

# Basic Detail Report

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## Orbit

**Vessel number**

HV000834

**Date**

1964

**Primary Maker**

Don Caswell

## Description

Orbit is a 12 ft 'Thorpe' sailing dinghy designed by Don Caswell and built in 1964. This special class of small sailing boat was sailed by the Maryborough Sailing Club (QLD) both in Maryborough throughout the year, and in Hervey Bay from Christmas to Easter. Orbit was designed in Maryborough by Caswell when he was 16, built by Merv Anderson in Brisbane, and completed by Caswell back in Maryborough. The 'Thorpe' design was an evolution of the Queensland 'Trainee' design - a class first raced in 1933. These dinghies were simple and cheap to build, being cross planked on their flat bottoms with sides cut and shaped from a single cedar plank. In the 1960's design rules were changed by Queensland yacht clubs in order to allow for more modern construction methods and the 'Trainee' class became the 'Thorpe Class'. Orbit's hull is made of plywood and it is a v bottom chine shape. It has a cat rig, with a 95ft square foot main sail area, and 75 square foot spinnaker. Orbit was the Maryborough Sailing Club Champion from the years 1966-68, 1971-2, and 1981-2. The vessel, and the Thorpe class, last sailed in 1989 with modifications made by Jason and Andrew Caswell, who brought it up to the latest race standards and revarnished the vessel. Both are sons of the original designer. Orbit is now on public display in a hard stand/cradle at the Hervey Bay Museum as part of a new maritime display. It is shown alongside sister sailing vessel Joan, built in 1983 by members of the Maryborough Sailing Club. Joan was also a champion of the club from 1984 to 1986, however Orbit is the more successful race champion of the two. Following flooding early in 2022 the Maryborough Sailing Club was demolished. The Hervey Bay Sailing Club was established in 1968 and remains as the most prominent sailing club in the area. The club has hosted numerous state and national titles of monohull classes including Herons, Tasars, Corsairs, Sabots, MG 14 and Lasers, and Catamaran Classes including Cobras, A Class, Nacras and Arrows. Since 1981 the club has hosted the annual 'trailable' (yachts capable of transport by trailer) Bay to Bay yacht race, running from Tin Can Bay to Hervey Bay along the Great Sandy Marine Park and just adjacent to Fraser Island. This event often includes up to 140 participants, and at 47 nautical miles in length is Queensland's largest trailable yacht race and one of the three largest trailable yacht passage races in Australia.

## Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 3.66 m (12 ft)