

Basic Detail Report



Boambillee

Vessel number

HV000623

Date

1968

Primary Maker

Bill Barnett (1915-2018)

Description

BOAMBILLEE was built for property developer Vince Walsh to a design by the leading American naval architects Sparkman and Stephens from New York. They were the outstanding yacht designers from the 1930s to the 1970s and a number of Australian owners commissioned designs from them, so their yacht would be as up to date as possible. BOAMBILLEE was a development of RAINBOW II which had won the prestigious One Ton Cup earlier in

1968 for New Zealand. However, it was also designed to the RORC handicap rule, which was about to be replaced by the IOR rule for international ocean racing events. Soon after S&S produced a smaller design that became the production S&S 34 that subsequently won many races around the world and was later used widely for singlehanded sailing as well, including LIONHEART HV000214. Compared to BOAMBILLEE this design sailed almost as well and had a better handicap, but did not have the elegant overhangs and proportions of BOAMBILLEE. Modern Boating in August 1968 noted BOAMBILLEE's genesis- "Bill Barnett is building a Sparkman and Stephens One Ton Cupper for Vince Walsh, formerly owner of MISTRAL VIII, who intends to enter her in the next Hobart race." Just prior to the Hobart race it had its first race and this was reported early the next month in Modern Boating : "...including One Ton Cup boat BOAMBILLEE, which in her first race (the last of the Admiral's Cup trials) came third overall and won Division 2 outright" Unfortunately the Hobart race where it was expected to challenge the German One Ton Cup yacht OPTIMIST was not a success and it finished 28th on handicap. The Modern Boating report noted 'BOAMBILLIE, Vince Walsh's newest Sparkman and Stephens' One Tonner, couldn't get going, blew out two headsails and had both compasses pack up". However things improved, and in May 1969 Modern Boating notes that sailing in light weather - "BOAMBILLEE, Vince Walsh's new Sparkman and Stephens One Tonner scored her first major win with an outright victory on corrected time in the 90-mile Janzoon Trophy race around the Tom Thumb Islands. Boambillee was in touch with the leaders most of the way, was only a mile behind Ragamuffin (the leader) off Coogee nearing the finish, and was just beaten for 2nd place across the line by Balandra. Her crew with Peter Kurts (Mister Christian) on board for this race, believe they have the feel of her now- they find her very sensitive to sail trim and crew weight trim." Kurts later went on to win

the Hobart race in another S&S design LOVE & WAR (HV000572). BOAMBILLEE's construction is its outstanding feature, and not initially appreciated as its elegant appearance is usually the first thing to attract attention. As noted it was the first cold moulded hull built by Barnett, and the four layered, cold molded skin had an impact resistance equivalent to 3/8" (10mm) steel plate. The planking was supported by internal framing and full length stringers that were always employed by the carvel construction that had been common until then. In addition the back-bone of the yacht was a custom fabricated stainless steel "H" girder, which ran from about 500mm forward of the mast aft to just in front of the companionway. The mast stepped on to this girder, the engine mounts were supported by it, the chain plates were terminated to it, and the keel bolts were fixed to it. Therefore the major loads to the hull were connected to this extremely strong back-bone. The keel fastenings in the lead keel were also carefully considered. Instead of nuts in pockets in the keel, the keel bolts terminated with 50mm diameter bronze bars that were are placed across the keel in a staggered formation. The keel was bored to accept these bronze bars, and these were then drilled and tapped to accept the keel bolts which were threaded bars. Monel bolts and screws were used throughout, plywood gussets were located at every frame to deck-beam connection, 25 mm thick Bruynzeel mahogany plywood was used for the decking and cabin top, and the hull was sheathed in Dynel. It was the highest quality construction and given Lloyds Certification at the time of building. In comparison, current ocean racing yachts are required to meet the lighter ABS standards for construction, and these scantling rules were only made mandatory in the mid-1980s. This construction has produced an extremely fair and stiff hull. BOAMBILLEE is fast in all conditions, but was at its best in light winds, and in 2014 is often sailing past modern yachts to their considerable consternation. In 2014 BOAMBILLEE is a successful racer in the classic yacht races, a competitive yacht in club races, and used for occasional cruises.

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 11.05 m x 8.21 m x 3.2 m x 1.9 m, 6.1 tonnes (36.25 ft x 26.94 ft x 10.5 ft x 6.25 ft, 6 tons)