

Basic Detail Report



Just One

Vessel number

HV000353

Date

1959

Primary Maker

Ralph Tobias

Description

JUST ONE was designed and built in Sydney in about three weeks by electrical engineer Ralph Tobias in 1959 for the Manly 14 ft Sailing Club. The club members wanted a versatile training craft for their children with the stability and handling of their larger skiffs. They felt that the only satisfactory solution was to design their own new craft. Originally called the Manly Midget, it is understood that the original idea for the hull shape featured a

conventional sharp stem. This was promptly changed to a pram or transom bow to allow the dinghies to fit under the club's roof when stacked on end. In local trials JUST ONE proved a big success. For its first outing Ralph Tobias sailed the dinghy with a young sailing novice in a good stiff breeze which showed how well it could perform. The dinghy was easy to handle, planed readily, had good stability and was also adaptable as a fishing and rowing craft. The Manly Junior, or MJ, was soon adopted as the training fleet by the Manly club's junior members. It was hugely popular because a crew of two youngsters could learn all aspects of boat-handling and racing in a safe, simple and relatively cheap craft. Other Sydney clubs quickly followed and by the 1960s and 70s, (the class' heyday) Manly Juniors were firmly established interstate. Despite the introduction of more recent training designs, such as the Laser, the MJ's popularity has remained strong across the country. In New South Wales, 90 craft raced for the State title series in February 2009. The 2008 Olympic Gold medalists in the International 470 class, Nathan Wilmot and Malcolm Page from Middle Harbour in Sydney, are among the many Australian champions who learnt to sail in a Manly Junior. JUST ONE was built of plywood and originally carried cotton sails on a wooden spar. Over the years it changed owners a few times, and the last private owner was well known Sydney sailor John 'Beetle' Hebden and his family. To reinforce the aging planking he fibreglassed the exterior, and in 1984, the craft no longer being used by his family, he donated it to Sydney Heritage Fleet. In 2009 JUST ONE was on display at the Wharf 7 Maritime Heritage Centre in Pyrmont, Sydney, complete with a wooden spar, a cotton mainsail from Brookvale sailmaker Laurie Mitchell, who made the first sails for the class, and a more recent synthetic jib.

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 2.59 m x 1.51 m x 0.41 m (8.5 ft x 4.97 ft x 1.33 ft)