

Year 1896
Report Thorndon Yacht Club. 7
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Before proceeding with consideration of Balance Sheet and other business before the meeting it may be of interest to some of you gentlemen now present to hear a short history of the formation of the Thorndon Yacht Club. It will be in the recollection of the older gentlemen that at one time there were no conveniences on shore in the way of dressing rooms &c., in which those yachting were able to change their clothes, but as a rule a change of costume had to be effected on board the yachts with the oft-time result that before getting on board the boat a pretty good 'ducking' took place. As a remedy for this state of affairs a few of the yachtsmen rented a small room, hardly as large as the one we are now assembled in, from Burns, who was then living in the building now occupied by Norton, and fitting up a few cupboards which did duty as lockers, and occupying a portion of the confined space on the ground floor, in which Burns built or repaired his boats, for the purpose of scraping and varnishing spars managed to 'shift along' for what ^{was} to us now a surprising length of time. Eventually however owing to the increasing number of Burns' family and the yachtsmen's portion of the ground floor being utilised as a sleeping place for various breeds of dogs which were undoubtedly strangers to the merits of soap and insect powder, a hasty retreat had to be made from the first yacht shed and a fresh home of a sweeter and cleaner nature to

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be found. On the 26th March 1869 a meeting of yachtsmen was held in Mr. Martin Chapmans office at which there were present Messrs. Chapman, Rawson, E.C.Mills, Jack, Symons, Moe, Campbell, Kimbell & Dean. Mr. Chapman occupied the chair and it was resolved that a Club be formed to be called "The Thorndon Yacht Club," the objects of which should be the building and maintenance of a Club house for the storage of yacht material and for the general convenience of members. Mr. Chapman was elected Captain of the Club and Messrs. Rawson, Mills and Jack were to be associated with him as a Committee of Management with Mr. Dean to fill the office of Secretary and Treasurer. After various interviews with the Harbour Board Officials a lease of 40 ft. frontage to Waterloo Quay on which our present Club house stands was granted to the Club by the Harbour Board at an annual rental of £10. and Messrs. Chapman, Rawson, and Mills were chosen as Trustees in whose names the lease should be drawn out. Through the kindness of Mr. Connell, plans and specifications were drawn up for the erection of a one story building 40 ft. in length and tenders were called for same Messrs. Gifford & O'Connor securing the contract at £200. Mr. Connell undertaking also to supervise the construction of the building. An issue of Debentures was then made with the result that the sum of £210. was received but the actual cost of the building was £218. & here it may be mentioned that altho' after arduous canvassing

we could only raise the sum of £150. Mr. Rawson generously came to the rescue by promising to take up debentures to the amount we were short of sum required, on the understanding that in the event of debentures being paid off he should have prior claim for a reduction to an amount which would place him on an equality with the other debenture holders. The Harbour Board about the same time was approached with the idea of rendering some assistance in the way of erecting skids for storage of yachts' dingies, and Mr. ^{Ferguson} Ingram in a most obliging manner obtained the authority of the Board to erect a wharf and skids in whatever position the yachtsmen desired and by mutual cooperation the Club house and skids were erected at the same time and by the same contractor. Only one Committee meeting of our Club was ever held ~~and~~ and that took place on the 4th January 1890 at the residence of Mr Herbert Rawson, the members present being Messrs. Rawson, Mills and Dean, when it was decided to immediately occupy the shed, lockers were allotted to various members and the Secretary was instructed to 'battle away', keep members in order, expel obnoxious ones and keep the Club going; and for seven long years the war has gone on, the Secretary, ably supported by a faithful few, as you will see from the Balance Sheet just about managing to keep the Club above water. In 1896 it was found that we had outgrown our quarters and were sadly pressed to accommodate the increasing

number of yachts and to provide lockers for the large number of yachtsmen who ^{should} have same and subscribe to the Clubs' funds, and after consideration it was decided that an attempt should be made to raise money for lengthening the building 10 ft. and putting on a top story with dressing room &c.; upstairs. An active canvass was made to raise money on debentures, the sum of £185 eventually being raised. Plans and specifications for alterations and additions to building were drawn up by Messrs. Clere, Fitzgerald & Richmond, and submitted to the Harbour Board for approval with an application for lease of further 10 ft. of ground. The plans were passed by the Harbour Board and submitted to the Governor for his consent which of course was given and the additional 10 ft. of frontage was granted at an increased rental of £1. per annum. An attempt was made to have our total rental of £11. reduced, but the Harbour Board could not accede to our request. Tenders were called for additions to Building and that of Mr. *Bliss* was accepted, the addition costing us £224. 5. 6. In addition to original cost of building a further sum of £41. 11. 3. has been expended in the way of Architects fees £19. 0. 5. Electric light wiring £9. 0. 0. and £13. 10. 10. for linoleum, chairs and other furnishings required in various parts of the building, so that the total cost of additions and alterations amounts to £265. 16. 9. Towards this amount as stated above £185. was raised by debentures and the original debenture holders generously gave the balance of Club funds

to their credit amounting to about £45. and which they might have claimed for distribution, as a contribution towards expenses of new building. You will notice from the Balance sheet that there will be a deficiency of about £35. on amount of outstanding liabilities, but it is hoped that there will be little difficulty in raising this amount, though if an increase could be made in amount of debentures relief would be sooner felt. The total cost of original and altered Building and furnishings amounts to £511. 12. 10. During the seven years operations we have received a total income of £685. 2. 4. made up as follows:- Debentures £395. Rent from yacht-owners £185. and subscriptions £105. and we have expended £624. 10. viz:- Rent in Harbour Board £72. Interest on debentures £93. Building £429. Insurance £8. Water £3. Debentures paid off £15. and sundries about £4. We started with a fleet of 5 yachts or boats and we now have 15 connected with the shed; we started with 40 good, bad or indifferent members and we now have 60 whom we count as being of the "right colour." Coming now to our prospects for the current year I estimate our receipts at £68. 10. 0 viz:- Yacht and Boat rents £36. 10. and members subscriptions £32. 0. 0. and our expenditure £50. 12. 0 as follows:- Rent £11. Interest £26. 12. 0. Insurance £3. Light £5. and Custodian £5. leaving a balance of about £18. 0. 0 to the good on the years transactions, but it must not be forgotten that there is a debit balance of about £35. on

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building and furniture to be wiped off as shown in Balance Sheet.

If Members would try and induce other yachts to join our Club and if we could only make the moneyed members of the community realise and feel the pleasures of yachting and build boats of their own I am convinced that before very long we should need to double our present accommodation and the desire of the late Patron of the P.N.Y.C. as expressed by him at the dinner the other evening would be realised, when in his parting speech he earnestly wished that yachting in Wellington might grow and flourish.

A. E. Dean

Hon. Sec. T.Y.C.

10th February, 1897.