

## **Past Waimakariri Sailing Club Patron Wyn Fairclough Passed over the bar on May 22 this year**

Wyn passed away 3 months after his 100th birthday. Wyn was a life member, club Patron in the early 2000's and at the time of his election to that position provided the following article for the Fleet Sheet about his early involvement with the club.

### **WYN FAIRCLOUGH'S RECOLLECTIONS OF THE WAIMAKARIRI SAILING CLUB 1935-1938**

At the time of the 75<sup>th</sup> Jubilee of the club I was somewhat surprised and taken aback when asked to write an article on the early days of the Club. The days I am referring to are in the mid thirties to the War (1939). One's memory is always a suspect facility and with encroaching years it tends to become correspondingly obscured. I may make omissions and names I may not recall. I also will devote myself to my experiences I had with the Club between 1935 and 1938.

As you will no doubt imagine things were vastly different to your modern Club house and its current excellent facilities. There was no club house at all in our time and we all met and pulled out boats onto the bank about two hundred yards nearer the mouth than where the present club house is today. The races were all started from there. Skipper Joyce kept the records of our performances and handicaps etc. The river too had a totally different configuration. The mouth was approximately three miles below the mouth of Salt Water creek and instead of running straight out to the sea as it does today it turned south running parallel to the coast until it turned left out to sea. The yacht racing therefore had a much longer circuit as the top buoy was usually almost to the Cam, while the bottom buoy was about one or two miles below Kairaki. Racing was usually fortnightly based on the tides and weather as possibly it is today. The cut to let the river run directly out to the sea as it does today was put in about 1938 or 1939.

Most of us kept our boats up Salt Water Creek and they were left there in the water the whole time. This as you will appreciate did not help their efficiency or speed. Only two were always sailed back to Kaiapoi after racing where the Dolphin belonging to Gordon Moore was pulled onto a pontoon and kept dry. This showed out in its performance. The other boat belonged to Skipper Joyce and if I recall correctly was called either Argo or Valmai.



*P. Vivian and W Fairclough  
1937 Idlelong Championships*

The two best boats were the Dottrel which won the Canterbury 18 ft Class and the Dolphin which also won the Canterbury Idlealong Championship in 1936. After that Gordon Moore sold Dolphin to P Vivian who also did well in the Canterbury Championship. Needless to say these two yachts won most of the club events.

I left the club in 1939 with the War coming on us that summer and after that event in 1946 I did not return until the time of the 75<sup>th</sup> Celebration in 2003. I was delighted to visit your club house over your Jubilee and was most impressed with your facilities and obvious enthusiastic management.

