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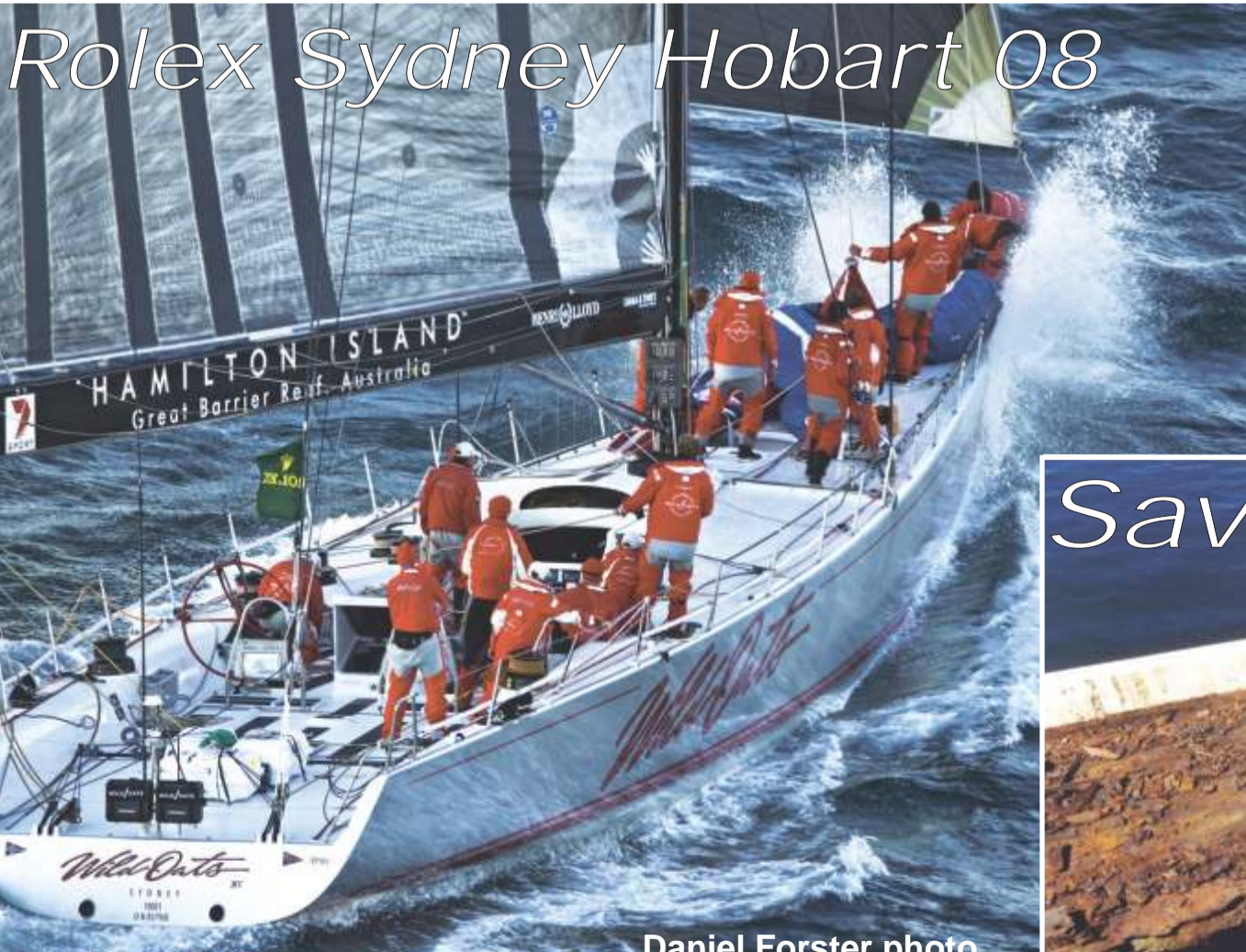
The Coastal Passage

The voice of the Boating Community!

34th Edition
Jan. - Feb. 2009



Vanda III at Yellow Patch, Queensland. Photo courtesy of Kay Ezzy



Rolex Sydney Hobart 08

Daniel Forster photo



What's your story???
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Saving Steel

Reflections by Alan Lucas

Gold Coast Mystery

The case of the disappearing galleon

Forgotten by most modern Gold Coasters is the once persistent rumour of a Spanish galleon lying at their doorstep. It was reputed to be in the North Stradbroke swamp, not far from Jumpin Pin Bar. The subject grabbed my attention in 1965 whilst employed to leak-proof an old launch at Southport. Her elderly owner had spent his entire life in the area, sailing a variety of boats around the Broadwater and Moreton Bay, farming and bushwalking the islands and gathering historical oddities along the way. His oddest story told of an ancient 'Spanish' galleon in the swamp at the southern end of North Stradbroke Island.

Years ago, he said, walking along the edge of the swamp between the island's coastal dunes and its high country, he sighted a mast stump and ornate taffrail standing proud from the reeds, just beyond the dry land. He knew of a large schooner that had been lost 60 years earlier, but correctly reasoned that it couldn't possibly have gravitated so far inland. It *had* to be a vessel driven ashore centuries ago when the island's coastline was a mile further west (this is fair logic considering that the ruins of Rome's ancient port city of Ostia now lie two miles inland).

So intrigued was he that in the late 1930s he organised an expedition to attempt a partial salvage: Unhappily, World War Two intervened and decimated the group, but he returned alone in 1946 and found no sign of the wreck despite other persons claiming to have sighted the taffrail around the same period.

With my yacht anchored stern up to a lovely protected beach (long since replaced with a concrete wall) in the Southport Yacht Basin I spent a few months odd jobbing in the area, one of which was the delivery of a 60-foot ketch from Gladstone to the Gold Coast where my employment continued as her temporary caretaker along with the owner's other boat, a diesel-powered Bar Tender. He insisted that I use the latter whenever I felt like it - a welcome gesture to a person developing mild galleon fever.

A friend and I steamed the Bar Tender north into Swan Bay (the southern end of the swamp and long since a closed fish habitat) where hopes were soon crushed - at first by mangroves then a swamp too shallow for navigation at high tide and too soft for walking at low tide. We considered entering Canaipa Passage then walking across the island via its many sand mining roads, but recognised the futility of such an attempt without proper equipment and supplies. We shelved our galleon ambitions and gave up.

In my ship's library was a 1907 book by Portuguese linguist George Collingridge claiming that Australia's east coast had been partially charted two and a half centuries before James Cook's visit. He suggested that in 1521 Portuguese navigator Cristovao de Mendonca, with a fleet of three caravels, was ordered to head east from Portugal's Spice Islands to defend her monopoly against possible Spanish attack spearheaded by Ferdinand Magellan, then thought to be in the Pacific after rounding Cape Horn.

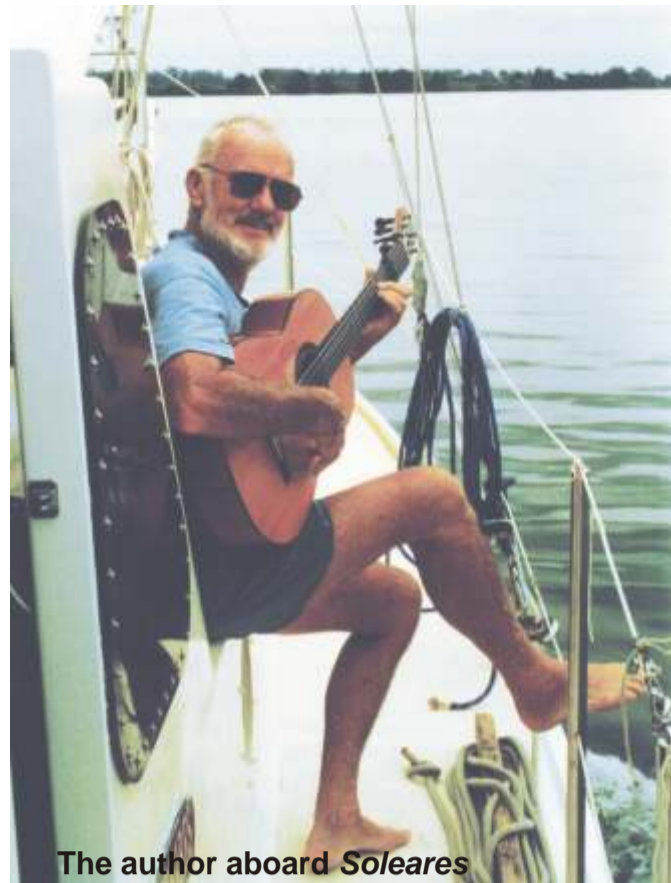
Considering Portugal's pre-eminent position as a seafaring nation in those days, it is reasonable to presume that probes from their enclave in Timor would have been commonplace. Almost certainly, they sailed south to the Kimberly coast where two cannons were placed in the ground as possible survey marks. These were discovered in 1916 when HMAS *Encounter* entered Napier Broome Bay on a routine World War One patrol. Commander C.W. Stevens and Surgeon-Lieutenant W. Roberts landed on (now) Carronade Island where they found two bronze cannons projecting vertically from the island's summit six feet apart. Immediate excavation of the area added only a portion of a brass-bound chest, but the engravings on the cannons were indisputable, one showing the Portuguese Crown and Rose and both indicating that they had been forged in Seville, Spain, where many European nations sourced their artillery pieces in those days.

A 1970s book, *The Secret Discovery of Australia* by Kenneth Gordon McIntyre, fine-tuned Collingridge's theories and linked the disappearance of the expedition to a number of other mysteries, including the Geelong Keys and the Mahogany Ship.

The case of the Geelong Keys revolves around the 1847 discovery of a set of European keys in a lime pit at Limeburners Point, Corio Bay, Victoria. Their discovery was witnessed by no lesser person than Charles Joseph La Trobe, Superintendent of the Port Phillip District and soon to be Governor of Victoria after Separation from New South Wales. The depth at which the keys were found geologically suggested that they must have been lost long before the British discovered Corio Bay in 1802.

It is vaguely possible, I suppose, that the keys were lost by a Dutch sailor who had somehow walked across the Nullarbor Plains after being shipwrecked on the west coast during the 17th century, but the theory of it being dropped by a Portuguese officer of Mendonca's flotilla is more probable.

The relics of a stone building in isolated Bittangabee Creek, south coast New South Wales, has encouraged speculation that the Portuguese spent some time there, perhaps careening their ships, but the same argument is used by Gavin Menzies



The author aboard *Soleares*

as proof of Chinese visitation in his highly contentious book *1421*. Having run my untrained eyes over these ruins, I suspect writers who cling to such theories are clutching at straws, but the amazing mystery of the Mahogany Ship takes a lot of explaining.

The Mahogany Ship ranks as one of Australia's greatest unsolved mysteries, involving, as it does, a well-documented wreck on a Victorian beach between Warrnambool and Port Fairy. A scene painted by teacher Thomas Clark, circa 1860, features ship's timbers projecting from the dunes that were claimed to be of European mahogany, a fact that diminished later claims that it might have been an American whaler.

The wreck was first discovered in 1836 by shipwrecked sealers Gibbs and Wilson while walking along the beach to Port Fairy. Their discovery set off speculation that rages to this day about it being a pre-colonial Portuguese ship, possibly one of Mendonca's flotilla that unwittingly discovered Australia's east and south coasts while searching for Magellan.

The Mahogany Ship has inspired archaeological digs right up to modern times, but it seems to have disappeared forever. However, rumours of 'Spanish galleon' wrecks along the Queensland coast abounded until recent times, most such rumours remaining speculative with no supportive evidence. But if the conviction of that elderly fellow back in 1965 means anything, then his 'Spanish' galleon may well have been Portuguese; perhaps one of Mendonca's ships that crashed onto a North Stradbroke beach from which extrication proved impossible.

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In Tribute

Geoff Henry OAM, dedicated to service

August 13 1923 - January 1 2009

Survived by his children, Julian, Mark, Rachael,
their families and thousands of friends.

TCP owes a special debt to Geoff as over the years he has been most helpful with the paper and just a good heart to talk to when things were difficult. But in common with so many people that have written and called already, Geoff was the measure we took whenever it was hard to decide, what was the right thing to do? What would Geoff do?

Geoff was a leader all his life and not because of some authorised rank though he earned that as well, but because he was someone that a person could turn to for example.

Bob and Kay Norson

Photo of Geoff in Cairns after receiving his
Order of Australia Medal supplied by his family



This is a tribute to our mate, Geoff Henry, OAM, who passed away on New Year's Day. Geoff was, of course, the persona of VMR East Mackay.

We started our cruising lives in 2000. We hesitantly, tentatively and with some trepidation picked our way up the Qld coast for the first time. We first clocked on with VMR East Mackay when we anchored at Curlew Island one evening. It was blowing bags and so, as was our practice at the time, we did an overnight anchor watch. At 4.30am there was a call for VMR East Mackay. Not a Mayday or a Pan Pan just VMR on channel 80.

Geoff quickly responded to a stink boat that had gone up on the bricks at Digby Island. He authoritatively took control of the situation, calmed everything down, started contacting a whole raft of people including the relo's of the people on the stranded craft, as well as assembling the rescue crew. Rescue Cat 4 was soon on its way and Geoff at base kept the whole exercise on the rails until the cruiser was pulled free at dawn. He, rather wearily, took the first clock-on call just before 6am!

We quickly realised that if *Speranza* was ever in strife, the best possible outcome would be to have Geoff in our corner.

When we next logged on with East Mackay we received his signature "Good to hear your voice again". It was for us, at the time, like being accepted into a very special family.

We spent a lot of that season around the southern Whitsundays and Mackay and spoke frequently to Geoff over the radio. It is true to say that he inspired a great deal of confidence in our sailing/cruising ability- so much so that 8 years later (and 9 coming up) we are still at it!

The next time we were in Mackay we dropped round to meet him in his digs at the RSL Village. This was the first of many visits. We would arrive about 4pm and have sundowners at 5 before calling a cab around 6pm. During this time, Geoff shared many of his experiences. His life was so interesting and varied we are sure his background could have been the subject of a successful long-running TV series.

He was a great raconteur and spoke openly about his war service (very distinguished, we gathered listening between the lines), Keswick Island (building the airstrip), managing a ski lodge in New Zealand (Aurangi?), water-drilling in the outback, VMR issues (his abiding interest at the time) and, of course, his family.

Inevitably, we would say to each other on our way back to the marina "that was absolutely fascinating we could have gone on for hours". The taxi drivers when collecting us would say with some authority "that's where the rescue bloke lives." Those many visits were special occasions for us.

When groups of yachties gathered at sundown, Geoff's name continually cropped up in the conversation as someone who was doing a really fine job. This led to a nomination for an Australian Award. The nomination resulted in over 50 letters of support from yachties who expressed, in their own words, their appreciation of Geoff's VMR role.

When approached to see if he was comfortable with his name going forward, his immediate reaction was "Why me?". Such was the man.

Soon after, he was included in the Queen's Birthday Honours List and was awarded the Australian Medal - OAM. We were lucky enough to be in Cairns when the honour was conferred. Geoff was really chuffed at the occasion. We would be remiss, Bob, if we did not recognise your role and that of the TCP in raising the money to get Geoff to Cairns for the ceremony. We know Geoff was deeply grateful.

But he's no longer at the end of the radio and it's time to log off. "So from *Speranza*, two POB plus the ship's cat, thanks for everything, Geoff". And wherever you may be "Do have a safe and comfortable night!"

Cheers mate,
Pattie and Keith
SY, *Speranza*.

Radio Aarangi / VMR East Mackay

For a number of years I was fortunate to accompany my husband, a Chief Engineer at that time, across many oceans and experienced many adventures. Time on the bridge of various oil tankers, container ships and general cargo with men of many nationalities, gave me time to learn that basically people who respect the sea are the souls who are dependable on land.

Eventually my husband left the sea, we were sent to Australia and now Mackay. With time on my hands I figured that maybe I could give my time to VMR as a radio operator so asked Benn of MV *Tidapaha* if he thought I'd be able to successfully help people on the sea. Benn encouraged me to give it a go, teased me about possible accent problems and added "..... there's a lovely chappie there, everyone knows him and he will help you anytime". Of course Benn was referring to dear Geoff whom I was fortunate to meet early on in during my time with VMR and have spent numerous hours with him since then.

Initially he would ring when he heard me struggling with information sought, his local knowledge was amazing and I was always grateful to know he would frequently be listening and of course he would never make me feel ignorant, even when I was! I could suggest that maybe a request to Radio Aarangi/VMR East Mackay would bring forth answers and if Geoff was at home I'd soon hear him answering the vessel concerned with his soft and dulcet tones.

One particular shift he heard me repeat Weekton Island back to a sailor, I was quietly corrected to Wigton Island then he added his beautiful laugh, telling me I was doing fine. He'd be quick to compliment yet did not suffer fools gladly, sticking firmly to his guns when required.

One morning I was caught up in a traffic jam after some World Cup overnight, football perhaps, either way I was not going to be in the radio room for an 0803 open all stations. Sailors were calling in to VMR Mackay with no response, then one apparently muttered something to the effect that what was the point of logging on when no one was there to answer.

Geoff leapt on the radio and pointed out fairly strongly that we were all volunteers and had some distance to travel and maybe he (the sailor) would like to volunteer to man the radio room. No response apparently.

Another time a friendly lady on *Namche* called up as they were passing through to the Whitsundays. With her delightful American accent and laugh I was slightly bewildered as to the spelling of the vessel. With pride in a well kept log, she sounded to me as though she was saying Numche. With a startling clarity my brain was in two sections, one excitedly saying "Numbnuts", the other calmly saying "Don't say that, DON'T SAY A WORD". Uncharacteristically, I stuttered twice, "Num, Num", then confidently said "*Namche*, you have a safe trip etc" then whispered to her "I'll just put my teeth back in" to which she laughed. I laughed, said our farewells and that was that because the whisper was between *Namche* and myself. Of course.

Not only was Geoff on the phone within seconds wondering if everything was all right, by the time I'd told him the story of what really happened from my point of view then he was laughing uncontrollably reminding me that absolutely everyone listening would have heard everything I said. In that brief moment I'd totally forgotten just how many people are listening on 21 and 80, including Customs and AQIS, as I was concentrating purely on *Namche*. That fact was borne out about eight calls later when someone anonymously simply said "VMR Mackay, have you got your bloody teeth back in yet". Another phone call from Geoff who was still laughing....

I will also add here that I was very upset to read in TCP a year or so later that the lady and her husband had died in an air accident in the USA.

Over these last few weeks that Geoff has been particularly unwell I have had the privilege of spending more time with him, sharing thoughts on many things. To Mark, Julian and Rachael and families I offer caring thoughts of a lovely father and grandfather. In the wider community there will be numerous people with their own memories of a generous man who loved to share his knowledge over a cup of tea and I am grateful that I am one of those many who had time with Geoff. Arahani Geoff.

Kore rawa atu e wareware , With fondest memories

Annie Scott

From TCP # 5 (2003)

' VMR, East Mackay, Geoff speaking. Yes, good morning. Good to hear your voice again. How can I help you ?.....

..I hope you have a safe and pleasant trip and will be pleased to hear from you again. It's been a pleasure. VMR East Mackay, monitoring channels 80 , 81 and 21 on standby"

So rings out the serene and steady spiel of Geoff Henry as he shepherds his sailors up and down the mid Queensland coast. Initially , you just think he is a pleasant radio operator having a good day, but when he is like it every day and half the night for 23 years without getting paid, you realise there is more to the man than meets the first impression.

Geoff was born in the 1920's in the rural town of Temuka in the South Island of New Zealand, the son of a grocer and a housewife. He attended local schools and finally engineering college at Christchurch where he graduated as a civil engineer with a thesis in hydraulics' and joined the firm of J.B.MacEwan specialising in pumping and irrigation. He then became a bridge builder for G. W. Pearson and Sons working on all the bridges between Oamaru and Kaikoura on the main road.

On 17 04 41 he joined the 2nd NZ Expeditionary Force and was soon fighting with the 8th Army at Tobruk to Benghazi and El ' Alamein. These were horrendous vicious battles, and he went onto the Italian campaign rising to the rank of Field Colonel with 2500 men under his command. He got blown up in the River Po and finished his war at Trieste.

He then became part of the British Commonwealth Repatriation Force and was shipped to Nagasaki and Hiroshima a few weeks after the atomic blasts, before being finally being demobilised back in Lyttleton , New Zealand.

He tried his hand at managing the sale of second hand machinery and bought some ski chalets at Methven, near Mount Hutt ski fields.

He came over to Mackay in 1973, following his son, and decided to move over permanently once he had the taste of the tropical warmth and sold his house and car. Overnight, the PM, Piggy Muldoon, devalued the NZ dollar 17%, and Geoff lost his chance of buying a boat in Australia. He had no job, but old army friends soon got him into an irrigation firm, and he became a manager in short time with his knowledge of hydraulics' allowing him to reduce the size and cost of irrigation motors to the cane fields. he bought a motel, leased it and finally sold it, and then retired , again, buying the first red 4WD Toyota Station Sedan in town, and travelling around Australia for 18 months. Daughter, Rachael was enrolled in "School of the Air" as they travelled which was his first connection with the radio. On his return they joined the partnership on Keswick Island where he converted the only 10 ' by 10' tin shed into a three bedroom home where "School of the Air" was continued. A contractor spent 2 weeks roughly bulldozing the air strip and he spent the next 2 years filling in all the holes with rocks by hand and finally grassing the strip. Overall , he spent 8 years on Keswick, becoming part of the Mackay VMR.

He went back to New Zealand for 4 years, selling the ski lodges and returned to become an Australian Citizen in 1992.He was the skipper of VMR doing many ordinary rescues and saving 6 fishermen when the trawler " Alpha Centuri " caught fire and another 4 when their fishing boat hit Edward Island, never losing a life at sea. He moved to Halliday bay at Seaforth for a few years and recently returned to a retirement unit at east Mackay, which is the base for his continued operations.

Today , he is battered of body but spritely of soul, silver haired , surrounded by memorabilia, and with his companion Corry, a male long beaked Corella perched on his shoulder offering him periodic moist dressings. The impression of a well educated gentleman is confirmed and his life experiences are a wonder to recall. He feels his caring attitude came from army training and concern for 2500 men at war, but I feel it comes from a deeper source than this.

Geoff Henry is a true ANZAC, a pioneer, a leader of men, a compassionate being that we all should aspire to, if only for part of our day, or week , or year, with acts of random kindness. Geoff keeps doing it year after year, infecting all his contact sailors with similar civility, concern and care. Keep it going , Geoff. We need you. The whole world needs more like you to show us how to conduct ourselves in these troubled times. Standby, but don't sign off yet.

Leigh Campbell, SY *Harley Street*

Contributors!



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recycled paper!

Ed Barker, MY *Waiben*
Alexandra Connolly
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Gina de Vere, SY *Caesura*
Trish Hawkins, SY *Quoll II*
Alan Lucas, SY *Soleares*
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Julius Sanders, Nova *Keria*
Bill Shorter, Yacht *Myambla*
Barbara Theisen, *SSCA*
Norm Walker, MC *Peggy Anne*
Wendy, SY *Absolutely*

And as always, TCP very much appreciates your letters and other contributions that provides the rich forum of ideas that sustains the rag. For information on feature contribution requirements and awards, see the TCP web site, "contributions" page.

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What has been going on at TCP HQ?

It looks like America is in for a change... and none too soon. The funny thing about the US election was how much interest there was from all over the world, particularly here. According to a poll reported on the ABC if the election were run in Australia, Obama would have won with a larger margin than the US results. What does that mean? I think it means what it says, that more Australians, by percentage, than Americans identify with the values that Obama represents. And yet we are stuck with Rudd who talked the talk but... Parents are working longer and harder to make those payments and child storage (sometimes referred to as "care") is becoming harder to find and more expensive. Meantime the government is propagandising through the government owned.. er excuse me.. government friendly media for these families to sacrifice their own security for the sake of the business community.. SPEND, SPEND, SPEND! And the corporatisation of Australian government continues.... and a rotten thing that is. A corporation by it's nature looks upon the public in an adversarial fashion rather than as a service provider. And, with these corporatised agencies retaining many extraordinary government powers, there is not much that is off the table. And who funds some of our corporatised regulatory agencies? The business's they are incorporated to regulate. If you want an example of the mismanagement that can result from this system have a look at CASA and ASA (Civil Aviation Safety Authority and Air Services Australia Respectively). News reports have been chockers with stories of near misses and failed maintenance. Small craft are dropping out of the sky almost daily and Qantas is losing her international reputation. Airspace safety regulation has gone backwards.

What has this got to do with a boating paper? Indeed, in a general sense it is an indicator of how we have lost control of our government and to demonstrate how this can bite when you least expect it, here is our story....

When we moved from Bowen a couple years ago, we rented a house so we could take time to decide on a new place. After our stint up north we realised how important it is to investigate the potential neighbours. So... a place came up for consideration that was acreage near the bay with fine ocean breezes and the neighbours were interviewed (no kidding) to insure they weren't wacko's and had no issue with a boat building project. The main objective was country peace and quiet and no stress. We took weeks to look the area over, don't see how we avoided getting a look over by police for being reported as stalkers! We knew the property was 6 kms. from an airport but there was a flight path in place that routed air craft directly over the bay and cane fields. Planes were not seen (or heard) in the area we were investigating and the existing flight path was so rational, expedient and documented, no one in there right minds would change it.... but about eight months after moving in... they did. Now instead of using undeveloped corridors of bush and Hervey Bay, avoiding residential areas, planes are buzzing around at incredibly low altitude over homes and schools.

Council Amalgamation was a very bad thing for Hervey Bay. Whilst the bay was growing as an environmental holiday area, retirement town and as a place where business people were moving to because they could work from anywhere there is an internet line (us)... Maryborough was stuck in it's old groove, backward hillbilly, flat earthers. (This describes the political environment but in no way pertains to individual citizens, many of whom are friends) In the last election a noisy minority of the new council were elected from the old Maryborough council and they brought along a pet project that they had been hanging onto. A Chinese owned flight training school for jet pilots that has an existing operation in Parafield, South Australia. The resulting impact on the residents of that town are truly horrible. Maryborough was going to give them the use of their multimillion dollar airport for.. get this!!... \$1 a year for 50 years!!! Wait.. there is more! The school wasn't even going to provide it's own liability insurance in case one of their planes dropped on someone's house like what happened near Sydney last December. Council would have to provide that. And subsidized profits would go right back to China. Nuff said about the Maryborough council?? Both Maryborough and Hervey Bay have airports and both council owned. If that flight school had gone ahead the school would have been at the Maryborough airport but Hervey Bay would have been the natural place for "touch and go" practise, thus the amenity of our homes, that had already been damaged would have been utterly destroyed for our use and substantially devalued as an asset.

Thus the boat building at Casa de Norson has come to a stop. All efforts are focussed on this immediate threat to our home. With pressure to council from concerned citizens like us, the proposal for the flight school was to be put to public consultation instead of the stealth approval the proponents wanted. After 2 years of working on this, the school pulled the pin (for now) a week before the public meetings, blaming council dithering and the world economy. Surprising how that economic crisis came to their attention at that particular time. The local paper, in apparent close alliance with the Maryborough flat earthers, has been keeping the flight school issue alive so we think they will try for the stealth approval again when the heat is off or when the paper can bully objecting councilors into submission. Meantime, we still have the issue of the local plane traffic and the fight must continue. If you have an interest in the detail of this debacle or have a similar problem where you are... see www.stop-noise.org

And what about the local aviators? They are enjoying an airport that heavily subsidises their use and repays the town by flying a path that insures the absolute maximum of damage, running a parallel course to the bay and right over the coastal communities. We are of the view that any pilot that would fly low over residential areas, knowing it annoys and with a non-destructive alternative immediately at hand.. is wrong in the head. Mentally ill and dangerous. I know that the aviation community isn't all that way but these locals are a particularly cliquish and offensive version. My previous view of an aviator as a skilled and trusted professional does not apply to these people. These are sociopathic hoons that would destroy their neighbors homes for fun and to assert their territory, like a dog pissing on a fence post.

We know of so many people that are currently fighting various agencies of government to resist the most heinous of activities and proposals. The whole role of government is becoming an enemy agency that must be resisted and examples of individual behavior are becoming loathsome to the point of incomprehension to normal people. I sense a desperation for a moral leadership and government. Next election will we have an Obama? Or tweddle dee or tweddle dummer.



The Coastal Passage

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LETTERS

Notice to contributors: All contributions that purport facts in a matter of possible contention, should be ready to provide support for their assertions or additional information or the contribution may be refused at the discretion of the editor. Anyone disputing a matter of fact in any part of TCP is **invited** to respond as long as the discussion remains one of fact and the responding writer must also be ready to provide support for their assertions or additional information if requested. It's about a fair go for boaties.

THE BOB HAYMAN FAN CLUB

Dear Bob,

I have just looked over your above Edition and was very entertained by the 2 Reports by Bob Hayman. The one on the round the world cruise was of particular interest.

Regards,
Graeme Gemmell

Hi Bob,

I was recently reading your magazine on-line and had the privilege of reading a number of articles by Bob Hayman. I find his witty anecdotes as well as informative script most enjoyable. I do so hope we will see more of his work in coming months.

Regards,
Kim Saunders

Hello Bob,

Just a note to say that I have read my first copy of Coastal Passage, which I picked up at the Yacht Club. For a free magazine it's pretty good reading. The articles by Bob Hayman were interesting and easy reading.

Keep it up,
Wayne Lodge

Hi Bob,

Just read Allan's snake bite story and found it fascinating. I have had a few close encounters of the snake kind myself. I never knew that large doses of vitamin C could neutralise the toxin.

And herein lies the question. Is 50 mg injected a massive dose or is the 50 mg a misprint. 5000mg or 5g is about a teaspoonful. I ask as a serious seeker of knowledge, not as a pedant.

I regularly carry 500 or 1000mg tablets of Vitamin C as an aid for healing and help for cold/flu/allergy type symptoms. Bugged if I know why vitamin C helps with bacterial infection but I seem to benefit.

Is the injected variety different or just faster acting as it is directly in the bloodstream. Would ingesting a number of these tablets produce similar results?

Would Allan know or know someone that could provide expert comment?

Cheers,
Julius, MV *Nova Keria*

QLD BOATING FEES GONE MAD

Dear Bob,

Congratulations on a top issue of TCP, with some really great photographs. I am frustrated that we are not currently out there, but next year.

Bob, I am appalled to see the one hundred percent plus rise in Boat registration Fees, said to assist with boat ramps. I think many of us, restricted to 2% CPI increases, wonder how our arrogant State Government (and local Councils as to excessive Rate increases) are able to increase rates like this. Can we take them to the so-called watch-dog, the ACCC? I am aware of the cry of the trailer-boat fraternity that seeks more and improved

boat ramps and parking areas, but they have absolutely nothing to do with the displacement yacht and cruiser community. It should be a user-pays system, and we with keels should not have to pay for speedie boat facilities. What we need is facilities which provide for keel boats, such as public jetties or landings, where we can go alongside for water and load provisions, rather than have to pay for such as a \$65 a night marina berth at Airlie Beach, as one example. I recognise many folk lug water and supplies out in a tender, and we have done that, but I regret that some of us are no longer able to do that. One of my friends said let's all stop paying the fees. Fine, but that throws in another problem where an insurance company might find a way out of paying up for damage, if not legally registered. And of course, we would be open to fines, more than the cost of the Fee. It is a no win situation. What we all need to do is seriously lobby our local MPs to do something about it, like here in Hervey Bay the Boat Club land lease fees from the same DOT have gone from \$180,000 to \$500,000 a bit more than the CPI. We really have to curtail Captain Bligh's need to impose more than CPI rises to fund extravagances which we do not need.

It is over to us boating people to take the action to the Government.

Harry Smith, SY *Cavarlo*

Hi Harry

Take a look at page 8 and 9 this issue. You aren't the only one unhappy with MSQ.

Cheers
Bob

TASSIE WINS FOR BOATIES!

It seems the further south you go the cheaper it gets to keep a boat in rego. My rego 'tax-grab' got me interested in what others around the country are paying and I came up with some pretty shocking results! To use my 10.00mtr example the following fees are levied
Qld-\$268.05
NSW-\$46.00 +\$8.50/0.5mtr =\$165.00 initial fee thence \$147.00/yr
W.A. -5.00-9.99mtr-\$124.30 9.99-19.99mtr-\$231.30
S.A. -\$214.00
VIC-Over 4 mtrs \$68.70 (can get an exemption if Australian registered.)
TASSIE-\$63.70
When are we going to wake up and get this tax-grabbing gov. out! Or else we will all have to get our boat's rego in the apple isle.

Regards,
Steve

A BIG THANKS TO THE ARMY & BOB

It was great to see this year that at least around the times we were in the area, the Defence Forces opened up some of the anchorages for us to break up the journey from the Keppel's to the Percy's.

The last couple of years we have had to sail from the Keppel's straight through which takes from 14 to 20 hours subject to wind. All of this is possible but a bit tiring for a couple of old farts like us and it also misses out on some of the best anchorages on the coast.

This year on the way north we had Port Clinton open and while it would have been better to leave Port Clinton heading NE instead of E to get around the military exclusion zone at least we had somewhere to anchor.

On the way south we had Island Head Creek, Pearl Bay and Port Clinton open, with an exclusion zone approximately 4.5nm NE of Cape Townshend to 4nm NE of Pine Tree Point. We had to keep a little further out than we would normally sail, but at least again we had some very pleasant stops along the way, not to mention quite a

few sundowners ashore.

However, we did notice a few boats sailing along the coast well within the exclusion zone around Cape Townshend. With all the VMR's from Mackay to Keppel Sands giving out warnings there should be no excuse for going into the military area. If we are not careful the military will close the whole area off every time, once again because of an inconsiderate few.

A big thanks to you Bob, as I am sure you had a big input to the re-opening of the anchorage.

Jan & Arnold, *Helmsman*

Greetings Helmspersons
TCP did communicate with the military on this and like to think it contributed to this new policy. It is important for the cruising community to insure the military doesn't feel abused for them relenting on this. So thank you for bringing up an important point.

Cheers,
Bob

Avast there Bob,

Feeling certain that you will follow up on the dreadful treatment metered out by Customs to an incoming yacht in Bundy recently, I thought you might like a little grist for the mill.

During my website updating odyssey of 2008, I failed to check the latest status of the Manly Boat Harbour's customs dock. So, while moored in Gladstone, I visited the local Customs office (2nd September '08) where a very friendly and helpful officer served me at the counter. She candidly admitted that she hadn't heard of any changes at Manly, but would check.

To this end, she disappeared into the back room where I heard her chatting to fellow officers, none of whom could confirm the rumour one way or the other. So she phoned Brisbane then reappeared at the counter to assure me that *Customs was still handled in Manly*.

This did not match the rumour of their moving to Rivergate Marina in the Brisbane River, so I phoned Rivergate and guess what? The rumour was true and Customs was wrong! The clearance facility had been relocated to Rivergate since July, yet Custom's website still placed it at Manly and the officer in Gladstone had been given the wrong information by her own department.

This raises a very serious question: If Australian Customs officers in both Gladstone and Brisbane are ignorant of their own whereabouts, how are overseas visitors expected to out guess them? Apparently ignorance of the law is a one-way street.

And while I have a head of steam, did you hear the news on the ABC, 8th October 2008? It included interviews with a few of the passengers aboard an incoming international Qantas plane that suddenly dived 5000 feet on its leg to Darwin, injuring many passengers, some seriously enough to need flying doctor service. After an emergency landing at Exmouth, an English passenger said, quote: 'Customs treated people horrendously, locking all doors, insisting on passports

every time someone moved, and placing armed guards on all exits. Couldn't just a little compassion have been shown?'

Meanwhile politicians keep their heads in the sand and say things like 'Open democracy is good for our state' (Premier Anna Bligh, another quote from the ABC).

I agree, but when does it start?

Cheers,
Alan Lucas, SY, *Soleares*

Greetings Alan

I get the feeling that in spite of the governments throwing money at the ACS, they still have the labour pool problem that most business's have lately. The best candidates are making big money at the mines and the ones left are the type that practise Clint Eastwood lines in front of a mirror in the morning! And they let these people carry loaded guns! And then the politicians... it all reminds me of an old Three Stooges movie..

And I'm all for democracy as well, from what I remember of it.

Cheers,
Bob

Hi Bob,

Thanks for the great job and all the handy warnings - Customs, etc.!

Have just returned from the rego office with a bit of a smile after a near heart attack 2 weeks ago when the new rego bill came in. Last year I paid just under \$160 for our 10.5 mtr. yacht and are now expected to come up with a staggering \$393.85. Now I ask the question what I am getting for this dramatic hike in revenue and I am given some dribble about boat ramps and such! Well none of that helps the yachtsman and upgraded facilities are not very noticeable where I have been sailing lately. So angry I am that I get to check the website and discover if my vessel (regardless of its engine size/power) is just .50 mtr. less I can reduce my rego. revenue contribution to just \$268.05. Can't be that hard to do that eh? Just remove the hinged duckboard installed a couple of years ago, or tell them I got rid of the Bowsprit cause everybody bashed their head on it at the marina. That would be simple sorts of explanation, eh? It turns out its even easier that that. Just turn up at the rego office and fill in the form - "Change of Particulars" and pay the lesser amount. EASY AS. So when your new rego comes around and you think your vessel is a bit too long anyway - change it
Name Supplied but withheld... go figure.

Yeah, the state is scrambling for cash from whoever is seen as an easy target. Increased traffic fines too... for our safety you understand...

I've got a great photo to go with your letter... I took this photo in Maryborough. I haven't talked to the skipper to verify but I'm told he actually cut off some of his ferro bow to beat the 15 metre ransom... he used to have a 50 foot (15.2 metre) boat, now 14.99 metre. Nice job of it to. Legal LOA does not include spars (bowsprit) so see no reason why this sailor can't have a.. "change of particulars". It shouldn't have to be this weird.

Thanks for your contribution to the discussion!

Cheers,
Bob





more LETTERS...

In response to Bev Alexander of Mackay from letters, TCP # 32

Hi Bob,

I think it was you that we met briefly at the launch of " Aussie Oi " in Mackay . Anyway I have just read your latest paper and see in it questions about cyclone Ada . The ship that took the tourists off Hayman was the bulk carrier "Clutha Oceanic". I noticed that Alan [Southwood] said he rode out the storm in the "Empress " . I was wondering if this was a 28 foot sloop "Empress" formerly owned by Lucy Schultz /Howard of Bowen . It belonged to my grandfather originally and I've often wondered what become of her.



Yup... God didn't build her... "Just a little dry rot there boss"

Bob's note: The Southwoods also sent a pic of the finished repair and when done you couldn't pick it.



GOOD OLD BOATS BE BUGGERED!!!!



Empress

Hi Bob,

In TCP 32 Ed, there was a letter from Bev Alexander inquiring about the **Empress**.

I have attached a photo I took of the fully restored **Empress** at Armit Island in about 2000, and an extract from the book **From Edgumbe's Shore - A History of the North Queensland Cruising Yacht Club**, about the **Empress**.

This is all very close to me, as I knew the late Vic & Lucy Howard and sailed in company with them in events of the North Queensland Cruising Yacht Club in the 70's & early 80's, and had a few drinks on the **Empress** while anchored at Monty's. Years later, the late Betsy Hansen, a founding member of the NQCYC just like Vic & Lucy, decided to write a book on the history of the club. Being a close friend, and near neighbour of Betsy, I volunteered my computer and services to assist Betsy. In the process, I ended up researching & writing a few articles, and also commandeered a few other club members to write articles as well to assist Betsy with her book. The article on the **Empress** was one of them.

Although I don't know the current whereabouts & owner of **Empress**, I hope this is still of assistance to Bev, and of interest to other readers. If anyone is researching any boat or skipper that had anything to do with yachting in Bowen up to 1999, you will almost certainly find it in **From Edgumbe's Shore - A History of the North Queensland Cruising Yacht Club**, which is still available for sale from the bar at NQCYC for a very modest price.

Cheers,

Bob Critchley, Mackay

Trinket

TCP note: So the boat is still not located but perhaps this will alert the current owner or others that the status and whereabouts of the vessel are being sought. Contained in the book Bob mentioned, these very interesting facts about the boat; the boat was built by Norman Wright in 1927 and presented as a gift to Len Twigg from the people of Brisbane as a reward for valour. He had swum 3 miles to get rescue help for the passengers of his yacht that had capsized in Moreton Bay.

Progress on restoring the old "Abrolhos Pearl" is progressing well, with the usual smelly greasy bilges, cracked ribs, a leak in the stem post area and a rusty steel frame in the hollow heel which looks really bad as it had grown large rust flakes. Of course we knew what we were in for as all old boats have many scars, scratches and sores, owing to ignorant owners and sheer neglect as well as age. We recon as god did not build it we can fix it, so long as the dollars do not run out.

As soon as we bought the vessel we tried to insure it for third party insurance, so as to be able to go into marinas and on the slip etc. We rang the insurance brokerage we have been dealing with for the past 25 years and were surprised to be refused. We needed an out of water survey, as she is over 20 years old. So we arranged a local surveyor to do the job for about \$450 and on the slip for 2 hours for another \$450. The surveyor arrived and informed us that he could not go on board, as we had no insurance, he finally relented when we told him that the previous owners still had her insured. So one should be careful, as it was nearly a Catch 22 situation. He then walked around the boat a few times poking his screwdriver wherever he thought it was rotten and in fact found a spot near the stem post. Needless to say he gave us a bad report so no insurance and a wasted \$900.

I was depressed and in need of a carton of nerve tonic, when the S.V. **Ariel** arrived in the berth next to us. On board were skipper Jeanette and mate Todd, sailing south to the Gold Coast. I was ear-bashing Todd about my insurance woes when he suggested we ring his broker in Darwin who had insured his 30-year-old Tahiti Ketch that he had sailed from America (sight unseen). Barbara rang the broker in Darwin and with a 5-year-old survey & a credit card, the next day we were insured. By the time you read this we will have slipped and fixed the problem by a very experienced, fast and reasonable priced shipwright Frank Bremer of Artisan Shipwright Services, for any repairs in fibreglass or timber, he is the man!!

We are now in Shute Harbour with an almost trouble free run from Gladstone; we took on some water the first day until the timber took up in the bow section.

P.S. The insurance was of no help at Abel Point Marina; they only accept full Comprehensive insurance.

Allen and Barbara Southwood of **Abrolhos Pearl**

Rubbish pickup for tourists only?

The two pictures attached were taken only 100 meters apart at the south anchorage at Thomas Island. The pile of rubbish has been collected from the beach by visiting yachties and left in a neat pile. It contains junk that has been washed up in SE winds. It is not refuse left by visiting cruisers.

Two years ago, I phoned Parks and Wildlife to let them know that it was there to be collected. I was thanked profusely for my civil awareness. They had a boat going down that way in the next day or so and would collect it then.

Keith Owen, **SY Speranza**

TCP note: Have noticed that flotsam collected on any island not regularly visited by charter boats and other tourist traffic tend to be ignored. TCP has inspected and reported on this (see TCP 16) and confirm the rubbish is substantially foreign in origin and maybe the same pile!



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And...more **LETTERS...**

AMERICAN RIVER, KANGAROO ISLAND, RADIO RESCUE VMR523

Letter in TCP #33

Hi Bob,

We are seeking information on the Australian naval architect, Len Hedges.

We own one of his designs, the "Dorrigo" schooner *Santika* an Australian registered vessel with the home port of Darwin. She was built in Melbourne in 1982 by Miele Yachts. We would be delighted to hear from other owners of Len Hedges designed yachts particularly the Dorrigo and any information on the man and his designs would be greatly appreciated.

We'd also like to hear from former owners and crew of *Santika* and find out more of her history.

Regards,
Tim & Julia Knight, SY *Santika*

Reply to Letter in TCP #33

Hi Tim & Julia,
CC, TCP

Hi, isn't amazing how things turn up when one least expects it.

Carol and I run a Marine Coastal Radio Rescue station on Kangaroo Island. From this we have made many friends, one who receives Bob's magazine. He saw my name (close enough) and decided your boat must be one that I built, he phoned me, gave me the web site, I phoned Bob and was then certain that she is one of mine and now that I have seen your photo I am 100% certain.

She was originally named "*Valian*" a blend of the owners names, Ian and Val Slee. The hull was painted green similar to British Racing Green with cream upper works and red antifouling.

When Ian came to me with the design he said that he wanted her to have a Clipper bow, a bit longer with a schooner rig. I considered Hedges construction system and convinced Ian that transverse framing with stringers was a recipe for disaster. I built another 45 boats after her and I am still convinced transversals are the wrong way to go, in truth Allan Payne convinced me and taught me why. I did not just add a bit in the middle, even the centre case and centre board were redesigned to suit the rig he wanted on her. The only stipulation that Ian made was that she had the same profile as the Hedges design. She is really a stand alone design adhering very closely to Hedges hull shape and profile.

I don't know how it will have fared over the years, the Centre Case was double hot dipped galvanized as a finished unit prior to fitting into the hull. I would be interested to know how the galvanizing has lasted.

Ian did his own fit out (I did all of the mechanical) and he made up the masts etc himself. He did it all on a bit of a shoestring which was evident with one mast aluminum, the other wood, all second hand. A sailmaker (now retired like me) who was reared in Scotland and learned his trade there, making sails for "square riggers", made the sails and he, Charlie, made them "bullet proof".

Ian and his wife Val sailed *Valian* for many years mainly to and from Adelaide to Kangaroo Island and a few times to Port Lincoln and back. During this time she was moored in the Royal SA Yacht Squadron and I think was the only schooner at the Squadron. I have sailed her on a number of occasions and she sailed beautifully, though we had to put 1 reef in the mizzen when going to windward with the centre board raised. I never got to sail her in heavy weather. When Ian sold her, about 12 or 15 years ago, she went to Victoria. Over the years a number of people have told me that they saw her over there but I lost track some time ago.

Regards,
Allan and Carol Miell
American River Radio VMR523

Reply to letters in reply from TCP # 33!

Hi Bob,

Happy new year to you and your readers. A big thanks too for publishing a letter of ours last year requesting information about our schooner and her designer (as we thought). We've had a flood of emails from people who knew of Len Hedges or who had one of his designs, all of which has filled a few gaps in our knowledge of one of Australia's early yacht designers.

However, it was pure serendipity to receive your email Bob, with a contact for the man who built our lovely yacht, one Allan Miell. We've since been in touch and you're right, there is a great story there. As it transpires, Allan designed *Valian* (as she was called then) from the ground up as a steel schooner on the wishes of her owners, Val and Ian Slee who were taken with the lines of a Len Hedges design for a smaller, ferro sloop but desired something larger and in steel.

Therefore she is a one off design with only a passing resemblance to a Len Hedges "Dorrigo" which is what we thought she was. More than that tho', *Santika* (ex *Valian*) represents an era in Australian yacht building when an owner and the builder could work together to create something from scratch, even for a builder on a tight budget. Quite apart from the expense, to find a builder so flexible these days would be rare indeed and we dips our 'ats to Allan Miell. The Slee's dream "*Valian*" lives on in her present incarnation as "*Santika*" but it appears that little has changed since 1976 apart from her name.

The icing on the cake tho' Bob, is that we have now built up a wonderful friendship with Allan and his Christmas present to us was a DVD showing *Valian*'s building, first slipping and test sail !! We're absolutely blown away and want to thank you and your readers once again and wish you all the very best for 2009.

Tim and Julia Knight,
Schooner "*Santika*" (ex *Valian*)

TCP note:

When Allan called in reference to the inquiry at left, the conversation got around to general gossip and boat talk, my favourite stuff. Somewhere in the conversation I mentioned something about how he must take some dramatic and interesting calls in those wild waters. And Allan began telling me of the one below. Not the hair raising rescue in 60 knots I imagined but something I found much more powerful, more human, more relevant. I begged Allan to write this down and hoped he could write it as well as he talked the story through. I needn't have worried.

Hi Bob,

When you asked me to put in writing what I told you about an event which took place on radio, I thought "this will be easy". My comment to you was "this is one of the reasons that we operate a Radio Station namely American River Radio Rescue VMR523".

I begun to think about the events that have taken place over the years that are much more sensational than what we talked about but this one sticks in my mind more than any other because of its human nature and it has done more to cement my resolve to operate this radio station 24 hrs a day where possible than any other.

To begin I must start at the end. Almost every person has been terrified at sea at some time, some more than others and some to the point of freezing up. A number of our local professional fishermen down here on Kangaroo Island in South Australia have told me of similar experiences and fears. They have also talked of having conversations with Dolphins out of loneliness. I too have found myself hallucinating at sea when sailing single handed and I have been well introduced to fear.

So onward we go to the event that made me think.

A few years ago I was sound asleep and off goes the radio (VHF Ch80), the call, "is any one there" he may have said on air, I got up and replied this is American River radio VMR523.

It was winter, bloody cold and blowing about 35 to 40 Knots where I was on KI, I don't know what it was blowing where this guy was as he was about 40 mile SSE of us and as I recall (I think) in 6 to 8 metre seas and about the same height swells. Not a good place to be. I realized after a while that he wanted to talk and I started to get just a little bit agro at getting called out at about 0200 in a freezing cold radio area in the shed, just dressed in a dressing gown, by some idiot who "just wanted to talk", but as courtesy is the order of the day, we talked and talked.

At the beginning I could not work out why he wanted to talk and talk (I am not bad at talking either), there must be another reason. We talked of where he had come from and going to, about his boat (34 Ft sloop) and his experience in single handed sailing, my pet subject and of course his family and background, etc.

After about a half hour I was still no wiser as to what the call was about and was beginning to think "this guys a clown", but there was something in his voice that made me stay on air.

When we got to talking seriously about the conditions he was experiencing, the reason for his call gradually came out. One must realize the wind was howling and I could hear the boat crashing in the seas over the radio. He eventually told me that he was terrified and had frozen up in fear. This is not so unusual except that this guy had done one hell of a lot of sailing, most of it single handed. This had never happened to him before and he said that he had been in worse conditions, why did he freeze? God only knows, he didn't.

What had got him to this point was that he had to go forward for some reason (to take a sail off the boat I think) and he could not leave the cabin to go and do it, he was petrified. We talked about getting the sail off, the process of doing it, how safe he was when "hooked on", avoid the flogging sail, watch out for the sheets, close the hatch when going out and all of the things one does when going on deck in a blow. We talked this over and over and eventually he began to take the lead in the conversation and in doing so was gaining confidence to the point that he said out of the blue "I am going out to do it, will you still be here when I get back". Yep.

I waited and waited and eventually up he came and even though I could hear his teeth chattering I could tell he was pleased with himself and that his confidence was back on line. We talked for a while longer about boats and things including his freeze up. He could not understand why it took place, never happened before but exhaustion could have been a big factor. All of this took about an hour to an hour and half. Sign off and back to bed with my teeth chattering with my vital parts rattling along in perfect harmony with my teeth.

This guy was heading West, I never heard from him again and he probably does not know who he spoke to that night if he remembers it at all. I don't remember his name but the boat name will always be with me.

I was privileged to spend this time with this person and I felt very humbled for the experience. I learned a lot about myself especially not to prejudge when on radio because what you hear may not be what is really being said. If I had not persisted with my self and over rode the agro that was building up and dropped the call as a crank call I would have learned nothing and who knows the sailor may have got himself together and gone on ok but I would have missed out.

That's it folks, when down this way in good old SA give us a call on HF 4483 or 2524 24Hrs or on VHF repeaters 80 or 21. If we know you are coming we can monitor and work you on all HF frequencies up to 25Mg

Allan Miell,
American River Radio Rescue VMR523

G'day The Coastal Passage,

We have just arrived at Bundaberg on the Port2Port rally in our Hallberg Rassy 42 called "Reflections". We sailed from Koumac in New Cal with a 4 day stop at Chesterfield reef, which was amazing. Our treatment by Customs in Bundaberg was excellent. 4 charming efficient girls cleared us in less than 30 minutes. We plan to continue our slow circumnavigation over the next 5 years. So far, 14 years from UK to Os!!

We need used paper charts from Darwin to Cape town via Singapore, Sri Lanka, Indian Ocean and Cape Town. If any of your readers would like to sell us some we would be very interested. We will be sailing between Bundaberg, Brisbane, Sydney, Brisbane again, then Darwin until July 09. We can be contacted on david_fosh@hotmail.com or on our mobile 0427 140 811.

Regards from David & Juliet Fosh on board "*Reflections*"

Greetings Reflections crew,

Always pleased to hear of a positive experience with customs. For the last months that has been the norm though the experience of Friction at Bundy shows there is still more to be done before anyone coming in can assume 100% safety. Hope your luck is as good for the charts. 14 years...sounds wonderful...

Cheers,
Bob

TCP's Forum

By Bill Shorter

Circular to Queensland Boat Owner Stakeholders

This is a somewhat difficult issue and it may need some background. However, it may intimately affect your organization.

I want to register my 16.1 m ferro cement ketch in Queensland so I can transit or sail there and possibly put the vessel on the market at some time.

So. I duly contacted Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) to find out about Queensland registration requirements!!! What a cock up this proved to be.

When I went to fill out the registration form, I nearly fell over backwards to find that for my vessel, the annual registration fees recently went up by 120% (ie more than doubled). These fees are way out of kilter with other states (WA makes for a good comparison). (for my 16 m boat, WA = \$261, Queensland = \$488.30) (Incidentally, in the NT, registration is not required at all)

However, the real problems are much worse.

Because my vessel is over 15 m length, I am compelled to provide two extra very specific insurance covers. One is for a \$250,000 cover for pollution clean up and the second is for a \$10,000,000 cover for wreck removal of my yacht. (I am a strong supporter for reef/environment protection)

[These two conditions do not apply for a yacht or vessel of 14.9 m but do apply for one which is 15.1 m. The legislation on the msq site states that it applies for private craft between 15 and 35 m length. (Apparently a 14.9 m rust bucket with 2000 L of oil and a history of poor behaviour can run aground, spill oil, then sink on a reef with impunity, but a well founded new 15 m sailing vessel carrying 100 L of fuel and an experienced crew is seen as a major threat!)]

I tried to obtain specific insurance cover for these two conditions only to be repeatedly informed by insurance brokers that I could not get these two as a stand alone policy. I could only get them as attachments to pre-existing *comprehensive* policies. (I have spent some months trying to find any insurance broker who would supply such a policy).

So, it seems that I am compelled to take out comprehensive insurance to get the two attachments. I find this a very questionable legal issue. I do not think that msq should be allowed to inflict this on *any* boat owner, but it does seem to be the case. It may not have been their intent, but it is certainly the reality. (Note that they would not dare to make *comprehensive* insurance compulsory for motor vehicles!!!)

Insurance companies are quick to state that the addition to the comprehensive policy premium (for the two Queensland specific extras) is not great or that it is already included. However, for a visiting racing or cruising vessel (> 15 m) from overseas or interstate, they *must* adjust their comprehensive policies (if they have one) or take out a new one.

One overseas insurance company claims that the wreck removal insurance cover for \$10 000 000 to be "quiet absurd" for a 16 m yacht This same company will provide ferro cement comprehensive cover with adequate pollution clean up, but will only offer a maximum of \$250 000 cover for

wreck removal, but no more certainly not for \$10 000 000 demanded by msq..

All this applies to transiting vessels as well. It applies for any invited racing or cruising participant in events sponsored by your organization. (for vessels over 15 m) (Registration for private vessels under 15 m does have a grace period of few months, but for vessels over 15 m, this is not the case as the two extras *must be in place even for transiting vessels.*)

However, the bottom line is that the two extra components, cover is compulsory and that the cover cannot be obtained without getting a comprehensive policy with the two conditions as components within that policy.

(If you own a 15 m+ NSW registered boat and have taken out normal comprehensive insurance with a local underwriter or broker, you cannot assume that the two Queensland requirements are automatically covered - in case you wanted to visit Queensland). Further, if you live in Queensland and have had a policy with your local Queensland broker for some years, you just cannot assume that you have been upgraded for the necessary extra cover.)

You may envisage a large international racing yacht being asked to pay a full yearly premium to obtain the two extra bits, all for a three race program covering a few weeks. I think you can imagine their response.

Finally, although it may be of little concern to your organization, I cannot obtain the comprehensive insurance policy in Australia to attach the two conditions to, as my vessel is ferro cement!!! (No insurance company will provide the required cover and msq are aware of this) There are still many ferro boats sailing Australian and international waters some well over 15 m. Clearly there is a serious problem here for these yacht owners.

However, there is an "exemption" pathway out of this (provided by MSQ).

It makes interesting reading and your association may be somewhat perplexed at it. (check their website)

It requires: -

- letters from a number of insurance companies that the two insurance covers cannot be provided.
- the vessel must undergo an annual survey to ensure "seaworthiness" (which MSQ is unable to define).
- there must be a "risk management plan" (again, MSQ seems unable to give details for vessels of specific length)

The "exemption" must be renewed each 12 months. It does not absolve the owner of any claims by MSQ for the two matters should an incident occur.

If insurance companies will not provide comprehensive cover for an older wooden vessel, then the owner is also subject to this nonsense. (Also, the decision to *not* offer comprehensive cover for a particular vessel by any insurance company is an *arbitrary* one)

Finally, it is not guaranteed that an application for exemption will be accepted

and just to ensure it is totally useless, it takes a minimum of **12 weeks** to be assessed. (due to legislative processes) (How's that for "the smart state" if you wish to just transit Queensland waters?)

I have sent emails off to both MSQ and the ministers office and after much waiting and requesting of a response, I have been told nothing that is not in the MSQ website. They have offered no positive or helpful suggestions to date.

However, there is one issue you may be able to assist me with. On the matter of the entire insurance issue, may I quote from the minister's office?

"In 2005, the Queensland Government undertook public consultation throughout the State with all stakeholders, including the boating community, about the proposal to introduce a legislative requirement for ships over 15 metres to have ship insurance. Amendments to the Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995 were passed in 2006 with subsequent amendments to the Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Regulation 1995 passed in 2007."

What I would like from your organization is some comment on this quote.

Personally, I find it difficult to accept that **all stakeholders** were consulted. I have not heard from *anyone* in the entire industry that was consulted.... But I could be wrong. It was some time ago. Maybe they asked the insurance companies. Hah!

- 1.) Was your organization actually consulted about this insurance matter? If so, when? How?
- 2.) Did your organization have any comment on the proposed legislation? If so, what?
- 3.) What was the nature of the "ship insurance" referred to? Was it just the two issues discussed above or was it undefined, or what?
- 4.) What other means (if any) for providing the "pollution clean up and wreck removal for all vessels" cover were considered? Eg was a model whereby all registered vessels paid (as part of their annual registration fee) a component to provide insurance cover for all vessels in case of pollution or wreck removal, ever considered? (ie a fairer, cheaper and more systematic approach)
- 5.) Was your organization aware that the legislation implied that comprehensive insurance would now be essentially mandatory for all private vessels over 15 m?
- 6.) Do you have any other comments on the legislation or the processes used to assess stakeholder considerations?

One of the MSQ staff stated that they had consulted the insurance industry when formulating the regulations and the insurance issues, but did not say that the boating industry had been consulted. This conflicts with the above ministerial office quote. I smell a rat.

I am prepared to make this a public issue, as it seems to me that there is a major flaw in the legislation that should be addressed. I do not accept that this legislation has been

considered or constructed carefully as my own case clearly demonstrates. The compulsion to take out comprehensive insurance for all private vessels over 15 m is simply an unsupportable position and I believe the minister should act to change the legislation quickly.

In my case, owning a ferro cement yacht, I am compelled to apply for the exemption. Let us assume I get it and my vessel does run aground in a storm. Being a retired person, there is no way I could afford wreck removal of even a million dollars. That leaves the taxpayer to pick up the bill. I bet that appeals to you. You see, the legislation shortcomings actually prevented me from taking out the needed insurance!

What do you do if you *do not want* comprehensive insurance, or can't get it (e.g. for a ferro boat), but you still *want* to be insured for pollution clean up and wreck removal? (If you believe that environmental protection is important)

It seems that it can't be done! MSQ have still not been able to address this. They claim that they liaised with the insurance companies when writing up their insurance requirements but it seems pretty clear that some deal has been done or the insurance companies put one over the MSQ staff.

It also seems that there may be an issue of "retrospectivity" here. People may have (earlier) built a vessel over 15 m feeling that insurance was not compulsory and now find that the rules have changed. This is not fair as it can depress the actual sale value of the boat.

If the new rules were to only apply to boats constructed *after* the new legislation was enacted, then it might have been a little bit fairer. (Although it would not help visitors to Queensland as this legislation is a local "law" that is made applicable to unsuspecting visitors.)

It is also clear that the legislation does nothing for the boating industry. Amongst some of the difficulties is the problem the legislation creates for visiting yachts- typically:-

A short term visiting or transiting yacht has to comply and to do so means they must consult with local insurance companies. (International companies generally will not provide such short term policy amendments). The local companies want an annual comprehensive policy (with the two attachments) premium to be paid, which is nonsense for a short term visiting yacht. Some also require a survey. (Jolly good for surveyors and boat yards, but not boat owners!) A common response to this by potential visitors is that they won't make landfall in Queensland, which must be bad news for the local small ship maintenance/repair and tourism companies.

It is also my contention that legislation such as this msq issue has come about simply because the boating industry is so ragged. There are builders, repairers, brokers, sailors, racers, cruisers, charter operators, yacht clubs, chandleries etc. They do not have a common voice against such silly legislation yet they all eventually pay one way or the other.

An interesting comparison is the local small trailer runabout owner groups. They tend to be locals who use concrete ramps to launch and retrieve their boats. When they want a new ramp or improvements they just turn up in numbers to the local council meeting and suggest that the mayor respond to their concerns ...and guess what? They get results. Or a new Mayor.

Continued next page...

"The Qld government are going to increase the safety risk to boaties in the Bay!" according to Mr Martin Bellert Secretary Fraser Coast Sunfish. Maritime Safety Queensland propose to remove the existing channel marks on Beelbi Creek near Toogoom (Hervey Bay) by the end of January 2009. This proposed act will substantially reduce the safety of small boaties travelling into and out of Beelbi Creek and Toogoom. The decision is based on confidential internal policy documents formulated without consultation with the community or available to the community.

MSQ have claimed that "the channel would only be safe to navigate from about 3/4 tide up as the channel has closed off with shifting sand bars. It appears that the maximum draft of a vessel safely able to transit the channel at 3/4 tide would be about 1 metre." Mr Bellert stated, "MSQ's view on the reality of small boaties using the channel for safe navigation does not contain much reality. Yes Beelbi Creek is a dynamic stream and can change course across the sand delta. Local knowledge and experience enables small boaties to navigate the channel when sometimes there is less than 50 cm of water. The markers are a valuable guide and are important indicators of where the deeper water may be found."

The markers have in this last couple of years been poorly maintained and Mr Bellert said that the decision to remove the markers could well be a financial reason rather than an outlandish technical claim. "After all there has been a significant increase in boat registration fees in recent years and the community has a right to share the benefits likely to be derived from the increases."

Mr Bellert urged all boaties in the area, and there are thousands of them, to voice their anger at this proposal by contacting the Minister for Transport Office, their local state member and the Fraser Coast Regional Council. "There are just over 6000 registered boats less than 6m long in the 4655 postcode area and it would be fair to say a significant proportion of these would use Beelbi Creek in addition to visitors and holiday makers. Boating safety in Beelbi Creek (Toogoom) will be compromised by the proposed action of MSQ. Accidents, injuries and, god forbid, loss of life, will be on their heads should they remove or not maintain channel markers on Beelbi Creek." Mr Bellert concluded.

Qld Boat owners & MSQ rules continued...

Continued from previous page

But yachtmen (both power and sail) have no such effective voice. Probably because (besides being fragmented), there are fewer of us and many of our needs and regulations are based on state government dealings rather than local council ones. Our associations and clubs have agendas that do not touch on such issues regularly. Some cruising sailors have no club affiliations at all!!

Your organization may be interested enough to ask questions of your local member or the minister responsible.

The **Hon John Mickel MP** Minister for Transport, Trade, Employment and Industrial Relations.

Email: tteir@ministerial.qld.gov.au
(Don't expect a speedy response)

Did you notice how simply they just more than doubled the registration fees?

This is what happens when the boating organizations do nothing.

However, I would really appreciate it if your organization could address the 6 questions I posed earlier.

Please feel free to answer any of the 6 issues. You could just add comments under each of the issues and return the email. However, any comments, in any form would help.

I will do you the courtesy of conveying any outcome of my efforts if your organization can respond to this email.

I have circulated this email to some groups/organizations in Queensland You may suggest some others. The list is at right.

Thank you for your time. Oh for the days when boating was a simple pleasure and your adversary was just the elements. How times have changed.

Bill Shorter
PO Box 2890
Darwin 0801, NT
Or preferably by email
william.shorter@bigpond.com.au

TCP note: There is more interest in this subject than page space allowed in this edition. TCP will therefore, create a special section on the web site for all that is collected and comments as they arrive. Look for a link from the home page soon.

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- Queensland Cruising Yacht Club**
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- The Wooden Boat Association of QLD.**
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- Marine Queensland**
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- Boating Industry Association (QLD)**
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- Gold Coast Boat Club**
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- Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron**
Use website
- Southport Yacht Club**
Use website
- Cruising Yacht Club of Australia**
Use website



Just one more LETTER...

Hi Bob,

Scary things can happen when you have an unswerving faith in the printed word. (Present company excepted of course!)

I met an interesting sailor here in Darwin this week and took a few pics and a few words for your "Passage People" section. His name is Chu-sa (Commander) Seki Hideshige or Hide (pronounced hid-eh) to his friends. But this is another story.

Hide is adamant about setting off soon (Mid November) from Darwin on course for Cocos. One of his guides in this is a publication that he has just purchased new. (TCP note; As time didn't permit an inquiry to the author/publisher, the name of the book has been omitted for now.)

I only read one page. This shows a chart with cyclone frequencies averaged over a 20 year period. To my mind the averaged cyclone tracks shown in the book are so far off reality that it is a recipe for a disaster at sea. Sorry to be so blunt. I do not want to bag the rest of the book as I only leafed through it but this page is just

not right. Maybe it is just out of date info that does not take into account the changes of the last 20 years.

I said to Hide that the most frequented cyclone area is on the WA coast, the north west shelf and the Timor Sea, but the book show this as a mainly zero cyclone area. This is precisely the area he proposes to sail though, late November.

I took Hide to Darwin Met (Bureau of Meteorology) in Casuarina. I cannot praise these "civil servants" highly enough. Darwin Met has assisted me for 20 years with weather from places as far apart as Melbourne and the Gulf of Thailand and anywhere in between. All it ever took was a phone call and they always came through with the best possible current info for the area I was sailing through. Same top service again. The staff listened to our request and were very quick to point us to a climatologist who introduced himself as "Sam". A very unassuming guy that probably has a string of letters after his name.

Sam produced the second scan that I will send showing how far off the book is. Sam explained the six week cycle and our current state re cyclones in the area. His verdict was that setting off on that course at that time had a definite chance of encountering the window with the probability of at least a severe storm. His advice, Hide should use his Inmarsat internet service to check the BoM internet site daily.

That site: <http://www.bom.gov.au/weather/cyclone/index.shtml> gives a 3 day cyclone forecast for that area (Look for Cyclone Outlook on left side of page) and if a storm is likely then head north. (Making clear that every cyclone is different and if one is coming from North of you then heading north may not be a good idea.) Sam was very knowledgeable and extremely patient and helpful.

The book also states that December to March is dangerous in that area but fails to show on the graph the cyclones that have come in November.

While it is not a good idea to rely on only one source of information for a trip like this, (and Hide is too experienced to do so) the info on one page in this book is the single most important item in it for his trip and it lays a definite trap for the unwary.

Cheers,
Julius Sanders, MY Nova Keria

See more on the story of Hide on page 28

Thanks Julius!

Cheers
Bob

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The Warning!

From TCP # 33 Editorial by Bob Norson

I am pleased to hear of every successful entry and act of compassion by any government official but is it genuine or a posture? What would have been the result of all this if TCP hadn't taken on the issue and informed the South Pacific fleet of the prosecutions of foreign vessels entering Australia? Over time, every exposé that TCP has made of inexcusable actions by Customs has had them quietly tinkering with their supposed, "strict liability" rules to save face and restore some credibility until the rules are hardly recognisable from the first prosecutions. [The letter below illustrates the point] But until the agency is willing to engage in a frank and honest way with the public TCP will keep a weather eye on them for you. So, return the smile... but don't turn your back and watch what you say.

The Message

Dear Bob,

We left Noumea today bound for Brisbane. About 4pm Brisbane time today I had HF radio contact with some friends (Aust. boat) who had just finished clearing into Brisbane. In the 2 hours it took, at one stage 7 officers were on board with 2 dogs! My friends were asked to leave the boat (probably not a lot of room left inside their 35' mono) and stand on the dock (which I think is especially worrying). Overkill? Did they find anything? No.

I wonder how ship owners and the seaman's union would react if it happened to a large ship?

This might be prompted by my friends' youth (25) or as a training exercise for officers and dogs but neither, I feel, justifies such outrageous treatment.

My friends are not likely to cause a fuss which is regrettable but if I cop similar treatment my camera and voice recorder will be ready.

I thought you might like to know about this.

Regards,
Isaac

The Incident

Report by Bob Norson October 29

This report seemed strange. There are a raft of reasons why police agencies do not usually require a person to leave the location of a search but the common one is the obvious risk of tainting the results by the opportunity to plant evidence, not to mention the risk of a theft accusation. Probably a one off....

Then a phone call a couple hours later reporting a very similar kind of incident. At first it was thought it was the same one, same boat. But it wasn't. The description of the search was similar but this latest one was located in Bundaberg and the caller, Chris Ennor, a rally volunteer recommended contacting the vessel *Friction* for more information on what appeared to be an extraordinarily destructive search by Bundaberg Customs..

So I drove to Bundaberg to investigate .

It is important to note that the great majority of vessels that entered with the Port to Port rally and otherwise lately, reported customs to be quite thorough but generally courteous and even helpful. This has been reported in TCP for some time and hope the trend continues but there are still issues that cruisers should be aware of.

David and Sonia, crew of the vessel *Friction* that had suffered the destructive search, were still angry but able to make some points. The marina staff were a source of good information as well. Two key points were that Samantha in the office noted that she had seen the couple leaving their boat for a coffee in good spirits after being requested to leave their boat for the search. Geoff Beyer, marina manager, informed me that customs regarded *Friction* as a "vessel of interest" and had requested the marina to direct the vessel *Friction* to the fuel wharf where a vessel can undergo a closer inspection. The fuel wharf at Bundy Port is somewhat isolated from the rest of the marina and more accessible by large numbers of people and equipment.

That information suggested that the search was arranged before Customs had face to face contact with the vessel and the crew were initially cooperative.

If there was any cause or intelligence that inspired these searches it is unknown. Because of the three searches of this type (the first one in Brisbane, *Friction* and another reported in Bundy), none were reported to have yielded any contraband, it appears they were arbitrary and random. **This is a very important point to know for a vessel entering Australia.**

The *Friction* crew reported extensive damage to the vessel and personal property as a result of the search. Dave Morrow stated that personal property was tossed about and displaced. Much of it was broken including mementos from children and family from Columbia. Electronics, including radios, were torn from their mountings. Wiring ripped out. Water tanks under the settee seats were claimed to have been disturbed and found empty upon the crews return, with the contents in the bilges. Dave said that if he were in the vessel he would have been able to access the areas for Customs by careful removal of items like the radios and he claims to have told the Customs crew that before the search.

The incident was reported on a local TV station. In response to the inquiry by Channel 7 news team, Customs promised that they would pay for damage to some personal property and to repair the damaged electronics on the vessel *Friction*. Following up on that Dave reported that the promise fell short of fact. For example a pair of glasses that were broken in the search were specialized and expensive and the replacements offered was claimed to be inferior and unusable.

Customs Does it Again!

rumours, innuendo, and a Gag Order??

comment by Bob Norson

Rumours beget more rumours... As remarkable as the incident that spawned them, the rumour mill that sprang into action immediately after the *Friction* debacle was as interesting as it was disappointing. TCP received a couple of letters favourable to customs right after the incident with *Friction*. TCP loves to get factual letters reporting a positive experience with Customs such as was published in last edition and this edition (see page 7). The point of all this is too affect a positive change and those positive reports are a record of winning the battle but all too often when it comes to support for Customs itself, facts are not the means. When you haven't got any facts, make up a story. Preferably an unverifiable one. As is noted on the letters page there is a burden of responsibility on writers to produce support for items stated as fact. One of the letters received lately was composed of such hurtful bigotry, verifiable fabrications and defamation that out of consideration for the *Friction* crew, it could not be published though otherwise it was tempting to make an exception to illustrate the point. It was a fine example of how the rumour mill can spiral out of control and be destructive.

The letter below is certainly not of the type mentioned above but it does illustrate the point of how an unsubstantiated story can be used to make an inference that may or may not be accurate or relevant. Though this writer may have been of sincere intent, it nonetheless echos the theme that the boats that have been treated roughly by Customs somehow brought the trouble upon themselves.

G'day Bob,

I read with interest in the letters regarding Australian Customs in the last issue. My wife and I have recently arrived back in Australia after buying our new home a Leopard 42 catamaran, we purchased it in the Caribbean and sailed it to Bundaberg for clearing in and paying our tax.

During our voyage that lasted eighteen months, we entered a lot of countries and had to deal with Customs, Quarantine and Immigration and they are all different in the way one has to do things. Some countries are quite easy and some are not so easy. However, I found one thing in our dealings with the authorities, different yachties have different experiences.

When we arrived at Wreck Bay in St Cristobel, Galapagos Islands, we radioed and asked permission from the Port Captain to enter port, we were told to enter and anchor in a certain place which we did. The guide books indicate that the authorities will be on board before the anchor hits the bottom, this was not the case. Guide books are good but out of date with some information due to the time between the research and the book going to print.

We radioed the Port Captain and asked about clearing in, we were told to report to his office at 1000 hours the next morning, and we asked if we were confined to the boat? The answer was no, we could go ashore.

In the harbour was a maxi yacht that we had met in the Panama so I dropped the dinghy and went across to talk to the skipper, Nick, he told me that the authorities were savage, they had charged him more than they should, they had carried out a full inspection of his yacht and confiscated some food stuffs and now they wanted him to fumigate the vessel at his own expense.

Armed with this information I cleared in the next morning expecting the worse. We arrived at the Port Captain's office, he asked what we wanted and I said we belong to the catamaran that came in and are here to clear in, I also apologised that I only spoke English. He said fine and called for another Naval Officer that spoke perfect English, we did not have the same experiences as the maxi yacht our clearing in was uneventful, the only small discussion we had was regarding the length of time we could stay. We did not get inspected nor have anything taken and the charges was calculated on what the guide book stated.

I think the difference was attitude, although Nick was a nice bloke he does have a little attitude that could upset people at times. We found this everywhere we went, many yachties treat the people as though they are stupid, most we dealt with were poor but more street wise than most.

On our voyage we heard terrible things about the Australian authorities and we met sailors that were going to bypass Australia because of it. May I say that when we cleared in at Bundaberg the authorities were very pleasant and very helpful, they helped us import the catamaran they sat with us explained everything, they gave us time to settle in before going through the process, then they helped us with the paper work. It was a lot more pleasant than dealing with the Gendarmes in Raiatea even though I was as polite as I could be there.

I think sailors judge the Australian Authorities on the experiences in other countries and yes our inspections are more thorough and so they should be, I know of three yachts that had dry wood termites overseas that totally wrecked the yacht one even de-masted through this.

In regard to the 96 hours notice, I think you will find it is a minimum of 96 hours notice, we gave notification in New Caledonia with the ETA of arrival, you can download the form to fax off from the internet, Australian Customs has a great internet site with all the required information. We arrived the night before our ETA and Customs had no problems with that because we had given the notice. They are aware that it is an ETA, (estimated time of arrival). We kept in contact with Customs and informed them of our ETA change.

Other Pacific countries are following suit with notification times, Tonga is now 24 hours notice, Fiji is 48 hours notice and there is a form that you can get off the net to send.

The Australian Authorities are no different to any other business they have good and they may have few not so good staff like everyone else, we only experienced the good. They have a job to do, it appears to be tradition that Australians knock authorities and we appear to be getting worse and by doing so we are frightening our potential visitors away.

Kind regards,

J

TCP did want to give the writer a chance to clarify and the TCP mail and the response with comment is next page>>>>>>>>>>>>

TCP ask's J...

Greetings J,

I did have a couple questions if you don't mind.

As far as the general thrust of the letter, that is, the matter of attitude affecting outcome, did you observe anything yourself that would have indicated this applied in the case of the vessel "Friction"?

If it did turn out to be a matter of random selection rather than a particular "probable cause" would that effect your opinion of the outcome?

And... pleased to hear you were able to import your boat successfully and enter without drama. That is the case with the majority lately.

Cheers,

Bob Norson

Hi Bob,

My comments related to experiences I had witnessed in the different countries that we cleared in and out from, the attitude of some skippers is that they feel that they are above the people of authority that they are dealing with. In many cases I saw other boats penalised for their attitude to authorities, where we were polite treated them with respect and only answered question that were asked of us and we were treated very well in all the countries we visited. The only places that we had food stuffs confiscated was Port Vila and naturally Australia, other vessels had things confiscated and had to pay fees of disposal. The only difference was the attitude towards authority.

I did not have personal experience with the yacht that you referred to, the aim of the letter is also to say that by the rumors that are out there and that is right across the Pacific and beyond we are frightening potential visitors away from Australia.

I get regular emails from people that we have met that have not reached our shores yet asking me questions about things that they have heard. To answer some of their questions I have contacted Customs and AQIS direct for the answers and emailed them to the respective friends.

Have a happy festive season.
I hope this helps.
J

comment and response, Bob Norson

First point: those aren't "rumours across the Pacific", those are facts. Australian Customs has used in past and continues to use extraordinary laws and enforcement tactics that are at odds with world norms and the interests of cruising sailors. TCP coverage of those hostile interventions has resulted in the more relaxed enforcement that is now *usually* the case. TCP has always and continues to invite correction on any mistaken fact stated in coverage of Customs. So far, no takers. All we get are unverifiable anecdotes on occasion, like J's. Notice he admits he hasn't met the *Friction* crew but would have readers make a negative inference about them based on innuendo. And what if we did? Is our border security to be based on facts or so unimportant we can afford to squander the resources on an officers personal dislikes ?? Besides decency, efficiency demands that laws are applied evenly and fairly. Also worth noting that though J asserts cruisers attitude is the problem he offers not one fact to support that. Even the example cited in the original letter does not state for fact that the cruiser "Nick" was treated rough because of his attitude, J merely states his belief that it was. To advise cruisers concerning a situation that could be dangerous for them to satisfy a personal belief could be disasterous. Second point: notice that J ignored the second question in my mail entirely. Mind firmly closed. This may be what allows J to criticise "rumours" and the harm they can do whilst at the same time make his point with.. rumours.. Perhaps the author is just passing on what he has heard because Bundaberg is for some reason the home of rumour and blaming the victim. An excerpt from TCP # 31: *Watch out for the whisper campaign! My favourite whisper lie? I was sent a mail that quoted some rumourmonger in the Whitsundays as saying he had a contact in Bundaberg that claimed the Manzari's were anchored for several days before contacting customs. This was from a forum that many will read and some will even believe. The person who mailed it to me had doubts and wanted confirmation. Wise man. Print media like TCP bears a burden of fact in reportage. The forums, blogs, marina layabouts and the MIB whisperers bear little or none at all.*

There are business people that may believe it is in their interest to deny or redirect blame for heavy handed officaldom. That may be wrong though as the most recent case shows because it does not deter future instances of abuse and it will be reported when it happens. If the business community got stuck into Bundaberg Customs as well, maybe they would revise their enforcement style for everyone's benefit. **After all, it isn't the victims or TCP that causes international cruisers to avoid Australia. Customs has the monopoly on that business. TCP just reports the facts.**

What's with Bundaberg Customs?

Bundaberg Customs has been at the front of conflict with entering cruisers. No other port of entry has had such a record. The very first complaint of Customs made to TCP was from Bundaberg (TCP # 15, The SV *Toujours* conflict). The Manzari case was in Bundaberg (TCP # 24). The controversy over "ship in transit" duties was in Bundaberg (TCP # 30) and now *Friction*. Cruisers should know this so they can make their own decision.

A letter from the P2P committee

The Port2Port 2008 Yacht Rally wishes to disassociate itself from the comments made by a "volunteer working with the Port 2 Port rally" as reported in your Customs article of October 29th.

Volunteers were advised not to offer comments about this incident as this is a legal matter between the Australian Authorities and the vessel involved.

Lesley Grimminck

President

Bundaberg Cruising Yacht Club and Port2Port Yacht Rally committee.

comment by Bob Norson

Regarding the very surprising letter above, why this person thinks they have the authority to control anyone's speech is interesting but actually there were no "comments made" from a P2P volunteer in TCP though a volunteer did have a few words on the TV coverage of the incident (wonder if Channel 7 got a letter!). A P2P volunteer did alert TCP to the incident but no comments were used. TCP had observed a friendly relationship with the writer and local Customs staff and hoped that might insure pleasant formalities for participants. **Thus TCP had made recommendation to several boats to enter with the P2P which is a lovely event with a fine history.** However, it appears that a cruiser may still encounter difficulties entering with the P2P and in that case, may not find support from the rally hierarchy that they may otherwise find from the general community.

Can they Take Your Camera Away?

by Bob Norson

On December 19, Nick Holmes a Court, owner of web based media companies was on a street in Kings Cross where he lives when he saw Police performing what appeared to be a search on someone. He started recording video with his Blackberry which caught the attention of the police and they came to him demanding his Blackberry and saying they could arrest him under the terrorism act as recording the police was forbidden under the act.

The incident received immediate attention on the web as upon returning home Mr. Holmes a Court sent a message out on the blogsite Twitter.

He claims he did not volunteer the device and stated "I do not consent to a search of my phone" but they insisted saying, "give me your phone, give me your phone".

According to his account the police pulled the phone out of his hand and when he protested he was told to "shut up". He was forced to stand by while the female cop looked through his email, text messages, photos and contacts. When they found the video they deleted it from the phone.

NSW Civil Liberties Council president, Cameron Murphy was quoted in a Courier Mail article on the story as saying there had been a similar event "where a student was arrested and pressured to delete footage of a brawl involving police". According to him police could seize footage only if it was needed as part of an investigation.

From the article, "There has been a steady increase in police powers to stop people, search them and move them along," Mr Murphy said. "This is very dangerous and it's the sort of thing that over time will lead to a police state."

Queensland Council for Civil Liberties agrees. According to the president, Michael Cope, police do not have the authority to confiscate equipment or stop people from taking pictures of them performing their duties and questioned why the police would feel they need to..

Australian Customs Service claims they have the right to stop people recording their work and this begs the question of their authority. It does seem to be common for government agencies to exceed their authority and some individual officers may use intimidation to succeed where the laws don't provide. Since few people know what their rights are, this often succeeds. TCP will pursue this matter along with the forced removal of owners from their own boat whilst being searched.



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Off we go with one in tow



Story & photos by Norm Walker, MY Peggy-Anne

It looks like the work has finally dried up and we're going to get a chance to finally leave the Bundaberg/Hervey Bay area. My last day of work is on a Tuesday, so Wednesday sees us making final preparations to the boat; we'll do some shopping on Thursday and depart early Friday morning.

While pushing the trolley around IGA the phone rings, it's an old friend who used to live in Bundy and has relocated to Rockhampton. He's been having a look at the weather forecast and thinks that the weekend would be a great time for me to help him deliver his 28ft Mustang "Sashay" to its new home at Rosslyn Bay Marina. I know I did offer to help him out, but we're trying to escape from here and have just finished buying the supplies!!!!!!

After a bit of thought, the plan is hatched. Get yourself down here mate and we'll tow ya boat to 1770 and then Dawn can take care of "Peggy-Anne" while you and I complete the delivery to Rocky, before bringing me back by car the next day.

Pete arrives that night and it's great to catch up with old mates when you haven't seen them for a while. Over a few Bundy and Cokes we plan the next day.

The next morning we arise early (despite the long hours of planning over Bundy and Cokes). We move both of our boats out of the marina and into the river, where we set up a tow from the "trailer eye" on "Sashay" (Pete's boat) to a bridle attached to bitts on each quarter of "Peggy-Anne" (our boat). Once we are set up, it's all aboard Peggy-Anne as we head out of the Burnett River

and plot a course for the Town of 1770. The forecast is good and the weather looks kind, but once the sun is a little higher in the sky a nasty little Sou' Wester kicks in and makes us reshape our course to gain a lee from the coast. Once in close to the beach the trip becomes a lot more pleasant and we relax in chairs on the fore deck and take in the sights not usually seen from further out to sea. We lose about a knot, on our normal cruising speed (7 knots) and arrive at 1770 just before sunset. We drop the tow before heading into the anchorage and raft the Mustang up once "Peggy-Anne" is securely anchored. Another night of planning over Bundy and Cokes.

Breakfast as the sun comes up, throwing some fantastic hues over this pretty spot. By 06:30 were aboard the Mustang, across the bar and headed for Gladstone. This part of the plan will be a lot quicker than the first, as we are now travelling at 18 knots. We have Bustard Head abeam within the first half hour, but there's no time to enjoy the pleasures of Pancake Creek. We're on a mission!!!!!! The little Chev. Engine runs sweet at 18 knots and the weather gods have been kind again, by 10:00hrs, we have tied to the fuel dock in the Gladstone Marina where we take on about 400litres of high octane. We have made really good time and will have to cool our heels for a while to gain enough water, to make the crossing through The Narrows.

After a long lunch it's about time to head off again. Past the coal terminal, Graham Creek and eventually The Cattle Crossing. The tide is still making and we have just enough

depth to get through and have to push a bit of water as we make our way to Sea Hill. Once out of The Narrows the tide is more favourable and we make good time running in between the islands leading up to Rosslyn Bay. After receiving berth allocation from Keppel Sands Marina, we have "Sashay" tied up in her new home by 16:30, after which we have the celebratory Bundy and Cokes.

Pete delivers me back to "Peggy-Anne" the next morning and my commitment has been admirably fulfilled. We spend another week at 1770, checking out the sites, before heading further north. Another week in Pancake, a few days muckin around at Turkey Beach, then

Thornton's Creek, Colosseum and The Boyne. Two days at Gladstone for a shop and off to explore Graham Creek and then Pacific Creek. Once out of The Narrows, we decide to head to Yellow Patch for a couple of days. This turns into a week, in this great spot. We climb the dunes, catch a feed, walk the beach to Cape Capricorn and climb to the light station, whilst enjoying calm nights at anchor with lots of new found friends.

It took us a month to savour the places we rushed past, when delivering "Sashay". Boy it's great having the time to explore and enjoy some of the great destinations along our magnificent coastline.



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Bad luck / Good luck Rolex Sydney Hobart 08



Quest, the winner!

By Bob Norson, photos courtesy of Rolex Sydney Hobart Media

It's been ten years since the horror of the 98 Sydney Hobart and this years race could not have been more different than that tragedy.

Sydney was sparkling before the worlds cameras and *Wild Oats XI* put on a world class show as she broke away from the fleet after a perfect two wave start. *Skandia* had a busier time of it having more tacks to make the heads. Outside there were the usual tense moments as the thoroughbreds threaded their way through the scrum of gin palaces and even Hobie cats. Especially with her lead out, *WO XI* was expected to run away and hide from the fleet but to the surprise of most, *Skandia* took the lead back in the 25 knot NE breeze

There was some bad luck/good luck that night as Sandringham Yacht Club entry *Georgia* hit something hard off Point Perpendicular. The hull was holed at the rudder stock and she was sinking. A mayday was issued and two vessels responded, *Ragtime* and *Telcoinbox Merit*. *Merit* steamed back to find *Georgia* with her nav lights barely above the water. The good luck for *Georgia* was that *Merit* had in her crew, 7 professional skippers from the Whitsunday charter fleet and they were sharp on their sea survival skills. The rescue of the stricken crew was executed perfectly and according to reports, *Georgia* sank within ten minutes of rescue. A close call. *Ragtime* resumed her race whilst *Merit* transported the survivors.

Meanwhile the frustrated *WO XI* just couldn't catch *Skandia* and then more bad luck, she hit a shark! The creature got wedged onto the rudder and the crew finally had to back the boat off it. This consumed precious time but the good luck was... apparently the keel had been fouled with something picked up off Sydney. Mark Richards, the skipper, claimed the boat was sailing like a dog but when they freed the shark and whatever else.. she took off for line honours without looking back. Richards did compliment *Skandia* skipper Grant Warrington for sailing a brilliant race and there was some good natured ribbing at the wharf.

The bad luck was that *WO XI* didn't break the record time but the good luck was the shark gave them their coveted four line honours in a row!

Bob Steel collected the Rolex watch and Tattersails Trophy for his second overall Hobart win on his second vessel named *Quest*, a TP 52.

A remarkable job of helming goes to Kirk Watson of *Sailors with disABILITIES*. He brought the vessel over the line at Hobart.. in spite of the fact he is blind.

This event was chockablock with great stories. The Coastal Passage web site ran a continuous feed supplied by the fantastic crew at the CYCA and the results and blow by blow will remain for perusal.



The brave and efficient crew of *Telcoinbox Merit*. Besides being great racing sailors, it's good to know this calibre of crew is running the fleet around the Whitsundays. Well Done!



Sailors With disABILITIES sails hard, ask's no quarter and provides fantastic opportunities for a variety of talents. Helmsman Kirk Watson with a friend.



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Observations on Solitary Yachtsmen

By Alexandra Connolly

I have spent about half of each of the past eight years in Queensland's Tin Can Bay, a beautiful little coastal village on a triangular peninsula jutting into the waters of the Great Sandy Strait, protected by Fraser Island to the north east and Inskip peninsula to the east. These waters are a yachting paradise and Tin Can Bay is a magnet for such passing small vessels and their masters.

My time in Tin Can includes a twice daily survey of the Yacht Club area to note the arrival of new yachts and to meet the new "yachties" who invariably turn up nightly for a look around, meals, showers, and to enjoy the life and company (if they can find any) for the duration of their stay before continuing on their solitary way. I use the adjective "solitary" because most are. Those that aren't sadly constitute a minority, the odd couple, retired and still together after a lifetime of child-rearing and working.

So, what type of being is the average, solo yachtsman (rarely a woman) who glides in, maybe stays a while depending on the weather and the attractions, then glides out of yachting communities?

The solo yachtsman is by definition partnerless, although he occasionally may have a wife who has refused to accompany him on his trip. He's also retired (therefore almost always post 50) and is now managing to follow his dream of freedom and finding new places. His dream invariably includes finding, along the way, a partner to sail with him. The ideal partner will be hopefully youngish, a fit and attractive female, at one with nature, indeed free and willing to sail. The expectation of such a finding is one of the lures, along with the finding of every pristine location, which makes successive ports of call, wherever they should be, an exciting prospect.

But alas, a dream she is, and unless he has truly exceptional attractions, a dream she may remain. He is looking for a partner with whom to share his lifestyle, a woman who will be happy to be with him, sail with him on his boat and share his dreams and adventures. But he cannot find even one of these as strangely, it seems there are no such women for these solo yachties.

After many conversations with many of these yachties, I begin to realise that I have stumbled upon a sub-culture of single men all pursuing the same dream and all seeking the same woman, and I use the singular to emphasise the dearth. So, who is this woman (if she exists)? To find her, let's look at the yachties' dream: "youngish, fit and attractive female, at one with nature, indeed free and willing to sail" - and I'll add - "with him".

Let's start with youngish. Yachties are, in general, not young. As explained above most are retired and over 50. Youngish women do not want to be with an older retiree. And, young women work and have children, and often a husband. So let's remove youngish and instead consider women post 50.

Next adjective: attractive. We know that beauty is in the eye of the beholder so everybody can be attractive but, in general, attractiveness, at least initial attractiveness is visual and associated with age. Older women are less attractive. They have wrinkles, weathered skin, and many tend to fat. So maybe we should also remove attractive or perhaps leave it to the yachtie's imagination to insert this attribute.

The "at one with nature" criterion is more subliminal and unconscious. It implies that the woman will continue to look as she did when our yachtie first sees her. Older women spend time keeping their appearance up. So unless our woman is exceptional, her hair will be grey or dyed

and when nature has its way with dyed hair, grey roots (and growing fast) are guaranteed. So too are unkempt eyebrows, increasingly weathered skin, and so on. In short, without full resources at hand, our woman's attractiveness may well decrease rapidly on his boat.

Now we have "free and willing to sail" and "with him". First let's examine "free". Free means no new grandchildren to adore, no pets, no husband, no regular bills to be paid, no mortgage, no debts to pay off, no rent, no job, a lockup property that does not need looked after, no medical conditions that require treatment or special care, no boyfriend or otherwise partner, and, financially secure, someone who has freed herself from all her commitments and ties.

Now are we, or is our yachtie, hoping to stumble upon a needle in a haystack?

Let's assume, by some amazing stroke of luck, that our yachtie finds this woman. The next question is: will she be willing to set sail (and, remember, we haven't got to "with him" yet)? Now for the double whammy. She may have worked all her life, raised children, cooked and cleaned and put up with her imperfect husband and dreamt of freedom from hard graft and now, at her older age, has achieved it. She has her own home and has gained freedom even from household chores as she has a washing machine, dishwasher and all mod cons, an Internet connection, the facilities of her neighbourhood, friends to call on, etc. The yachtie's hope is that she will be willing to leave all this to go and sail (with him).

Before we get to "with him" it is time to examine, from her point of view, life aboard a boat. The most uncomfortable thing for women is the heeling. With the floor at a permanent angle of around 15-20 degrees one way or the other (unless he has a catamaran, which might give him an advantage over a monohull owner) she soon becomes a mass of bruises with broken fingernails. She also dislikes the sort of boat (and this means most of them) where even in a marina, life is too cramped to be civilized (again more points to the cat sailor). She loathes tiny toilets and washbasins, and trickling showers, suffering the trips between less than ideal marina facilities. And as for those quaint hell holes that are cutely named "galleys", if ever there was anything expressly designed to put your average female off sailing for life, this is it, unless of course the yachtie's home is exceptional.

In addition she is expected to cope without mod cons, with feeling dirty (shower not too wonderful) sticky hair full of salt and cannot get her roots done, sheets not crisp and clean.... Let's just round all this up to

"leave behind your hard won lifestyle and say hello to hard graft with added discomfort and likened to being in jail with a risk of drowning".

And in the intervals between the graft, what will she do? She will enjoy endless hours of staring at blue, at swell, ripples and waves, punctuated by swathes of distant mangrove and the odd yellow strip of beach. And above all, she will put her very life into the hands of her adventurous new companion who knows he is an excellent sailor, safe, not a risk taker but, on the other hand, could know more about cracking a bottle of champagne than the mainsheet. Perhaps we should dump "willing" in favour of "hopefully gullible enough to be coaxed".

So, at last, let's assume that having got over all these obstacles, our yachtie has found this rare species of woman and has managed to convince her that she should go sailing. He now faces the biggest hurdle of all, i.e, having convinced her that not only is sailing for her, but, sailing WITH HIM is for her.

This could be difficult but not impossible. He will have to present himself as able, strong, slim, fit, attractive, reasonably monied (as she will not take off with someone with no home, no money and whose only possession is the boat), clean, happy, very easy to get on with AND all the rest of the normal attributes that every land-dweller has.

And now for the good news: to any "solitary and looking" yachties that read this, this species of woman does exist. I know because I used to be one of them. So why did it take me ten years to go cruising the blue with a yachtie?

Wait for it, wait for it, the odds are about to fall into the mid-Atlantic trough. Like every other woman, I wanted to be in love with the man with whom I would live.



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And just who is the yachtie that captured Alexandra's heart? TCP knows but we aren't saying

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The secrets to going sailing and sex appeal Or.. every babe is a sucker for a boaty

By Captain B. S. Nautical



WHERE TO START:

(1) Get a sailboat. This is the easy part. Go to the harbour and look for boats, find the biggest, cheapest one and buy it!

MOST IMPORTANT! Get a boat with a motor! Everyone who 'sails' knows that is the most important part of the boat.

(2) **Essential accessories;** the boat must have a 'fridge' or at least an 'esky.' Cold drinks are no mere luxury but a required part of your 'navigation system.' (I'll explain later) You may also need 'provisions.' This is not too tricky. You may just go through the market and pick up tins that strike your fancy. My favourite are the 'red' ones. If colour coded provisioning isn't to your standard then you should get...

A 'FIRST MATE.' The value of this accessory is a matter of some contention amongst us sailors but the virtue of having someone on the boat to order around should not be undervalued. (gimme a beer, what's for lunch? etc) In my opinion First Mates are indispensable and easily found. Any sailing club will have several young and attractive candidates waiting for just such a stud-ly example of manhood and seamanship as yourself. Go to the bar and practise all the nautical terms you know (be sure to wear the little hat with the anchor on it or the optional stuffed parrot), check out the selection and hold out for the best deal. It is well known that woman with large breasts make great sailors.

(3) **Other accessories:** Liability Insurance is not a bad idea depending on the location of your boat. If you are in a crowded 'marina' surrounded by expensive boats with people (witness's) around most of the time then you should have insurance. When I manoeuvre around a marina I often get asked if I have insurance (don't know why!) and I've found it best to answer 'no' even if ya do, as it seems to make other's remarkably helpful. Since word has gotten around, whenever I come into the marina there is an army of willing hands to guide me into 'the berth.' It's great to have so many good friends!

DAY ONE:

First... open a beer, then untie all the lines holding the boat to the 'jetty' or better yet, this is an opportunity to order

around the 'first mate.' Now start the motor and engage in a backward gear straight away as by now you have probably drifted near or are already 'alongside' another boat. (See above; other accessories) Remember to keep the open beer in the right hand whist all this is going on, as a dumb smile and a raised beer can/stubby is the universally accepted explanation for all errors in 'navigation.' By now you have probably made your way out of the marina with lots of help from friendly neighbours raising their hands in a salute or something like that. If you have really impressed, you may be honoured with many shouted nautical terms in addition to the salutes. I admit there are still some even I don't know but they mostly seem to have a rectal reference, eg; arse this or that.

By the time you are done with your first beer you should be out where the wind is so you can begin to 'sail.' First stand by the mast and put your finger in the air to test the wind direction. Find out which is the side of the stick the wind is coming from and going to. Next find the rope that fastens to the top of the sail. When done with that open another beer and yell for the 'first mate' to come up from the food place and haul up the sail while you 'steer.' Be sure to tell the 'first mate' to stand on the side of the 'stick' where the wind is 'going to.' If the first mate seems to have trouble hauling up the sail with the rope you can then criticise the first mate for her lack of 'seamanship' and thus establish your own position as 'skipper.' Be sure to retrieve the 'first mate' from the water, where you will find her after the sail fills and knocks her off the 'deck.' This might be a good time to reassess which side of the 'stick' you instruct the 'first mate' to stand on when pulling up the sail.

ANCHORING; Since by now you are aware of the proper technique for performance sailing (about 2000 revs on the motor) you will have arrived at the 'anchorage' just in time for beer #3. To find the best spot in the 'anchorage' look for the other boats. Find the two closest together and go between them. Be sure to raise your beer in salute and announce that you have no insurance to bring out the best in your new neighbours. While this seems to have a dramatic effect on new, shiny plastic boats, especially 'catamarans,' you will find large steel boats react very little. Often raising their own beer in salute while saying, "your funeral." Your first mates facial colour should now be

restored and thus she should be ready to assist 'setting' the anchor. After showing your 'first mate' how to 'drop' the anchor but before telling her how to 'secure' the thing, order her to 'hold tight' while you 'set' the anchor. A few moments at full throttle in reverse should do. After retrieving your 'first mate' from the water again, there are several things to remember, One; the location of the 'first aid kit' as the 'bow roller' and 'pulpit' are a tight fit for a first mate when clinging to a chain. Two; this is a good time to clear the boat of any potentially lethal objects, knives, guns, broken bottles etc. Three; hide all life jackets as after the first day sailing is when first mates are most prone to 'jump ship.' Because of your first mate's lack of 'seamanship,' you now have a lot of chain out and you are very close to one of your neighbours, usually the shiniest one. Even though you have 'stowed' the 'pfd's' and the mate has had enough swimming for the day, if you are close enough for her to step aboard another boat she may consider a drooling pirate rapist preferable to your company and flee.

No problem, simply bring in most of the chain. If your 'depth sounder' says 10 metres then 11 metres of chain is perfect. One last job is to pull out the \$9.95 solar garden light and fasten to something with a 'zip tie.' This is the traditional 'anchor light.'

Congratulations!! You have done your first 'sail' and now have many new friends and adventures waiting for you. With a firm grasp of the fundamentals learned the first day there really isn't much more to learn. Fair Winds!!

About the Author



After retiring as a financial planner (just ahead of the investigation) the good captain has gone to sea but now has a fashion centre for the distribution of custom made leather vests, treasure chests and child safe plastic cutlass's for that oh so sexy look...

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Historic Vessel, MV Waiben



I am fortunate enough to be in possession of a piece of Queensland history, a vessel that is registered with the Australian National Maritime Museum and the Australian Register of Historic Vessels.

The *Waiben* is a **Norman Wright** Built Pilot Vessel launched in Cairns in 1949 for the purpose of servicing the Torres Straits.

Its first job after WWII was to replace the navigational beacons that had been removed at the time, so the enemy could not find their way in to the Torres Straits.

Being a vessel in a remote part of Queensland the "*Waiben*" was the local school ferry, the police launch, medical ship, customs and immigration vessel as well as its real job, a Pilot Vessel.

It was up in TI for approximately 25 years, before being transferred to Hay Point, as the pilot vessel for the new coal loading facility near Mackay.

It was only a short stint there, before it was up for repair at Goldstons slipway in the Pioneer River. The vessel was declared uneconomical to repair and the shipwright was ordered to burn it.

The shipwright seeing an iconic part of Qld maritime history being reduced to ashes, offered the Government officials \$50.00 for the boat, they scoffed and returned the order to burn it. Ray Goldston, the shipwright stated that the vessel was declared unseaworthy and if he was to burn it on his land that they would receive an invoice for \$500 to remove the remaining debris from his property, Ray got his *Waiben* for \$100.00.

The *Waiben* laid on its side in the mud for a year or two until Ray had the time and money to resurrect his project. Eleven years in the making and some \$300,000, the vessel was restored to its former glory.

The *Waiben* was put to work fairly quickly and become the flagship of the P&O owned Brampton Island as a charter vessel, offering sunset champagne cruises, dive and fishing charters up until 2005 when the contract was not renewed.

The vessel was put on the market and quickly snavelled up by Ed and Michelle Barker of Brisbane.

The boat was cruised down from Mackay and now calls the Moreton Bay Boat Club at Scarborough home.

The vessel has had extensive work on her, being rewired, new electronics, blasted back to bare timber, seams re packed and new epoxy topcoats.. New refrigeration, DC board, onshore power and new instrumentation and new structural fridge freezer installed. The make over cost me about the same as the purchase price of the vessel.

I plan to cruise the vessel back up to Thursday Island (TI) in October 2009 to celebrate the "*Waiben*" 60th birthday. I recently flew to Horne Island and ferried to TI to pick up some history on the old girl, the response was fantastic; the party will be on when we tie up next to the new *Waiben* next year.

**Ed Barker,
MY *Waiben***



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Much Needed Marina Berths Added at Manly

From the MBTBC crew and Peter Hansen

The Moreton Bay Trailer Boat Club is building a new state of the art marina of 135 berths due for completion in April/May of this year.

Less than half of the allocated marina berths are offered for sale; however there is a wide range of monohull, multihull and large marina berths available ranging in size from 12m to 24m at competitive rates.

This is the last opportunity for the Club to expand marina berth numbers in the Manly Boat Harbour at completion the marina will house 350 berths in total. State Government legislation restricts the development of any further canal sub-divisions or marinas so the pressure for available berths is enormous.

This scarcity of marina berths both for sale and rent plus the likelihood of this being the last new marina built at Manly are likely to attract investors as well as those looking for a home for their boat. There is also great demand for investments in lifestyle destinations and a strong increase in the registration of boats longer than 10m.

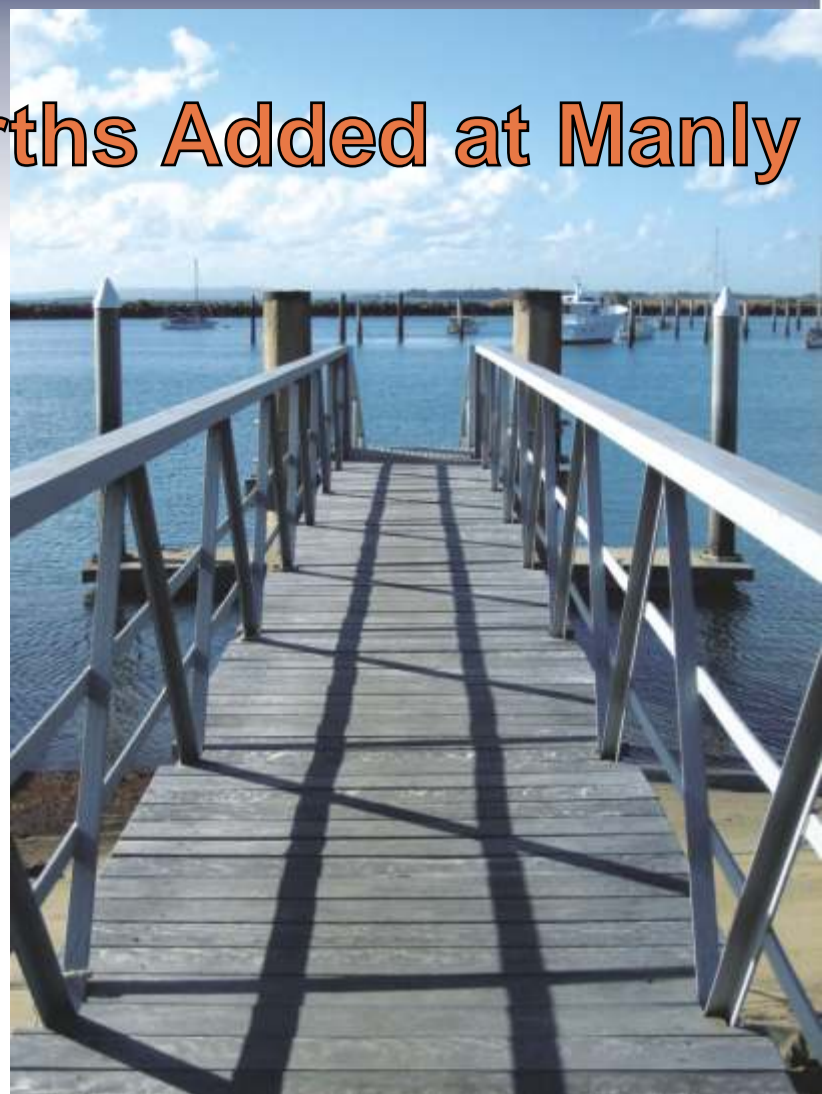
Property analyst group Colliers International has been watching rising prices of marina berths and believes that marina berths are a solid investment for the future. Colliers Brisbane

of people into boats in southeast Queensland has just exploded."

Manly Harbour definitely has all the boxes ticked for a perfect boating destination and is widely considered the hub of boating in southeast Queensland with the best access to Moreton Bay. Marina facilities include: monitored security access, travel lift, hard stands, diesel and unleaded fuelling station, boat servicing, car parking, shower and restroom amenities. A five minute walk from the marina to Manly Village you will find a Post Office, coffee shops, restaurants, hotel, supermarket, bus and train station.

Coastal cruisers love the location for a permanent berth as the off season security of being out of the major cyclone belt combined with the convenience of the best of the city at the doorstep, make the off season a thing to look forward to rather than something to be endured! Yearly maintenance, social networking and retail therapy at hand.

And for boaties that cruise local waters, it couldn't be better. A few minutes from the house, toss lines and you are on your way. A sailing vessel has a lovely destination in almost any wind direction through deep navigable waters, making the most of your precious weekend time. The islands of Moreton Bay or the glitz of the Gold Coast Broadwater are easily accessible.



Taking into consideration the large number of multihulls on the water the Club is building marina berths specifically designed for multihulls with finger

lengths same as boat lengths and fairway widths exceeding Australian Standards.

Moreton Bay Trailer Boat Club facilities include alfresco dining and gaming. The Club actively promotes and fosters a healthy family culture and has plenty of special interest groups including Social Cruising Group, Sailing Group, In-Shore Fishing Group, Deep Sea Fishing Group and Dive Group.

The Club also has one of the finest views of Moreton Bay in Manly!

To find out more about Moreton Bay Trailer Boat Club visit www.mbtbc.com. To discuss berth sales call Peter Hansen on 1300 889 509 or email marinasales@mbtbc.com.

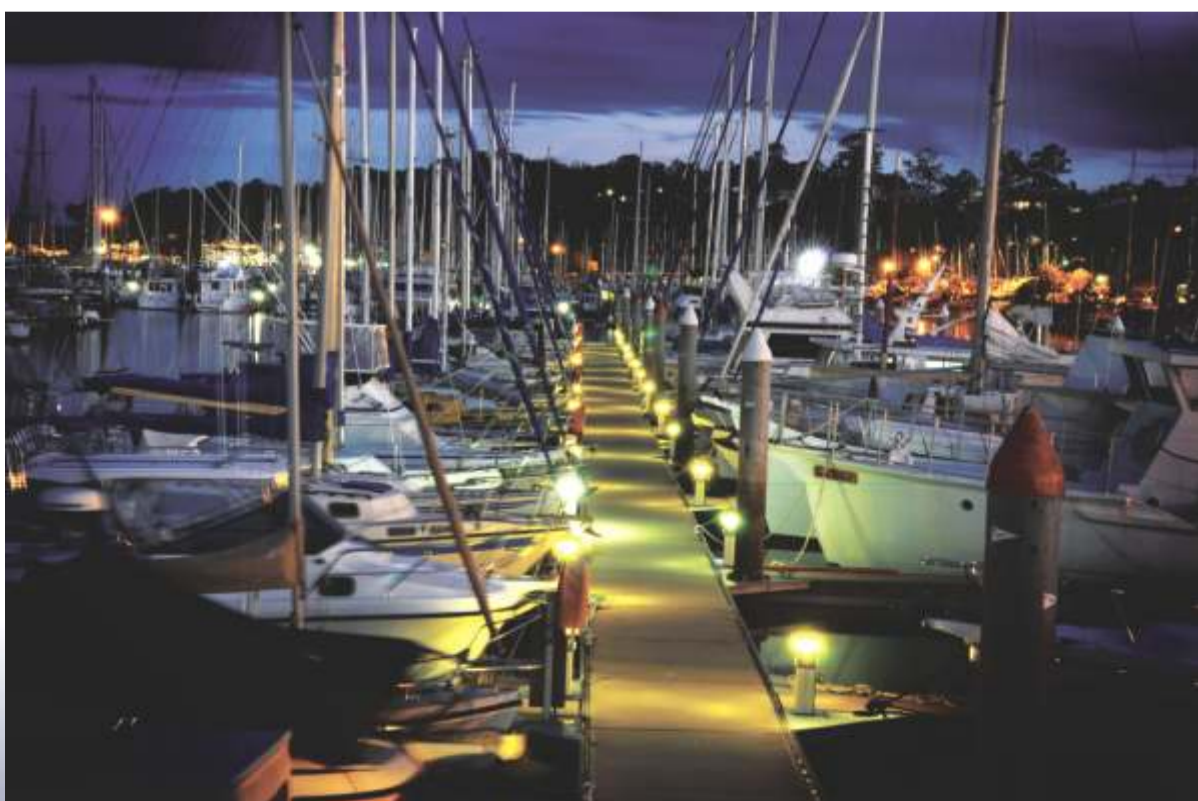


research analyst Alison Timchur said: "It's the age-old principle of supply and demand, the demand for berths is up and there aren't enough available.

"Boat ownership in Queensland is growing faster than the population and there are at least 2000 people in the southeast on waiting lists for marina berths. It takes time to build more marinas so we would suggest the prices may continue to be pushed up by the lack of supply for some time to come."

(Speaking to the Gold Coast Bulletin) Hope Island Resort Marina Manager Marc Hall said the pressure on the limited number of marina berths available for purchase and annual rental on the Gold Coast was increasing monthly as more people opt for a boating lifestyle.

"In West Australia, parts of Victoria and on Sydney Harbour people are paying unbelievable prices for marina berths and that is going to occur here," he said. "The number



*Beautiful blue skies.
Still water below.
Vessel under your toes.*

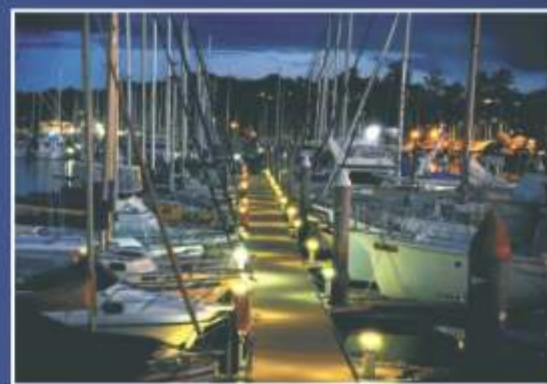
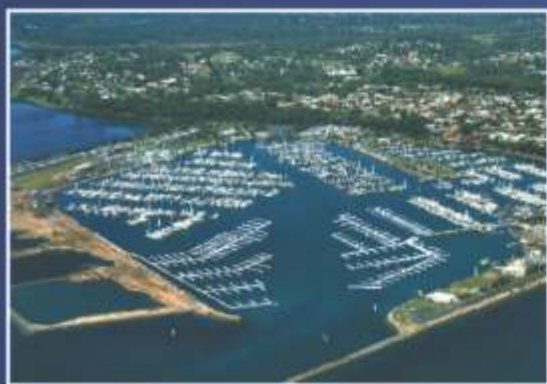
Completion April/May 2009
Mono and multihull berths for sale

Rare opportunity to buy new marina berths at Moreton Bay Trailer Boat Club Marina from \$132,000

- 135 new state of the art berths are being built, less than half available for sale
- Wide range of berths still available to buy 12-24m mono and multi
- Best access to Moreton Bay - hub of boating in Southeast Queensland
- Marina includes hardstand, travel lift, fuel, boat servicing, car parking and amenities
- Short walk to cafes, restaurants, shops, supermarket and post office

On completion, the expanded marina will accommodate 350 vessels.

Whether it's a work berth or a secure place to moor your boat, this is your last opportunity to acquire a competitively priced, lifetime appreciating marina berth within the Moreton Bay Trailer Boat Club at Manly Harbour.



To discuss your specific needs call Peter Hansen on 1300 889 509
or email marinasales@mbtbc.com



Making Cruising Dreams Come True the Seven Seas Cruising Association



By Barbara Theisen

What do Nigel Calder, Jimmy Cornell, and Beth Leonard have in common? They're all members of Seven Seas Cruising Association.

With nearly 10,000 members from across the globe, the Seven Seas Cruising Association is the largest non-profit organization of voyaging cruisers in the world. These members share the dream of sailing the seas as a lifestyle. Founded in 1952, SSCA is also the oldest non-profit organization of cruisers in the world and the goals of the original founders are still the goals of SSCA today: sharing cruising information, camaraderie, and leaving a clean wake.

But just because SSCA has celebrated over fifty years of launching cruising dreams doesn't mean that things haven't changed over the years. Our passion for cruising has stayed the same, but even long time members are surprised at the extensive benefits that have been added to their membership and the ease of accessing these benefits from anywhere in the world.

SSCA is probably best known for its monthly Commodores' Bulletin. The 48-page monthly publication is packed with information, advice and inspiration from members who are actually out there cruising the world. This means that members get the most up-to-date information on anchorages, customs and immigration, costs and "what to do and where to go." The *Bulletin* is all about cruisers sharing information with fellow cruisers. Members know that in addition to finding the best anchorage, you need to find a place to do the laundry and you want to know where the best places to snorkel, the best place to provision and the best place to enjoy a good dinner or a beer are. It's all in the *Commodores' Bulletin*.

Lin and Larry Pardey, *Taleisin*, say "A month after we joined SSCA, we read in the *Bulletin* about a brand new port that had just been completed in the Madeira Islands. We were bound south and west from England. That new port was the best stop of our whole voyage that year. Great introduction to a fine organization!"

The Bulletins are now online at www.scca.org so that members no longer have to wait for the mail to arrive to read the latest cruising information. They can download the issue for future reference, search past issues and even purchase ten years worth of past *Bulletins* on CD, raising the waterline by not having to store printed publications on board. Forty percent of the membership now chooses the WebOption, where they read or download their *Bulletins* online in lieu of the mailed printed *Bulletin*.

"SSCA was with us all the way from our dreaming of cruising days through our circumnavigation," says Dave Abbott of the Privilege 39 catamaran *Exit Only*, who together with his family recently finished circling the globe. "We first heard about SSCA in the 1980s. At the time, we were living and working in the desert lands of the Middle East. The ocean, sailing, and cruising seemed a long way away, literally, but the arrival of the *SSCA Bulletin* reminded us that people were out there on those oceans and someday we could go, too."

Active cruisers all over the world regularly use their *Bulletins* to plan their itineraries. "We have consistently used articles from the *Bulletin* to help us choose sights to see all across the Pacific, New Zealand, and Australia," say Dave and Kathy Blanding of the

Norseman 447, *Sunflower*. "For example, the *Bulletin* was very instrumental in our decision to join the Sail Indonesia Rally this year. We'd read an article by a previous participant, who, like us, normally tries to avoid large fleets of boats. They found that the rally gave them many opportunities to do activities on their own, while still having the safety net of a group and group activities when they wanted. We have found this to be true, plus some of the rally tours have offered us sights and situations that we could not have organized by ourselves. It has been a great experience so far, and we would have missed it if not for the article in the *Bulletin*."

It's been said that the *Commodores' Bulletin* has probably launched more voyages and kept more cruising dreams alive than any other publication.

"The camaraderie of SSCA members around the world is remarkable. We have used the *Bulletin* extensively while planning and traveling to 114 countries and always look forward to reading it each month," say Liza and Andy Copeland, *Bagheera*

Camaraderie is another cornerstone of SSCA. Wherever members gather, they organize get-togethers and exchange cruising information. SSCA sponsors an annual Gam (a gathering of sailors). Members and their guests sail, fly or drive from all over the world to join old friends and meet new ones. They attend educational seminars, roundtable discussions, hand-on demos and they share experiences and enjoy each other's company. The 33rd Annual Gam will be held in Florida in December 2008 and features SSCA Lifetime Commodore Jimmy Cornell as the keynote speaker. In addition, the three-day "islands theme" event will have live music, an island buffet, a cocktail party, a nautical flea market, dozens of vendors and a wealth of learning opportunities through seminars and hands-on demonstrations.



Members are encouraged to hold regional Gams, as well. Longtime cruiser Kathy Parsons, *Hale Kai* has been a member of SSCA for decades. She first joined SSCA years before she set sail in order to learn what cruising was all about. "Now in the nearly 20 years that I've been out cruising, SSCA is my community of cruising friends. I enjoy attending the Gams and we fly our burgee as we cruise."

One of the newest ways that SSCA is sharing camaraderie is through local Metro Coordinators. These volunteers coordinate local social events for members. We would like to actively engage even more of our members to build camaraderie worldwide and would love to find some willing volunteers from Down Under. Start-up kits are available to give you lots of hints to help you launch a new local group and SSCA Home Base will provide administrative support. Send an email to Jeff at metromanager@scca.org for more information.

SSCA members fly our burgees with pride. All members join as Associates, which allows them to fly the blue burgee. Members can apply to become Commodores after fulfilling certain requirements: they must be members for at least one year, be fulltime cruisers, have met the cruising distance requirement, and be sponsored by two Commodores. Commodores fly the red swallowtail burgee.

By flying our burgees we can find other members throughout the world, enjoying their friendship and company. But we can also see who's in the anchorage before we get there! We can find members we've lost touch with or who can give us insight into what we can expect when we arrive at our destination by using the online **Member Locator Map**.

With the aid of Microsoft's Virtual Earth®, you can visualize the whole world and then zoom in for a closer look. Search for fellow SSCA members by continent, country, state or city and see it appear before your eyes. Tiny sailboats appear (Red for Commodores, Blue for Associates and Yellow for Cruisers traveling with kids) marking the location of registered SSCA members. Move the mouse over a particular sailboat and see that SSCA member's lat/long location and contact information (contact information is shared *only* with other SSCA members and *only* if desired).

Cruisers Ty and Suzanne Giesemann, *Liberty*, believe that "There's no greater feeling than sailing into an unknown port and seeing the familiar SSCA burgee flying from a cruising boat's flag halyard. The excellent upgrades to the website help us keep track of our friends even better than before."

Want to receive a warm welcome in over 100 ports around the world? Just visit an SSCA Cruising Station (CS). It's a big, big world out there but SSCA is making it a bit smaller. Members can go online to www.scca.org and download a list of CS. The list and map are updated monthly. CS Hosts offer not just a warm welcome, but often can help with transportation needs and can provide local maps and information and can assist in finding needed services. They may organize potlucks or other get-togethers and provide you with social and cultural information and exchanges with local people. You can contact them in advance for information about a port and its facilities, knowing that any information you receive comes from a knowledgeable local with your best interest at heart. Imagine sailing into an unfamiliar port ... in the South Pacific, on the U.S. Coast, in Turkey, Thailand, Korea, Japan, Australia, Argentina, New Zealand, and more. Think of the advantages of having a host there to provide information in advance and welcome you when you arrive. That's an SSCA Cruising Station Host.

Whether you're on the move or making plans, interactive Port Guides for worldwide ports provide information you need. Sharing information is one of

SSCA's key traditions. It's great to be able to refer to *Bulletin* letters about a port while you're planning a passage. We buy and share costly cruising guides, and yet, as we all know, much of the information in print becomes obsolete as soon as they are printed. People move, regulations change. Plus you don't always get the nitty-gritty information you want. Where's the nearest laundry? Can you buy varnish? Where do you buy diesel or get your propane tanks filled? My dog needs shots; is there a vet around?

SSCA's new online interactive Port Guides allow you to search available Port Guides by region, country, port, author or boat name and start reading the chosen Port Guide immediately. Or browse all of the Port Guides to see what's available. Sitting in a port or know it well? Members can and should add their local knowledge and experience to the ever-expanding library of online Port Guides. Not going anywhere right now? Take a look and start dreaming!

Oh, sure, you say! Great if you have Internet access, but what about those at sea and in need of current information about a port they're hoping to visit? Aha! We've thought of that, too! You can even access Port Guides via SailMail or Winlink. You can access help files, do queries, choose the Port Guides you want and download them as text files to your boat email just like any Saildoc.

continued next page...

SSCA CRUISING STATIONS

Return To Cruising Stations Page | Help Using Google Maps | Return To Member Locator Map

Map Locations [-]

- Argentina, Ushuaia
- Australia, Queensland, Bundsberg
- Bahamas, Abaco, Treasure Cay
- Bahamas, Exuma, Black Point
- Bahamas, Exuma, George Town
- Bahamas, New Providence, Coral Harbour
- Belgium, Garraardsbergen
- Belize, Placencia Harbour
- Bermuda, St. George's
- Bonaire, Kralendijk
- Brazil, Paratia, Cabedelo
- Canada, Nova Scotia, Chester/Deep Cove
- Canada, Ontario, Kingston
- Chile, Tome, Casilla
- Colombia, Cartagena
- Dominica, Portsmouth
- Ecuador, Bahía de Caráquez
- Ecuador, Galapagos Islands, Santa Cruz
- El Salvador, Costa del Sol
- Fiji Islands, Vanua Levu, Savusavu
- Finland, Nikkeli
- France, Les Sables d'Olonne, Port Bourgenay, LaRochele
- Germany, Schleswig at the Schiel (Baltic Sea)
- Guam, Titi
- Guatemala, Rio Dulce
- India, Bombay (Mumbai)
- Italy, Cagliari
- Italy, Gaeta (Litha)
- Marshall Islands, Majuro

SSCA continues...

SSCA is a caring, supportive family of kindred spirits, ready to assist fellow cruisers when needed. We are individuals who share a unique way of life and celebrate international fellowship and goodwill. We aspire to the fulltime cruising lifestyle. We are independent and responsible people who pride ourselves on our self-reliance and conduct ourselves with integrity. We treat all people and our environment respectfully. We are ambassadors of a cruising fraternity and want to ensure that those following in our wake will be warmly welcomed.

It's this now famous "SSCA Clean Wake" policy, which has helped raise the reputation of today's sea-gypsies around the world, ensuring that the welcome mat will be out for all cruisers who following in the wake of a fellow SSCA member.

Beth Leonard and Evans Starzinger, *Hawk*, are true ambassadors of the SSCA Clean Wake policy. They add, "SSCA provided us with invaluable information and an instant support network when we were new to cruising and most in need of both - and SSCA allows us to do the same for others who are following in our wake."

For as long as mankind has memory, man has been entranced by the sea. The need to know what lies beyond the next wave and over the far horizon is pervasive. Ask any group about their fantasies and someone will tell you of a vision of tropical blue skies, balmy breezes, ever-gentle waves and sailing to exotic ports. Those who are living the dream, as well as those who are planning for the day that they can release the ties to the workaday world and sail off to seek paradise, and those who only dream of such adventure, all join together in an organization called the Seven Seas Cruising Association.

Become an SSCA member and participate in the fellowship of worldwide cruisers. You'll be rewarded with lasting friendships of like-minded, caring people who are there for one another when help is needed; who are eager to share their experiences and knowledge with you.

For more information, go to www.scca.org and take our Virtual Tour.

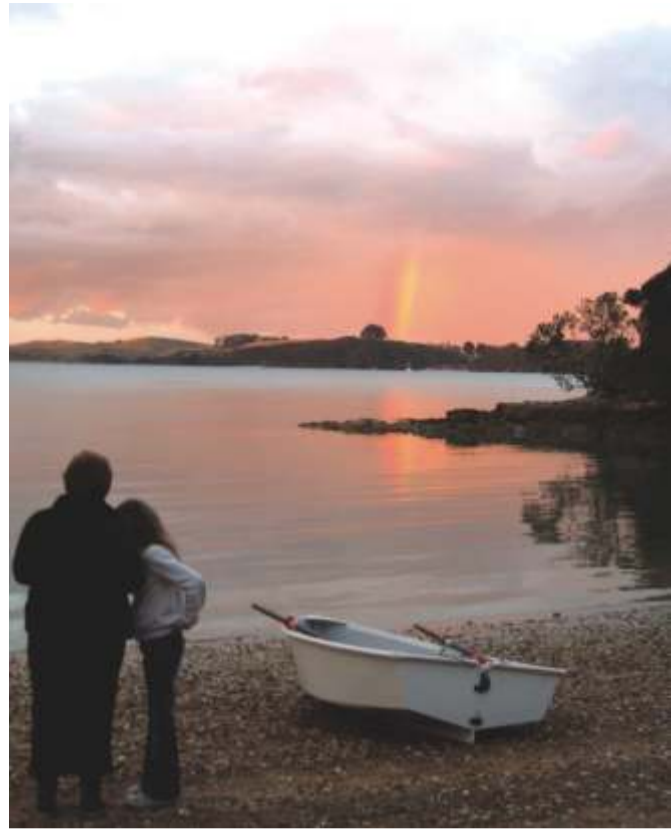
Bob's note: It is my opinion that Australian sailors have much to gain by association with this respected international organisation. Besides the obvious social delights, Aussie's in particular could use an organisation that really is representative of who we are and what we do. Kay and I are members.

Need to buy new equipment or replace what you have? Let nearly 10,000 SSCA members help you make informed buying decisions! Every year, cruisers spend meaningful sums of money on maintaining, replacing and adding marine equipment to their boats. Because many SSCA members espouse a fulltime active cruising lifestyle, we tend to rely on this equipment more than most. In the past, the SSCA has conducted a paper-based Equipment Survey every four years to collect and publish member opinions on marine equipment. The process was cumbersome and the data limited in scope, but folks eagerly sought the results.

Our newest online Equipment Survey was introduced early in 2008. Categories include virtually everything from stem to stern that you might want to research -- from the boat itself, to anchors, electronics and communications. It is open-ended and will remain available to members (and new members) for the indefinite future. The database of ratings and comments will be allowed to grow indefinitely over time, and all participants are able to return to their own surveys as they add gear to their boats and/or their experience as existing gear matures. To our knowledge, this is the first time an open-ended, inclusive marine equipment survey has ever been attempted, and best of all, the ratings and comments are coming primarily from the most demanding of test beds: cruising sailors who live aboard their boats.

The benefits of membership in SSCA continue with a free online subscription to *Ocean Navigator* magazine and **Special Offers** on supplies, equipment and services available to members from over fifty vendors! All of this can be found on the SSCA website at www.scca.org along with much more. Find out how cruisers can volunteer around the world, learn where help is needed and what to bring when cruising to remote areas of the world or find out how you can volunteer to serve your SSCA family. It's fun and it can take as much or as little time as you have to offer.

From the sharing tradition of our founders, SSCA has become the key tool and resource for information in the world of cruising. "No other organization in the world has anywhere near the collective long-distance cruising experience and wisdom that is embodied in SSCA," says Nigel and Terri Calder, *Nada*.



Port of Entry to Bundaberg

BUNDABERG PORT
Marina

Welcome

WELCOME

Bundaberg Port Marina is situated 1 nautical mile from the entrance of the Burnett River and offers all weather, all tides, deep water access to visitors to the Coral Coast.

We are the official Port of Entry for Bundaberg and offer our visitors many facilities to choose from, to make their stay that little bit more enjoyable.

FACILITIES AVAILABLE

● Floating Berths up to 130ft	● Shiplift to 70 tonnes
● Fuel Dock & Sewage Pump out Available	● Shipwright & Marine Engineer
● Marine Electrical & Ships Chandlery	● Water & Power to all Berths
● Major Hull & Insurance Repairs	● Diesel Engine Repairs/Services
● Marine Trimmer & Upholster	● Painting, Detailing & Antifouling
● Timber & Deck Specialists	● Marine Surveyor & Brokerage
● Stainless Steel Fabrications	● Hire Cars
● Wireless Internet Access	
● Phone lines available to selected Berth	
● Cafe, Restaurant & Seafood Shop	
● Bait, Ice & LPG Refills	
● Courtesy Bus into Bundaberg City	
● Free BBQ on Fridays for Marina Guests	

VHF 81

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info@bundabergportmarina.com.au
www.bundabergportmarina.com.au

Saving Steel... how we did it



This was one of those days that wouldn't have been a good one for my surveyor to stop in for a chat...



Removing the first bits of teak revealed little steel left, it was now more like soil.



Kay was below cleaning out the fitout debris and clawing off the blown in insulation whilst I was making match sticks out of teak. She was saying as I snapped this... "don't you dare take my picture!"



Still smiling...



There is a satisfaction to seeing progress.

Lesson number one,

The skipper is responsible from day one

Over the years I have been asked or been involved in discussions regarding the purchase of steel boats. Often the subject turns to surveyors and some people suggest that buyers rely entirely on the surveyors report. This runs shivers down my spine. I did that once....

"This vessel was professionally designed and built and has been well maintained to a very high standard. Hull and superstructure are in very good condition. Paitwork (sic) has been kept up to protect all areas. All windows have stom (sic) boards. No defects were noted with hull or superstructure."

Owning an old steel boat has taught me many things but paramount is the realisation that a good skipper is absolutely self sufficient, and that begins on the day of purchase. Never ever delegate YOUR responsibility to a person whose abilities or interests are unknown. When it comes to buying a boat it is 'Buyer beware!' A good surveyor can be very helpful but do learn enough yourself to know the difference between a good boat and a disaster.

How to judge a steel boat? Very briefly, look around as you board. Is deck gear bolted through the decks? Or on raised flanges? Leaks on decks ruin steel. Is there timber fastened to the steel? Oh oh.. look carefully around the edges of the timber for signs of fresh paint to hide the rust scale. Go below and look immediately for the lowest point in the bilges. Not accessible? Walk away. Accessible? Is it dry? I like to see dust and cob webs, maybe even a little saw dust left from the fitout. Is the prop shaft seal dry or a dripping stuffing box? Is the fitout nailed and glued? Or does it appear to be removable so the steel can be accessed for inspection and service? Are the electrics tidy and well organised? Poorly designed or badly installed electrics can destroy a steel hull. If those items pass muster then go hire your surveyor to see what he/she finds.

One of the things going for a person intending to save an old steel boat is ignorance. So we were the perfect candidates.

A chill ran down my spine, very literally, after reading an Alan Lucas article a few weeks after laying down the cash for a 25 year old steel boat. I had asked the surveyor I had hired about the lumps in the teak on the aft deck, he assured me it was the nature of the timber etc etc... But according to Alan's article it could be caused by rust below swelling and forcing the teak up. If that's the case then I wondered how to go about lifting those patches of teak off to repair the rust and then replace the teak without showing too much.. (blessed ignorance!)

There was a small rusted spot that was noticed in the pre-purchase inspection, under the waterline. The surveyor assured me it would just need a dab of paint to fix up at the first slipping. At that slipping... I was cleaning off the spot when the tool pushed right through the steel! Hmmm, not good but these things happen. I called on the closest engineering business that did semi regular work at the boat yard to repair the spot and give a hand with replacing the cutless bush. After a few days more on the slip the pros lightened my wallet by about \$2500 and left me with a clumsy large patch (It turned out that a section of steel about 18" X 30" adjoining the hole was paper thin from corrosion), a bent prop shaft from a botched repair, a bent rudder shaft from dropping the heavy thing when unmounting and a distorted log and cutless from bashing the cutless with a sledgehammer until a local chippy pointed out to the pro that the reason it wasn't coming apart was maybe because the parts were threaded together... The chippy was right of course. All of those things were corrected over time, though it took years of excessively hard steering before I understood the importance of the kink in the rudder shaft and worked out how to fix it.

Back at mooring I lifted up a little of the teak and realised it might be more extensive than originally thought... Alan Lucas was right in spades. Teak on steel was a very bad idea but at the time the boat was constructed even recognised "experts" like Ian Nicolson endorsed it.

I was fortunate in that there were trawler wharves nearby and the use of one was offered at reasonable price. Bruce Thompson, Thomo, who ran the wharves and slipway was warned it could be as much as 3 or 4 weeks to get the job done. I think he knew better but he smiled and said OK anyway. For the next 2 years we were the grateful guests of the trawler fleet in the Tweed. We showed our appreciation of this breach in normal yachty/fisherman relations by being ready to shift in case the wharves were needed and by being handy with a welder when anyone needed a little job done. Also we didn't fit the 'whinging, lazy yachty' image but most important I think was that the fishermen were impressed with Kay. Not even the fishing family women would tackle the hard, dirty work that Kay took on. Many days we both looked like some creature from the rust lagoon. I was just a grub but it elevated KK to sainthood! We noticed that when I went to the fish and chips counter next to the slipway for lunch, I got the skinniest fish in the tray and a few sodden chips but when KK went in her rust covered clothing and smeared dirty face... we dined! Fat cutlets of juicy snapper on a huge bed of crisp hot chips... and that was just an order of one flake and chips!

We did try to work around the fishermen's schedule as well. One morning I was below running a scaling gun hard. The racket was deafening and so I was perplexed at the noise of someone bashing on the hull of the boat loud enough for me to hear over the air tool and ear protection.. it was the skipper of the trawler next door offering drinks and fresh sea food if for just a little while I could 'shut the f*ck up' while they took a little break after coming in from working all night. Thus the first of several days that I had Bugs and Jack Daniels for breakfast and then wobbled through the rest of the day... It was also a time that I got to know these men more and shared in the talk of their everyday work. "Got four shots at 60 fathoms..." "hooked up and damn near rolled..." "bloody new decky can't even sort let alone cook..."

And so the days turned into weeks.. and months... As one part of the project was being completed the next would be investigated and a small repair would soon be doubled.. and then doubled again in complexity. As mentioned earlier, the aft deck was first to look at. It became apparent that there was no small repair but wholesale replacement of the deck. My earlier experience with the local engineer suggested that if we were to succeed, it would have to be done ourselves.

Since I have never let wisdom get in the way of ambition, I prepared to take on the job.

Never having welded before, I went out and bought the cheapest MIG welder I could find and picked up a handful of scrap steel and went home to learn. We had already demolished the teak and cut away the panels of rotten steel on the deck. I bought the first lot of steel plates (12 would eventually be used on the boat, plus uncounted lengths of angle and bar) and had it blasted and primed. After very carefully shaping and tacking the new steel in place, I began to weld in earnest. Though my first welds were bulky, they were quite strong and the joint between deck and gunnel was successful. It was the butt welds joining the separate panels that I did wrong. In my zeal to do the perfect job, I had created joints so precise you would have had trouble slipping a piece of paper through them. So of course they all cracked! The lesson learnt was that butt joints should have about 2mm or greater of gap for the weld to penetrate. So.. all the butt welds were cut back and re-done.

.....and lessons learnt!

The cockpit was next and again... much worse upon commencement of work than anticipated. Combing, deck, lockers, the lot. It did provide the opportunity to redesign the cockpit which I did. Ports were incorporated that provided much needed light and ventilation for the galley below. Ease of access for the side decks was achieved.

The Bow was next and by then I was getting used to the idea that it was always worse than it looked.... Besides replacing the decking, the steel under the anchor windlass and bollard was not sufficient in my opinion so that was replaced as well. One of the trawlers replaced its fitout and a scrap left over was a large table top covered in stainless steel. I stripped off the steel and welded up a chain locker that drained into a plastic bottle.

The side decks weren't in quite as bad a condition as the aft deck. Where all the stanchions had been attached needed patching and the screw holes from the teak all needed a spot weld but I didn't want to cut away and replace the steel if I could. From the main bulkhead aft, the entire fitout was savaged with crow bar and sledge hammer but I was hoping to save the teak fitout forward. To have welded whole sections right against steel with timber attached on the other side was more dangerous than I wanted to risk. Except for that, it would have been easier and faster to replace the decks then to have made the intricate repairs that I did.

With the decks now looking better I set up for doing a fence, not the piss weak little life lines that she had come from England with. Sandvick is the place for stainless but they don't do retail. I made a bulk order of tube and sheet for the hand rails, cockpit canopy and water tanks. I found a pipe bender at one of the local rental places that could work just well enough to get away with bending tube if one was very careful. For the canopy, we needed some compound curves. This was managed by the use of an assortment of old tires for cushions and then running over the tube with my van to get the right shape. Another very useful tool was the heavy pipes stuck in the ground near the wharf to protect the fuel valves. These were used to put the long curves in the tube to match the gunnels. A week of work got us handrails all around and sissy rails for the main mast (a very successful idea) and this used up about \$800 of the stainless. Good value compared to the \$4000 that it would have cost to hire a pro to do a job I probably did better. The rest of the stainless went to water tanks and to build another log and cutless to replace what the engineer wrecked.

I got so enraptured with stainless that every project thereafter was done in it somehow. Galley counter surfaces (cheaper than laminex!), fridge box and a host of other bits and pieces.

Then the bilges.... While I was working on decks, KK was below clawing out the old blown in insulation. Another one of those funny ideas from the sixties. Contrary to claims, the stuff does absorb water and retains it for best effect. That it was used in place of a good paint system is astounding to me but that was the case; "experts" advising a coat of primer and the foam only. .. and don't forget the wonderful teak deck! As soon as the decks were in place and the environment dry, we both turned to the inner plating. Months of the rattle gun and scalers. But a warning I gave to KK, "don't use the rattle gun below the waterline till we are on the slip"! Good precaution. Though I knew we had some work below to replace previous poor quality work, the extent of the rust was, as usual, underestimated.

When we did scale the lower bilges we punched eight holes in her. The boat had been floating on paint. The quick scaling we did on the slip was good enough to identify spots needing repair or replacement of steel but when it was time later to do paint... Every last bit of rust scale must be removed which is trickier than it may sound as the stuff will disguise itself as steel and appear in surprising places. As abrasive blasting wasn't possible, a carefully applied paint system was the next step. Beginning with two or more layers of Altex pre-prime 167 (POR 15 would do this job as well but wasn't yet on the market then), then two or more of Jotomastic, two or more of epoxy high build, then polyurethane top coat, at least two coats. This was real work. The stringers were angle and required considerable effort and even some customisation of brushes to get at those corners. The hull plating became our disposal area for excess paint from other projects. Most areas had 12 or more coats.

One of the more memorable days.... It's when you think you've won that you can be most disappointed. It was Melbourne Cup day. The wharves were deserted, except for me. The boat was looking good and floating on good steel. Exterior paint was fresh beside the new port lights and reconditioned hatches. Much of the fitout was replaced and the engine room had been gone through. The only thing I hadn't examined, the only panels I hadn't peeked behind were under the steps down from the saloon to the galley. The boat carried 2000 litres of fuel (don't ask me why), in two steel tanks, 1000 each, either side of the engine. They were roughly 3/4 full. On the port side where the steps were, the tank was formed into steps covered with ply. Lifting the ply exposed steel in bad condition.. shit! Well, just a little chipping and then I'll put some paint on and she'll be right.. WRONG! As the screw driver plunged through the steel the spurt of diesel leapt toward me. I made a grab for my phone and stuck my finger in the hole. KK was at home some 20 minutes away but with no-one around the wharves, it was her I had to call. When KK arrived and we could swap fingers, I mixed up a bit of "knead-it". A stick epoxy you can get at hardware stores. Brilliant stuff. After about 15 minutes being held in place it was firm enough to leave.

Further inspection revealed that previous owners must have considered the locker above the tank as a wet locker.. it wasn't, or shouldn't have been anyway. I had a big job... but how to do this? I was gleaning my memory for any reference to welding on fuel tanks. And this is what I did; Diesel isn't explosive. The fuel itself can tolerate a lot of heat in the absence of oxygen and not burn. So with a water hose handy and KK with a fire extinguisher on hand (for what good it could do), I scaled back the worst of the debris, cut pieces of stainless steel to shape and started welding. The sound of the boiling diesel behind the plate was disturbing and there were a few small leaks that I would discover as the fuel lit on my gloves and around the work. But I wanted to get the job done and out of there so I would swat the flames down and find another few inches of plate to weld and keep going. In a couple hours I had the plates welded in and the leaks under control but now I had the areas at or above the fuel level... where there was available oxygen. If an open flame occurred inside the tank I figured there would be nothing to do except run...

So, I drove my old van unto the wharf, connected a piece of 2" hose from the exhaust pipe to the fuel filler and let the van run for about 20 minutes. The idea was to evacuate the oxygen and replace it with the inert carbon monoxide mix from the vans exhaust. In theory, it should work. Ever bet your life on a theory?

Six overlay patches with over 14 feet of weld later, and little hair remaining on my arms... the tank was repaired. But removing panels to get at that job I noticed this one small rusty spot on the hull plating by the tank inlet, so just a little scaping to clean up... GUSH, oh shit! Out comes the "knead-it" again. The hole was about 6" below the water. Thomo volunteered some oil drums from the slipway. These were rolled to the starboard side deck and filled with water. That lifted the port side and exposed the hole. Welded it up, slapped on some paint and next day emptied the drums. This had the fishermen scratching their heads again, wondering what we were up to now!!

There were a few other small problems and revisions along the way but that wretched few days dealing with the fuel tank was the apogee of pain. Everything downhill from there.



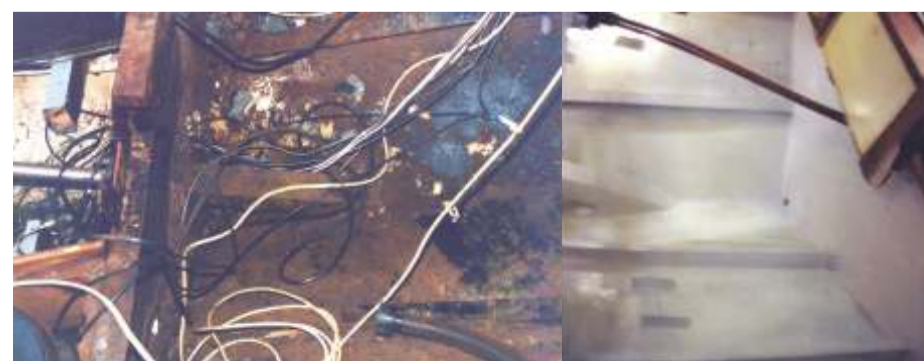
The cockpit was as bad as the aft deck. With so much to replace it was an opportunity to redesign it as well.



This centre cockpit design was unusual in that instead of an engine under the cockpit, that was our galley. This was OK in that we had a beaut of a galley but it suffered from lack of light and ventilation. The triangular shaped boxes reflected a good amount of light and they ventilated from a sheltered position. A very successful addition.



Teak is so attractive against a white surface. The little that was used was screwed in place to allow occasional service. The lockers were ply suspended above the deck by steel tabs. It was all set up to flow water through full length scuppers under the combing. The hard dodger and combing are edged in 5/8" stainless tube.



Before and after... The stern tube and parts of the bulkhead were replaced, some bilge replaced and then very careful preparation and much paint. This is a fair sample of what was done for most of the boat below decks.

Saving Steel, continues.....

A few things worth noting...

When we did the fitout I refused to do it the way the pros had done the boat. I thought that if we did insulate it would be with panels of foam or even just layers of old carpet as the chippy at the Tweed advised, but sailing in North Queensland, it was never an issue. The boat was painted white so heat wasn't a problem and well ventilated so we had little of the condensation that experts warned we would. But insulation could have been done anytime because I made the fitout so that *everything* came apart with a screw driver and 7/16ths wrench. I believe strongly that no steel boat should be built in a way that denies access to the steel for inspection and service.

On MIG welders; the first machine I bought was good only in that it was such a challenge to use, that when I got a good machine it seemed easy! The overhead welding required for the patches in the bilges was going to be more challenge than I needed however. I got a high quality machine with greater capacity and it had such powerful grunt that I literally danced while welding the plates overhead just to show off. Anything to put on a show for the troops... And in case you think I'm careless, not one leak ever showed on the welding I did and it was impossible to tell my repairs from the original professional welds.

How to select a good MIG welder? Pick the thing up. If it nearly breaks your back to lift it, that's the one you want. Aluminium coils are light weight and cheap but they heat fast and do not tolerate heat well. This means the character of the arc is inconsistent and the machine shuts down frequently when the internal temperature sensor tells it to. The better machines use copper wound coils that do not heat as easily and can tolerate more heat. The arc remains consistent and they have a much greater "duty cycle".

Steel is a bloody mess to work with. You owe your neighbours all the effort to insure you don't damage their boats. Metal spray is very destructive. Only some one ignorant or a real arsehole works steel near other craft.

And don't be tempted to put off a small job after wrapping up the big project. Even a little ten minute project will spread metal spray over a surprising area requiring an all day clean-up effort. That's if you want your boat looking good. If you don't care what your boat looks like, clean up is pretty easy. But on a steel boat, if it looks good it may be good. If it doesn't, it is in decay.

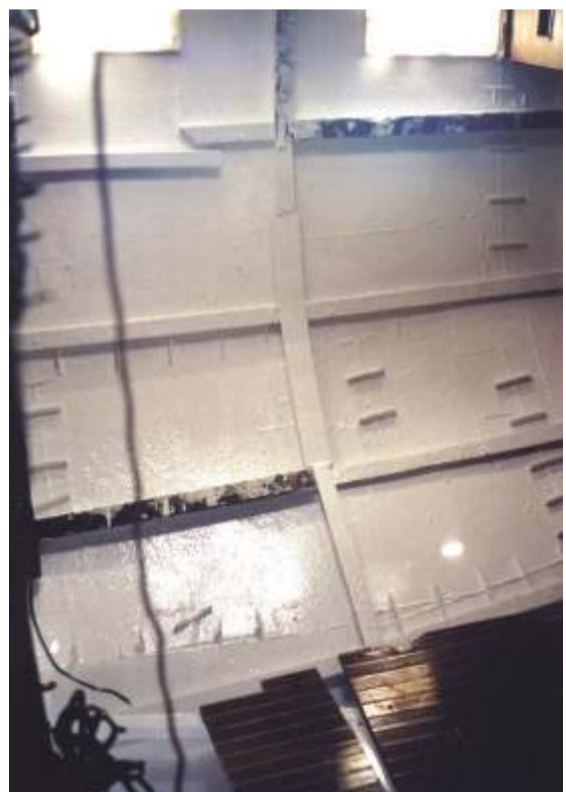
There is an old saying about Granny's 100 year old axe. It may have had 2 new heads and 10 new handles but it is Granny's 100 year old axe. A good steel boat is like any other in that it will last forever with proper maintenance. But what is proper maintenance? We got the boat caught up after many years of indifference and as important, changed much of the deck gear to suit the realities of steel boat use. No holes drilled through the deck! Flanges welded on to mount things like mainsail track, stanchions and cleats. When we sold her she was in the best condition she had been in for decades but there will always be work to do on a steel boat.....



Reconstructing the stern tube and cutlass at the slip way, all from 316 stainless



Starboard side patches are in progress at top and above, Kay is using a rattle gun with the scaler tool to chip away any debris and insure the substrate is firm before priming with epoxy.



Before and after... these don't quite show how much work was involved in getting to the finished product. The most rigorous preparation is necessary prior to the painstaking paint system but there is no step that can be short cut. Perfection is only 90% effective.



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There are two kinds of patch, over-layer and inlaid. The overlay patch is just cutting up a piece of steel that is at least as large as the repair area needed and smacking it on over the top and welding all around. Cheap and nasty.

If done properly, an inlaid patch can not be discerned from the surrounding original work and if under water will not slow your boat because of an uneven surface. It will also be as strong as the original work because it will be fully welded, that is, inside and out.

This is a description of how WE did it.

First cut out the rotten steel. Be sure to use a respirator and ear and eye protection!!! Besides the flying bits of steel, the fumes from the burning paints and other nasties will bite you. Ask me how I know....

Try to leave fairly straight edges and insure the steel is clean and wholesome all the way around to make a good weld. Transfer the dimension to your new steel by tracing with a piece of cardboard or bracing ply or just measure it up, whatever works for you. It doesn't have to be perfect. The bottom edge needs to be close enough so that it will rest in place to start but much of the rest can be adjusted as you go with an angle grinder. Remember, this is butt joining so a gap of at least 2mm to 1/8" inch is perfect. You can get away with up to 1/4 inch depending on the thickness of plate you are using. The range of hull plating used is usually from 1/8 to 1/4 inch or 3 to 6 mm. Ours was 3/16 or about 4.6mm.

Because I bought a second, better welder before the bilge work, I had the convenience of leaving my weaker machine in the boat so I didn't have to lug around the other machine. Outside I started the welding by installing the "dogs". These are small plates temporarily welded in place to support and position the new steel. As you can see in Step 1, the dogs at the bottom are just rectangular pieces while the ones above are "L" shaped. Working inside at the bottom, the bottom dogs should keep the steel in line, or a little pressure against the new steel with one hand while you tack with the other should do. Use your touch and eye to judge the alignment. Get

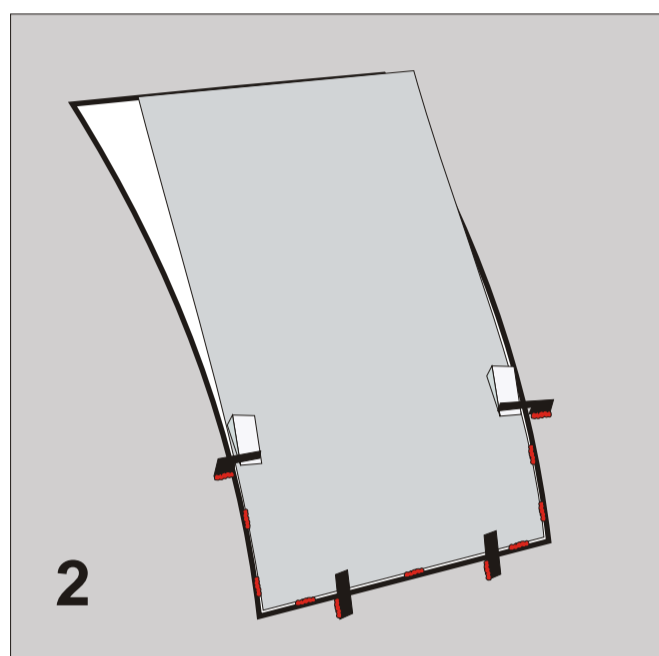
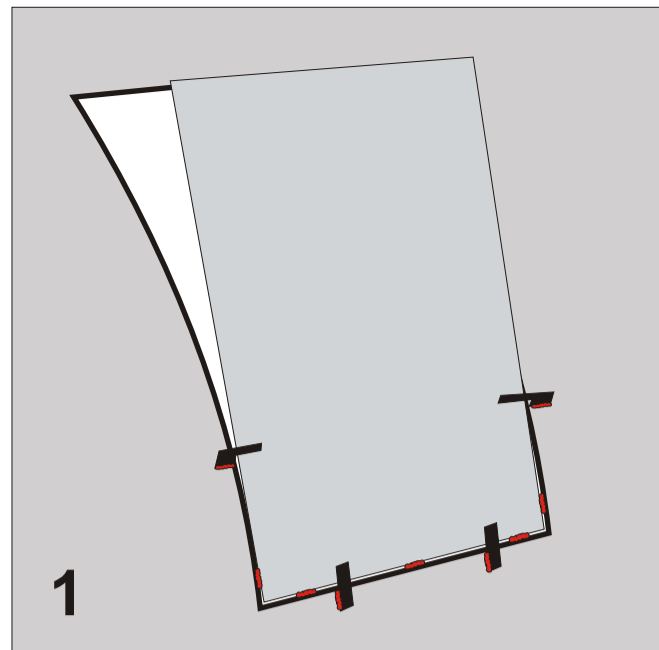
it right. Make the tacks inside as shown on Step 1. If you place your weld on just one side of the dogs they easily knock loose later with a hammer.

Next I would yell to Kay who would be outside with a hammer, to drive the wedges in the "L" shaped dogs to force the steel into a slight curve. As soon as the surfaces aligned about 6 inches up the plate from the last tack, I would have her stop and install another set of tacks and repeat that until I tacked right under the "L" shaped dogs. Then I would go outside to smack off the "L" shape dogs and weld them higher up and start again. Inside again and with the plate tacked all around and satisfied the edges met well, I would cut back the tacks to reduce bead height and prepare for welding all around. With my small MIG running on moderate power, I could weld a pretty long line before stopping to let the metal cool to prevent distortion.

With that done I would go outside and take an angle grinder with a cutting blade and use it to "groove" out the line all around the patch. I do this to get a more uniform width and depth of channel. Then fire up the good machine. For overhead welding you need a different arc than what you would use on a horizontal surface. Many will advise to reduce your current and slow the work right down but the machine I got was so grunty and I was so sharp from having to work with a rubbish machine before, that I just wound up the wire feed speed and ripped! I use good magnification and my jeweller's background was helpful. If you get it right the weld lays flat and dense, no bubbles, pits or globs hanging off. The bead width should be consistent. It should be pretty!

To prevent distortion you have to work in sections. The length of weld can vary depending on the current used and nature and thickness of steel. I was going about a foot (bold) and then doing a line on the opposite side of the patch. To make a smooth start on the next section, I would cut back the end of the previous line with the edge of the cutting blade to form a small groove then start the next weld with about an inch overlap.

Kay and I did over 40 square feet of curved bilge that way and no one could ever tell we had done it at all once it was painted. And in spite of it all being done on the rush on a slipway that the local fishermen would get nervous about being tied up for long periods... we never had a leak.



I would fabricate the fence in sections and then have Kay hold in place whilst I "eyeballed" from shore. The result was quite good. Below...cruising in the Whitsundays.



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Janes "BIG O" Birthday Party



By Jan & Arnold Ellis , SY Helmsman

The scene is Sawmill Beach at Cid Harbour, Whitsunday Island. The timing is between strong wind warnings (most of us are endeavouring to get south sometime). The occasion is Jane's (SY, *Escondido*) "Big O" Birthday. We were lucky enough to get six hours without any rain.

Twenty something dinghies had converged on the beach and disgorged some seasoned party goers. For a few people this would be the first of hopefully many more such beach events. For those of us more seasoned travellers it's just an excuse for another big get together ashore.

It doesn't take a lot for Arnold and Frank to dinghy around the anchorage and invite everybody to a BYO everything party.

Several of our partygoers put on some entertainment including a "Marilyn Munroe Happy Birthday Mr. President" rendition by Tina from *Aurelia* and lots of jokes from the men of the group. Frank (*Escondido*) sang the *Charlie Mops* song "The man who invented beer" along with some more of his great songs and guitar playing.

It turned out to be Cath's birthday (*Cool Change*) as well, which meant more celebrating. Donna (*Kidnapper*) "says" she made a chocolate mud cake Birthday cake. It looked like something out of Michaels Patisserie but there isn't one in Cid Harbour so I guess she really did make it. Quite a work of art.

Frank and his electric drill made short work of some green coconuts, which along with a bottle of rum, lime juice and a couple of straws became very popular. After they were emptied they became the Sawmill Beach version of *Petonque*. Everything on a boat must have two uses.

We parties until dark then rescued the dinghies from varying positions up the beach with the falling tide and all headed for home.

Saturday was a fairly quiet day around the bay except for the charter boats who were all squeezing as many anchorages as possible into their short holiday.

Then followed a "Recovery Party" two days later which was held at the other side of the beach, with Frank acting as our Caribbean dinghy boy. Bill (*First Light*) didn't join us because he was having too much fun swimming around his boat with a turtle. Steve (*Aurelia*) caught a stone fish nearby and brought it in a bucket to show us (adult show and tell).

The forecast is starting to improve so hopefully this means we will have the next get together at a new location.

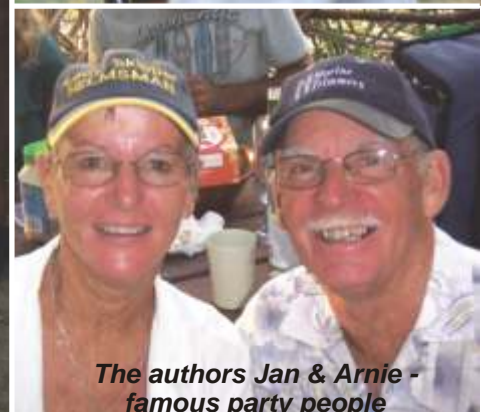
"The Party-Goers"

Tina & Steve,
Cath & Merv,
Jane & Frank,
Bill,
Roz & Lance,
Jan & Arnie,
Val & Paul,
Donna & David,
Joy & Dennis,
Jan & David,
Trish & John,
Ann & Kel,
Pam & Grenville,
Helen & Harry,
Karon & Tim,
Sjanie & Col,
Lucy & Geoff,
Annie & Michael,
Lorraine & Mick,
Phil,
Brenda & Neil,
Sue & Peter,
Lynne & Wayne,

Aurelia
Cool Change
Escondido
First Light
Galadriel
Helmsman
Judet
Kidnapper
Molokai
Moonglade
My Lady T
Ocean Story
Osiris II
Ozizuru
Selas
Shikama
Soul
Suite 1
Sweet Mango
The Office
Wicked
Windjogger
Windrode

Bob's note:

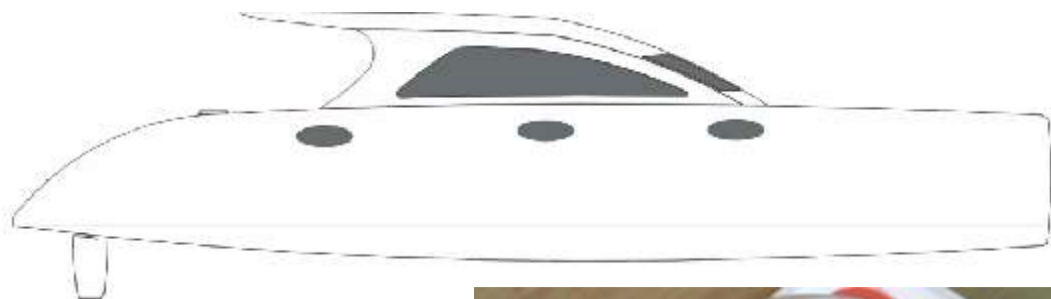
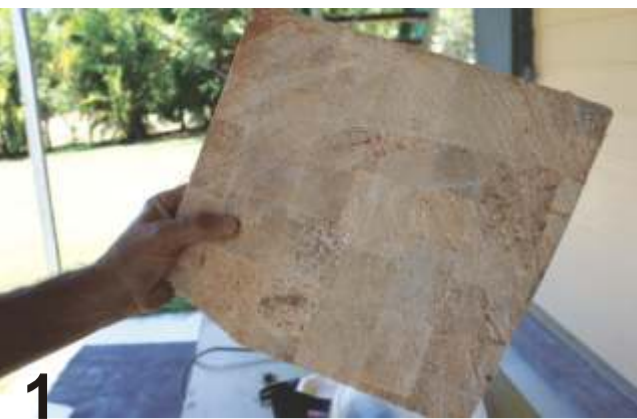
So how did a birthday party rate a precious full page in TCP? Because these are my friends! And I know that at most any anchorage the makings for a bash like this are laying there waiting for an instigator.... how about you! I wish I could have printed a tenth of the great photos provided but I'm in enough trouble already. The dance at below left, got a lot more interesting for example. At right Jane is full of admiration for Donna's cake, how did ya do that in a 10 metre boat?



Jane

The authors Jan & Arnie - famous party people

The Bare Bones Project



or.. some days you bite the dog
and some days the dog bites you..
**OR... The conituing saga of Bob's
boat building saga**

Just before publishing last edition I ran into an outgassing/pitting problem that I wasn't certain of the source. Where did it come from? For the benefit of those that aren't familiar with the terms, when a porous material is warming, the gasses inside of it will expand and if you are covering with resin, the resulting escaping gasses will bubble up through your work leaving surface pits. If the gas is coming from the core, the pitting will apparently leave a path from the surface to the core. If the core is cooling, then the opposite occurs and the resin will actually be 'pushed' into a surface cavity. From TCP # 33; *I have to settle the question of whether it's the core or laminate that is the source of the gas. Before I proceed with the first hull I will conduct an experiment to find out conclusively where the gas came from and how to approach the problem from there. I'll post it to the web site building log after publication.*

I did do an experiment that answered the question to my satisfaction and the answer is; it's the core. My lot of Duflex panels have a skin that is not sealed at all. The web site has a more complete log on this. Boat builders who wish to know more detail should have a look there.

Here is what I did; I cut off the skin on one side of a scrap piece of panel (pic 1), leaving as much balsa as possible. After installing a gasket to be used with a vacuum chamber later, I immersed the panel in a few mm of water with red food colouring (pic 2). The idea was to let the exposed core soak up some water and then apply vacuum to see if the moisture would draw through the skin. The vacuum has hardly necessary in that the water started "wicking" through the skin in minutes. When vacuum was applied the water gushed through the skin (pic 5). I took another scrap and coated it with a layer of resin (pic 3), and put it through the same treatment. The result was a vast improvement.

The conclusion? My lot of 13mm Duflex panels have a resin impoverished 800 gram fibreglass skin that is probably structurally sound but is not water proof. The pitting I had so much trouble with was the result of outgassing from the core and these pits likely provide an ingress route for water through the fairing and skin that could see the core saturated. It was my judgement that a couple of hopeful coats of resin over the top of the bogg was not sufficient for me to have confidence in the integrity of the hulls. If the sealing agent is on the surface of the hulls then any scratch or scrape on the surface could be dangerous.



To repair the problem I cut back the bogg under the waterline on the first hull and will apply a layer of resin AT NIGHT when the panels are cooling. Then while that coat is firming I will reapply the bogg. If my experience with the second hull is an example, I should see no pitting in the surface of the fairing bogg having done it at night and I will have a sealing surface entombed underneath and protected from mechanical abrasion. The parts of the first hull in pic # 6 that haven't been cut back are either above the waterline or where there has been glass tape applied over a joint, which will not leak gas. I will also coat the surface with resin when done fairing.

I believe that boats built of Duflex, provided the panels are similar to mine, that have not taken precautions could possibly be subject to ingress of water to the core. Of special concern may be interior surfaces that get wet as they may not have any sealing surface applied.

This is another set back that in my opinion, did not need to happen. If the panel skins had been fully wetted with at the factory I don't believe this would have been an issue at all. The next best thing for a builder may be to coat all panels with resin upon receiving a kit and prior to any assembly. And do it at night!

The project has had to be delayed due to another matter that I may have mentioned in editorial but it will resume when conditions allow.

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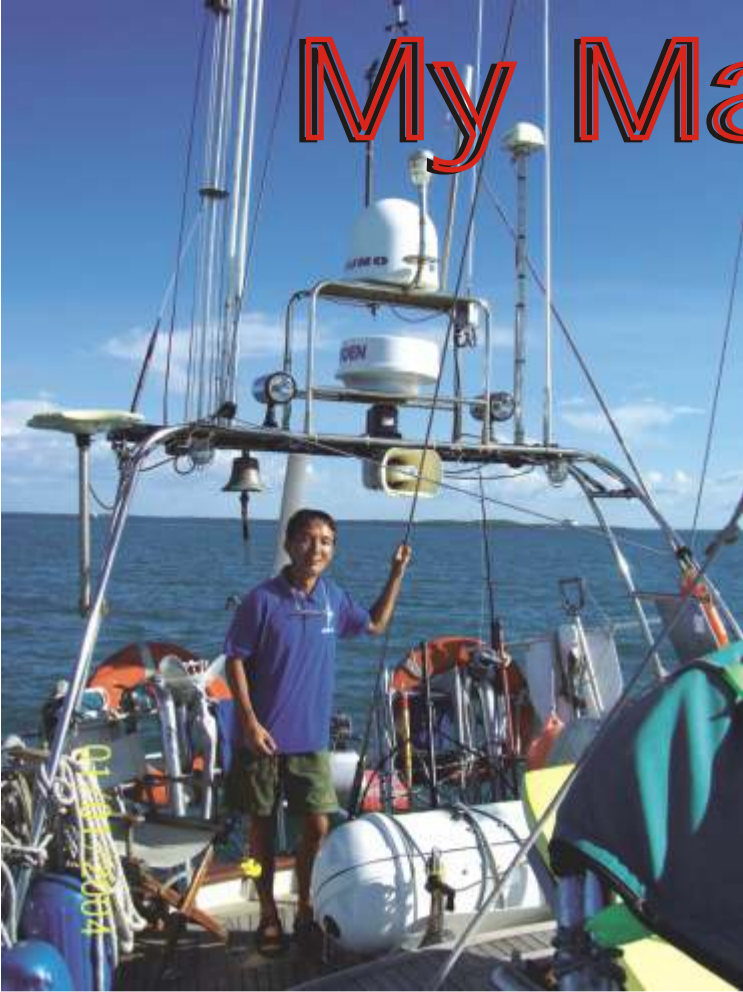


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My Mate Hide

TCP note: This started out as a Passage People from our friend Julius Sanders but it got carried entirely away with this interesting sailor. As it should...



Tayama 52, aft cabin and cutter rigged. A most impressive feature is the two leather recliner armchairs in the saloon. We very quickly made use of these, kicking back with a cold XXXX or two. His experiences in Queensland have made a lasting impression. His beer of choice is now XXXX. The condensation off the cans were leaving water rings on his teak dinette. Strange that with all the technological marvels on these visiting boats, such a simple and effective aid to comfortable cruising, the venerable stubby holder, is generally missing. We soon rectified that and the beers stayed colder and his furniture stayed unmarked. With arm chairs and coldies, the stage was appropriately set and Hide recounted his travels so far.

calmer weather. Here, he could climb up the mast and repair the furler. 1000 miles from the nearest land, sailing solo and he climbs to the top of the mast. You may think that sailing a thousand miles off your course is a bit extreme. Not so. Those of us that have had a similar experience know that the job HAS to be done. And know also that it is terrifying. Wobbling around on the top of your mast where a mistake could see you drop 50ft to the deck or the water and no one around to pick up the pieces. Hide remarks here that apart from the small fishing trawlers near the Aleutians he saw only six large vessels on the whole trip across the top to Canada. I asked about his solo watch keeping regime on board. He started off by catnapping during the day so that he could be more alert at night. Later he went back to the normal day-work/night-sleep cycle. His radar receiver alarm is enough to wake him in plenty of time to keep clear of traffic.

are being caused by 10% of the staff?) Hide says that the officials he met with were, without exception, cheerful, friendly and courteous. The icing on the cake was his catching up with the folks from the boat *Yawara*, who he met in Malolo Lailai, an island about 10 miles west of Nandi, Fiji.

Hide then sailed to Bundaberg where he picked up three friends for a week's cruising in the Whitsunday's. After this was a trip outside the reef to Cairns and then outside the reef again to Thursday Island (TI). He said that it was easier on him to take to the open waters of the Coral Sea than try do day hops inside the reef. He nearly came to grief anchoring at TI with the well known poor holding and strong currents forcing him to spend hours dropping and retrieving the anchor. Here, gentle reader, I must apologise. Hide gave me places and times in TI. I know he did. But the sheet of paper, like my memory of this part of the tale, is missing. I plead an excess of Hide's generosity with the Fourx. Also, somewhere in this is a hydraulic hose vibrating loose, a hydraulic boom vang empty of hydraulic fluid, a sudden wind gust and involuntary gybe with the end result of a boom vang needing repair.

This is, sort of, where I come in to the picture. Hide asked me for directions to a chandlery and a repair shop for his boom vang. I offered my services with a car and local knowledge. I made the offer remembering the many foreign ports where local people had done the same for me.

continued next page...

By Julius Sanders, MY Nova Keria

I would like to introduce Chu-sa (Commander) Seki Hideshige or Hide (pronounced hid-eh) to his friends. Hide san is retired from the Japanese Navy where he was an air-frame engineer. On retirement he bought his boat from a friend and decided to do a solo round the world trip. Hide and I met in Darwin in November where I spent a few days as his chauffer.

He left Tokyo, his home port and chose a great circle route for Canada. This took him up towards the Aleutian Islands. He went almost as far as 50N. Here he encountered fog, fishing boats and fishing floats. Despite these hazards he persevered until bad weather broke his hydraulic jib furler. He then altered to the south east. Being caught in a blow with a jib that will not go up or down is not something that you would wish on your worst enemy.

After 33 days on this zig-zag course he arrived in Victoria, Canada without other mishaps. Hide then sailed down the US west coast to Mexico where he set of on the South Pacific leg of his trip. This leg took in Marquesas, Tahiti, Fiji and New Caledonia. The stuff dreams are made of.

In Australia, Hide's port of entry was Brisbane where there was only sweetness and light with Customs and Immigration. (Bob, as an aside, would you say that 90% of the heavy handed type problems in Customs

His boat is named *Polaire* (Polaris or Pole Star). *Polaire* is a Perry designed

Hide tells me that he had a full jib going for over a week until he got down to 38N looking for

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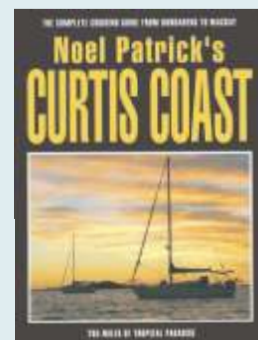
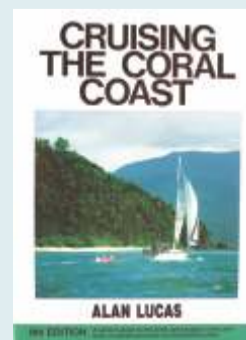


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Hide says that the trip from TI to Darwin was a great broad reach with a fresh tuna on the line every day. So much so, that by the time he got to Darwin he did not want to even think about sushi. Despite this, he made the sacrifice of hosting me to a sushi restaurant one night just so that I could experience real Japanese cuisine. Here I was encouraged to try a bit of everything. I'm neutral about raw fish and seaweed. I love hot foods like curries but wasabi is definitely not to my taste. Japanese beer is. This one came in 500ml cans and 5.9% alcohol content. Japanese beer with "Made in Canada" in big letters on the side of the can. When I queried this he just shrugged his shoulders and said something about globalisation. He twisted my arm to drink these, despite my protests that I had a car parked just outside. How could I refuse and endanger Japanese-Australian relations by offending my host. That is my excuse and I'm sticking to it!

As the car was in a place that I was not comfortable with it being parked overnight, Hide staggered off in one direction towards his dinghy while I staggered off in another, towards a cup of coffee and a rich chocolate mud cake to help soak up the alcohol. (I know, I know! Nothing soaks up alcohol except time but it was a great excuse for the mud cake) Believe it or not, there are NO alcohol restrictions on a person in charge of a (private as opposed to commercial) vessel in the NT. You can be legless and there is no law to stop you being in charge of a vessel. There has been some discussion about this in the local halls of power. It was decided to leave this as is to preserve the traditional Top End lifestyle. Wish they had the same idea about open speed limits.

I later returned the favour by taking Hide to a traditional Australian club for a meal or two. You can't get much more traditional than the Buff Club in Stuart Park. I couldn't tempt him with kangaroo, crocodile or buffalo but he reckons that an Aussie meat pie is good tucker. We also did the tourist bit with a trip to Litchfield National Park and The Spectacular Jumping Crocodile Cruise at Adelaide River. At Litchfield we sampled the swimming at a couple of the waterfalls. Here I demonstrated my immaturity by climbing up the rock face next to the fall and jumping in to the plunge pool below. I have done this once each visit, with the first being in 1976. I see no reason to change tradition just because I got my pensioner card in the mail last month. I was impressed with Hide's digital camera. It is an Olympus μ 37. Smaller than a cigarette packet and waterproof to 2 mtrs. He took it swimming with him and snapped some great pics while in the pool. Really weird to see a camera on a tripod with 90% of the tripod below water. Or the whole rig, tripod and camera, below water trying to take pictures of the fish.

At Adelaide River, by far the best of the croc cruises is the "Spectacular" one. You turn left, off at the Window on

the Wetlands Bird observatory and follow the dirt road for about a kilometre. Here we met the operator of the venue, Peter "Salty" Saltmarsh. (In the territory nearly everyone has a nickname ending in Y. Shorty, Salty, Whitey, Happy, Hippy, Holtey and Hoppy, just to name a few.) Salty introduced Hide to several large, well fed pythons. Hide got up close and personal with Olive, a two metre olive python. After the photo op we went for the cruise. The skipper was extremely knowledgeable about the local fauna, pointing out Arctic Terns and Whistling Kites amongst others. The Kites followed us, grabbing tidbits thrown up to them, on the wing. We saw about a dozen crocs, with several doing the "jumping" for chunks of buffalo dangled at them. My favourite was "Michael Jackson". It ignored the chunks of buffalo in favour of attacking the outboards. Scary to think of what this 5mtr monster would do to anyone silly enough to get close to him, in even a large tinny. They call it Michael Jackson because it has a white face and they can't figure out if it is male or female.

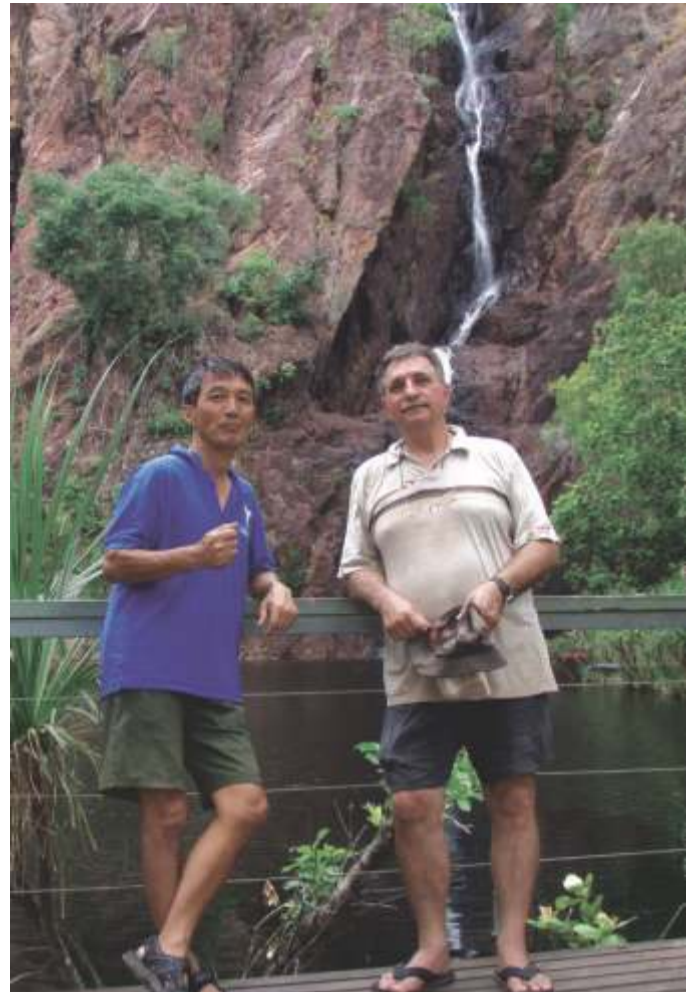
We put about 400 km on the odometer that day. Like many other visitors that I have chauffeured around Australia, Hide was amazed at the space, distances between venues and the very few people in-between.

Well, my few words for a Passage People piece have turned into this massive missive. But Wait! There's more!

In my ferrying around Hide to prepare for his departure, I came across two less than pleasant surprises. First. He was ready to spend well over a thousand dollars on Indonesian, Indian Ocean and African data cartridges for his Garmin chart plotter. They were not available in Darwin and calls to Garmin Australia were met with indifference. "We do not stock them" was the reply and they never called back with information on availability and price. This is in stark contrast to cMap. I can ask Scott at SeaFleet Marine in Stuart Park for any cMap product and he will load it onto a data card while I wait. It is a shame that such a good GPS is let down by poor service.

Second. A longer story. He bought a couple of cruising guides and the single most important item in it for the next leg of his trip was so wrong as to be dangerous. The "Cyclone Tracks" chart was out about 600 miles. And it begs the question, how reliable is the technical information in these cruising guides? I have written a separate item to TCP regarding this.

I had to leave Darwin a few days before Hide and did not see him depart. I wish him safe passage wherever the winds take him.



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Quoll II and crew make Borneo



Quoll II with Mt. Santabong in background



By Trish Hawkins, SY Quoll II

The crew of the good ship *Quoll* have had another busy few months exploring our new surrounds. We arrived in Borneo late in June taking up anchor in the Santabong River near Kuching in Sarawak. It is a picturesque anchorage with Mt. Santabong overlooking the river (see photo). We got energetic one day and climbed the Mt. The climb itself on a well marked trail was fun.

Following the ridge, we scrambled up over giant granite boulders making our way over 800m to the top with

endless views of the river and across Kuching. As usual, Mum was tail end Charlie holding back the team with Tim doing a balancing act keeping a leash on the boys and keeping an eye on me behind him. It took us only 3 hours to climb but 6 hours returning. We extended our walk to a waterfall which was fun. Problems arose when we lost the trail going home and then had a hot, exhausting 4 km walk along the road back to the boat. 9 hrs was a bit more than we had budgeted for in our energy allowance!

Kuching is a modern city with a large suburban corridor, not unlike Perth, but more crowded with identical houses crammed into housing estates without trees. Most of the shops and restaurants are Chinese owned. The Chinese form about 1/3 of the population of Sarawak. Travelling around the state, we've decided a Chinese town is a good town. Everything is available or can be organised for you.

The quality of the food at the markets is delightful and we're always in search of the 'Rumah Babi' where you can buy superb pork and only around \$4 kg for a fillet. Because it's a Muslim country, pork, if available, is always in a separate room. In one town we had to seek out a van on a back street to make our purchase. Almost feels like you're dealing in illegal goods. The highlight of our time here was to go to a longhouse-up the Rajang river, past Sarakei

to Bintangor, turn left into the Tulai river and stop at the first set of longhouses on your Stbd side. Here we joined two other yachts and celebrated the end of Gawai, their 'thanksgiving' cum Christmas type festival. Here we shared a few meals and enjoyed longhouse life for a week.

Each afternoon the children would come and do some English/Maths homework and then run wild with our two, swimming and jumping off the boat. Catamarans make wonderful water playgrounds in tidal waters. You jump off the bow, float/whizz under the bridgedeck in the 1-2knot tide, climb up the ladder run up the bow and jump off again. The locals weren't concerned about crocs so we weren't either, safety in numbers I guess.

At the Gawai festival we were introduced to Tuak/Arak the rice wine. Tim broke out in a severe rash soon after. I wonder if there was any correlation between the two? We also discovered on the night of the festival, Tim has a natural flair for traditional Iban dancing. I felt like the 'belle of the ball' when invited to wear the traditional silver dance trimmings. Unfortunately I couldn't wear the heavy hair piece/crown of silver. I had about 6 ladies dressing me, but try as they might, the headpiece was too heavy for my lovely fine locks. I've never been made such a fuss of!

The dancing took place around the Tree, a pot planted in the middle of the longhouse veranda floor. It contained food and drink much like you would decorate a Christmas tree. At the end of the evening guests (male) were invited to harvest the 'fruit' of the tree with the traditional sword. A very special privilege to share this night with them. Like all good parties, the more rice wine consumed the better/more lively, the music and dancing. I did notice that despite large quantities of alcohol consumed by some, there was a complete lack of agro all evening.

Continued next page...

The bridge to the longhouse across the rice padi, approx. 500m long.



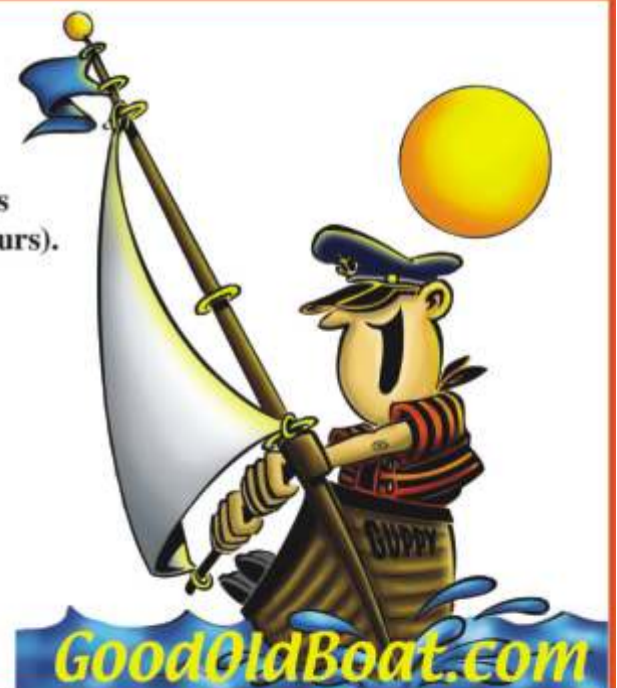
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This tree has its roots caught under the rudder. Tim's trying to chop it free. David lends a hand.

Mud monsters

Sailing up a river in these parts of the world is risky business. Logs get swept downstream off river banks and threaten to damage our thin skinned foam

sandwich hulls. Small islands also break off the river banks and get swept up and downstream with the tide. We saw this one coming one day as we returned from the longhouse. Jumping into the dinghy with the speed of light we raced to *Quoll* and steered the island away, only to have it return a few hours later and catch under the rudder. Pictured above is Tim trying to free *quoll* of her excess baggage. He tried to saw it into pieces, he tried standing on it and even swearing at it (this worked best) over several hours to accomplish this feat.

Malay. The people were more Filipino than Malay, so we're told. They live a very subsistence lifestyle, still pillaging the barren reef in order to get their daily food. Extensive reefs surrounded the island and being a cat we were able to anchor in the narrow/shallow lagoon inside the reef.

The island with its extensive coconut plantations reminded us of the Pacific.

We've now turned the corner at the tip of Borneo and anchored off the sleepy country town of Kudat. This coast is lined with white, sandy beaches but no resorts. One wonders how long it can stay this way? Sandakan, is our next port of call to see the Orangutans and visit the war memorials. A few island paradise stopovers are planned en route.



Since we were at the longhouse, we have flown home for 4 weeks, returned to Borneo, sailed up the coast to a regatta. It started offshore in Labuan and finished in Miri, on the border of Sarawak/Brunei. Geoff Connor, an RPYC friend who sailed pelicans with Tim as a kid, joined us. I'm sure it was his expertise that enabled us to come second. There were 4 cats in our division, 3 of us quite competitive which made it more fun. A bonus attraction for all of us in the regatta was the 2 days free hotel accom. in both Labuan and Miri. Also, the US\$400 for each boat. All regattas should have these perks. After such a strenuous schedule it was time for some rnr at Brunei. Here we just relaxed at the pool, did a little site seeing and enjoyed the yacht club the social centre for farangs. Joined in a Hash party, nearly all the girls were English teachers at the local schools. HMMM, interesting.

On the road again, we catch up with *Backchat* once more and head off to Pulau Tiga to enjoy some volcanic mud baths. What a strange experience floating in bubbling mud. The boys loved it.

It's taking me so long to write this that the miles are slipping by and the miles of photos taken are mounting up. Another highlight was a few days at Mantanini Island, NE of Kota Kinabulu. The name sounds very non-

Trish dressed to impress. Dancing, wearing the Iban yoke and solid silver skirt. Note the intricate beadwork of the yoke.

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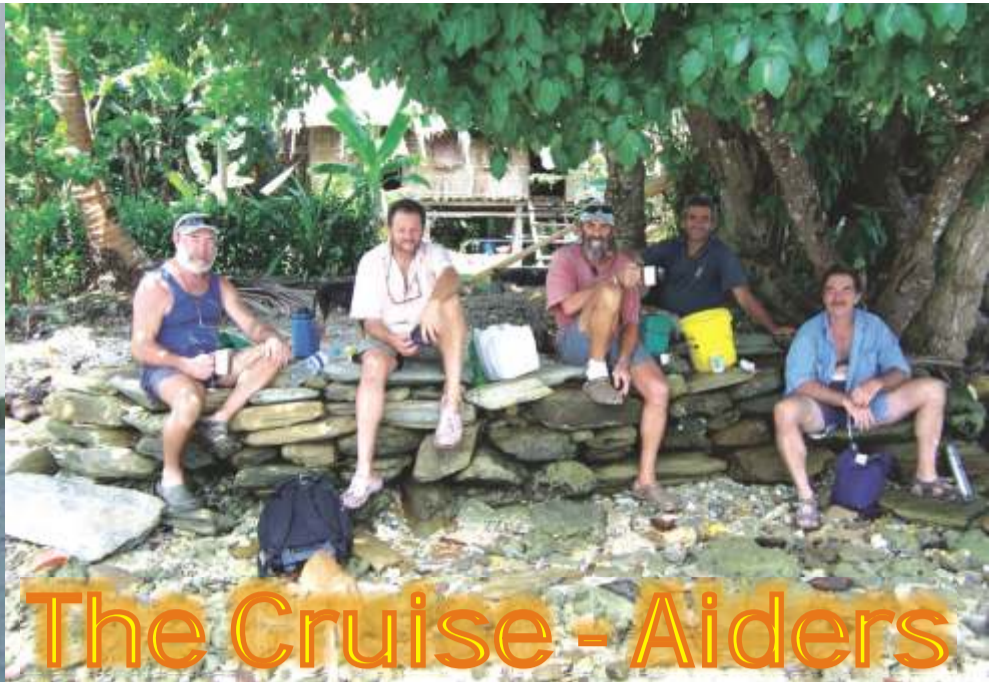
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They Did It!

The Cruise - Aiders

Left to right: Paul, SY *Insatiable*, Christian, SY *Caesura*, Rick, SY *Roxanne*, Bruce SY *Swaggie*, Eric SY *Erica*

By Gina de Vere
For Yachts "Erica" and "Caesura"

The crews of yachts 'Erica', Cathy and Eric Gray, and 'Caesura', Gina de Vere and Christian Selaries, are pleased to say the boat building project in the Louisiades over August and September, has been a tremendous success. 'Tolo Yot' (meaning, "Yachtie follower, those who trade with yachties") performs better than we ever imagined.

While 'Erica' and 'Caesura' were cruising in the Louisiades in 2007, we noticed many holed and unused fibreglass banana boats lying on the beaches. Eric had the idea of putting two together to make an 11.5m schooner with the aim of teaching the islanders how to use fibreglass techniques to fix their boats and their water tanks, making a business of it if they wished. 'Tolo Yot' also gives the community many other benefits; getting pregnant women and the sick comfortably to hospital, keeping trading goods dry, and getting the children back to high school on time. And no more running out of 'zoom'!

Many times over the past year we wondered if our project would in fact ever take place, then something positive would happen and we would be excited all over again. We had to raise funds and gain sponsorship for materials which at times was quite daunting, but the exercise in determination and perseverance paid off.

The day finally came when we loaded the rolls of fibreglass and found space for them under 'Caesura's' table, tied a mast to the lifelines, the many drums of resin firmly on the deck and arranged the paint cans on the floor of the cabin making a 'false' floor. 'Erica' had similar problems finding space for the 24 sheets of plywood requiring tangential thinking, so they stood it vertically and braced it against the wall of their drop keel housing. This made access to the head into an obstacle course as their guest cabin was full to overflowing with boxes of donations of resources for schools and clothing.

We left Bundaberg for the Louisiades on 14th July and arrived 6 days later in the du Chateau isles and found a comfortable anchorage. Then onto Gigila Island. Having the villagers come out to meet 'Caesura' and 'Erica' and unload the boat building materials was very welcoming. A week later 'Roxanne 1' arrived with Rick and Alex who stayed the entire time working with us. Not long after, 'Insatiable' arrived with Chris and Paul who also became involved with island life and the project.

As 'Erica' and 'Caesura' arrived the boatshelter was still in progress. All the old men in the village were busy weaving palm 'tiles' that were put on the roof by the agile younger men. The next day saw the hulls of the two banana boats placed end to end and their sterns and chines cut off, and made ready to be joined with fibreglass. Three *dimdims* (whites) and eight to ten islanders worked steadily from 7.30am to 5pm for six days a week on building 'Tolo Yot' as she came to be known, 'Tolo Yot' meaning 'yachtie follower, or those who trade with yachties'. The guys had a steep learning curve; they had not handled many of the tools before as they use their bush knives for everything, so even learning how to cut the fibreglass mat with scissors was a new experience. Also they were learning in English, not their first language of Misima. They did extremely well and strong bonds were formed.

The women took over all the gardening duties and some of the fishing. This meant they were away from the village very early. Some of the gardens were on other islands because of the lack of water. The women carry water in huge pots and cauldrons on their heads. In fact everything gets carried in large soft woven baskets on their heads; vegetables, washing, pots and pans, and stones for building the wharf for *Tolo Yot*.

The weeks were full of work. We had ups and downs. Ups when we had finished a big step, like turning the boat over to work on the interior, and downs such as when we realized we would run out of fibreglass mat, then another up as 'Lady Bubbly' still in Cairns, said they could bring some with them. Cathy's nursing visits took us all over the Gigila islands and opened many doors to friendship for us. We shared meals in people's houses and had fun on feast days when there was lots of wonderful harmonious singing, from the islanders, not from us! We were appalling the only song we knew all the words to was *Waltzing Matilda* a sign of too many evenings spent watching tele perhaps.

We women were busy too. Going to school in the mornings meant a pretty walk around the beaches and through 4 villages until we got near the school when mysteriously the children would know we were near and pour out of the school to greet us amid lots of 'yaliyaya' happiness, and take our hands

into the school where they would sing us a welcome song. Alex (*Roxanne 1*) taught there most days. We sat on the sand with the children. No chairs. No tables. No shelves. Woven walls with holes in them through which the dogs and pigs would enter at will. The children had decrepit slates to write on, although I did see one child chalking his sums on the back of his mate; it was blacker than his slate. The gifts we gave of books, pencils and posters were very much appreciated. Now cupboards and shelves are needed to store everything!

We started our own publishing company, "Yot Top Publishing" based on 'Erica' and between us we made several laminated books for the island. Alex worked with the school and we produced a book on their medicinal plants, translated into Misima language. Cathy worked with the "medicine man" and walked with him photographing plants and I wrote their descriptions and use which we later collated into a book to leave with Valeha village. Also the villagers were left with a pictorial souvenir of the making of *Tolo Yot* and with a step by step guide to fibreglassing techniques. Of course family photos were much in demand too.

continued next page...



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Eric proved to be an excellent boat builder and taught the team well. Christian helped oversee activities and was responsible for the Optimist style lanteen schooner rigging. Rick of 'Roxanne' and Paul of 'Insatiable' had their separate projects running parallel to the fibreglassing of the hull. Bruce of "Swaggie" was doing his thing with his chainsaw and overseeing the building of a wharf.

When the boat was turned over to work on the interior, the islanders had to learn a new set of skills, working on the ply cabins, drop keel housing and the rudder. We squeaked to a finish on launch day. What a joyful day! The two lifebuoys were formally handed over. Ceremonies of speechmaking and handcrafted gift giving took the majority of the morning after the blessing of the boat and rolling her into the sea. The shrieks of joy were deafening as she hit the water! Then a shared meal, traditional dances, songs and lastly fireworks on the beach. A great end to a great day. Never before in these remote islands had there been such a big project undertaken co-operatively between *dimdims* and islanders. Farewells were highly emotional, with many hugs and tears and best wishes for the future.

Without the help of many other yachties, especially the crews of 'Roxanne 1', 'Insatiable', 'Swaggie' and 'Lady Bubbly', we could not have finished her on time. In fact the boat was launched with the paint still soft. So if any yachties are visiting Valeha village on Gigila Island, please take cans of blue and white enamel paint. Also any fibreglass and resins. We left behind all the tools and materials we could but if the islanders are going to use their new fibreglassing skills, more materials will be very welcome.

Of course, we cannot control what happens to *Tolo Yot* in the future. We can only hope that the islanders of Gigila maintain her well. Recently they took her into the main harbour of Bwagaioia where she was the centre of attention. There is much 'mana' attached to her ownership and we hope this pride will guarantee good maintenance.

The villagers of Valeha now have fibreglassing skills, but like any newly acquired skills, they need practice. If any yachties are keen to assist them

repair and maintain fibreglass boats and water tanks, we know this assistance will be invaluable to them.

A new school is one of the Councillor's aims for the island. To this end two projects are about to start; a trade store and a pig farming venture, where profits will assist the fund to build a proper school. This seed funding has



come via a Trust I have created, called the Yachties Louisiade Education Trust aimed at improving the educational prospects for young people. This is in conjunction with a *dimdim* couple, Keith and Lynnette Parascos at the bakery in Misima, the largest island in the Louisiade chain. Already we have sent one 23 year old to Teachers Training College in Lae, and assisted with fees for two high schoolers. We are hoping that yachties who cruise in the Louisiades either on their own or with the rally, will donate funds to the Trust to put something back into the islands as they leave. Or they may wish to give a helping hand with the pig farming, trade store and wharf projects. Co-ordination for projects can be done via www.cruise-aiders.com.

From Eric Gray's initial vision last year up until today, is an interesting story with many ups and downs. The project was made possible not only through our determined efforts but also because of the generosity of many New Zealand and Australian companies, organizations, friends and family. A huge thank you goes to all who have helped this project become a



success. We are also very grateful to the genuine friendship, hard work and the goodwill of the people of Gigila Island. They join with us in our thanks to all our cruise-aiders supporters.

We hope that other yachties will check on the maintenance of *Tolo Yot* as they cruise the Louisiades, and take her for a sail. If yachties have other projects to co-ordinate, please contact me via my website, www.cruise-aiders.com. It is for your use. Updated information on the building of *Tolo Yot* and the newly formed Yachties Louisiades Education Trust will be on this site early 2009. Email: info@cruise-aiders.com



Eric



Christian



Gina, the author

TCP is proud to have had a small part in helping to publicise this endeavour and congratulates the people that gave their time and money to help the islanders acquire the means to help themselves. Talk is cheap but these people made it happen. Every cruiser has a right to be proud of this fleet! Besides the good done, the example made that great projects can be achieved... maybe will inspire another... maybe you?

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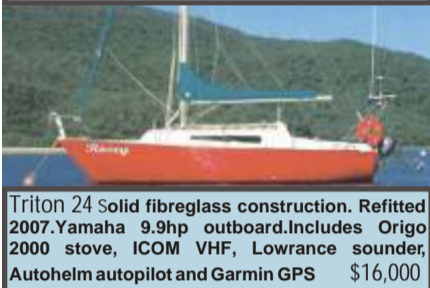
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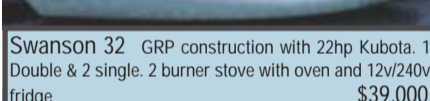
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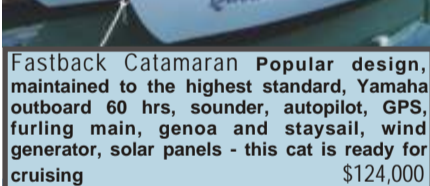
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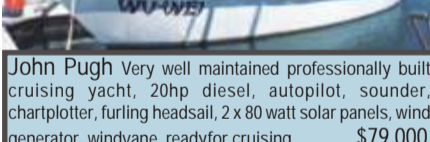
Triton 24 solid fibreglass construction. Refitted 2007. Yamaha 9.9hp outboard. Includes Origo 2000 stove, ICOM VHF, Lowrance sounder, Autohelm autopilot and Garmin GPS \$16,000



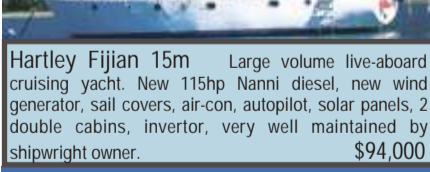
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Hartley Fijian 15m Large volume live-aboard cruising yacht. New 115hp Nanni diesel, new wind generator, sail covers, air-con, autopilot, solar panels, 2 double cabins, inverter, very well maintained by shipwright owner. \$94,000



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Passage People



Idyllic



After being introduced to "The Coastal Passage" during our recent 3 month sail from Brisbane to the Whitsundays and back, I thought I would add some photo's of another "family" to your gallery.

Whilst many thought our 3 month adventure on "Idyllic" (Northshore 46 monohull) with our three sons Mitchell (2),

Scott(6) and Curtis(8) was not in keeping with the name, we all had a FANTASTIC time!!!

We had mostly great weather, certainly plenty of Whales, Dolphins, Turtles and excellent snorkelling, as well as the old "not so planned" occurrences. Probably the only disappointing thing was how few other families with young children we came across. This trip brought us all more together as a family and whilst not in formal schooling, the experiences the older boys gained during this journey could not be taught in any classroom situation.

We were also very encouraged at how kindly others without young children welcomed us despite not fitting the "Cruising Couple" mold. I hope you can use this and some photos to encourage some more families to "seize the opportunity" and that when we head out again in 18 months there are more young "playmates" out there!!

Kind regards,

Donna & Ian Luxton

send us your pics!

It was 9 years around for Dave on his Adams 12, and he didn't come home alone. He met Sonia in her native Columbia. Sonia loves children and comes from a very traditional family. Dave told us how when he first met he asked if he might talk to her for a while and he was surprised when he had to wait for the matriarch of the family to size him up first! Apparently he was judged OK and now Sonia calls Australia home.

Friction



Chantilly



One look at Kevin off 'Chantilly' and 'Old Salt' springs to mind. He and his wife Carole have been sailing the high seas for over 30 years and their experience includes several circumnavs of the world. Carole is the navigator and prefers ocean crossings, while Kevin is more into coastal exploring. Perhaps his penchant for collecting rope explains this. If you ever need a particular type or thickness, more than likely Kevin will have some on board somewhere. Kevin and Carole started off life on the sea on a 23 footer, complete with four kids, two Labradors and a cat. Time has whittled down both the kids and the pets and now their boat is a beautiful Bavaria 46 Cruiser, and their only passenger is one very spoilt moggy named Charlotte. Their motto is: "Go where the wind takes you and never wait for the mail".

words & photo courtesy of Wendy, SY Absolutely

Maui



Tracs Too

"It's just 10 minutes past beer o'clock and sundowners on Thomas Island is already in full swing. Enjoying the ambience of the occasion is Edwina and Mack on Maui, Maxine and Richard on Tracs Too and Pattie from Speranza. Where else would you rather be?"

words & photo courtesy of Keith & Pattie, SY Speranza

Auspicious



Auspicious is an Explorer 40; a beautiful black and white cat who has safely sailed her owners John & Win around the top from Perth last year. These guys have been married 43 years, which puts them in the 3% of the population that most of us are not members of. They've done quite a bit of sailing over the last 35 years, including the Pacific Ocean, PNG and the Solomon Islands and of course the East coast. After all that time John reckons he can feel a 'tree change' coming Win calls it pottering in a garden and swears she will be a FI/FO wife if he wants to stay in Cairns. It will be sad to see them land based once Auspicious finds her next owner, as they are lovely people who are always good for coffee and a tale or three.

words & photo courtesy of Wendy, SY Absolutely