

Basic Detail Report



Smoky Cape

Vessel number

HV000714

Date

1973

Primary Maker

Cec Quilkey

Description

SMOKY CAPE was designed by Len Randell from WA. It was a sloop rigged design for a "24 foot Double Ender" and was featured in the August 1955 Seacraft magazine. This plan was adapted to suit Earl's requirements. The hull design is a double-ender with a seaworthy hull, and the article points out it had a "Norwegian Stern" with a raked sternpost and deep rudder. The style overall is one that takes inspiration from Norwegian Colin Archer and his seaworthy double-enders. Designs of this concept have been prepared by a number of boat designers world-wide. Earl had owned KATHLEEN GILLETT HV000042 a design adapted and built from a set of Archer's plans held by the builder, and Jack had always been a keen on the Archer concept. He sold KATHLEEN in 1950, and toward the end of the decade began sailing his second big yacht, the Alan Payne designed Tasman Seabird MARIS HV000233. Both were yawl rigged. After extensive voyages around the Pacific with his family MARIS was sold, and Earl revisited the small double ended sloop that he had admired since he saw it in the magazine. Randell's plans and Jack's revisions were realised by one of Sydney's premier boat builders, Cec Quilkey, whose experience with cold moulded construction was widely recognised, including yachts such as LOVE & WAR HV000572. The hull has a triple skin of Oregon, a plywood deck and a teak superstructure. The yawl rig was a favourite rig for Jack and he redesigned the sail plan to fit the mizzen mast and sail. Jack liked how a yacht could be simply balanced in strong winds with the small mizzen and a small headsail only, making the craft easy to handle. In some conditions the helm could be secured and the yacht would hold its course. Part of the fitout includes a large chart table which doubled as a spot for Jack to work on a painting, and SMOKY CAPE certainly became part of the process when subjects were local. Vince Walsh commissioned Jack to do a painting of his son's 12 foot skiff in 1984. Jack said he would come across to do some sketches of the boat at their Watson's Bay waterfront house, and surprised the family when he anchored off the front garden in SMOKY CAPE and called out to them instead of turning up by car, as he preferred to go by yacht whenever he could rather than drive there in his VW Beetle. Amongst the changes Jack added a toe rail, higher camber on deck house and a larger hatch. Jack designed the fittings including the yoke that runs around the mizzen for the tiller to swing. It was simply rigged boat and easily managed by Jack, reflecting his many years' experience in yachts of different sizes'. Moored below his house in Mosman Bay, he could be out sailing in minutes if he wanted a break from painting. Shortly before Jack passed away in 1994 it was bought by Steve and Michela Moss. They sailed SMOKY CAPE extensively including a voyage from Tahiti to

Australia, a passage Jack had once wanted to do in the little yacht. Earl's family through his grandson Ben Hawke and friends bought SMOKY CAPE back from the Moss's in 2012, and later the current owner, also a marine artist, took sole ownership. Ian is an artist specializing in maritime art and has been the owner for the last 12 years. In those 12 years he has been to Lord Howe 4 times in Smokey Cape and attended a number of Australian Wooden Boat Festivals. In 2022 he replaced the deck of the yacht with flexi teak. SMOKY CAPE is maintained in superb condition and in 2016 featured at the ANMM Classic and Wooden Boat festival alongside KATHLEEN GILLETT and MARIS, bringing all three yachts together. In 2024, its designer Len was honoured with an Order of Australia in recognition of his services to Sailing and Naval Architecture.

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 7.3 m × 5.9 m × 2.05 m × 1.2 m (23.95 ft × 19.36 ft × 6.73 ft × 3.94 ft)