

Basic Detail Report



Fairlie II

Vessel number

HV000496

Date

1899

Primary Maker

Robert Inches

Description

FAIRLIE II was designed in Scotland by William Fife III in 1899, whose yard at Fairlie on the Clyde had earned a reputation as one of the finest yards throughout the world. It was framed up by Fife's shipwrights, then dismantled and sent to Robert Inches yard at Battery Point in Hobart. Inches was a premier builder of this period. He carvel planked the hull in Huon Pine. It was rigged as a gaff cutter, and its elegant Fife profile was matched with a moderate beam and draught, there were no extreme features and it was an ideal yacht to race or cruise. The cabin has a rounded front and features a skylight over the main saloon. The yacht is about 11.4 m overall, 2.6m beam and 1.71m draft, with 5 tonnes of ballast. Clarke's previous design from Fife, the 21 Foot Waterline class CLUTHA was noted for its extreme overhangs, being around 12 metres or 40 feet long overall. Clark was well-known in Hobart and involved in many activities including yachting, rowing, football and horse racing. One of his significant acts in yachting was his continued support for the North v South races between 21 Foot Waterline yachts from North Tasmania and Hobart. He died in 1939, aged 69, at his Hobart residence "Clutha" and was noted in one obituary as being ' of independent means'. FAIRLIE II was launched early in 1900, and raced in 24th January Hobart Anniversary Day races, as recorded by the Hobart Mercury on 25th January 1900. "Mr F.N. Clarke, who, of course, is well known as having introduced the latest design yachts in the colonies, scored another success, and doubtless a record, as far as this colony is concerned at any rate. He did it with his newly launched cruiser Fairlie. She was only launched on the day prior to the regatta, but not withstanding the disadvantages attendant thereto, the yacht showed that she was superior to all other contestants, and through she started scratch and allowed some of her rivals 6 minutes, carried off first prize easily. The yacht was handled by the veteran A.W. Williams." Success continued in many other events including line honours and handicap wins in the 1904 and 1908 Bruny Island races. There then follows a gap in its story until the early 1920s when it was located on Port Phillip Victoria, and was purchased from a Mr Bremmer by Stan Gamble and put back into racing condition. Skipped by Dick Edwards it was St Kilda Yacht Club champion in 1923-24 and 1925-26, and then Gamble swapped it for another yacht PETREL. The new owner Bill Smith of Geelong soon sold it to G Laird, and then Charlie Forster bought it. Back at SKYC it was Club Champion again in the 1934-35 season. About this time it is understood it was sold to Garry Walker and converted to a Marconi rig sail plan. Walker sold it in 1946 to a Sydney owner and it was delivered up the coast by Alec Mitchell. In Sydney it was raced and took the name ISABEL at an unknown time. In the early 1970s

yachting enthusiast Andy Bluett became owner of the yacht which at this point had deteriorated and had sunk at its moorings on more than one occasion. He gave it back its original name and began a slow process of stabilizing the hull and restoring it, but kept sailing when he could and limited FAIRLIE II's racing to the social twilight events on Pittwater, north of Sydney. Andy and his first wife lived aboard FAIRLIE II early in their marriage, and the yacht was fitted with lifelines and netting to stop their young son Cameron from accidentally falling overboard. FAIRLIE II remains there in 2012 in good condition, still with a Marconi rig but the original hull profile, counter and cabin are all in place.

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 11.4 m x 2.8 m x 1.71 m (37.4 ft x 9.19 ft x 5.61 ft)