

Centennial Celebrations

ROYAL PAPUA YACHT CLUB

LIFE MEMBERS

DAVID JEFFREY BRYAN (MBE)



Dave Bryan first came to PNG in 1949 and spent the next 51 years of his life here. He grew up in the shadow of life members Jack Drake, Bruce Lamont, John Wild, Jimmie Hayes, Craig Kirke, Greg Sheehan and others.

In 1967 he bought his first boat and this was to be the start of an interest in boating and safety at sea that

continued for 40 odd years. It was at this time that Dave first joined the Yacht Club. He was a founding member of the Port Moresby Underwater Club and was concerned when in 1968 a skin diver was drowned at the Beacon. As there was no radio available a boat had to go back to the Yacht Club for assistance. It was obvious that a better system of communications between the boats at sea and the shore was needed.

During 1970 the Yacht Club brought a CB on 27.88MHz for Yacht Club use only. The Game Fishing Club tuned their CB's to 27.91MHz. Neither could talk to the other. Leading up to Independence, in 1973 Dave's company BRYCO was bought out and he went 'Finish'. He returned in 1976 and the next two years saw him diving and fishing from John Middlebrooks's "Princess". During 1978 lives were lost in the water off Port Moresby and Dave proceeded to introduce the general public to the use of a combined Game Fishing Club and Yacht Club radio system. Dave had already joined the Game Fishing Club in 1976 and at the time of writing this profile was it's ninth oldest member.

At this time search and rescue was mainly carried out by the Fisho's as they generally have the most powerful boats. These were necessary as fishing in the notorious Moresby weather can be quite hazardous at times with the strong South East Trade winds; North West 'gubbas' and occasional doldrums. Although the system of monitoring boats that went out in these conditions had been sufficient to date, Dave saw that with more boats traveling further distances, an organized control network from ship to shore would have to be established.

'Fathom', Dave's 25ft Bertram was purchased in 1978 and by now he was fully committed to safety at sea. 1980 saw Dave elected as President of the PMGFC, a position he held until 1986 becoming the longest serving member. During the same time, he pushed for the use of 27.92MHz as PNG's emergency watch frequency. The previous emergency channel was 27.88MHz which was the Australian talk channel and was often jammed with idle chit-chat. An education program was put into action and not only were owners encouraged to install radios on their boats but also to monitor the emergency channel and render assistance when necessary. Because of some people's concern about Search and Rescue a group lobbied for him to stand on the Yacht Club committee as a power boat representative. He was voted in at the 1981 AGM and served on the committee since, making him one of the longest continuous serving committee members.

1983 saw the establishment of FATHOM BASE which gave a night-time listening watch for the general boating public and FATHOM MOBILE was added later. In 1984 Dave was elected president of the PNG Game Fishing Association and served until 1988. Dave was involved in many Search and Rescue operations. In 1986 full license was given to FATHOM BASE as a restricted Coast Station, enabling HF and VHF to be monitored as well as CB.

The PNG Government recognized Dave's commitment to SAR and in 1986 he was made a "Member of the British Empire" for his volunteer work towards Safety at Sea. The members of the RPYC recognized his efforts in this field and generally and made Dave a Life Member at the 1988 AGM.

Dave and Patricia departed PNG in 2010 to spend more time developing their Stud Droughtmaster Property in Australia.

