

Basic Detail Report



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Title

RAWHITI on Sydney Harbour, racing downwind under maximum sail area

Date

c 1925

Primary Maker

William James Hall

Medium

Emulsion on glass

Name

Glass plate negative

History

RAWHITI is a racing yacht built in 1905 in Auckland New Zealand. The gaff rigged cutter was built by the Logan Bros for racing on Sydney Harbour. RAWHITI had a major involvement in Australian yacht racing over a long period in the first half of the 20th century. It challenged for The Sayonara Cup in early 1907, and later became the champion yacht on Sydney Harbour for many years, where it was a very well known vessel. Logan Bros were the premier New Zealand yacht builders of the early 1900s and at this time it represented the highest boat building standards available in the either Australia or New Zealand. RAWHITI is a 16.46 metre (54 ft) long racing yacht that was designed and built by Logan Bros NZ in 1905 as the last of three 54 footers from their yard, the others being ARIKI and IORANGI. The kauri planking is done in the Logan Bros. method of triple-diagonal construction. RAWHITI's success came under two owners, firstly C T Brockhoff, a champion skipper of his period, and then the well known music publisher and keen sailor Frank Albert. The wooden, gaff rigged cutter was built to the 2nd Linear Rule and rated close to 38 feet when measured for The Sayonara Cup. This rule encouraged designers to give their craft the long overhangs at the bow and stern. These are a major part of the craft's elegant profile. It was designed for New Zealand yachtsman AT Pittar who had settled in Sydney, and the design was intended for the Interstate yachting events. In October and November 1905 RAWHITI sailed across the Tasman Sea to Sydney in 28 days, and was hove to in severe conditions at one stage. Pittar sold it to Brockhoff after only a few months who, during the time he owned RAWHITI, raced the yacht to great success. By 1910 RAWHITI had been sold to Frank Albert and E E Sayers who campaigned the boat for more than two decades, with numerous race wins. At one point they commissioned naval architect Walter Reeks to overhaul the craft and he designed a new larger rig, and added 1.5 tonnes of ballast to the keel. The waterline length increased about 600 mm. It is thought that this may have not been entirely successful and some of the changes were later reversed. In 1927 a new Bermudan rig designed by William Fife and Sons was stepped

to keep pace with more modern yachts of the era and it continued to be a champion yacht. However the first outing with the new rig ended disastrously when the yacht was involved in a collision and the hollow spar was broken. RAWHITI was also known for its unusual colour scheme, sporting green topsides. It is understood it was painted 'Eau de Nile' green by Brockhoff, and Albert then retained the colour. In 1910 the report on Reeks' work also noted that as well as keeping the topsides green, the bottom was now pink in colour. The flamboyant scheme however was matched with excellent results. In the 1930s it spent much of its time laid up as newer craft were now dominating yachting; including Frank Albert's son Alexis Albert's International 8 Metre class NORN. Toward the end of World War II RAWHITI was sold to new owners in New Zealand. It sailed back across the Tasman soon after the war ended. In 2006 RAWHITI began a huge restoration in New Zealand, bringing it back to the original 1905-1907 hull and rig configuration, and original white topsides. In 2011 it was re-launched in September and soon after began sailing in company with the other Logan big boats on the Waitamata Harbour.