

Basic Detail Report



Kon tiki

Vessel number

HV000814

Date

1953

Primary Maker

Uffa Fox

Description

Kon tiki is a 20ft 'flying fifteen' racing skiff built by Robin Attrill in Glenorchy in 1953. Kon tiki is the first flying fifteen skiff to be built in Tasmania, and is constructed of Huon Pine below the waterline, king billy pine above, with king billy and celery top pine ribs. It has a sloop rig, bulb fin keel, and ultra-lightweight of 329kgs. Kontiki is further the only wooden flying fifteen to be built in Tasmania, other 1960s designs fibreglass models from Sydney. The flying fifteen class was designed by renowned British Naval architect Uffa Fox in 1948 as a two man ultra-lightweight racing sloop. Vessels of this class are capable of planing under sail, and their iron keel can be removed to allow for transport by trailer with ease. Details and plans were first published in the British magazine Yachting in 1949 and followed soon afterwards by the Australian Seacraft. The first to be built in Australia was Stellor, in Whyalla in South Australia in mid-1949. The class came to particular prominence later that year when one named Coweslip (FF192) was built on the Isle of Wight for the Duke of Edinburgh. The original design was revised on a number of occasions and became an international class in 1981, by which time fibreglass had replaced traditional timber construction. Over 4000 Flying Fifteens have been built worldwide, timber boats built to the original Uffa Fox plan now being designated Flying Fifteen Classics. Following construction, Kon tiki competed in a few third division races with sail number H14. The vessels only win was the third division race at the 1954 Sandy Bay Regatta, helmed by Peter Attrill, a former Olympic Games sailor. With no new boats being built locally to compete with Kon Tiki, the vessel competed as a District Dinghy at the 1955 Sandy Bay Regatta, and is said to have raced in the District Dinghies class at Bellerive with considerable success. There was a resurgence of interest in Flying Fifteens in Tasmania after Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh donated the Coweslip Cup to the newly-established Perth-based Australian Flying Fifteen Association in 1962. A national competition was soon promoted. The Royal Prince Alfred Club in Sydney made available two early fibreglass boats built in Sydney by David Hinckley to start the class in Hobart. They had not proved particularly successful due to overly rigid construction, and at their first outing in the Hobart Regatta, in 1964, the older Kon Tiki helmed by her owner-builder was the winner. A further seven Hinckley/RPAC boats ended up in Tasmania by 1969, and a formal Tasmanian branch of the Australian Flying Fifteen Association operated in 1967-69, after which the class lapsed in Tasmania for many years. From the 1970s fibreglass Flying Fifteens were built to modified designs, some of which have sailed in Tasmania over the years and some of these still exist, some in southern Tasmania and one based at Ulverstone. After being sold by the

original owner, Kon Tiki was renamed Fish. Fish spent several years on the hard in Dave Wardrop's yard behind the Charles Davis building in Elizabeth Street Hobart. Kon tiki was restored, however not owned, by George Burrows in the early 1980s. The vessel was then sailed for a while under the name Kon Tiki once more at Cornelian Bay. Kon Tiki then transferred in ownership to Ken Reeve. Having again fallen into disrepair and being badly hogged after many years ashore resting on its keel with the ends unsupported, the Huon Valley Council (HVC) arranged for Kon Tiki to be taken over by the Living Boat Trust. A restoration project was initiated as part of the Huon Challenge Mentoring Project with some funding from the HVC and Department of Health and Human Services. Under the guidance of Adrian Dean, a considerable amount of structural work was done including removing several midship ribs, gently forcing the ends up and installing new laminated stringers to maintain the shape. After a period of post-restoration use Kon Tiki was again neglected for many years, but underwent another substantial restoration in 2018 and remains at Franklin in good serviceable condition. Completed with the assistance of Graeme Broxam

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 6.1 m × 4.57 m × 0.76 m, 0.45 tonnes, 13.93 m² (20 ft × 15 ft × 2.49 ft, 0.45 tons, 149.96 ft²)