

T

The Moreton Investigator Association - *Technical Report N°8*

Technical Report ~~NO.~~ 1567/8B/3925Y

Subject: The Wearing of Flags, Burgees, Ensigns, Pendants, Ribbons, Toilet Paper etc.

Disclaimer: This is a subject up with which the present writer cannot get tight.

Source: Joshua Peter Bell: "Moreton Bay and How to Fathom it". However Bell cannot in any way be held responsible for most of what follows.

Caution: Certain flags, ensigns, pennants (spelt but not pronounced "pendant" in the Royal Navy - cf "Cholmondeley" pronounced "Brown") may be worn only by privileged organisations. To be a privileged organisation, it must

- (a) get in first;
- (b) have at least three yachts worth over \$100,000 on its Register;
- (c) have a high proportion of its members' surnames hyphenated;
- (d) have at least half of its members speak with a pronounced lisp;
- (e) take steps to see that at least two thirds of its membership be unable to sail.

N.B. These conditions for qualification as a "privileged" organisation may be waived in an emerging colony such as Queensland where the bazza element is still strong. Accordingly, there may be hope for the Investigator Association.

Ensigns Any Australian ship or yacht may wear the red Australian flag or the official (blue) Australian flag. It is flown from a flag staff at the stern of a power boat or a single masted sailing vessel. It is worn continuously at sea (taken down at night if you want it to last longer) and the raising and lowering bit is indulged in whilst in harbour.

Burgees

Bell is extremely clear on the subject of burgees: "Pennants are triangular flags reaching a point at the fly. Burgees are swallow tailed rectangular flags. Yacht club pennants are known as burgees."

Burgees are worn "at the main", sometimes on the starboard spreader (where it is invisible to everyone to port of the vessel), or on a jack staff at the bow (which if it could be made strong enough would serve as a useful grab handle when attempting the well-nigh impossible task of changing an Investigator's jib). Our habit of "wearing" a burgee from the back stay is obviously incorrect: fixed back stays had not been invented when the rules of flag etiquette were drawn up.

Pecking order can be indicated by suitable variants on the burgee theme: the Club's Commodore wears a rectangular, swallow tailed adaptation of the club burgee. To quote Bell again, (as being safer), "The Vice and Rear Commodores' burgees are similar with one and two balls respectively (or is it respectfully?) at the hoist".

## 2.

The present writer knows what Vice Commodores get up to; but he is not clear about Rear Commodores.

### Saluting

We come now to this vital topic.

The usual method of saluting in Queensland waters is (1) give three derisive hoots on the power horn if carried (or should it be worn?); (2) get on the 22.78 MHz and ask the club officer the time or where the fish are biting; (3) ignore the dignitary altogether; (4) make a crude gesture with the thumb or first and second fingers and throw an empty beer can in his general direction.

Only the ensign (or the national flag) is used in saluting, which lets most of us out.

Club burgees are flown at half mast (half way up or down the back stay?) only by club order for the death of a member.

### Racing flags

Bell: "Unless stipulated by the club there would seem to be no fixed site for the display of racing flags on sailing craft. Most skippers wear them at the main where they do duty as a wind indicator; others, who consider that they are liable to foul halliards at the mast head, wear them at the spreader or elsewhere".

### Conclusion

It is hoped that this information will be appreciated by members; and especially by the President Mr Clark (spelt from henceforth, "clerk"). It is the work of the Chairman of the technical Committee alone, his collaborator Mr Chew (Old English spelling, "crunch") having no part in it.

D.J.F. Bills (new speak spelling)  
Technical Committee Chairman.

25/1/77