



Lizzie lives again

SHE WAS all but sunk, the mast rigging had failed, and both mast and gear were lying alongside in the water.

We were told about a derelict yacht in Big Shoal Bay, on Auckland's North Shore in an email on June 23 to the Classic Yacht Association from Marc Davis at the Auckland Harbourmaster's office.

We managed to pump her out in time but she was making water quite quickly. We decided to tow her to a contractor's barge and lift her out of the water. I checked the police website and she was not listed as a stolen boat. I had until the Friday to find an owner and then we would have to remove her from the barge that she was stored on due to other obligations. At this point she would probably have had to be declared derelict and end up being destroyed – such a sad end to this vessel.

Within minutes, the information was posted on the CYA's website's 'Boat Rescue' thread:

"The yacht *Lizzie* has just been rescued from sinking by Ports of Auckland who can't find an owner. Pics below. *Lizzie* was built in Wellington by Ted Bailey in February 1909. She's a little 22ft keel yacht of impeccable pedigree. She was called *Linnet* for a long time but has now reverted to *Lizzie*. Her days are very numbered unless her owner can be found to take responsibility or another saviour found."

Almost immediately, Gavin Pascoe of the CYA's Wellington membership swung into action. Gavin is passionate about the history of Wellington yachting and he realised how fitting it would be for Wellingtonians to rescue *Lizzie* and rebuild her back home in Wellington.



Lizzie is dragged from the water, derelict, at Shoal Bay, Auckland in June 2010 (above) while Gavin Pascoe, Tony Ward and Terry Ward, C.J. Ward's greatgrandson and grandson, survey the 22-footer at Aotea Quay



Lizzie, as first launched in 1909 (above), featured on the cover of NZ Yachtsman magazine (below) on November 2, 1912.

"I emailed a few salty friends with the idea of bringing her home to Clyde Quay. To my surprise, over \$3000 was pledged within a couple of hours to the cause of her restoration. As luck would have it, the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club AGM was that same evening and, after a short off-the-cuff presentation, further pledges brought the working capital to around \$6000 – more than enough to pay the salvage and get her trucked to Wellington."

In mid-July, still half full of Shoal Bay seawater, *Lizzie* arrived by truck at Evans Bay where she had essential repairs carried out to make her seaworthy for the short trip around to Clyde Quay. It was in Shed 49 at Clyde Quay that Ted Bailey plied his boatbuilding trade for many years, after moving in August 1909 from Martins Bay where *Lizzie* had been built, six months previously.

Serendipity has reigned ever since. *Lizzie* has proved to be the catalyst for an upsurge of pride in Wellington's yachting and boatbuilding past. Port Nick and Evans Bay Yacht Club have backed the project, Charles Ward's descendants have come

up with a treasure trove of early photographs and documents about the yacht, the descendants of Joe Jukes – probably the most prolific Wellington boatbuilder between the wars and who served his time with Ted Bailey at Clyde Quay – have contacted Gavin with superb information about the Wellington boatbuilding trade of the early 20th century.

But perhaps most importantly of all, this Wellington group of classic yacht enthusiasts, long an outlier of the Auckland-based CYA, have gone

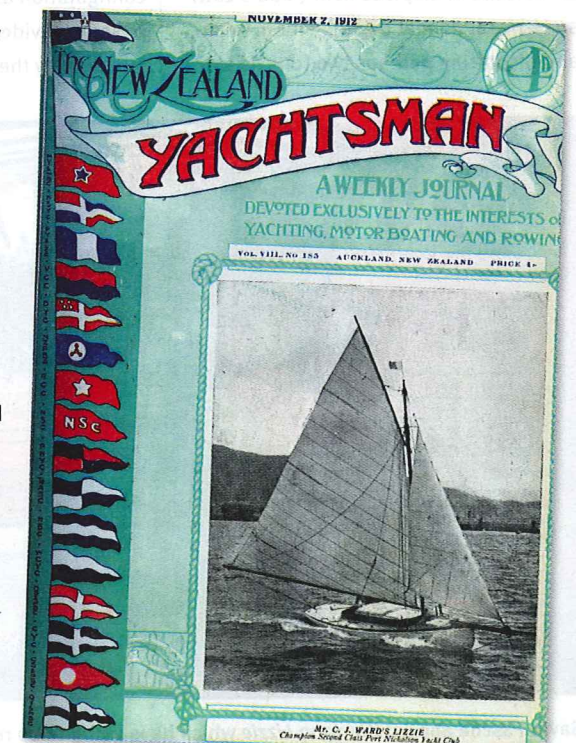




Photo: Dominion Post

up a gear. They were already beginning to blossom in their own right with the importation of an increasing number of fine early yachts such as the Bailey 2½ raters *Rogue* and *Thelma*, and my old warhorse *Loloma*, but the rescue of *Lizzie* has enhanced their sense of community spirit.

Straight after their decision to commit to the rescue and restoration of *Lizzie*, the team established the Wellington Classic Yacht Trust to ensure that people who were donating knew where their money and support was going, and to set up guidelines for the restoration and the yacht's future. They followed precedents set by Auckland's Classic Yacht Charitable Trust headed by John Street and Tony Stevenson's Tino Rawa Trust.

The restoration of a small yacht is easier and cheaper in inverse proportion to the cube of displacement (Kidd's Law) so *Lizzie*, at 22 feet overall, 7ft 6in beam, and displacing perhaps two tons, is at the

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lower end of the scale of affordability and complexity, thus ideal for a group to restore. Gavin Pascoe says the plan is to restore *Lizzie* as faithfully as they can afford to.

"The philosophy behind *Lizzie's* restoration can be described as follows: she will be returned to her original configuration as closely as possible based on evidence from photographs supplied by the Ward family, and the



Photo: Dominion Post

Gavin Pascoe aboard the 1909 *Lizzie* which he is going to be restoring in Evans Bay

evidence given by the remains of original fittings and joinery, of which there is thankfully rather a lot.

"The Trust is working on a very tight budget, and many people have come forward with the offer of building materials and labour. However, the cost of bronze and copper fastenings, American White Oak for framing, and other important structural elements may mean some elements of the restoration will not be as we might wish. For example, bulkheads and much of the deck will be laid with ply.

"Thankfully, none of what remains of the original boat will have to be replaced, and much of the timber from the built-up topsides can be reused. We haven't got as far as financing the standing rigging and sails yet!"

Lizzie's topsides had been built up at least one foot, but the original shelf had been left in as a stringer and her original sheer, as well as the position of the original deck beams are clearly evident. Thanks to the builders using different joints, it is also possible to detect exactly where the original cockpit and low trunk cabin are situated.

This also helps with the positioning of the mast, which has been moved around since November 1912 when the Ward family sold her. The original breasthook, quarter knees and transom block are still in position and in good shape. *Lizzie* has been badly over-caulked at some stage, resulting in most frames being broken but this is progressively being removed and the planking braced back to the proper shape.

A huge amount of help is coming from the doyen of Wellington yacht designers, Bruce Askew, and Rongotai boatbuilder Matt Price, who have both played central roles in the current Wellington classic yacht resurgence. Their help has been phenomenal says Pheroze Jagose, the owner of *Rogue* and a member of the team working to save *Lizzie*.

"Both men are heavily relied on for local advice and expertise. Both contribute largely out of the goodness of their hearts, and their passion for the craft, and both operate without the strong community of peers that so marks out the Auckland fleet."

Restoration is surging ahead at Clyde Quay. It's not certain when *Lizzie* will take to the water again, but my guess is the beginning of the 2011-12 season.

It has been a rollercoaster ride since that email from Marc Davis in June 2010, and we still don't know how *Lizzie* came to be neglected to the point where she nearly foundered in Shoal Bay and by whom. But congratulations to the Auckland Harbourmaster's office for broadcasting her plight so effectively, and congratulations to the Wellington classic yachties for their energy and foresight.



Ted Bailey and *Lizzie*

Edwin Richard (Ted) Bailey, the fifth son of Chas. Bailey Sr, moved to Wellington in early 1906, initially working with James Bringins at Balaena Bay. He soon became prominent in building small centreboarders, dominating the Thorndon Dinghy Sailing Club 10-footers with boats he built and sailed.

Later in life he built a string of fine X Class yachts, culminating with *Lavina* which won the Sanders Cup in 1937 for Wellington. Other significant yachts he built include the keelers *Wylo* and the first *Reverie* for Dr. Chesson.

He designed and built *Lizzie* for Charles J. Ward (pictured) in February 1909 and she became scratch boat in the Second Class with Port Nick, racing consistently until the war. Ward sold her to Charlie Neal in late 1912, and in 1920 he sold her to C. Tringham Jr. who renamed her *Linnet*. She did little racing after WW1, went to Lyttelton, and on to Auckland in the late 1980s where Graham Robertson restored her extensively before he bought *Queen Charlotte*.