBERS. ALISTAIR WENT ON TO BE VICE PRESIDENT

UNDER THE SEISMIC LEADERSHIP OF DAVID TAIT –THIS WAS A PERIOD WHERE THE TAV ESTABLISHED AND MAINTAINED ITS STRONG FINANCIAL POSITION. ALISTAIR BECAME PRESIDENT FROM 1989-92 AND SINCE THEN, HAS REMAINED EXTREMELY ACTIVE IN THE ASSOCIATION, MENTORING AND SUPPORTING ALL SUCCESSIVE PRESIDENTS.

AT A NATIONAL LEVEL, ALISTAIR INTRODUCED AND MAINTAINS AT ALL NATIONAL (AND INTERNATIONAL EVENTS WHEN HE IS COMPETING), THE ‘RONSTAN HALF HOUR’ WHICH IS FOR MANY THE HIGHLIGHT OF THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONALS, WHETHER FOR SAILING WELL, SAILING AT ALL, OR FOR THE MANY SEEMINGLY UNNOTICED MISTAKES THAT WE ALL MAKE. IN WAS IN CASCADE LOCKS IN 2013 WHERE I OBSERVED AT CLOSE QUARTERS THE RESILENCE OF THE MAN WHEN HE PRESENTED THE RONSTAN HALF HOUR IN THE USUAL HILARIOUS WAY IMMEDIATELY AFTER WE HAD BEEN ‘T BONED’ OUT OF THE REGATTA BY ANOTHER TASAR. THE PHOTO ABOVE WAS TAKEN THAT SAME DAY AND THERE IS NO SIGN OF DISTRESS, ONLY ALISTAIR DOING THE JOB HE LOVES IN THE SPORT HE LOVES.

TOGETHER WITH JON ROSS, PAUL AND BRONWYN RIDGWAY, ALISTAIR WAS A PRIME MOVER IN THE ‘NEW DIRECTIONS’ CAMPAIGN FOR THE TASAR CLASS, WHICH PROPOSED AND IMPLEMENTED THE CHANGE OVER TO MYLAR SAILS AND THEN THE NOTORIOUSLY SUCCESSFUL PHUKET WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP, RUN BY THE ATC. IT WAS ALISTAIRS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DESIGNER FRANK BETHWAITE AND HIS SON JULIAN THAT SMOOTHED THE PASSAGE FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE CLASS AND EFFECTIVELY GAVE IT A HALF LIFE EXTENSION.

IN THE WIDER SAILING COMMUNITY AND SINCE RETIRING FROM RONSTAN, ALISTAIR HAS BEEN ELECTED AS A BOARD MEMBER OF AUSTRALIAN SAILING AND IS ALREADY BEING SEEN AS A NATURAL LEADERSHIP CONTENDER FOR THAT BODY.

IN 2017, ALISTAIR WAS AWARDED AN ORDER OF AUSTRALIA FOR HIS LIFELONG ASSOCIATION WITH THE SPORT OF SAILING. THAT SAYS IT ALL REALLY.

APART FROM ALL THESE ACHIEVEMENTS, IT IS ALISTAIR’S INFECTIOUS ENTHUSIAM AND FORCEFUL PERSONALITY THAT STANDS HIM APART AND FROM WHICH HE HAS MADE A TANGIBLE AND SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE TAV.

IN CONCLUSION, WE ARE ALL BETTER OFF FOR KNOWING ALISTAIR AND SAILING WITH AND AGAINST HIM. AND THE TAV CERTAINLY IS.

LISTED BELOW ARE THE NATIONALS THAT I BELIEVE ALISTAIR HAS SAILING IN.

MICK PAYNTER MARCH 2019

| YEAR | LOCATION           | CREW            | BOAT # | BOAT NAME         |
|------|--------------------|-----------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1980 | BALMORAL NSW       | JENNI MURRAY    | 761    | MADMAN            |
| 1985 | WOOLLAHRA NSW      | MICHAEL PAYNTER | 1781   | INSANITY CLAUSE   |
| 1986 | BLACK ROCK VIC     | “               | “      | “                 |
| 1987 | HENLEY S.A.        | “               | 2122   | UPWARDLY MOBILE   |
| 1988 | YEPPON QLD         | “               | “      | “                 |
| 1989 | POINT STEPHENS NSW | “               | “      | “                 |
| 1990 | GEELONG VIC        | “               | “      | “                 |
| 1991 | LARGS BAY SA       | “               | 771    | OUTWARDLY HOSTILE |
| 1992 | HUMPYBONG QLD      | “               | “      | “                 |
| 1998 | SANDRINGHAM VIC    | “               | “      | “                 |
| 2002 | PORT LINCON SA     | CLARE MURRAY    | 2579   | THE MASTERS       |
| 2003 | MORDIALLOC VIC     | “               | “      | “                 |
| 2005 | DARWIN NT          | “               | 2779   | CLAREBUOYANT      |
| 2006 | LAKE MACQUARIE NSW | “               | “      | “                 |
| 2008 | ADELAIDE           | “               | “      | “                 |
| 2009 | MCCRAE             | DARREN EGER     | “      | “                 |
| 2010 | AIRLIE BEACH QLD   | “               | “      | “                 |
| 2011 | WOOLLAHRA NSW      | “               | “      | “                 |
| 2012 | DARWIN             | “               | 2905   | TRACE AL'IMENT    |
| 2013 | VICTOR HARBOUR SA  | “               | “      | “                 |
| 2015 | GEOGRAPHE BAY WA   | “               | “      | “                 |
| 2016 | TOWNSVILLE QLD     | TRACEY MURRAY   | 2941   | AL CAPITAIN       |
| 2017 | PORT STEPHENS NSW  | “               | “      | “                 |
| 2018 | DARWIN NT          | “               | “      | “                 |
| 2019 | LARGS BAY SA       | “               | “      | “                 |

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