

The history of the “Des Townson Memorial Trophy”



Buckland's Beach Yacht Club (BBYC) has run an Electron regatta on the 2nd Saturday in November since 1998. Most of these regattas were run as “away regattas” around New Zealand and Des really enjoyed sailing in them, not so much the repairs he attended to willingly for fellow sailors.

The 1st Des Townson Memorial Regatta was run in November 2009, (following the passing of Des in 2008) at the BBYC and was won by Colin Hickman. The prize was a photo of Des and a promise of a trophy to come. At the prizegiving a fellow sailor Noel May (and good family friend of Des's) generously offered to make a Trophy. The result was a magnificent scale model of an Electron. An extremely beautiful piece of craftsmanship.

The following year the Trophy was won by Brett May (Noel's son, and Sue Townson's owners' representative for the Electron boats) We continued to run the regatta annually in November around NZ until the untimely arrival of Covid in 2020.

In 2023 I decided as the custodian of the Trophy it was time to pass it to Brett, to be held as a family heirloom in respect of his father who built the trophy. I am delighted to know he intends to resume the annual regatta for the Trophy through his club, the Gulf Harbour Radio Control Yacht Club.

The next “Des Townson Regatta” will be held on the 16th November 2024 at Regency Lake, Whangaparoa. We wish Brett and his team every success and happily offer any assistance they would like.

Lindsay Graves

Lindsay, Rita and all Electroneers,

On behalf of the May family, I would like to thank you both for your years of contribution to Electron sailing so ably organising and running regattas around the country. You set a very high standard, providing Electron sailors with outstanding events both on and off the water.

Sadly, my father Noel passed away in 2020. The trophy that Dad crafted all those years ago is a part of his legacy and testament to his patience and skill as a builder of many beautiful Townson boats. We do consider it a May family heirloom and a piece of history representing a close relationship between Noel and Des. Again, thank you for your diligent custodianship.

It has been several years since Electrons were regularly sailing at Regency Lake and it will be exciting to participate in rejuvenating the class here with GHRYP running the Des Townson Memorial regatta on 16th November.

I'm sure the GHRYP team will be pleased to take up your offer of assistance.

*Best Regards
Brett May*