

Basic Detail Report



Antares

Vessel number

HV000644

Date

1948

Primary Maker

Andrew Riddell

Description

The sloop ANTARES was built in 1948 by Andy Riddell in Powder Hulk Bay, on the eastern side of the Spit at Seaforth. The 8.4m long hull is carvel planked in Oregon, and sloop rigged, Riddell also built a sailing dinghy to an Uffa Fox design which was used as a tender for ANTARES and is now in the Sydney Heritage Fleet Collection.

ANTARES was designed in May 1948 by Alan Mackerras who was an electrical engineer but practiced yacht design as his hobby. Mackerras designed seven versions of ANTARES and settled on No. 5 as the one to be built. The lines feature well-proportioned overhangs and an elegant, classic profile. It is understood to have been designed to the metacentric principle of yacht design, an English method of calculations that is believed to help distribute the underwater volume to give a balanced hull when the yacht heels. The lines are extremely well detailed to a level even beyond most professional designers. One of the design criteria was that the yacht should be able to pass under the Hawkesbury River Bridge so it could cruise further up the river. There is a sister ship called MANDY A, built for Mr Alexander, a friend of Alan Mackerras.

Mackerras did not believe in having any penetrations in the hull and the yacht has no engine, it has been sailed on and off its mooring for over 65 years. The fractional Bermudan rig retains its original proportions, and it still has the original hollow Oregon mast and boom. In the last 10 years the seams have been raked out, sealed and filled with flexible epoxy to replace the old caulking. Some seams below the waterline have been splined and a number of the frames have been strengthened. The result is a very tight hull.

Mackerras took ANTARES cruising to Pittwater and slept on-board or camped ashore. Every nook and cranny was occupied by a box of camping equipment or fishing tackle, however they are no longer kept on-board. In the 1970s Alan was also a member of Middle Harbour Yacht Club and its handicapper. After cruising with his step granddaughter Francis on Saturdays they would return to Middle Harbour just in time for Alan to calculate the handicaps and post the day's results. Alan Mackerras was the father of a well-known and talented family of seven children, including the famous conductor Sir Charles Mackerras, the political commentator Malcolm, the mathematics teacher and headmaster of Sydney Grammar School Alastair, and the China expert Colin. All sailed on board ANTARES and enjoyed cruising on the yacht. When Alan Mackerras died in 1973 a family friend, Dr John Wilson, took over the stewardship of ANTARES and

spent a lot of time restoring the yacht. It was eventually sold to Bill Ratcliff who raced it successfully at the Cruising Yacht Club, winning Harbour A Division in 1977. He sold ANTARES to co-owners Michael Friend and David Mathlin. It has since had a new set of co-owners take over and is seen regularly on the harbour racing with Sydney Amateur Sailing Club. ANTARES has since won the Division 2 Short Series in 2013

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 8.4 m × 5.5 m × 2.2 m × 1.25 m, 2 tonnes (27.56 ft × 18.05 ft × 7.22 ft × 4.1 ft, 1.97 tons)