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# The Coastal Passage

The voice of the Boating Community!

31st Edition  
July - Aug. 2008

The Lure of the Big Blue  
More Bass Strait Adventure



Robert Latimer Photo



Middle Percy Island Decided!  
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# Carbon Trading

By Alan Lucas, SY Soleares

The worldwide reputation of Queensland's boating laws and the often arrogant ways in which they are enforced, led me to consider ways of democratising their policing along environmental lines. Perhaps, I thought, they could be linked to carbon share trading as a means of reminding our persecutors that on the subjects of safety and environment, they should be practising, not preaching.

The way things are, you are sailing along doing absolutely nothing wrong, when out of nowhere appears a large, high-speed patrol boat. As it draws abeam, a RIB full of armed Hollywood heroes launches off its stern then zooms across to your innocent little ship to carry out a terrorist exercise and/or search for infringements. Without niceties, the officers swarm aboard to finance their invasion and outrage your sensitivities. You are stunned and shocked by an invasion of privacy that is chillingly like the beginning of Nazism in the 1930s.

Now let's replay the same scene under my proposed democratic carbon trading system. This time, as the RIB comes alongside, a carbon share balance must be established before the officers can board your craft. Instead of shouting 'We're coming aboard', then rudely carrying out their threat regardless of your protestations, they must say, 'Subject to carbon share transactions, we may have to board your boat'. As a sop to their egos and in recognition that rules and regs are unstoppable as well as a lament to the death of the assumption of innocence, you are automatically deemed to have committed an offence and immediately lose 1000 shares.

However, because many of today's rules and regs are linked to the environment, you countermand by pointing out that their mother ship and RIB are burning obscene quantities of fuel whilst you have burnt none all day. This automatically cancels out the deemed 1000 shares and produces a level playing field.

At this juncture lifestyle cruising sailors can increase their share portfolio by pointing out that they have not used a car for months (years in some cases); that they always walk or use public transport; they consume just five litres of freshwater a day against landlubbers' statistical squandering of up to 600 litres a day; they use wind and sun power instead of being connected to a fantastically wasteful grid and find at least three uses for every item aboard ship. Furthermore, they belong to one of the last western social groups in which obesity is virtually unknown, thereby easing the burden on present and future health budgets.

The officers still bouncing up and down alongside in their RIB, now owe you 20,000 shares and are hanging their heads in shame. They promise to be better environmental citizens in future and will start by replacing their RIB with a gaff-rigged pinnace and the mother ship with a trireme and 120 rowers. They will also have sponge or Baby Wipe baths instead of long,

hot showers, and will shred their copies of *Mien Kampf*. They even promise to join Jenny Craig and replace their 4WDs with pushbikes while planting native trees in their backyard. Furthermore, they understand that they cannot board you again until all share folios have tipped back in their favour.

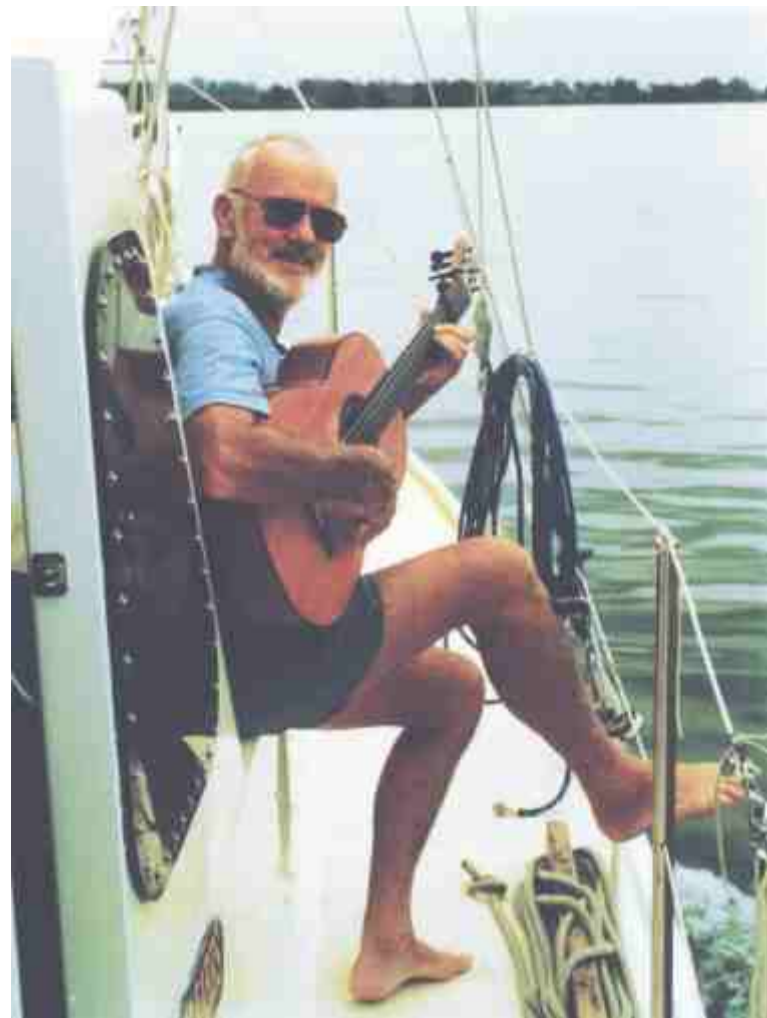
Feeling magnanimous and without rancour about the tyranny of the pre-carbon trading days, you tell them to have a nice day then go and exchange your extra shares for an Al Gore DVD and a yacht charter holiday to see what sailing is like without a licence nor any obligation to comply in any way with dozens of hypocritical rules.

A return to democracy through environment-based shares would be mind-bogglingly complex but, hey, that's never troubled governments in the past so why should it now? But let's say the concept is rejected: there may be other ways to a return of democracy on the high seas albeit, at the possible cost of a brief civil war. One way is to accept being demonised by marine officials in exchange for having all landlubbers subjected to the exact same treatment. Give police, customs and at least five state government departments the absolute right to enter any house at any time without warrant, warning or pleasantries to issue on-the-spot-fines of up to \$64,000 for aging electrical systems, leaking plumbing, LPG infringements and for not insuring a house for salvage costs when it becomes a public liability.

An alternative to the above is to adopt the Italian system that works on the basis that when rules and regulation-meltdown is reached, everyone ignores them including the government. And don't be fooled by the fact that Italy has changed governments every ten months since 1945: this is not proof of a country in distress: far from it, it is proof that the country doesn't need a government. It works just fine without one.

Back in Queensland it has to be acknowledged that bullyboy boarding tactics seems to have decreased lately, so maybe anarchy is already clicking in. After all, marine officers are human too, able to endure just so much public anger before turning a blind eye to a mass of rules that make no sense. Nevertheless, Nazism may not have left us astern yet, as suggested by a recent incident. It is deliciously ironic that it happened to a retired boating officer from another state.

The retiree in question bought a cruising boat in the Burnett area. Steaming his treasure south, still in Queensland waters, he was shocked by the sudden appearance of officers jumping onto his side deck from an official boat *whilst under way*. There were no niceties, just the usual bullish attitude that stunned our retiree whose boat did not attract a fine because, predictably, she fully complied. Without apology, they left him in a state of shocked disbelief, so when it



happened a second time (that's right, he was boarded *twice* during his few days in good old perfect-the-next-day-Queensland), he had his response ready: As they stormed aboard, he confronted them saying; 'Look, I'm a retired boating officer from interstate. I once had the same powers as you, but never boarded boats without permission, and certainly *never* under way. Don't you people get *any* training in civility?'

In telling me his story, he went on to say that towards the end of his employment most boating officers who came from a solid maritime background, like himself, were retiring and being replaced by young officers whose training is more about police tactics than understanding the nautical world. And although he felt 'his' state would never be as bad as Queensland, he held no real hope for overall improvement anywhere in Australia.

And I can't let this subject go without referring to an item on the ABC during early December 2007. Sydney Airport, now privately owned, complained that Australian Customs were causing unnecessary bottlenecks and delays to the flow of incoming passengers. This, they said, restricts profits and ruins our reputation with tourists who will go elsewhere. The company statement went on to promise that it will not tolerate it and will demand change!

So, there you have it: all we have to do to repel boarders is call ourselves tourists. The next time officers come alongside, just say that you have no licence, know nothing about boats and their regulations and are, in fact, just bare-boating. They'll probably say 'Have a nice day sir and enjoy your visit'.



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Alan Lucas, SY Soleares  
Jenny Maruff, SY Tropical Cat  
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Capt'm Oddworm, SY Mariposa  
Allen Southwood, MV Solaray  
Norm Walker, MY Peggy-Anne  
Mike Waller, SY Ariel of Rabaul  
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.

**"It can't be about you without you!"**

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Boating Hardware-Prosail -



**The magic island bought for \$10 from vulnerable old man returned to family**

The verdict was handed down June 19 2008 after months of waiting. The judges order;

1. Give leave to the plaintiff to amend the title of the claim from Radcliffe to Morris. (Bob's note, name change due to recent marriage)
2. Order the department of natural resources by it's appropriate officer substitute the name of Cathryn Alice Morris for Michael Joseph cotter on the lease of Middle Percy Island.
3. Order the defendant to vacate the island by not later than 31st July 2008.
4. Order the defendant remove all personal effects from the island including any vehicles, vessel or vessels, chattels or effects owned by the defendant from the island not later than 31st July 2008.
5. Order the defendant pay the plaintiffs costs of and incidental to the action to be agreed or assessed.
6. I give liberty to apply within 28 days.

**catch words: Unconscionable conduct-undue influence**

And so begins 14 pages of careful and clear, event by event reconstruction of the arguments and the judges decisions on each point. TCP coverage of the controversy was involved in court. A press release/statement submitted to TCP by Cotter (TCP # 11) had points not accepted as fact by TCP due to a refusal to provide support for the claim he (Cotter) had deposited a large amount of money into Andrew Martins account. This was determined by the judge to be a "lie". (See page 8 para 47 of the decision.) No contradiction of fact was made to the extensive investigation TCP provided over several editions.

The judges decision is published in total on the TCP web site along with the archive of features published in TCP over the years on this controversy.

### AND WHAT NOW???

Cathryn and John Morris have no boat suitable for the voyage to the island and ask the cruising fleet to assist if a vessel is willing. A vessel departing from Mackay would suit. Also, if someone out there has a vessel in seaworthy condition that they can sell cheaply or better yet, donate to them it would be gratefully received. Law suits of this nature are an expensive thing. Recovery of costs as ordered by the judge may take a long time if ever recovered. Please contact TCP by [email](mailto:email) or phone (07 4125 7328) and your offer will be forwarded.

And then??? That's up to the owners and the department of natural resources and the generosity of the cruising fleet. TCP will post information as it becomes available. All vessels sailing to the island are encouraged to assess and document the condition and status of the islands facilities. Please send TCP your pics and comments.

### Customs Scuttles ship in Transit Up-date

Last issue TCP reported on the difficulties a Hong Kong boat was having receiving boat parts from America without paying duty/GST. The customs official in Bundaberg was adamant that their arrival in Australia terminated their voyage thus disqualified them from the usual avoidance of taxes on a foreign vessel in transit. This in spite of the fact they were here on temporary visas and the vessel had not and would not be imported into Australia. Arni Highfield, skipper of the vessel "Jade" confirmed via phone that when the parcel arrived through their customs broker, the charges were not applied. The official and the legal advisors she claims to have consulted were apparently wrong.

### Comments from the editor... Indonesian Fishermen and Customs and Quarantine

A big "I told you so" moment for TCP! (See page 6) I have been critical of the governments action to destroy vessels that have been charged with fishing offenses for several reasons. For one, the excuse of the destruction of the vessels for fear of environmental contamination has all the credibility of the Japanese claim their whaling activity is "scientific research". It's punishment without trial. Two, What if they are wrong? Customs have proved themselves inept on a number of occasions and the fact they aren't clever enough to know where is and isn't legal waters for Indonesians to fish is no surprise to me at all. Whilst the fishermen on that report could prove their innocence, TCP and the Indonesian government believe there may be more that have been wrongly charged. Three, destroying a boat is evil. To me boats are not just 'things'. Whilst poaching in Australian waters is wrong, cruisers should resist attempts by government media to create more distrust with our northern neighbors than may be deserved.

**Watch out for the whisper campaign!** My favourite whisper lie? I was sent a mail that quoted some dingbat 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 much burden of fact in reportage. The forums, blogs, marina layabouts and the MIB whisperers bear stuff all.

**We aren't the only ones....** Our fishermen and truckies are also feeling like the government is trying to kill them off. One truckie may have been pushed too far. He has started a new political party and there are so many pissed off people the thing could have a chance. He is calling it the **Southern Cross Party** and has a pretty flash web site up for you to have a look at if you like. See [www.southerncrossparty.com](http://www.southerncrossparty.com)

**Congratulations to the Sun Herald and reporter Kate Dennehy** for finally bringing the story of Australian Customs abuses of foreign sailors to mainstream media. Many may remember Kate for her courageous report of the military's threat of violence to a family cruiser forced to leave a safe anchorage in strong wind conditions a couple years ago. The military did modify it's stance since then.

**Abel Point Yacht Club** under new ownership. Steve Halter says the club will have greater transparency in finances and improved organisation of events. Congratulations and best wishes from TCP. The coming Rendezvous should be the best in years.

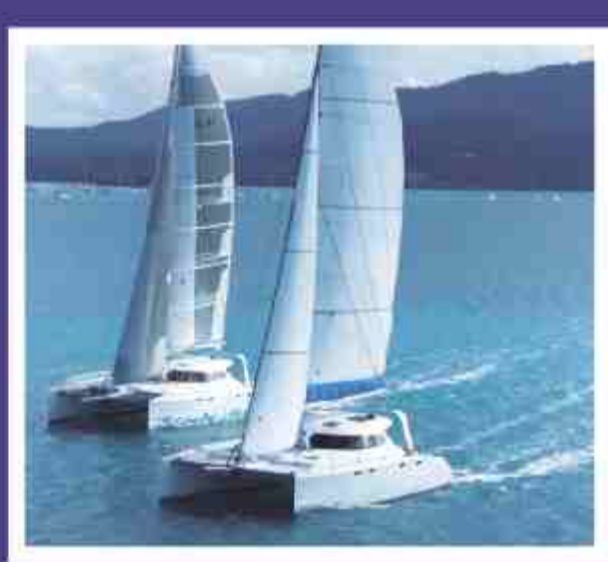


## The Coastal Passage

The voice of boaties everywhere

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# In With the Tide... NEWS!

Bob Norson

## Government Destroys Foreign Fishing Vessel



## But What if they are WRONG?



## Fishermen Beat the Rap!

It was revealed May 15th by Federal agricultural Minister, Tony Burke that 55 Indonesian fishermen, including some underage children being held in detention were innocent of charges and their boats were wrongly destroyed. The fishermen were due to be transferred from detention to motels in preparation for repatriation. The boats are to be compensated for but the value was a matter of dispute.

The Indonesia Consul in Darwin, Harbangan Napitupulu says investigations into other Indonesian boats apprehended in April are continuing. According to an ABC report he was surprised 33 boats were apprehended across three weeks. "We felt that perhaps there was something wrong with these apprehensions," he said. "We met the fishermen, most of them mentioned that they are still in the Territorial water."

A TCP source familiar with the case claims that many Indonesians are just not sophisticated enough to provide for their legal defence but if they were there would be many more such vindications.

Though the real quarantine threat posed by the fishing boats remains suspect, the fishermen themselves do seem to be a real concern according to the NT News (Illegal fishos bring new TB threat 20Apr08). According to the article TB is a real problem among the fisho's. This is complicated by the fact the treatment begun whilst in detention isn't completed before they are repatriated, thus undermining TB control efforts by developing drug resistant strains that are much harder and more expensive to cure later. The article further stated that, "Industry sources fear repeat offenders may bring resistant strains to the Territory. One source said there was a high recidivism rate because when illegal fishermen are caught and their boats burned, they are fined by the boat-owners in Indonesia. They then return to Australian waters to earn money to pay off their fines -- to be caught again, the source said." This confirms a TCP report in issue # 29 concerning the arrangement between the Indonesian fishing crew and boat ownership.

The ABC quoted Senator Kerry Nettle from the Greens as saying "this terrible mistake" indicates it's time for the government to stop targeting the small players. "Really what we need to see from the new Government is a renewed focus on stopping this issue at the cores." The fishermen are just employees whilst the 'Mr Bigs' escape punishment. "Their families probably don't know they've been detained, probably thought they'd been lost at sea so it's a horrendous situation for these people."

Meanwhile through local NT press Indonesian fishos are portrayed as 'living it up' at the expense of Australians, even using computers in detention to view pornography, though no charges of child pornography have been made. The children are housed in motels and provided excursions for entertainment.

## New Border Security Measures?

Immigration Minister Chris Evans intends to increase security measures at international airports and sea ports and strengthen Australia's security. Immigration officials will now assess passengers' data before their flight or ship arrives in Australia. Yachts have faced criminal charges and huge fines for not giving Customs four days before arrival to "assess" passengers. Senator Evans says the new system means low-risk passengers can be cleared through immigration more quickly. Yacht crew are apparently considered extremely high risk.

## Talk about Marine Pests...

University of Tasmania, Marine Biologist, Neville Barrett claims DNA tests confirm a Japanese sea "pest" grateloupia turuturu, has invaded Tasmanian waters. As quoted from ABC;

"Tests have shown that it is certainly positively identified from the Bicheno region but our ongoing survey work indicates that the plants are certainly round the east coast of Tasmania from Bicheno certainly down to the Tasman Peninsula," he said. Mr Barrett claims they are easily spread. "There are still major problems with translocation of material within states and even between states, that certainly probably do need to be tightened up," he said.

According to information researched by TCP in issue # 17, "Bio-Fouling, What does it Really Mean?" and currently available on the web site, "issues" section, the claim made by Barrett has some problems. This marine specie would have come to Tasmania via Ships ballast water which has already come under international control via the IMO of the UN, and is not likely a threat to other areas of the country due to difference in environment. Boaties are recommended to be alert and learn more about this subject as TCP expects an attempt to increase regulation on cruising boats with transmigration of marine pests as a rationale. More on this next issue.

## Tourism Clout gets Novice killed?

Queensland Police admit that a tourist killed in a jetski accident April 28th may never have used a jetski before. According to an ABC report the English victim suffered head injuries. The victims wife was also seriously injured in the accident. A witness was quoted as saying, "this morning they hired a jetski from the hire company on the sand bar just to the side of us over there.."

Whilst Australians are required to have a license for any craft over 4hp tourist are not required to have a license or training for even large sailing boats or high speed power craft. TCP knows of at least one more incident involving a collision between a tourist on a hired jet ski and a yachty in his tender rowing back to his boat in "Bums Bay" near Sea World on the Broadwater. In that event the yachty escaped serious injury in spite of being thrown in the drink and nearly knocked unconscious. It was a close call. Many within the boating community consider the situation backwards where experienced boaties are more regulated than a novice but the tourism industry would suffer if regulated similar to the boating public.

## Q: What's the difference Between a Giant Squid and a Colossal Squid? A: About 4 metres and 200 KG!

Are fishermen going further and deeper to get a catch? That's one theory as to why these dramatic deep sea specimens are showing up with increased frequency. But no one seems to know really. In fact little seems to be known at all about these creatures as so few are found... normally. The Giant and Colossal are really recognised different breeds. Back in February this year a New Zealander fishing in the Ross Sea off Antarctica for Patagonian Toothfish hooked a Colossal Squid that weighted in at 450 KG, just shy of a thousand pounds. Prior to this find most of what was known was from the bits recovered from the stomachs of Sperm Whales. The fishing boat was equipped with a large freezer and the squid was looked after by the crew so scientist will be looking to answer the many questions such as how large can they get? How long do they live? Has it had a starring role in a Pirates of the Carribean movie and other important information.... like how big the Calamari rings would be... Sorry.. A couple of interesting things about the monster are the eyes which were reported to be about 300mm or one foot diameter and the longest tentacles were armed with a series of very sharp claws. Probably good they don't hang around beaches.



Fisheries Victoria photo

This is the little one. These specimens provide a demonstration of how little is known of the deep sea environment and the creatures that inhabit the depths.

Not long after that a Giant squid was hauled aboard off Portland Victoria. At only six metres and 240 KG or about 528 pounds this pint size specimen is still plenty interesting to the scientists at Museum Victoria that will be examining the creature to try to find out everything they can including diet, eye structure, evolution, aging and sex life. Apparently so little is known that with an excellent specimen like this almost all information may be new information. After a bit of slicing and dicing the carcass is to be stitched back together and shipped to Melbourne to be displayed in the Museum. To the dismay of seafood lovers everywhere...

# Qld fishing fleet near collapse'

The Queensland Seafood Industry Association says high fuel prices may be the last straw.

According to an ABC report of June 3rd, Association president Neil Green claims the high Australian dollar, cheap imported seafood, and sky-rocketing diesel prices are crippling the industry.

"In Queensland, our guys are tying up in huge numbers at the wharves and just walking away from their boats," he said.

"We just can't keep going and with the price of diesel around the \$1.70 mark and low prices that's being offered for our product ... unless there's a change and a demand to our product ... this is just about the end."

But according to Bowen Fisherman Vince Lowcock, the state carries as much or more blame than the vagaries of the marketplace. He apportions the blame to "about 70%" due to unreasonable regulation (or words something like that...)

by state agencies.

This is a story that has been going on for some time. The article below is 4 years old now but still relevant. It is followed by an up date to see how things have gone since then and what the real status is of the fleet.

Whatever you may think of the fishing industry it's absence in Queensland waters will be a profound shift and an important lifestyle on the bricks.

## Can family fishing business survive ?

BY BOB NORSON  
Originally published 2004

### Then...

**One fisherman warns that the coming changes to the live fish industry could be bad for the industry and local economy's.**

Vince of the fishing boat "Alma Jane" estimates that there are 40 boats working at present from Bowen. Vince reckons his boat spends about \$5200 every trip. "I'm a small operator" he states. When you add up provisions, bait and ice, fuel (petrol for outboards and diesel), wages, average maintenance costs and miscellaneous supplies, the average boat in the harbour probably spends around \$6200 per trip. Most boats make about 22 trips per year which adds up to almost **\$5,500,000**.

Vince claims that of about 1400 licences now on the coast, only about 450 will be left soon. While he believes he speaks for many fishermen that understand there are too many fishermen out there now, the process of reduction has been riddled with inconsistency and misinformation. He said GBRMPA and state authorities have given warnings and guidelines that the fishermen have responded to, often at great expense and sacrifice, only to rescind later, causing havoc to family finance and planning. When warned that L1 and L3 licence types would be targeted, fishermen began dumping them to acquire L2's which were supposed to be safe. They weren't.

### "WE ARE SHOT DUCKS"

"We were told that if we brought our catch back to 1997 levels that it was sustainable." Current reductions go far beyond 97 levels...."WHY", he asks? Vince further complains that when questioned, the bureaucrat's answer seems to be another form to fill out or a useless meeting where the issues may be "discussed", but nothing solved.

Local fishermen are currently filling out a form titled "REGULATORY IMPACT STATEMENT AND DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN RESPONSE FORM". Vince and another representative of a fishing family expressed doubts about the real intent of the form though they might fill it out to be able to say they did. Suggestions are made that the form is little more than an exercise in appearance. Suspicion of the motives of the state agencies extends to some of the representatives as well.

In absence of consistent policy, rumours fly. Some reefs are to be closed to fishing amid rumour that the reason is less about fish management and more about staking out territory for future large tourist ventures. In general some family fishing business's feel that they are under threat because the powers that be would rather the business be dominated by large corporate interests.

The wobbly future of the industry is having an effect on the families involved. Health problems attributed to stress are reported by some family members.

When asked what he was going to do, Vince replied that he might try to tough it out by buying low performance licences to add to what he has. When asked if he has concern that they might change the rules again, making the effort futile, he said, "it's possible".

**Fishermen and Farmers are alike in important ways. They have to be eternal optimists. The best catch or crop is always the next one. Vince's house is for sale to raise cash for the additional licences.**



Family & crew of "Malysian" taken in 2004, this boat now belongs to Vince!

### Now... the up-date

With the report from The Queensland Seafood Industry at the top of the page, I wondered how the fleet was doing as I knew there was trouble brewing from years ago. I got lucky and found Vince at home pulling a sickie. Was he still going and had the strategy he outlined in the old article been a success? "It was". The combination of licenses had allowed him to catch enough to get by even though the price he was getting for live coral trout was about the same as they were getting at the time of the original story. "Livey's" get about \$30 per kg at the harbour. There was a year when prices were into the \$47 area but not anymore. During the same time, fuel has gone from \$.60 to \$1.70 at the bowser. Vince credits his success to good planning with the licenses, a little careful dabbling in the share market, building work on the side and relentlessly pursuing bureaucrats and pushing paperwork to get the funds promised from the state agencies. The last actions being ones not common among the fishing fleet. He estimates about 20 boats left working out of Bowen, half of four years ago and these may only be that high because the reef that is still left to fishermen is concentrated between Mackay and Bowen.

Like many in the fleet, Vince went fishing, "because I loved it! I loved the freedom of it but that's gone now."

Like many other industries, fishing is suffering from a man power shortage as well. Many good men have gone to the mines. Also the job is harder than it was. With prices soft there is more fishing for "deady's" which means a fisherman starts at dawn and into the night is processing fish (filletting) making for a long day.

But Vince has a plan and it means getting out one day soon. He is the exception though, most don't know anything else and few have Vince's financial talents. He mentioned words from his father, "I had the best of it, you had a taste of it but your kids are gonna see the worst of it".



Vince

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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.

## DOGS ON BEACHES?

Thanks to Norm of Peggy Anne for raising the question about dogs on beaches. When I first took my dog aboard a couple of years ago I tried, with limited success, to clarify the rules about National/Marine Parks. As far as I could ascertain dogs are allowed in Marine Parks and National Parks only extend to the high water mark. (HAT?)

I carry on board an email to this effect but when I tried for a blanket statement from National Parks my emails were ignored. Does anyone have info about the REAL situation?

Thanks,  
Petrea, SY Talisman

---

## **WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO HELSAL?? OR... THE STEAK KNIFE COMPETITION**

### **G'day Bob!**

I think I may have won the steak knives in this editions TCP quick quiz!

Regarding *Helsal* the Floating Footpath - launched by Dr Tony Fisher (where is he now could this be the next TCP quick quiz question?)

AND THE ANSWER AS TO THE CURRENT LOCATION OF THE ORIGINAL "HELSAL" IS (quiet roll of drums) - MANILA BAY right there in the Philippines!

In the late 80's, Pattie and I were your humble servants representing the Kingdom of OZ in the wonderful nation of the Philippines. We loved every minute.

And there was *Helsal*. She was still Australian skippered and on charter around the delightful Filipino islands. But she ran foul of the Authorities I don't remember why - overstaying perhaps (and invoking a customs levy) or whatever. So *Helsal* was arrested and taken to Manila Bay and moored just off the main seaside promenade called Roxas Boulevard.

There followed a great barney between the *Helsal* owners and the government who owed what to whom. In typical Filipino style, the standoff was broken with the arrival of a cyclone and poor old *Helsal* was blown up on the seawall in Roxas Boulevard.

The local millionaires on the boulevard said "we're not having a concrete boat cluttering up our view". So poor old *Helsal* was dragged off the bricks and sunk off shore in Manila Bay. Where I believe she is today (start wrapping the steak knives, Bob).

But, listen to this. There is always a happy solution to "problems" in the Philippines. There was a strong rumour around that the owners of *Helsal* and the Filipino Coast Guard had done a deal to split the insurance payout and some "friends" had actually lifted *Helsal's* anchor when the cyclonic blow was approaching Manila. How's that for effective conflict resolution?

Now, I don't know whether the demise of *Helsal* is accurately portrayed in the above scenario but hell, why let a few loose facts get in the way of a good story!

A sad ending to a truly remarkable yacht.

On a happier note. I saw *Helsal II* at the Scandia Geelong Week year before last. She had just returned from a circumnavigation which included the Cape Town/Rio race. She looked in top nick.

Pity about her eldersister!

Cheers  
Keith Owen  
SV *Speranza*

PS: Please send the steak knives to the Bundy Port Marina - brown handles would be our preferred choice.

*Bob's note; Oh yeah... see the next letter smartarse!*

## **Dear sir, madam or person,**

Someone was asking in your letters column about *HELSAL*. I skippered her to the Philippines in 1979 where she was chartering, she ran aground in the Palawan Peninsula, salvaged, towed back to Manila put on a typhoon mooring was blown off and settled on the harbour sea wall, rescued again sailed to Guam as charter boat with much shortened mast to ferry Japanese tourists around to see their wrecks, That's the last I heard of her.

**Hope this helps,  
DICK BEARMAN  
CYCA SYDNEY**

*Thanks for that Dick. It is worth noting here that Keith did include a disclaimer in his historical comments so though he forfeits the steak knives he preserves his honour! Though we seem to have found much of the history about this boat the final question remains tantalisingly unanswered. Where is she or what finally happened to her.. We'll leave it open for now.*

*Cheers  
Bob*

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## **YESTERDAY'S STORMS**

**Hi Bob,**

Read Alan's article, "Yesterdays Storms", with interest however there was one statement which I think should be commented on. Alan says: "Tragically 13 lives were lost from boats sheltering in Nara Inlet."

I figure this statement could be quite worrisome to the large numbers of boaties who head to Nara for shelter during cyclones and other bad weather and may have read this.

I was in the area at the time and worked at Hayman immediately after cyclone Ada and I feel quite confident in saying that none of the loss of life occurred in Nara. I believe seven of the lives lost were on a commercial fishing vessel passing through the passage.

Alan mentions a cruise ship that embarked evacuees from Hayman and took them to Townsville. As this ship's propellers were engaged on departing Hayman the thrust from the props swirling the shallow water brought the body of one of Hayman's skippers to the surface. His boat was rolled over on a reef quite close to Hayman. I believe other losses were in the vicinity of Shute Harbour

I hope this letter clears things up for anyone who may have read Alan's article and perhaps had doubts about Nara as a safe anchorage.

Alan, love all your work, hope you don't mind the above.

**Larry Bardsley,  
Tin Can Bay**

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## ***Reply from Alan Lucas:***

**Dear Bob,**

My information came from hearsay at the time and a newspaper report but I suspect Larry would be correct. Incredible as it may seem despite the number of times I went alongside the evacuation vessel transshipping Hayman guests into Townsville, I am uncertain of the type of ship she was but I am almost certain she was not a cruise ship. If Larry can confirm details of Ada's aftermath, I would be delighted to see them. One comment though, Nara Inlet though excellent holding, is a dead lee shore to the destructive semi circle of a cyclone and leaves a lot to be desired as a secure haven in extreme conditions with or without a history of deaths.

I thank Larry very much for his input. It is all terrific grist to the mill.

**Cheers,  
Alan**

## *Greetings all*

*I had a strong recollection of hearing about lives lost in Nara from ADA as well.. so I tried to find out by cruising the web but no luck... I think I had heard the same hearsay over the years. It does have the ring of truth to it though. Nara is subject to bullets of wind in my experience but that experience is limited to something like 40+ knots open wind velocity. Also, as is normal for the area, Nara has a boat eating fringing reef that would be a horror to drag onto. It just so happens that I know the walking talking encyclopaedias of everything Whitsundays though, Barbara and Allen Southwood. So I rang them up and here are a few details from Allens very clear memory subject to the limitations of my speed note taking ability.... Nara was OK... but nearby Cid harbour had lives lost and that may be the basis of the confusion. According to Allen a motor vessel that had been a Regatta boat named "Tide Song" was lost with some lives from Cid along with other vessels. Allen recalls that there was a Demartini family member on that boat. A small boat he knew of went right up Sawmill Creek for safety and was OK for the wind but the rains came down the hillside so strong that his boat was washed out the creek to the breakers and he fought for his life there. There was a brand new trawler tied up to the jetty at South Mole called "Whakatani" (unsure of the spelling) that disappeared. They just found broken ropes on the jetty where she had been. Allen recalls there was crew aboard that was lost. A big Halverson type vessel, about 65 feet was lost at Stone Haven, the "Island Gypsy". A big Fairmile from Daydream island was lost in Shute and even a soldier coming from Proserpine to help the victims was lost en route to Airlie Beach. This was written in haste whilst on the phone and though I believe this is accurate it is surely incomplete as Allen was firing information way faster than my meagre transcribing abilities.*

*Allen road out the storm aboard his boat "Empress" in Shute Harbour and his account of that night is thrilling reading. That's in TCP # 17.*

*We hope Allen and Barbara have time in future to collect the notes and clippings from the scrap book to further inform us about that horrific storm.*

*Allen's point remains... if a storm like that hit today...*

*Thanks to all for the "terrific grist to the mill".*

*Cheers  
Bob*

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## **Brampton Bullshit**

### **G'Day Bob,**

Having read about the problems on Brampton (see letters TCP#29) and having experienced the same harassment from the "heavies" I decided to follow it up again. I did not seek permission from Qld. Parks and Wildlife to publish their response but the emails are available.

Broadly Voyages Resort have a lease within a National Park. This lease does not extend to the beach below high water nor does it extend to the jetty and foreshore railway. The resort does however have an arrangement for operation of the railway and ferry but Parks and Wildlife make and enforce the rules. The rule is that the public have access to the jetty but not the right to disrupt commercial operation of the ferry. [Yes the ferry still operates]. The public also have the right to cross the railway but for safety reasons should not walk along the track. Public access is "freely" [no landing fees] available to all walking tracks which are now set up so that all tracks are accessible without entering the resort. The boating public are not welcome in the resort but it would seem that management is overstepping their authority both with

myself and [Graham Shields of SY Caledonia] in turning us away from the beach or the foreshore railway. Enjoy the park but stay out of the resort.

**Barry Lee,  
SV White Horse, Mackay Qld**

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### **G-Day Bob,**

Congratulations on your great TCP paper. It just keeps getting better, being not just entertaining reading but also providing a much needed service to those of us who enjoy yachting.

It is pleasing to see you taking it up to the "authorities" who consider it their right to board our boats etc. Great to see you have had some success in having some of the illegally used fines withdrawn.

With this in mind I enclose a statutory declaration that I carry on my yacht. My attitude being any person claiming authority to board my boat after completing and signing the statutory declaration and viewing the documents referred to in same may then do so.

I have found those who claim authority are keen to tell you your responsibilities but not so keen on signing a document taking legal responsibility themselves for their actions; they in fact don't want to give you their address (which you need to have a summons delivered to them), however they demand your name and address.

We need laws and we need responsible people to enforce these laws. We also need legislation to be legally passed by a valid legal parliament and then receive valid royal assent and here they have a problem, however it is too complicated to go into here.

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**Keep up the good work,  
Bob McCulloch  
Yacht Instigator**

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### **Greetings Bob,**

Compliments on a great mag. and 'nil carborundum illigitimus'.

My query is one you probably already have an answer for. My yacht is Australian registered. Can I claim Australian rego. in a Queensland port as exemption from compulsory Queensland rego.? In my case I went to considerable effort and expense to achieve Australian Registration (Hamilton Is.Q.) in Feb '90 and subsequently departed for a circumnavigation, which I completed upon my return in Oct. last year. I have now been informed that I can not apply for a mooring permit in Tin Can Bay unless I hold Queensland Registration (as well) despite being registered in a Queensland Port

I would appreciate knowing if any of your readers or contributors has tested this ruling and if so what the outcome has been.

---

### **Name Withheld**

#### **Greetings,**

*I have the act posted to my web site in PDF. I recommend you have a look to make your own evaluation. Particularly division 4 section 60 on pages 48-49.*

*See the "Issues" page or try [http://thecoastalpassage.com/papers/MSQ\\_safetyregs04.pdf](http://thecoastalpassage.com/papers/MSQ_safetyregs04.pdf)*

*Anecdotally... I have heard of people going to court and losing on this one but it is hearsay, not first hand info. I have heard that other states have finally recognised Australian Rego as sufficient but in your case it seems they aren't so much demanding you obtain local rego as denying you local services because of your lack of local rego. That's a new angle. I think it is a good idea to put it before readers to see if some first hand experience is available.*

*And thanks for the kind words and encouragement. The bastards can be trying at times.*

**Cheers,  
Bob**



## Lack of Communications North of Cairns

### To the Editor,

By way of introduction I am the Officer In Charge Water Police Cairns. One of my responsibilities is the management of Search and Rescue operations from Lucinda through to Cape Grenville on Cape York. I was hoping that through your paper I might be able to educate some of your readers in relation to the lack of communication systems available once boats proceed north of Cairns.

The reason I would like to do this is due to a number of incidents each year whereby cruising boats venture north of Cairns and fail to notify relatives and friends that they will be out of mobile phone contact range for the majority of their voyage north of Cairns. As mobile phones unfortunately have become the preferred means of keeping in touch so has the expectancy of relatives and friends that they will be able to reach you at all times on these phones.

Cairns Water Police receive a number of calls per year from concerned relatives and friends when they fail to make contact with family and friends travelling on boats north of Cairns or wish to report them overdue when they fail to reach destinations by the nominated time.

### The three most common problems are:

1. Boat operators not informing relatives and friends that they will not be contactable on mobile phone north of Cairns.
2. Boat operators underestimating the time it takes to travel especially against the south east trade winds on the east coast. They are then unable to communicate their delay to relatives waiting for them.
3. Boat operators not informing friends along for the ride that their relatives will not be able to contact them for long periods.

Dependant on the circumstances Water Police usually commence some form of intelligence gathering and communications search in an attempt to track down the present whereabouts of the vessel so that relatives minds can be put at rest. As you can imagine this can be a time consuming effort and utilises numerous information sources. The longer you remain out of contact puts greater stress on those waiting to hear from you.

Please if you are cruising in remote areas ensure you establish in writing prior to your departure a detailed communications plan with your relatives back home. Let them know the times you are going to be out of mobile phone range. If your passage plans change due to weather or other circumstances advise those waiting for you of your changes.

For your own personal safety there is no substitute for a well equipped vessel with serviceable safety equipment and marine radios. However consideration should also be given to the permanent fitting or hiring of a satellite phone when venturing into remote areas.

Next G mobile phone coverage north of Cairns occurs sporadically near Port Douglas, Cooktown, Cape Flattery, Lockhart River, Escape River and around the Torres Straits.

Your cooperation would be greatly appreciated.

Andrew Ibell

**Greetings Andrew Ibell (please correct if wrong on the name)**

*Thank you for your contribution. TCP encourages responsible operation of vessels and welcomes this information.*

*Even one or two instances of this issue deserve a correction but for curiosity sake do you have many? (hope not!)*

**Cheers,  
Bob Norson**

Bob,

On average we have at least 6 per year. Some are resolved within 1-2 hrs whilst others can take up to several days to track down the location of the vessel reported overdue.

In some cases the vessels are overdue having been delayed by weather, breakdowns etc but are not able to communicate that with persons waiting to hear from them.

In other cases there is a communication breakdown between the vessel crew and relatives as to when and how often they will be able to contact each other.

Andrew

Andrew,

*Lets see if we can reduce or eliminate this problem then. Thanks for the info.*

Bob

## INSURANCE INSURANCE??

I have never insured anything, thinking that I am responsible enough to look after my own affairs and be able to pay for any damages I may incur to someone else's property. If I were to lose my own property, I am prepared to take the risk. It is my right to choose to insure or not.

I was of the assumption that if I were to pay for minimum insurance, that would cover 3<sup>rd</sup> party property; in other words, if I were to create damage to someone else's belongings, that would be covered by my 3<sup>rd</sup> party insurance. Similarly, I would expect that if someone else damaged my property that they would at least 'make arrangements' or be covered by insurance, to rectify any damage or loss to me.

Right? Wrong!

My partner and myself were on board 'Amber' the night of the big blow at Airlie Beach, 12/02/08. An accurate account of the forecast preceding the event can be found on the Boating Oz website, titled "why did the Whitsunday storm damage so many boats?" Google it.

We had moved our yacht to the most easterly position in Pioneer Bay called Muddy Bay, to endure what was at that time in the afternoon (1655) forecast to be NE to SE 25/30 in open waters, gradually turning NW/NE during Tuesday, with the intention of moving to Shute Harbour the next morning (a safe northerly anchorage.) The NE conditions are not comfortable, but safe in Pioneer Bay. The move to the east of the bay also made our possible lee shore mangroves instead of rock & steel wall, which are the result of recent development in Airlie Beach.

Well, the Met Bureau updated the forecast, but not before we had lost the opportunity due to tides & visibility to make way to safe haven at Shute Harbour. By midnight the conditions had become dangerous, & our only option was to ride out the blow. About 0100 hrs we started to drag anchor, but were able to maintain our position with all chain (70 metres) & motor ticking over in gear.

At around 0130 I saw a terrible thing. A big trawler style boat was drifting towards us, unmanned & unlit. It was on a direct collision course with us, it coming broadside towards our bow. The motor was already running in gear, so I asked Mel to steer us to starboard while I got the life jackets handy. We could be in REAL trouble if this thing hits us! Next, I am on the V.H.F to V.M.R Whitsunday, who normally only operate on the weekends (thanks guys for your efforts!). I informed them of the situation, in case we did not recover from the impending impact.

That boat got bigger & bigger as we donned jackets & motored to starboard against 70 metres of bar tight chain in 3 metre breaking seas. Then we ducked our heads as... CRASH came the first blow to the port bow

rail. The big boat's bow was crashing down our port side! Over the next minute or so we cowered in the cockpit, scared as hell.

I looked up to see a huge timber ship's bow come crashing down onto our rails at the cockpit, then as she reared up I saw the vessel's name emblazoned across the bridge. It missed our solar panels by mere millimeters, & I have no idea why our mast is still standing? Before I can take another breath, that big bow came down right on top of our trusty dinghy which had been riding behind on long doubled painters. That sunken dinghy made for an excellent drogue, so had to be cut loose, as recovery was impossible.

Now, I see a huge snake creeping along my port side deck the runaway boat's mooring rope! There is nothing I can do but hope that there is not a nasty chunk of mooring tackle on the end of the snake, & there was not (whew!)

There is more to that story, but the point has been made. We were hit by a vessel which was unmanned, unlit & adrift. I radioed VMR to say damage sustained, named the vessel, reported persons unharmed & our yacht unlikely to sink. (Steel is real!)

Now back to my point. I contacted the owner of the vessel, who referred me to his insurance company. (This is the condensed version of events.) They told me to write a letter of demand to the owner, include a copy of my marine incident report & quotes for repairs. I prepared a beautiful folder containing letter of demand, incident report, transcripts of V.H.F. communications to V.M.R, colour photos of my sustained damage, witness statements, & quotes. (Copies) I was not prepared for the short & sharp response I received.

A small letter, with impressive letterhead informed me that "Our client was not negligent; therefore we deny liability on his behalf."

Apparently, this is a standard response. I fell over. That's it? Now what? I wrongly thought that people pay insurance premiums to cover costs of their things causing damage to other people's things, so that they don't end up out of pocket in such an event.

I did not suggest that there was negligence, just that his boat crashed into my boat. Pure & simple. If it were me who was insured & my vessel had caused damage to another, I would expect my insurance company to rectify any financial loss to the 3<sup>rd</sup> party. Is that not what I would have been specifically paying premiums for? Call me naïve, but it seems that having property damage insurance means that not only do you not have to pay for damage incurred by your property, it ensures that nobody pays for the damage & the victim remains a victim.

Of course, had I been insured myself, this would be a lot easier. I did not realize that I need insurance to protect me from someone else's insurance company. I expect that this will drag on until we have exhausted our cruising kitty which we have just worked for this last year. Legal assistance will make short work of funds that would normally last us 6 months or so, not forgetting funding the damage repairs to 'Amber'.

To my mind, this is a very unsatisfactory system, which requires some kind of overhaul.

I wonder if I can buy insurance insurance?

**Bourke McCarron, S.Y. 'Amber'**

Dear Bob,

I am planning a trip from Brisbane along the Great Barrier in a 40' sailing cat to Papua New Guinea, the Pacific Islands, New Caledonia, Vanuatu and back across to Brisbane. I am looking for information and crew to join the trip (either for the full journey or parts) and am planning to leave around July / August 2009 however time is not of importance as we can arrange dates at a later stage to suit crew.

**Bob's Note.....**

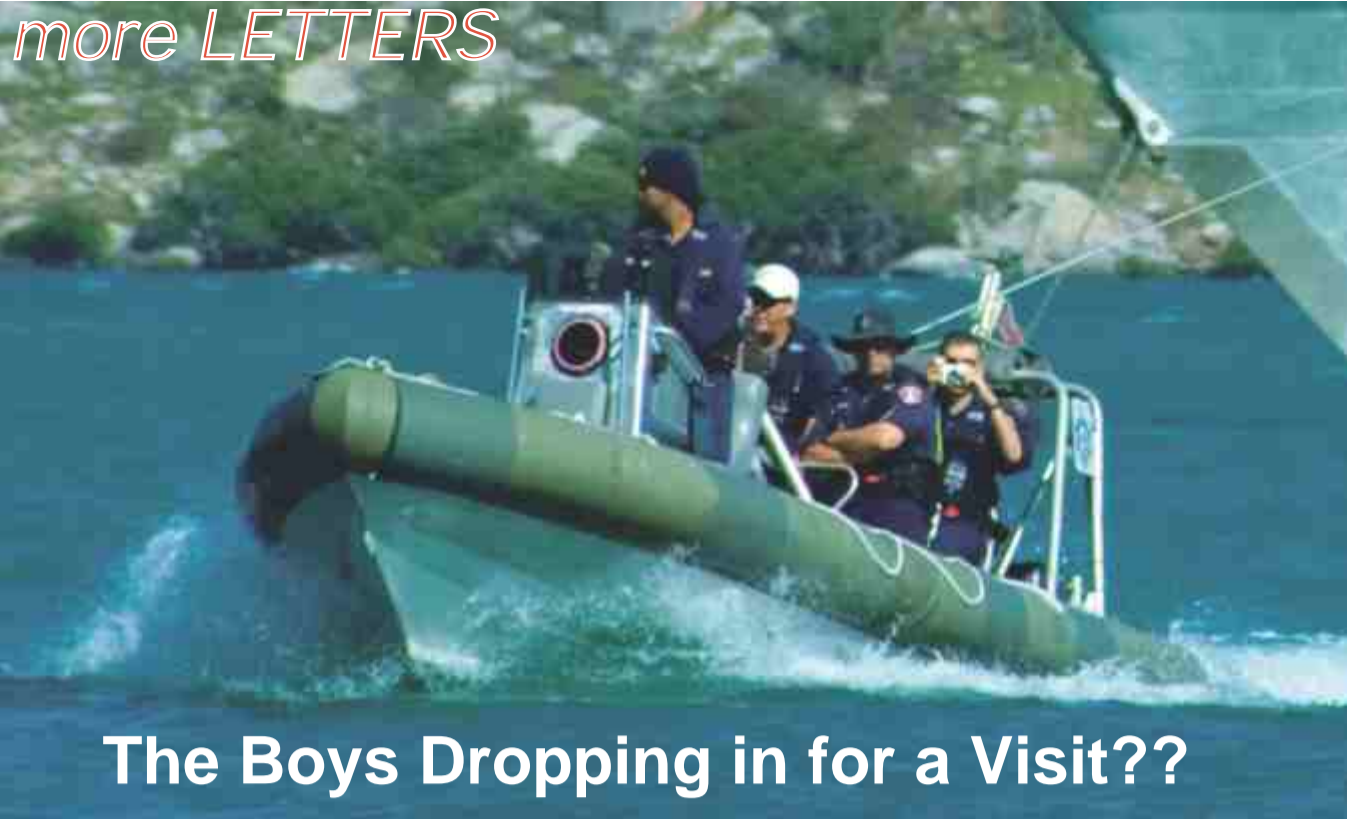
*I wanted to insert this message here before anyone could read further and take it seriously! To properly address the inquiries previous.. two resources that I know of that can be very useful. For information on local entry regulations for various countries I think www.noonsite.com is probably the best. They will also have news up-dates that can be valuable. Boat Books has a list of cruising guides though I am not familiar with the titles. Maybe someone out there could give reference to what they found the best. There is an old Paul Theroux book "The Happy Isles of Oceania" that gives an entertaining and insightful look into the various cultures you may confront. well worth reading. Having said all that, the extensive list of questions below was too tempting for a smart arse like me. I'm not really qualified to seriously address some of them so .. I had some fun. Hope you don't mind! I list my responses in bold and please.. don't call me from some prison because you actually did these things!!!*

I am looking for any information on the following:

- Must see places / things
- >Brampton Island Resort... rock up in your nickers and tell em you came for the TCP slumber party.. they'll love ya!**
- Good diving and fishing spots
- >Try the harbour in Rabual... top spot for diving!**
- Places / things to avoid at all costs
- >The harbour in Rabual.. I lie.**
- Useful trading items
- >Drugs and weapons, especially automatic and high calibre. Always in demand, name your price, and that's just in Australia!**
- What time of the year not to be in places
- >Any time of year in any place you have just dispensed of some "useful trading items".**
- Best winds etc.
- >from your stern.. years of experience to get that one sorted..**
- People you know in these areas to visit / see
- >Check in with a few mates in Indonesia, but hurry, they are due for execution soon.**
- Weather patterns in the North of PNG, Madang, New Britain etc.
- >Well there's hot, stinking hot and fucking hot... in that order.**
- What is not allowed on board - eg. meat, fruit & veg etc.
- >Vegemite and granola bars... takes up room that could be used for beer.**
- What are the rules about firearms
- >rule number one, whoever has the firearm, makes the rules... rule # 2?.. see rule # 1**
- Where to get information
- >whatsamatter.. you don't trust this source?!?! I'm hurt!**
- What about medical supplies - is there somewhere you can buy such things - antibiotics, painkillers, needles, etc.
- >behind the customs office in Port Moresby.. anything you want....**
- What engines are preferred - petrol outboards or diesel inboards? What are the pros & cons of both?
- >Depends on which is easier to steal...**
- Can you get petrol as well as diesel on the islands?
- >depends on your weapons..**
- What languages are spoken on the islands? PNG, Pacific Islands, New Caledonia - Can we get away with just English?
- >9mm or 38 cal seem to be universal languages...**
- Any other information you can provide / think may be of benefit
- >Nope, we've covered all the important stuff I think. Except when you clear customs back in to Australia, don't bother with the paperwork, just tell them I sent you....**

Your assistance with this information would be greatly appreciated.

**Regards,  
Danny O.**



## The Boys Dropping in for a Visit??

### GOOD CUSTOMS???

Dear Bob,

We have also had experience with bureaucracy during our 4 years on the water. To balance the debate, all our encounters to date have all been positive ones. We've travelled from the Sunshine Coast in Qld north along the entire east coast of Qld, across the Gulf of Carpentaria to Gove in the NT (our home for a few years) across to Darwin and the Kimberly and back again to the Sunshine Coast. We're currently half way back up the Qld coast on our way to The Flinders Islands on Cape York, our tentative destination for this cruising season.

We're regularly buzzed by Coastwatch aircraft in the remote north and north-west and asked the usual questions name of boat and registration, last port of call, next port of call, POB, and if we've seen anything unusual they may be interested in. We actually find it reassuring that these guys (and gals) are out there looking after our shoreline and us! Our last Gulf of Carpentaria crossing was done in company with our mates on "Gone Surfin", and during our first night at sea we lost contact with them. We have a VHF radio and satellite phone on board while they have VHF and HF radios but no sat phone, so once we were more than 20nms apart, we had no way to communicate. Coastwatch called us up during our second day out, and were able to tell us that they'd also seen our mates and that they were OK, though they were not permitted to tell us where they were. They were more than happy to relay messages back and forth and, through them, we arranged a location to meet our mates on the Qld side of the Gulf.

We regularly encountered Customs vessels in the Wessel Islands area north of Gove in the NT. This area of the north is a favorite poaching spot for Indonesian fishing boats, and we felt reassured that Customs vessels, as well as the Coastwatch/Customs aircraft, were out there somewhere when we cruised these islands. We actually sat out Tropical Cyclone Monica in a creek in the Wessel Islands in April 2006 and, when we exited the creek, encountered a Customs vessel anchored in our bay. Their rubber ducky, with two burly blokes and a lady, came alongside to check if we were OK, being curious as to our presence in the area during such a violent storm. We invited them on board and over coffee, swapped cyclone stories. They were very friendly and invited us to visit their mother ship, offering us any assistance required.

Our latest encounter was quite hilarious when we were literally caught with our pants down! As you do when there are no other boats around, the gear comes off. Greg was busy working down stairs when there was an 'Ahoy' from outside. I popped my head out to find a Customs rubber ducky at our transom! It was quickly grab the clothes, calling out to tell Greg to put his pants on, and we went outside, to find two burly blokes and a lady rolling around the ducky laughing their heads off!

Regarding the criticism in TCP about the various authorities, we feel that, in our experience, emotive criticism won't necessarily win the war and in fact may serve to exacerbate the problem. Whilst no doubt there are negative experiences, more may be gained by reporting these matters in factual, objective, non-emotional language and if necessary, using the services of the relevant ombudsman.

Maybe we've been lucky, or maybe it's the attitude to these guys when they visit that sets the tone of the encounter. It doesn't necessarily need to be confrontational - they're just doing their job, however distasteful it may become at times.

Regards,  
Greg & Jan  
SY, Outahia

### RESPONSE....

Greetings Greg and Jan,

Thanks for your letter and it's always good to hear a positive report about customs interaction with a yacht but I do have to take exception to a few remarks.

First let me point out that many matters you brought up are very subjective. For example, whilst you perceive the proximity of customs a comfort many do not. In fact if my mail is any indicator you are a slim minority. What you call a "visit" many others would call an invasion of their home. But you must be granted your right to opinion in a subjective matter, as you must grant differing views. Like why are Custom interfering with domestic craft in territorial waters anyway? Like our entry laws, this is bizarre by international standards.

And have you been "lucky" or are you benefiting from the criticism that has been levelled at "various authorities" via reports in The Coastal Passage? It's no secret that customs have been conscious of their image woes and several sources have commented on that to TCP in published letters. Subsequent to coverage in TCP Customs have stopped enforcing their 'ten day rule', have given greater flexibility to entry date and time and even allow third parties to relay entry notice now. All these things were strict offences not long ago. And the chances of you being unfairly booked by MSQ is surely diminished after TCP coverage of their backdown on false charges last edition. You're welcome!

Which brings me to this part of your letter; "Regarding the criticism in TCP about the various authorities, we feel that, in our experience, emotive criticism won't necessarily win the war and in fact may serve to exacerbate the problem. Whilst no doubt there are negative experiences, more may be gained by reporting these matters in factual, objective, non-emotional language and if necessary, using the services of the relevant ombudsman."

I strongly reject every word of that. TCP's coverage has been fact based; virtually all accounts are first person and all subject to verification. In articles where unsupported assertions are made the writer is contacted and requested to provide support for their allegations. The very first account received critical of customs is a good example. (TCP# 15, *Boarded in our Bundaberg Berth*) TCP became aware of a "Chinese Whisper" going around the marina that the official was disputing facts in the letter sent in by an American Cruising boat. Thus the writer was asked to forward photos that would support his claim and he did and more. When customs was asked to respond to the facts TCP received a flat refusal from customs of commenting on a factual basis but instead received a testimonial of the fine character of the official involved (emotive), inferring that the American cruiser may have been of lesser character. That was the origin of the statement that is at the top of the TCP letters page. The one you may have failed to notice. You see, you have made a strong suggestion that TCP does not provide factual or objective reportage but you provide no support for that assertion. So what facts has TCP got wrong? What incident has been falsely reported? I make the same challenge to you that I have made to customs or anyone else. Unless you have something specific to refer to your letter fails the criteria that would apply to a contributor writing an article critical of customs.

Customs bad image is of their own making. Do you think TCP so powerful it can invent that? TCP reflects, it does not dictate and nor will it be dictated to. As has been reported in several recent articles and letters in TCP, Customs interaction with boaties has far improved, no doubt about that but the same people are in place and the same laws are on the books. TCP will continue to provide an affective voice for boaties, reporting the facts and where I see fit, making strong comment. If you still think TCP hasn't made a significant and positive change in the attitude and enforcement style of the various authorities.. well, you are entitled to your opinion and I do appreciate you having the integrity to say it face up.

By the way.. the photo above? Taken by a cruiser in the gulf as Customs were making their way to his boat for a very unwelcome visit. The cruiser preferred to not be named as he feared retribution.

Cheers,  
Bob

## Rusty Business..

Hi there Rob,

Just wanted to have a winge about one of the rip-offs done to boaties. There seems to be too many rich buggers out there willing to pay what-ever it costs so 'they' just make up a price and double it. Just doesn't work for poor pensioner live-aboards like me. Anyhow my problem is a (Very) rusty steel boat and a near total lack of money. Now the best rust converter I've found is Tannic Acid. However the cheapest I can get it is around \$40 for one litre and it doesn't even get much better in bulk. I thought that was a bit steep and I'm a scientific sort of ratbag and so I looked it up on the internet. What I found amazed me - ordinary old Tan Bark that is sold as mulch is 10% to 15% Tannin and some Australian trees have 40% tannin in their bark - and you just have to boil it up like tea to extract it. So I knew it must be cheap in industrial quantities and Commercial rust Converters were definitely over-priced but, being a glutton for punishment, I looked for an actual price per kilo. About HALF a euro per Kg!!!! and that is enough to make 4 liters at least of converter - so when you get down to it those companys mark up a simple chemical by about 16,000% !!! I'd guess that the Labels and the bottle costs more than the ingredients. (about 25 cents)

John Cook  
The Box, Airlie Beach

Greetings John,

Thanks for your contribution. There are a variety of acids that work as a "rust converter", most commercial compounds use phosphoric acid in the mix which can be purchased in bulk from some pool maintenance suppliers or any chemical supplier. The cost from these sources is FA. This is not an uncommon situation. It's called "marketing". For years as a jeweller I purchased a solution for cleaning torch scale off precious metals from jewellers supplies in nice tins that cost a lot. I finally was tipped off that the content of these tins was just sodium bi-sulphate, cheap as chips at any chemical supplier. This stuff works on removing stain from welds on SS as well.

Having said all that, I never had much luck with rust converter as a means of maintaining a steel boat. I found that if it was scaled rust it wouldn't work for me and if it was surface rust it wasn't needed. For treatment of weathered steel, after thorough removal of scale (see TCP # 27) I used paints that encapsulated the rust particles. POR 15 works well for that. If you have found a way to make it work and have had enough time on the repairs to indicate or prove a long term solution, I would appreciate your report to share with others. Anything that can help with boat maintenance is welcomed by TCP. I did find that for automotive use in spot applications, rust converter was useful. But in any or all cases, nothing beats abrasive blasting. I bought a \$30 set of sand blasting gear from Super Cheap auto and used it with my 13 CFM compressor for small spots on our old steely. The sand was from the beach filtered through fly screen. Even back then this was officially a criminal activity (hopefully past the statute of limitations by now!) and the man that told me how to do it died shortly after that of cancer... who knows...

BTW, have you ever noticed the brownish stain that stream water often has in a rain forest or other heavily wooded environment? Tannin leached from the leaves that fall into the stream is the cause of the colour.

Cheers,  
Bob

### The most creative reason why bill not paid:

Hey Bob,

You is right we no paid - will fix. C---- tells me she did not receive invoice - so being woman - she no pay. Tee hee. Ah wimmen - worse than boats. (mandatory chauvinist comment) Can you fax or email inv pls and we get this sorted. Sorry about the stuff up.

Best regards,  
B—

P.S. As the Whinging woman was standing behind said chauvinistic male (SMACK!! @#\$#@\*) you may deal with me next time. He may not wake up for awhile!  
C----

# Ariel of Rabaul

## A lady with a History



Judi and Mike Waller's boat was featured in **Passage People** last issue and the history of the sweet little yacht caught up with TCP.

So below is the story as furnished by Mike and a sailor from Innisfail that recognised the boat..

By Mike Waller, SY *Ariel of Rabaul*

Built in N.Z. by Stainless Steel Industries Ltd. In 1973. The Yacht is an 10 mts alloy Lidgard Design, a registered ½ Ton. Raced in N. Z. under the name "Ally Oop" and sailed to Rabaul in New Guinea in 1982 under the guidance of Mike Thurston of "Dolphins in the Sunset" fame.

Owned and raced by the late Graham Shuttleworth as "Ariel", and holder of the Race record .. Rabaul - Kavieng, until the God's decreed, in 1994, that perhaps there were, collectively, too many "Sinners" left in Rabaul, viz ..The Yacht Club, the RSL, the Kaivuna and the Travellodge, not forgetting the Cosmo, all of which "He" partly submerged in 1972, with a Tidal Wave, (Who said God wasn't a woman..some of the best watering holes in the Tropics).

After a practice run in 1984, sent in two Volcano's to cover the Town in 2 mts of hot ash, .... with the exception of the Catholic Cathedral, but not even Father Tim could save the Roof.

The Boat was purchased in Cairns, imported into Australia, and has since, been in our possession. Because the name *Ariel* (from the Greek .... Water Nymph) was registered on the Australian Registrar

Dear Bob

Picked up a copy of the Coastal Passage at Cardwell Marina.

Interested to see the small article on page 35 titled "Ariel of Rabaul". This must be a yacht that was sailed to Rabaul or Kavieng by a Mr Graham Shuttleworth. Graham was the manager of BLA motors, the Toyota distributor. Graham was transferred to Rabaul where the boat was very competitive in the Rabaul-Kavieng yacht race.

Unfortunately Graham died of a brain tumour. The yacht was in Rabaul Harbour while his will was sorted out. The yacht was left to a friend of his in Kavieng over on New Ireland where the boat was worked on for a while. Unfortunately the new owner was murdered in Kavieng. I understand the yacht

So, I had to contact Mike to verify and...

Hi Bob :

This is correct, and the Yacht was sold to a Canadian School Teacher, he sailed it to Cairns. Unfortunately ...his wife and child wouldnt go to Canada. It was sold by Ben Lexen Marine, to one Mr. Mike Waller. {I was the agent with Ben Lexen, and was doing a HARD Sell to a young bloke who was looking to go sailing. This was the perfect first boat ....In the end 'I was so convincing ...that I thought ...If this IDIOT doesn't buy this lovely boat ...I will }, and paid the Customs and Import Duties, next day.

We sailed to the Torres Straits to do a Contract with the Govt, on 6 islands for 5 months, and finally sailed back to Cairns, just after Xmas 1992, just ahead of the Cyclone. The Yacht was so much fun to sail that we kept it, even if on the small side.

Cheers : Mike Waller

of Shipping, she was renamed, (with all the proper protocol), and seeing she came from Rabaul, it was decided on "Ariel of Rabaul".

Under the watchful eye of Peter Duncan (a recent convert to the genteel art of sailing and now the proud owner of a Vanderstat) of South Pacific Marine Ltd., Burpengary.... the Vessel (and the owners) suffered a total refurbishment, including such luxuries as an Electric Anchor Winc, a Micro wave and a Sailing Log with all pages intact (Cruising mode).

But not the Three items deemed never to be seen on a Cruising Yacht: Grand Piano's... Naval Officers & Dinner Suits.

The exotic Ports in question (Bob's note; Mike first contacted TCP from Congo but Thailand this month!): Congo, Nigeria, Madagascar, Bangladesh Ecuador & Yemen are deemed necessary to fund the "Habit". Pending my retirement, so we can cruise again and visit, yet even more exotic places, starting with Bribie, Tin Can Bay and Forbes Island.

But first, we have to revisit Rabaul, where all this started.

was sold at a give-away price to possibly an American couple, not too sure of those facts.

It seems too coincidental that there were 2 X 10 metre yachts made by Lidgard in N. Z. unless this was another boat that was there about the time of the eruption. Grahams passing and the change of hands of this yacht took place about 5 years before the eruption. I am aware of this because I was working in Rabaul at the time of the eruption which was in September of 94 and Grahams yacht was not in Rabaul at the time unless as I suggested that there may be another Lidgard there at the time of the eruption.. a bit too coincidental.

Thanks and Regards

David Hutton.



by Bob Norson

It was many years ago when I stumbled over the problem. I was testing a radio and couldn't work out why I wasn't getting all channels. The real shocker in retrospect was how many boaties were as dumb as me. Even the Australian distributor of the radio I was testing had no idea and instructed me to return the unit as defective! So for all you dummy's out there....

Here is what is going on.....

Most of the frequencies on your VHF are "duplex". That means they receive and transmit on different frequencies even though they are on the same channel. This means that even if you are standing next to another radio, they can't hear your direct transmission if you are on a duplex channel, because you are transmitting on frequency "A" while they are receiving on frequency "B". This is where repeaters come in. Repeating stations do more than just boost a signal and send it on. They receive your frequency "A" and re-transmit your signal on frequency "B". Got that??...

So, here's how it works: You are chatting with another boat at your island anchorage on channel 81 (duplex channel). Your transmit frequency cannot be heard directly by the other boat. The signal goes to a repeating station back on the mainland, which re-sends the message on a different frequency that your mate receives.

Your personal conversation has travelled up to 80 miles back and forth, and any radio in range of the repeating station can hear it. If you want to talk directly to your mate, use a simplex channel. A handy tip to know if you are engaged in smuggling, gun running, or just don't want to clog up the repeater channels.

Oh yeah...Have you wondered what that control on your radio means? The one that says "USA" or "INT" (International)? What happened there is that the USA uses far less duplex channels. So...if you and your mate at the island anchorage both had your radios adjusted to the USA option, you could talk to each other on more channels directly. (This is just to illustrate a point, I am not recommending you use the usa channels)

To put it more simply, SIMPLEX frequencies are boat to boat.

DUPLEX frequencies are boat to repeater to boat, even if the boats are next to each other.

Frank Stooove of *Escondido* was the first boaty I talked to after my radio test and subsequent enlightenment, that understood how this all works and it was him that recommenced I reprint this brief article at least once a year... SO BLAME HIM!

### FREQUENCY CHANNEL CHART

INT (International...us)		USA (...them)			
SIMPLEX	DUPLEX	SIMPLEX	DUPLEX		
6	1	64	1	60	24
8	2	65	2	61	25
9	3	66	3	62	26
10	4	78	4	63	27
11	5	79	5	64	28
12	7	80	6	65	84
13		81	7	66	85
14	18	82	8	67	86
15	19	83	9	68	87
16	20	84	10	69	
17	21	85	11	71	
67	22	86	12	72	
68	23	87	13	73	
69	24	88	14	74	
71	25		16	75	
72	26		17	76	
73	27		18	77	
74	28		19	78	
77	60		20	79	
	61		21	80	
	62		22	81	
	63		23	82	
				83	
				88	

# Macho without the mess



By Capt'n Oddworm, SY Mariposa

The white-hot tropical sun was just reaching its zenith as our dingy bumped to a halt at the base of the crumbling seawall. I tied her off to the rung of a rust-blistered ladder, dubiously clinging to the ruined barrier, and climbed up to a broiling esplanade. The flat stretch of concrete uniting these tiny keys shimmered before my eyes in dream-like waves. Beyond this artificial viaduct a great shallow pool shimmered, seductively stretching off to a soft blue horizon. There was no one about. No birds wheeled through the haze-bleached heavens. The untroubled waters rested slick and silent as oil.

To my right, the verdant dome of the higher key undulated with the heat. Close on my left, the lower key looked stark and prickly, and terribly over-exposed in the dazzling light. One lone tree stood out, darkly distinguishing itself from its brittle companions and casting the only shadow in sight. And in that shadow stood a man. He was clearly not a native. His baggy shorts, stubbly beard, and Tillie-hat marked him as a cruiser. I gave him a nod and he flicked a quick wave at me. Then I turned to

Capt Oddworm is back with a vengeance...

help my wife, Sandra, as she scrambled to her feet at the edge of the seawall.

"Holy Moly it's Hot!" She huffed, opening her little umbrella against the sun. Then she looked about and shrugged.

"Well..., which way now Bwana?" "Good question" I said, miming her pose. "I'll bet that fella over there knows something."

She squinted behind her sunglasses and headed over. We made our introductions and discovered that, like ourselves, he too was an American cruiser searching for the offices of officialdom. His name was Hennery. A few minutes later, with formalities and banal niceties out of the way, we got down to a very serious discussion: FISHING.

I had been going on at length, as I've been known to do, when Hennery made this startling revelation.

"I uh..., don't go fishing. I mean um..., fish. Ya know?" He was looking at the ground, studying the dirty toes protruding from his sandal. "Like never." He offered, as if I didn't get it.

"Never?" I asked. I didn't get it. "Yeah," he stammered. "I don't even own a rod-n-reel, or gaff, or anything. I guess I should be ashamed but..., well...: There it is."

He gave a lame little shrug and avoiding my eyes, gazed off beyond the white concrete griddle to the cool blue plane of the sea.

cool blue plane of the sea.

I felt incredulous. How could this fellow dare to make such a pathetic statement; and before perfect strangers as well! Did he not have the decency to lie? He doesn't fish - ever? It was beyond my imagination. My embarrassment for the poor schlemiel stunned me into silence. The seconds dragged by.

Ironically, Sandra's curiosity was picked. "But why should you be ashamed?" She asked. "I don't understand."

"Ya know, you're right." He said, returning to animation. "I don't know why I said that. Why should I apologize? Funny thing that..., isn't it?"

They smiled at each other while my mind reeled. It was too much for me to bear any longer, so I lowered the proverbial boom.

"I'll tell ya why you should be ashamed!" I snapped. "You, Hennery, are a Man! And more to the point, you are a Man-With-A-Boat! Fishing is Manley; Boating is Manley. And deep down inside you suspect that by not fishing you are failing as a man and now you have revealed that failure and are at risk of being judged a pathetic whuss and possibly a homosexual to-boot and you know it!"

Wow! We were all a bit shocked at the vehemence of my

analysis or was it an attack? I was prepared to swing if he leapt at me but it didn't come to that. He stared for a moment, mouth a-gap in utter amazement; then he slumped as if I had actually hit him.

"Yeah," he said at last. "That about sums it."

Now I felt abashed. I wanted to reach out to him, to ease his mind and restore his faith in..., in what? I didn't exactly know because basically, I believe in the underlying truth of my proclamation. Since I am a Man with a Boat, I am obligated by gender to fish. It goes along with going to work; supporting my family; defending my country; and not wearing my sister's fuzzy pink jumper. It's a package deal.

(At this point in my tale I feel it only fitting to warn my dear readers that, should you happen to be a woman, sensitive liberal, or limp-wristed pansy, it is time to return this publication to the rack from which you nicked it, and walk away. There are some things you will never understand.) (editors note; little late Oddworm!)

Now, on behalf of us Real Men, I further press my point. If I lived in the bush I would be obliged to hunt. In fact, executing that masculine duty nearly landed me in jail. No Kidding!

I wasn't actually living in the bush at the time but I did find myself holed-up in a rotting little shack on the muddy edge of the great Floridian swamp, The Everglades. I think the place was intended to house slaves, but with emancipation and all that, it became available to low-rent tenants like "yours truly".

Anyways, the infamous three-meter tall Florida saw-grass had encroached upon my yard, completely swallowing my little cabin, forcing me to hack a path to my doorstep. Finding ones way to my portico was somewhat reminiscent of wandering through a medieval maze - which was fun - and the soft green light diffusing through my grass covered windows spared me the expense of curtains. Something about living so close to nature, with all those weeds and vermin scurrying about, put me in the mood to shoot something. But the only "somethings" close at hand were the neighbours annoying old terrier and their even more annoying teen-aged son. It stood to reason that if I actually shot either of them, well....

So I sat in my doorway, rifle in hand, and waited for a more appropriate target to wander down my jagged green approach track. But nothing happened.

The days passed slowly in that steamy breathless swamp, and in the timeless Zen-like void I began to contemplate my options. It occurred to me that I could go out into the swamp and possibly scare-up a deer, but the potential threat of lethal snakes and colossal alligators cooled my enthusiasm. Then too, if I managed to find a deer, or hog, or what ever, and shoot it; I'd have to bleed and skin the stinking thing and drag it back to my cabin on foot. I could just imagine all the fleas and ticks leaping from that infested carcass as it cooled. I'd be the only warm body around, the only host. "No," I reasoned. "There must be an easier way."

continued next page.. if you dare..!



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It has been said that genius is "ten percent inspiration and ninety percent perspiration." All I know for certain is that I was sitting in the doorway of my stifling little box-in-the-sun, sweating through my shirt, when the thunderbolt struck me: The Gulf Course!

It was so perfect; I couldn't believe I hadn't thought of it sooner. I was living in the Land of the Eternal Gulf Game, with over a score of courses within an hour's drive of my shack. And I had heard tales of early morning sportsmen confronting whole herds of deer as they grazed on the fairway.

It was easy to picture: The dawn horizon blushing softly in anticipation of the day: harsh white shafts of sunlight piercing the woods, painting the meticulous lawns in a patch-work of light and shadow; the forested boundaries receding into silhouette; and the beautiful dun coloured deer, wide-eyed and cautious, sniffing the cool morning air. I could almost feel the tranquillity of the scene; not a sole stirring; no hum of traffic on the inter-state; just the sweet sent of Morning Glory, the twittering birds, the deer and I. Did I mention the rifle?

So I phoned the low-cost municipal gulf course and booked a Tuesday morning reservation for one - complete with electric gulf cart for easy carcass removal. Then I began searching for some clubs.

Since I wear a beard, I do not gulf. And naturally, since I ride a motor cycle, I don't associate with those who do. But persistence paid off and I finally found an old bag with a few antique clubs in which to hide my weapon. Tuesday came and I was off.

To this day I am convinced that, had the cell-phone never been invented, my scheme would have succeeded without a hitch. But this was not to be. When I opened fire near the third green, things turned ugly.

As this is a fishing story, I will spare you the unsavoury details which ensued. Suffice it to say that I will not be returning to the glorious state of Florida any time soon.

And so, I found myself on this parched Islamic atoll expounding upon the virtues of Manhood before my somewhat indifferent audience of two. Hennery was crushed and my dear wife was eying me as if I were a raging beast. But I knew she was far too feminine to understand; so I ignored her and changed the subject. We located a group of young soldiers lounging near a dilapidated shed who, with sheepish grins and pointing fingers, directed us toward the Customs and Immigration buildings. We had a nice time in the Maldives.

Half a year later and three thousand sea miles away, I began re-playing my encounter with the hapless Hennery

when it suddenly dawned on me that I had already solved his baffling moral dilemma. The answers came slowly, drip by drop, until a cascade of clarity rushed through my brain. Here is how the mystery unraveled itself:

The sun was high and the Trades were puffing gently, sliding Mariposa along her rhomb line at a comfortable five knots. It was what one might call a "perfect" sailing day; the kind of day we dream about but so seldom get. Cottony little cumulous lambs danced across a rich blue sky as the barometer recorded a slow but steady rise. And so it was a perfect fishing day as well.

We had been off-shore for over two weeks and despite the fair weather, I was completely exhausted. Sprawled out in the cockpit, barely able to muster enough discipline to stand up and scan the horizon for ships, I began to contemplate catching fish. How could I not? After all, I am a Man and blah, blah, blah....

The conditions were too good to pass up, but the prospect of actually landing a thrashing sea monster, throwing slime and blood over virtually every thing, spraying my rails and seats, washing the decks in slippery crimson.... I knew that even my cockpit awning would take on a sickly red pox as the insensate beast beat out his death throes in his own gory muck. Well, it all seemed a bit much to deal with. First I would have to skin and filet the creature, and bag him up for refrigeration; easily accomplished in port but a lot of hassle on a rolling boat. Then would come at least an hour of soap and brush work.

I was in a dilemma, willing my body to stand and break out the tackle while reproaching my compulsive foolishness. Reason argued for rest while hormones urged action.

I stood.

My head spun with the rush of blood. Lights flashed, a cool breeze blew through my mind, and I knew.

And now I am back from the desert. I have heard the voice of God, and so am obliged to share the Truth with all my brothers. Yes; we can indeed be MACHO - WITHOUT THE MESS!

All I needed to do was to cull through my gear, select the most unlikely lure, rig it, trail it, and relax. If a fish actually took my bait I would deem it an Act-of-God and rise to the occasion. But so far, God had not intervened. Several days



Oddworm and ever patient mate Sandra

passed; conditions continued to improve; and I was not bothered by aquatic troublemakers. My luck held. I was off the hook at last. Or was I?

It seems inevitable that employing such a cock-eyed scheme should raise ethical questions. Just how far could I push this absurdity and still esteem myself a fisherman? Obviously, towing an old sea-boot off the transom does not constitute fishing but what if I rigged a naked Barbie with a treble-hook dangling from her butt. No; I needed to set parameters.

This is how I have come to see it: If a lure is manufactured for the express purpose of catching fish and is properly rigged to appropriate tackle, then I can affirm that I am actually fishing and, despite any outward appearances, am not a shameless whuss.

Certainly, such a high-minded platitude will beg moral questions. What about home-made lures; exactly what constitutes "appropriate" tackle, you ask? All I can answer is that personal morality is, well..., personal. Every man must search his own heart. I can only advise you to trust your instincts.

**Do not be afraid.  
If it feels right DO IT!**

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**Haul out and return - Trailer only - Mono or Cat: \$400**

Daily rate whilst on trailer \$60 (after 5 days, \$100/day).

yard lift	from \$150/lift
yard rates	\$60 per hour
fork lift hire incl. operator	\$35 per 15 min.
extra trestles, stands, blanks, props etc.	\$15 per week.
\$250 environmental deposit required,	
\$200 returned after one week relaunch	

(All prices include GST)

It has been said that genius is "ten percent inspiration and ninety percent perspiration." All I know for certain is that I was sitting in the doorway of my stifling little box-in-the-sun, sweating through my shirt, when the thunderbolt struck me: The Golf Course!

It was so perfect; I couldn't believe I hadn't thought of it sooner. I was living in the Land of the Eternal Golf Game, with over a score of courses within an hour's drive of my shack. And I had heard tales of early morning sportsmen confronting whole herds of deer as they grazed on the fair-way.

It was easy to picture: The dawn horizon blushing softly in anticipation of the day: harsh white shafts of sunlight piercing the woods, painting the meticulous lawns in a patch-work of light and shadow; the forested boundaries receding into silhouette; and the beautiful dun coloured deer, wide-eyed and cautious, sniffing the cool morning air. I could almost feel the tranquillity of the scene; not a sole stirring; no hum of traffic on the inter-state; just the sweet sent of Morning Glory, the twittering birds, the deer and I. Did I mention the rifle?

So I phoned the low-cost municipal golf course and booked a Tuesday morning reservation for one - complete with electric golf cart for easy carcass removal. Then I began searching for some clubs.

Since I wear a beard, I do not golf. And naturally, since I ride a motor cycle, I don't associate with those who do. But persistence paid off and I finally found an old bag with a few antique clubs in which to hide my weapon. Tuesday came and I was off.

To this day I am convinced that, had the cell-phone never been invented, my scheme would have succeeded without a hitch. But this was not to be. When I opened fire near the third green, things turned ugly.

As this is a fishing story, I will spare you the unsavoury details which ensued. Suffice it to say that I will not be returning to the glorious state of Florida any time soon.

And so, I found myself on this parched Islamic atoll expounding upon the virtues of Manhood before my somewhat indifferent audience of two. Hennery was crushed and my dear wife was eying me as if I were a raging beast. But I knew she was far too feminine to understand; so I ignored her and changed the subject. We located a group of young soldiers lounging near a dilapidated shed who, with sheepish grins and pointing fingers, directed us toward the Customs and Immigration buildings. We had a nice time in the Maldives.

Half a year later and three thousand sea miles away, I began re-playing my encounter with the hapless Hennery when it suddenly dawned on me that I had already solved his baffling moral dilemma. The answers came slowly, drip by drip, until a cascade of clarity rushed through my brain.

Here is how the mystery unravelled itself: The sun was high and the Trades were puffing gently, sliding *Mariposa* along her rhumb line at a comfortable five knots. It was what one might call a "perfect" sailing day; the kind of day we dream about but so seldom get. Cottony little cumulus lambs danced across a rich blue sky as the barometer recorded a slow but steady rise. And so it was a perfect fishing day as well.

We had been off-shore for over two weeks and despite the fair weather, I was completely exhausted. Sprawled out in the cockpit, barely able to muster enough discipline to stand up and scan the horizon for ships, I began to contemplate catching fish. How could I not? After all, I am a Man and blah, blah, blah....

The conditions were too good to pass up, but the prospect of actually landing a thrashing sea monster, throwing slime and blood over virtually every thing, spraying my rails and seats, washing the decks in slippery crimson.... I knew that even my cockpit awning would take on a sickly red pox as the insensate beast beat out his death throes in his own gory muck. Well, it all seemed a bit much to deal with. First I would have to skin and filet the creature, and bag him up for refrigeration; easily accomplished in port but a lot of hassle on a rolling boat. Then would come at least an hour of soap and brush work.

I was in a dilemma, willing my body to stand and break out the tackle while reproaching my compulsive foolishness. Reason argued for rest while hormones urged action.

I stood. My head spun with the rush of blood. Lights flashed, a cool breeze blew through my mind, and I knew.

And now I am back from the desert. I have heard the voice of God, and so am obliged to share the Truth with all my brothers. Yes; we can indeed be MACHO - WITHOUT THE MESS!

All I needed to do was to cull through my gear, select the most unlikely lure, rig it, trail it, and relax. If a fish



Oddworm and ever patient mate Sandra

actually took my bait I would deem it an Act-of-God and rise to the occasion. But so far, God had not intervened.

Several days passed; conditions continued to improve; and I was not bothered by aquatic troublemakers. My luck held. I was off the hook at last. Or was I?

It seems inevitable that employing such a cock-eyed scheme should raise ethical questions. Just how far could I push this absurdity and still esteem myself a fisherman? Obviously, towing an old sea-boot off the transom does not constitute fishing but what if I rigged a naked Barbie with a treble-hook dangling from her butt. No; I needed to set parameters.

This is how I have come to see it: If a lure is manufactured for the express purpose of catching fish and is properly rigged to appropriate tackle, then I can affirm that I am actually fishing and, despite any outward appearances, am not a shameless whuss.

Certainly, such a high-minded platitude will beg moral questions. What about home-made lures; exactly what constitutes "appropriate" tackle, you ask? All I can answer is that personal morality is, well..., personal. Every man must search his own heart. I can only advise you to trust your instincts.

**Do not be afraid.  
If it feels right DO IT!**

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# Sanctuary Cove Boat Show

## Huge Crowd and Record Sales....NOT!

### But it was far from a dud

It was like normal except for the holes in the crowd. People were in chunks on the footpaths, sometimes slow and go and sometimes you were standing alone. The weather was perfect so the jetties did best. Pretty constant there. and there was a lot to gawk at outside. I admit that the TCP booth kept me hopping and little time was available for touring the field and closely inspecting every boat but... there was time to get the high lites and general feel of the business activity from observation and talking to various vendors. Boats were selling but not across the board. Like the crowd, spotty. Generally the show looked weakest for the trailer boat/runabout market. I'm sure there would be exceptions but the interest appeared lite and brokers I have talked to reinforce that observation. "People just don't have \$100K for a bloody trailer boat Bob, but the people that have a few hundred thou to spend on a substantial boat still do", was one opinion I heard.

The sailing fleet was all there, all the usual suspects including the European imports, domestic builders and kit designers were on show. I caught the Schionning crew smiling and why not? Besides selling the premium big kits they have made some of the Wilderness series available in part kits and a variety of materials to allow a home builder to get started with a composite boat at plywood cost. I think this will have a future with those people that want a good cruising cat but can't afford to buy the one they want so must build. Not that I know anyone personally that falls into that category... (he said with tongue buried deep in cheek... see page 27!) Ask about the new Wilderness X series.

Everything floats into Sanctuary Cove but it is a motor boat show at heart and this year that is where the innovation was. But what separates innovation from just plane weird? The question couldn't have been better expressed than by the juxtaposition of Fusion and ... well.. if Popeye came to real life I know the perfect boat for him! The "Investigator" is so quirky that I admit to being charmed by it. A cartoon come to life but you would never have to worry about being indistinguishable in a crowd aboard this funky and special boat. For a more conventional and high performance approach the Fusions were next door as mentioned. This year Jim Gard had a Fusion 40 sailing boat and one of the new Motor cats on display and they set a standard where ever they show. The comfort, accommodation and lately, fuel economy of the cruising cats makes them hard to beat and the Fusion is one of the very best.

**Money can't buy you love... but it can buy you art and that's the next best thing!** "MOJOCREATIONS" .. just love the name.. is a floating gallery. The boat itself is a work of art. Drew Wooler, the builder has made a masterpiece out of an adapted Prescott design cat. He confided the boat probably owed him over 11,000 hours and the boats finish and his epoxy wounds were proof enough for me. Jo Wooler is an artist specialising in stainless steel sculpture that she became interested in as the material was left over from Drew's boat work. They will be circumnavigating Australia and then the world as a floating gallery. Pretty good stuff! [www.mojocreations.com.au](http://www.mojocreations.com.au)



[www.fusioncats.com.au](http://www.fusioncats.com.au)



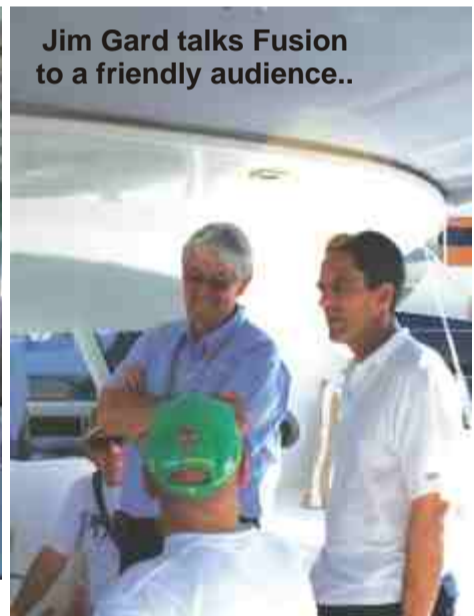
So where is Olive Oil?

The Melges boys had some fun with me.. I wondered at the name of their display vessel and asked a few questions but.. "No comment"!

**So why does TCP spend thousands of \$\$ to attend a show to give away papers?** Good question. The answer is that it is that important to me as a publisher to personally contact as many readers as possible. Is the paper reflecting the communities concerns accurately? Well, the feedback was humbling. Like Earl and Ann from Cardwell that said the trip was worth it to meet up with TCP... and "let me shake your hand, keep up the good work" was a quote heard often. One reader described the paper as "the last free press in Australia." Wow.. I was delighted every time a reader would show up with a list of missing editions to try to fill in from our dwindling collection of back issues. That speaks louder than words. Spending days in front of this stinking computer I'll think of all those people and keep typing. People are passionate about TCP, not just entertained. The corporate/government crowd have their media and TCP is for the rest of us but we can afford to be fair. We don't need a stacked deck to win on facts! The rag is on course and stronger than ever. So for TCP, it was about the people as much as the hardware... so lets see a few photos of the crowd! *see next page.....*



The Schionning crew all smiles!



Jim Gard talks Fusion to a friendly audience..



[mojocreations.com.au](http://mojocreations.com.au)



"No Comment"! Where have I heard that before?

*They came in Cars.. They came in Boats...*

*They even came in Wheelchairs but they came to the show!*



That's Lynn of *Rose'A'Lee & CatNap* in the wheelchair, Jenny Maruff of *Tropicalcat* cheesing out, me, Steve of *Rose'A'Lee & CatNap* and Dudley of *Tropicalcat*



Here is an X files special.. David and Carol at right were just telling me about a spectacular Whale Shark sighting they had and I mentioned we had a really good one a while ago written by Maxine Holman from WA and right then who should show up but Maxine! We had never met before... very spooky! That is her pic she is pointing to on TCP # 19. Maxine reports they have just bought another boat and her feet were barely touching ground! Congrats to the Holmans.



John and Wanda Hitch of 60 foot cat *X-IT* are always fun company. John has built and designed a lot of notable boats and Wanda's specialty is stirring up trouble! If she gets into publishing I'm out of a job!



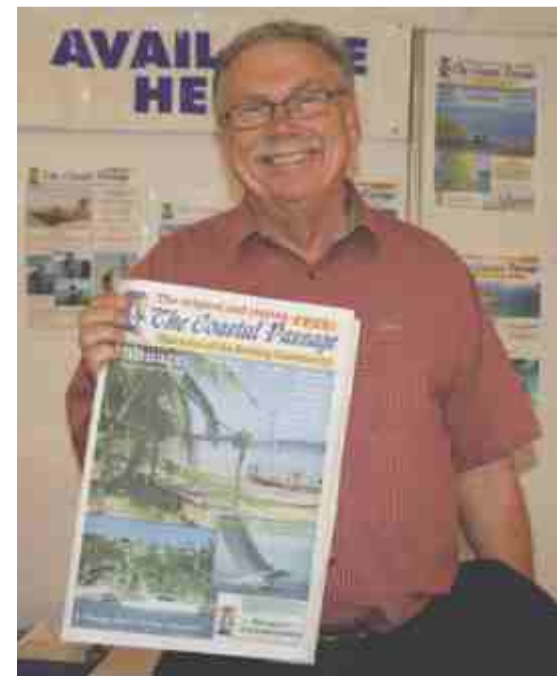
Liliana and Ross cruise on a Riviera. No really they do! They came to the show to sign up for a bigger one. And yes... big wash aggravates them too. If you see a 46 footer chuffing along at 8 knots it could be them.



As if I needed more proof that dynamite comes in small packages.. Kate Lovegrove of *SV Delight* stood up to the might of the state to win a fight for boaties. See TCP # 29. Thanks Kate!



Bill and Sandy built *Foreign Affair* a very nice power cat. The story of their recent voyage to New Caledonia was in last edition. We hadn't met before and Bill had no idea what I looked like but reckoned I looked like a boat builder so I was OK.... So, you got low standards Bill... I like that in a friend!



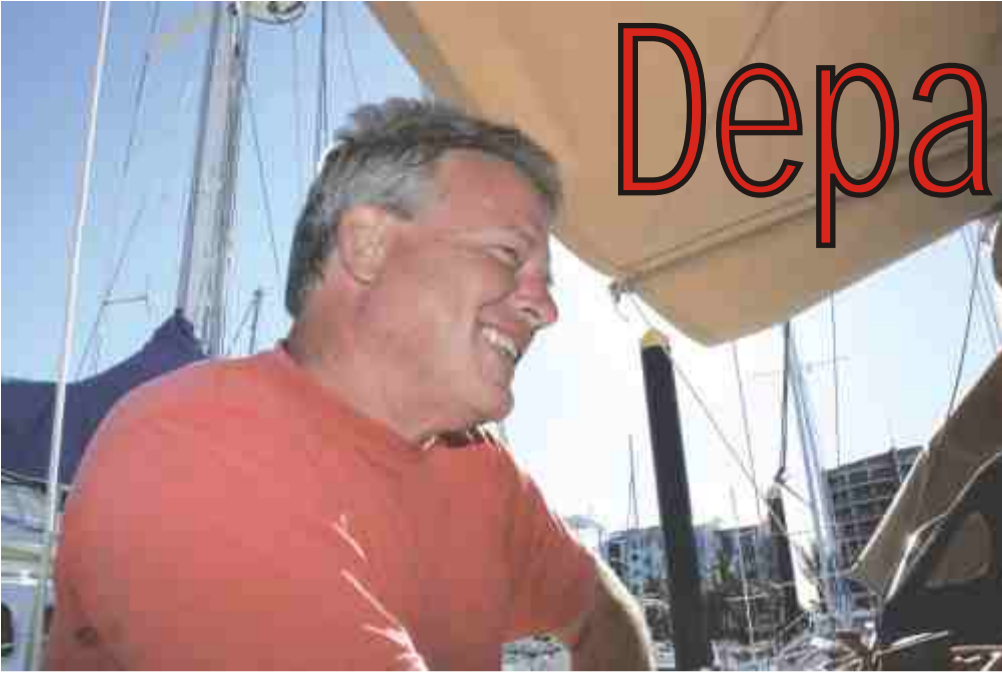
**Not enough room!!! Thanks to all that stopped in special to say hi! Your comments, suggestions and even friendly insults were all welcome.**

Evan Johnston got TCP set up at the RQYS because he just liked the paper. Thanks for clearing the way for us Evan! RQYS is a great club.



That's Carol and Neil at left. Neil is "Cool Cats" the builder of a series of great Oram cats. If they ever don't sell he may keep one but they keep going... Carol says "next one"! Peter at far right and his partner who was celebrating her birthday at the show. That's a good idea!





# Departure Stress

**By Stewart Mears, SY *Velella***

For me, departing the confines of a marina berth, is usually accompanied by a feeling akin to having farted in a lift. There's an urgent need to get out at the next floor....any floor will do! At the same time, the prospect of the open sea, has me just shy of crapping my pants with apprehension. There's a disconnect here; I know.

Lily, my partner in life and things nautical, attributes this to a dysfunctional attitude towards commitments generally. The truth is that I know a few things that she doesn't! The first is that the list of shit that *could happen* out there, is a long one. Lily having not had quite my range of 'experience', doesn't know the half of it. The second thing is that the shit that *actually happens*, likely isn't even on the list.

Truth is, the departure goddess waits just outside every Marina break-water: "so

sailor boy ...are you really game to leave your security blanket & come out here ...where I can play with your nerves till you're a namby pamby, ego-shredded, parody imitation of a real sailor?" This observation is based upon a rich store of experience. November 2007 in fact, was the occasion of our most recent 'departure event'. I recall it being a bright Whitsunday day as we exit Mackay Inner Harbour, wind light from the southeast, the harbour groin receding gradually into a haze of coastal clutter. The engine is cut; *Velella's* mainsail heeling the boat gently onto a starboard tack. Lily goes below to stow the last bags of stores into their respective containers; order being conducive to mental stability and calm on these occasions. How well she knows me! We set a heading for Percy Island some 80 nautical miles to the south east. In the silence of sailing mode, my nerves are descending from their jangled state of high alert.

"Jesus Stuart there's water over the floor boards!"

"Really Lily?" Now with an old wooden boat, built traditionally, plank on frame, a bit of a leak is usually more or less a manageable event. Hell... we have an array of pumps suitable for the occasion, including a big mother of a Johnson. Besides, *Velella* always leaks a bit in the early days of a sailing trip, particularly after a spell at the marina dock, in the shimmering heat of a Queensland summer. These are the flimsy threads of hope to which one clings, in that nano-second of denial before one's bowels turn to water. Plunging below & tearing up floorboards, I see no evidence of leaking in the usual places, but it's pouring in big-time from *somewhere!* Crawling up behind the pilot bunk, torch in hand, I see it; a bubbling well-spring of horror, shafted by flickering streaks of reflected daylight coming from *outside!* The location is buried under the cockpit and exquisitely inaccessible. "So smart-arse imitation of a real sailor man...what're you going to do now?" The Johnson pump that has capacity to outrun the marina hose at full bore, is by now pushing to keep up with the flood. A bee's member from full throttle panic, my mind is roiling with torment. If we turn around with tail between legs, I can see the smirk on Pete's face; sitting up there on the Travel Lift... a devastating remark on the tip of his tongue. The thought is hardly an inducement.

Mmmmm! The 'might work' solution that finally crystallizes in my pea brain takes the form of a quart of your best Mesopotamian roofing tar, sometimes referred to by old shipwrights, as 'black jack'. Of course one has to go over the side to trowel the stuff on. It seems preferable to sinking! An exhausting hour later and 'inelegant' hardly describes the

desecration to the topsides paint job, ...but the in-rush is now reduced to a dull roar.

When finally some semblance of normality returns and rational thought becomes possible, the stress of the foregoing is an excuse I suggest for a change of plans, namely a stop off at Keswick Island; a little drink to settle the nerves and a good night's sleep. Next morning, relaxed and full of the delusion that we've been 'tested and survived', the anchor is raised and the heading once again set for Percy Island. Motoring into the stillness of a morning calm, my drift into reverie is suddenly shattered: "Jesus Stuart there's a strong smell of diesel down here!"

"Really Lily!" Oh fool you... to think that side-stepping *your* karmic load was remotely possible....out here!! After all you moron...that's why boats were invented... isn't that the truth?

"Ah Lily...yes it surely stinks of diesel down here!" But do I really want to know why? The truth is...in my heart... I don't! Nevertheless, the source soon becomes apparent. A hose from the fuel pump to the injectors has burst, spraying diesel everywhere but chiefly into the back of the alternator. A fire!!! "Christ... stop the engine!!" Flopping around in the windless calm I tear into my rat-hole inventory of miscellaneous spares (based on anticipations of shit that might happen). Ah ha! We have fuel hose! So the offending section is soon replaced. Problem is however, that the spray of diesel has trashed the alternator which now registers zero charge.

Once again the tropical Whitsundays will be hosting the Multihull Rendezvous. From formula one racers to the most laid back cruisers, there will be something for everyone.

This year's regatta will be run by Abel Point Yacht Club in conjunction with the Whitsunday Sailing Club.

Which will allow all competitors access to secure club grounds for rigging, launching, storage of boats, camping facilities, including toilets and showers, plus onsite bar and restaurant.

For larger boats, Meridien Marinas Abel Point will provide discounted berths (prior bookings essential). There is always the sheltered anchorage of Airlie Beach for the self sufficient!

Courses will consist of a mixture of island passages and around the buoys races depending upon your division.

Don't be shy: join the laid back party atmosphere that the Whitsundays are famous for. Meet new people, make new friends, enjoy some warm tropical sailing and maybe take home a prize or two.

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# "Stress" concludes..

No problem to the resourceful! I'll just check mate that particular move ...by fitting the spare alternator; restored for just such an occasion. Am I not clever to have such foresight? So an hour later we're hitting the starter again, with the spiffy new looking alternator in place. The truth is about to dawn; namely that alternators are not worth 'restoring' because rarely is the job ever done properly on account of ...if it was done properly, it would cost as much as new one and wouldn't be worth doing anyway...a bit like ...'if your mother was your father...you wouldn't be here!' But hitherto my extensive education in 'shit happening' has been deficient on this particular count. "Oh dear!" I am thinking (the realizations dawning in instalments) ....no alternator means ...let me see now...no fridge...mmm can probably deal with that one...no engine....now that's a bit more serious.....and yea gods...no Johnson pump!! The thought of manually pumping out the volume of water still incoming, has my arteries constricting in protest.

In the old days of course; in the days of wooden ships and iron men, they didn't have engines, alternators and all the crap that hangs off them and the real sailors of that era got themselves out of trouble regardless. So much as we might have a 70 year old wooden ship, the analogy ends there. Sailing westward now into the setting sun, on our new course for the coast and the cosy confines of Gladstone marina. I reflect upon the ineffable truth, that I'm not one of them. I really am, as the departure goddess whispers to me from just beyond the break-water: just another one of those namby pamby parodies of a real sailor man.

# Hey Kids, what do you think about sailing around the world..? A Simple Pleasures sailing adventure

By Brett Gray SY, Simple Pleasures

Three years into our originally supposed 6-12 mth's of cruising the coast of Oz [with a 3mth trip to Louisiades] on our beloved Catamaran *Imagine*, we sold and attempted to become "Dirt Dwellers" once again. This was not successful.

A cruising friend had mentioned a year or so earlier of how great it would be to buy a boat somewhere far off and sail it back. These things stick in your mind and bug you until you do the "reasonable" thing and "just do it".

So after much Internet searching, many phone calls and a helpful Ozzie broker to set up two contracts on two boats, we left the kids with grandparents and flew from Bris to Auckland, Auck to L.A., L.A. to Miami, Miami to St Martens, where we were to view and sail the first choice of our prospects. A 3 1/2 yr old ex charter 52 Jeanneau. "Yukk". Not so much misrepresentation, more like "where do you start". Amazing what 3 yrs of charter can do to a boat in the tropics.

So we flew into Guadeloupe. Awesome place with the most beautiful shiny black people we've seen. They arranged a motel within walking distance of our next contender "Balisea". A Dufour 56 [again ex charter]. She looked awesome with all the right lines. Couldn't wait for the morning to arrive, to properly view our "new boat".

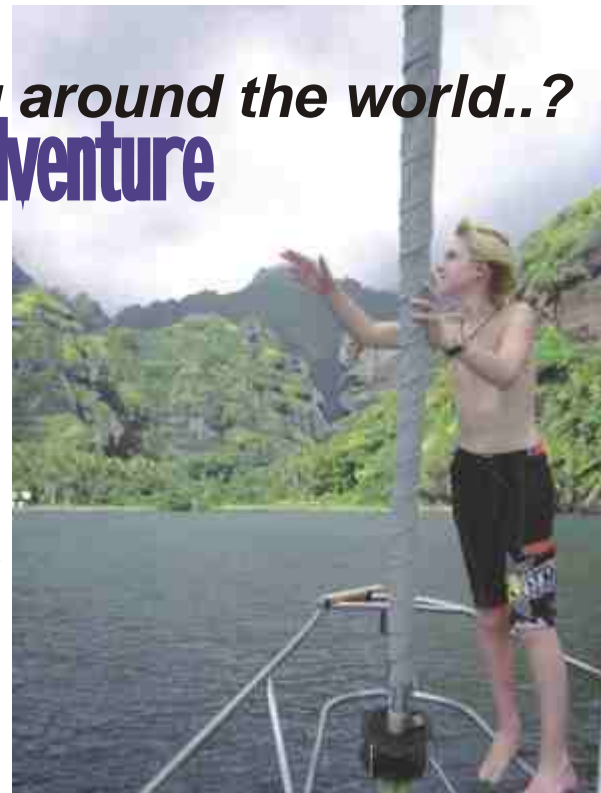
Again disappointment with condition, layout, lack of serviceable equipment [nothing worked], took her for a sail and pointing in 12 knots of breeze, had half an inch of mast pumping up and down. The broker was assuring me that this is normal for a French yacht.

After doing the sums, this boat was a logistical nightmare. Maybe after 6 mths of work, two hundred thousand dollars plus, of new equipment, we might be able to actually go sailing in a bendy boat. Flew to Trinidad, viewed another dilapidated wreck. Visited several other West Indies Islands, finding we had already picked the best out of the bunch.

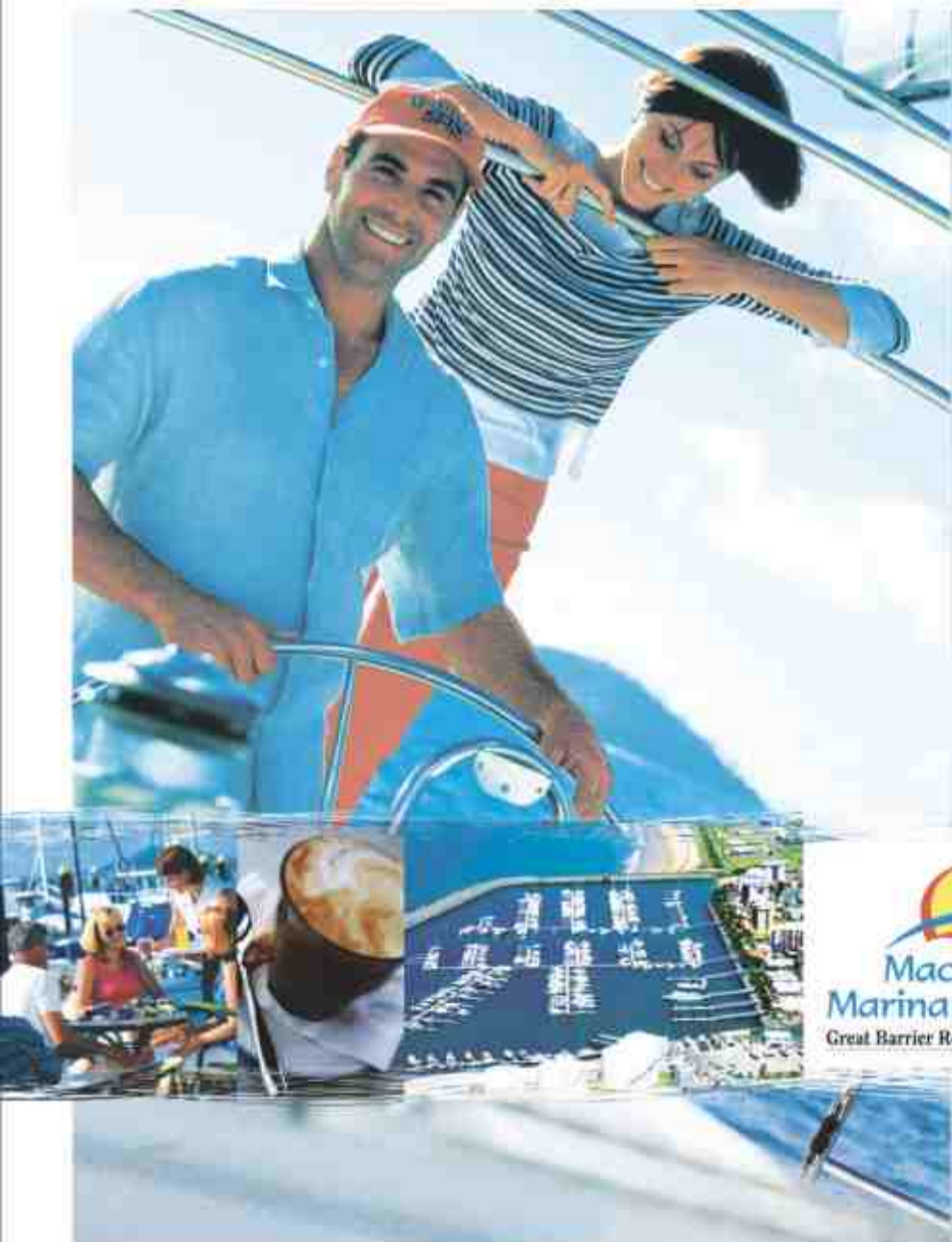
Still boatless and a little demoralised we flew back to the USA, We hunted out a huge brokerage who had many boats. Determined to find "The Boat" for us, our man, with great diligence, wheeled us through boat after boat, until he exhausted his wares. Seems the yanks don't generally upkeep their yachts too well. They look great in the pics via the internet but fail largely upon presentation.

On the morning before flying back to Oz, we found "The Boat". Our broker had not personally seen this one, the elderly Texan owner had recently listed it with the owner of the brokerage. It was everything you could think of and more. Much more. Like always, it was over our price range, but when we did the sums of what we had to spend on the dregs we had viewed, it wasn't all that much more.

continued page 18...



Rockin on in the Carribean...



## A tack worth taking.

It had been a great day, a steady 15 knots kept the sails full and the Whitsundays beckoned ~ The sun was getting low in the west and we needed provisions, so decided to tack and head into Mackay ~ All reports of the new Mackay Marina Village were nothing but positive ~ We dropped the sails and motored to our mooring, secured the boat, jumped off and headed up to explore ~ What we found was a modern and world class facility in an ideal location ~ It was early evening, the cafes and restaurants were busy and the night was starting to coming alive ~ In short we had a ball ~ The next day we discovered even more to the Mackay Marina Village and we extended our stay ~ All we needed was on hand to resupply, or if need be, repair, and continue our journey ~ On the return trip we made sure to make Mackay Marina Village a port of call.



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# Hey Kids... concludes

Unfortunately the owner would not negotiate one dollar so we flew back home boatless, 10k or so lighter for the experience.

Over the next couple of months, we watched others go sailing while we kept trying to find a boat.

Upon my continual [I can drive people nuts] [just ask my wife] ranting to the U.S broker, he finally got in the Texans ear, and we came to a weird type of agreement. If we were prepared to include "Kermit" [like the frog!] a 72yo Texan in on our trip via emails etc, he would sell to us for what we could afford.

Deal done, off I went ahead to see the sale through, Donna and kids trailing some two weeks later. Along with Sue and Wayne [Court Jester], we prepped and filled our boat with food, 2000 ltrs. water, 1800 diesel, and all the necessary stuff to sail long-distance.

Wayne was great with his love of diesel engines, and crawling around in every nook and cranny in the bilge, replacing hoseclamps and anything else he could possibly think up. When your lives are in a craft 2500kms from nearest land, it's a long swim!

It's a daunting feeling steering out into the big blue, knowing we have half the world to navigate before we see the land of Oz.

We sailed the Bahama's, until the likes of Hurricane Dennis sideswiped us [we were late in the season]. So with advice via sailmail from "Kermit", we anchored up with some other cruising yanks in Georgetown Exumas. Got a bit of breeze that night. Had two anchors out with 250ft of chain and rope. In the midst of the wind and rain cells, you couldn't see more than 20 ft. Luckily, all the boats in the bay came through unscathed, so we thought it time to exit the area via Windward Passage and make for Panama. We nearly got there!

Hurricane Emily came fast and further south than anticipated, so under unanimous decision [including Kermit who wrote & said "don't try to outrun hurricanes", we turned 180 degrees and steered north again to Cuba. Sat outside Guantanamo Bay with a gunship holding us off while we asked permission to shelter. After 2 hrs of 10 questions, the yanks turned us away. At that time, they had David Hicks there and obviously didn't want us upsetting the balance. We sailed west to Santiago under a pink/orange early dawn sky of haze, with a halo around the sun. Very eerie. The hurricane went away, leaving us to enjoy the sights and sounds of Cuba at it's finest. Probably the highlight of our travels so far [See - Cat 5 Hurricanes aren't all bad news].

On to Panama, through the canal, and fully stocked we motored out with no wind, looking forward to a pleasant sail to the Galapagos Isles. Yeah! Right! 12 hrs in, we were beating into 24 knots from exactly where we wanted to be. This further increased to 27kn and lasted the entire 7 day journey. Our kids learnt to sleep airborne. If we were in our previous catamaran, we would have broken it into little bits of matchwood. Typical sea's cresting with white foam tops. When we made landfall, Wayne actually fell over on the pavement as it wouldn't move right [too used to a leaning lurching platform]. We all did the right thing, and laughed at him instead of helping him back up!

Galapagos is really weird, its cold and yet it sits on the equator, most likely why all the weird animals live there. We were sitting there eating our \$3 three course meal, me being the quickest eater, found a lump in my soup. Which upon investigation, was a chickens foot. I looked at Kendall, our then 9 yo daughter, and pushed my chicken foot deeper, as she was really enjoying the rich flavour of hers. She worked her way through it till yep, there was one in hers too! Took us a few days before we could get her to eat ashore again. We swam with seals,

We filled up with diesel for \$1.40 per gallon, then set off to cross the largest bit of ditch on the globe with no land.

About 3,000nm. We sailed some, then sailed some more, then kinda sailed further. Bit like Forest Gump's running. You do get into a rythm, bit of school in the morning, afternoon matinee movie, eat lots etc..

Halfway across the puddle, we were motoring on a flat sea, when the engine alarm went off. I quickly slowed to an idle, ran down and lifted the engine hatches to look. Here was water halfway up the engine and gen, and spraying from the fan belt through the cabin. "NOT GOOD".

Switched off and calmly [not the entire truth] started systematically shutting the seacocks trying to figure why we were sinking. With all six of us searching for a hole, we were at least making headway on the waterlevel for now with the bilge pumps. It was 4 or so kms. deep and not going to get shallower for a while. Eventually found the problem - as usual, it was me. I had started the watermaker earlier and had failed to switch the feed to the tanks. Filled the bilge with maybe 1000ltrs. Oops.

Made landfall after 18 days at sea, which in lightish conditions was fairly quick. We all celebrated with champagne. We had sailed a big curve going south to try and find wind. Figured out there wasn't any. Came up for my watch many evenings and found us going due south. Wayne was very intent on not letting sails slap, which was fair enough.

The Marqueses are amazing mountainous Islands. We did some amazing walks, and swam in huge freshwater pools with waterfalls from dizzying heights.

Met three young guys who had bought a \$25k boat some 4yrs earlier and had completed their circumnavigation crossing their path at this particular bay. No fridge, no autopilot but were getting real freedom for minimal outlay. We gave them cold beer, and they gave us stories of their adventure.

We cruised this group of French speaking Islands, experiencing their culture, heritage and ways, before heading to the Tuamotu's. Of all places of beauty, these take the cake.

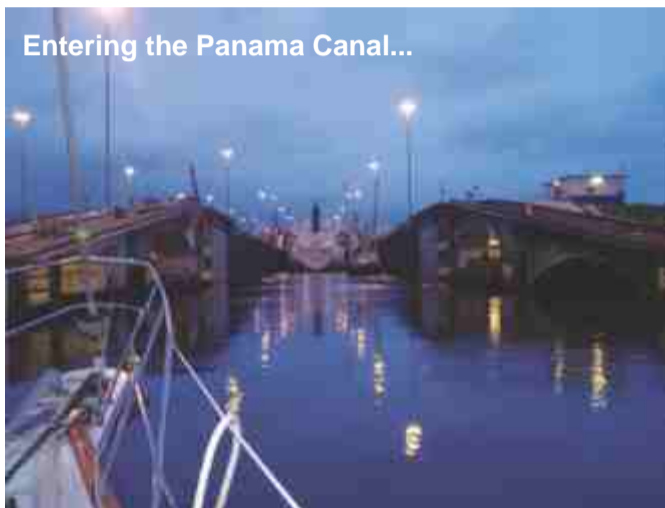
No land higher than 3 mtrs, they are very old formed coral atolls. Most of which have an entrance to the lagoon, however many are so large, that in strengthened winds, the fetch can cause considerable seas within. Locals are again French speaking dark skinned Islanders, very warming and friendly. We noted their tidiness. They rake the leaves on their lawns each day making little piles and burning them off. Spotless everywhere. We traded for black pearls. ie. Two cans of beer for a pearl etc. Seen them here for \$500 of a similar quality. Met Manwell and Julie, a couple from Kauihi, Manwell took us coconut crabbing and cooked these Kauihi style. He doubled me on his Vespa scooter around with our spearguns and divegear looking for places to hunt, while the kids and girls hung out together at their place. We in turn took them sailing to other islands in the group.

We swam with Mantarays and dived in 200ft vision.

Next was on to Tahiti where Wayne and Sue jumped ship and flew home. They have since sailed their yacht to Thailand where they still remain.



Somewhere in the Pacific.. Back left is Rhys then Sue and Wayne of Court Jester. Front left is Brett, Kendall and Donna.



Bob's note; As you may have read in previous editions... The crew made it back to OZ and is now selling the boat (see ad within) and getting ready to take on more/new adventures. There is no telling what except I'm pretty sure it will involve a boat somehow.



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# Lure of the Big Blue!

## More Bass Strait Adventures aboard Tee Pee

Story & photos by Robert Latimer, SY Tee Pee

There's something special about sailing in the open waters of Bass Strait; the deep blue of the waves, the rolling swell, the freedom. Not that there's anything inherently wrong with the confines of Westernport.

It's just that setting a course beyond the green-brown waters of the bay means real adventure. It means escaping the predictable world of the suburbs, of neatly cut lawns, shopping malls and traffic jams and pitting yourself against the elements. It's a primitive urge and a basic instinct not satisfied by such things as trimming the roses, cleaning the car, or growing ripe tomatoes in time for Christmas.

### Surely You Must Be Mad

A few days before heading out, a concerned friend inquired, "Isn't it risky?". Then a close work colleague, (fond of Poker and other games of chance) shook hands with me at the office break-up and said in a serious manner, tinged with a hint of humour, "What do you reckon the percentage chance is that you won't make it back?"

Fortunately, by now, most family and friends have great faith in the good ship Tee Pee and her trusty crew. A faith built on the knowledge that after 30 years of cruising the high seas, everything that could go wrong probably already has and in a strange Darwinian-

survival-kind-of-way, we'd probably be able to handle anything that might in the future, be thrown our way.

### Obtaining Domestic asset

More challenging than most of what Mother Nature can dish up, however, must surely be the act of actually blocking out 15 precious days in the diary; given the myriad of competing activities in the Latimer household. To my great relief, this was done, with the consent of my understanding wife Linda, (who's not so keen on the open-water stuff) along with the OK to take the boys, Matt (21) and James (17). Now, whilst the lads are old enough to make up their own minds concerning holiday pursuits, as many sailors, fathers, husbands and would-be adventurers will understand, obtaining "domestic assent" in such matters, is akin to a following breeze. It's also a good way to remain married, if that's your intention.

### Off At Last

As to the task of preparation, there wasn't a lot of extra work required in getting Tee Pee ship-shape and ready for her journey. And after assessing all the possible "known-unknowns" and in the process, reducing the number of "unknown-unknowns" (to quote our old friend from the US State Department, Donald Rumsfeld) Thursday the 27<sup>th</sup> December 2007 came soon enough and with provisions and gear stowed, we waved good-bye to Yaringa Boat Harbour. It was 4:00pm and with the aid of the outgoing tide we made good time to the San Remo bridge and The Narrows.

As to our final destination ... having worked through a series of possible alternatives, (over the previous few weeks) from Plan A, through Plan B, C, D & E, the final consensus was to head southeast to Deal Island (in the Kent Group). From there we would go south around Flinders Island (in the Furneaux Group) with the return leg taking in a stopover at Port Welshpool. Here, in the interests of returning Matt, James and the fourth crew member, Jeremy, to their studies and part time jobs, a change of crew would take place, before embarking on the final leg home around Wilson's Promontory with three (never-sailed-offshore-before) friends.

So it was that at low tide we made it under the Phillip Island bridge at San Remo, with light fading and night fast approaching. By 9:00pm we were passing Cape Woolami, on the starboard beam with the lead lights clearly visible astern.

### Under, Not Around

Taking the route under the bridge at San Remo, rather than the conventional course past the Nobbies and Seal Rocks, on the southwest tip of Phillip Island, saves around 2-3 hours. However, it's very much a case of doing the calculations and then trusting the numbers, as your instincts keep telling you "you're not going to make it". For the record, the height of Tee Pee's mast is 13.3m above the water, the bridge height is 12.2m and the tidal range is around 2-3m, so at low tide, by rights, there should be 1-2m clearance. (Despite the logic though, I still get everyone to stand on one side as we make the final approach, while I pull the sheets in tight to extract that extra bit of heel.)

The night sail to Deal Island was largely uneventful, with a steady 15-20kt breeze from the northeast enabling us to maintain around 6kts on our southeast heading. The wind moderated to around 5-10kts as the sun emerged over the horizon. The engine was turned on around this time to both keep the speed up and charge the batteries. In the end, we covered the 131 miles in around 24 hours.

### Ode To The Iron Headsail

Now there was a time, in earlier sailing days, when we'd pride ourselves on NOT starting up the engine. Whether it was a reluctance to buy diesel, a desire to prolong the aged engine's last remaining hours of life, or a simple dislike of the thumping noise, I'm not sure, but we were very much sailing purists. Fast forward to today, equipped as we are with a lovely new, (and quiet) 30hp Yanmar and it's a very different story.

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And it's not *just* that we like to average at least 5.5kts when the wind loses its punch. It's that with all the electronic stuff that seems to have found its way on board, (all demanding access to a 12v charge), running the engine from time-to-time becomes an absolute necessity. A quick tally of the electronic gadgetry for this trip included, 2 laptops, 1 handheld gps, 1 handheld VHF radio, 2 iPods and a walkman, not to mention 4 mobile phones.

#### Website Communications

Improvements in mobile communication, particularly in the remote corners of Bass Strait, saw us maintaining a Tee Pee website on this journey, with messages and photos being posted on a regular basis, via our wireless connection, as time and access permitted. [www.teepeeadventures.wordpress.com](http://www.teepeeadventures.wordpress.com) There was also an opportunity for friends and family to post messages on the site, adding a new social dimension to a trip that would, in the past, have removed us all from circulation for a time.

#### The Real Deal

In the two years since our last visit, Deal Island had lost none of its remote beauty and charm. So it was decided to spend a couple of nights in the area, meeting the caretakers and generally exploring, both on land and at sea.

We visited Winter Cove on the east of the island and from there set sail south on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> December, bound for Lady Barron on the southern tip of Flinders Island. On the way we made a brief overnight stop at Roydon Island, (at the northern end of the Furneaux Group) with conditions generally favourable, except for the fast running tides, slowing progress as we made the last approach up Franklin Sound.

#### New Years Eve

The big smoke of Lady Barron was finally reached at 5:00pm on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> December, about 100 miles out of Deal Island, just in time for the New Year celebrations. Every fishing boat in the region seemed to be tied up at the wharf so we rafted up alongside Tamar Pride, a big blue, steel Cray boat, before walking to the only shop in town for some basic goods. After this it was onto the hotel, The Furneaux Tavern, for a healthy serving of fish and chips on real crockery.

The last time we were here, back in 2006, we'd bought a few minutes under a shower great value at just \$5 each. This time we felt clean enough and made our way home in the dark with just a couple of bags of ice to see in the New Year. On board we saw

in the New Year watching DVDs on the computer while drinking semi-chilled bubbly and eating chips and nibbles. She's wild stuff aboard Tee Pee, no question!

January 1<sup>st</sup> saw little action aboard, with signs of movement detected around 11:00am as hunger finally forced us out of our bunks to rummage in the food locker and fire up the metho stove. It was a lazy day, warm and sunny, which we devoted to such things as topping up the fuel and water tanks and chatting to fellow travellers. There was also the second stroll to the shop, where this time the four of us bought and devoured a 2 litre tub of ice-cream with the aid of plastic spoons. It might have appeared better value than individual ice creams, but there is only so much ice cream one person can eat. In retrospect, I think next time we'll need a better reason than ... "*quick before it melts*" to eat so much.

#### Babel Bound

What the next day's sail lacked in distance, it more than made for in excitement. Our destination was Babel Island on the eastern edge of the Furneaux Group, a short hop of just 32 miles. The big test, however, was first getting out into the Tasman Sea via what is known as The Pot Boil and the Vansittart Shoals. Just the names put the wind up me. Then you read the sailing guide warnings and wonder to yourself, "what am I doing!"

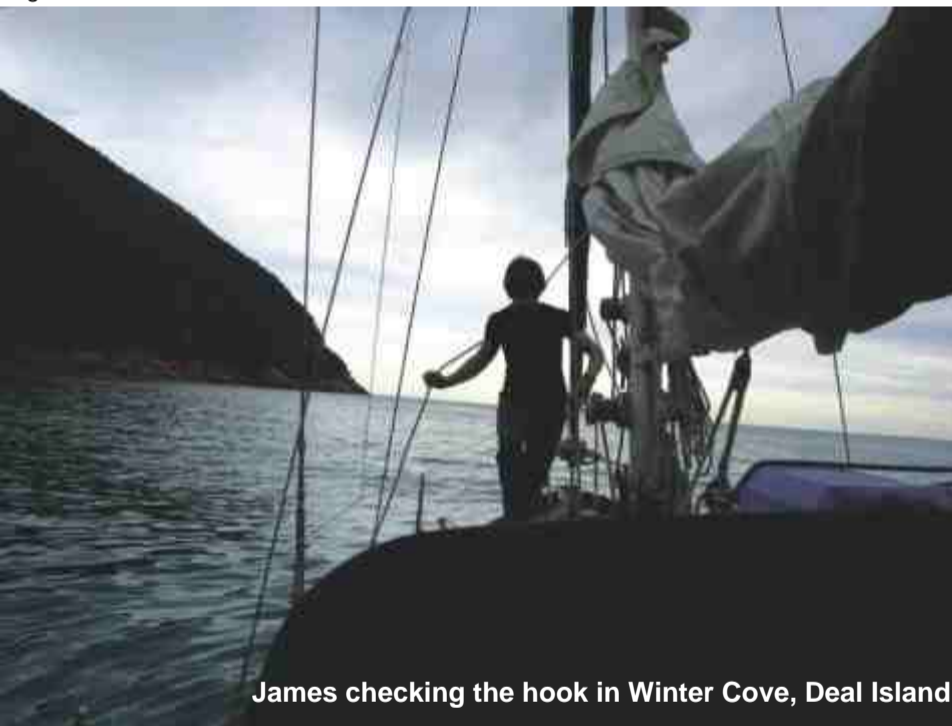
By 6:00am the Lady Barron wharf was well astern, as we made a good 6kts on the ebb tide, taking care to follow the various sets of leads in order to stay clear of shallow ground. But it was the final course through the Pot Boil, into the 15kt wind on roughly a southeasterly heading that created the most anxiety. By now it was past 7:00am and the seas were becoming steep by virtue of the outgoing tide meeting the income wind and with shallow water either side of our narrowly defined path, breaking seas at times appeared on all sides. All the while, a close eye was kept astern as we maintained visual on the white Pot Boil leadlight shining brightly on the horizon. Oh what a wonderful light; a seriously bright light with a range of 10 miles in daylight.

After much pitching, rolling and course adjusting, the 10 fathom line was finally reached and after again giving thanks for our wonderfully reliable engine, (and the draining holes in the cockpit floor) we bore away north in the direction of Babel Island where we hoped to drop anchor and explore.

*continued page 22*



Rob, Jeremy, James and Matt.. looking natural!



James checking the hook in Winter Cove, Deal Island

Erith Island and West Cove as seen from the lighthouse on Deal Island



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# The Lure of the Big Blue.. continues

Babel Island has long held a fascination for me. Its isolation must be one of its most endearing features, along with it being home to so many birds. In particular, the short-tailed shearwater, also known locally as the muttonbird. It's estimated that Babel Island has over 3 million nesting burrows, all on about 450 hectares of land. We regularly see this bird in large flocks while sailing, either feeding or just flying around. But you've got to admire an animal that flies 15,000km north, and then another 15,000km south each year, back to the same burrow. Now that's navigation.

Some clever scientist reckons there are a total of 23 million muttonbirds, in over 260 colonies in southern Australia, with Babel being by far the biggest. It sounds a lot, but the diary of Matthew Flinders in 1798 estimated just one flock to exceed 100 million birds, taking hours to pass and blocking out the sun. Being called a "mutton bird" might help explain its decline in numbers.

Babel Island was reached by lunchtime and after a quick bite, it was time to explore ashore. (We had sought and obtained prior approval from the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council) We also made our way around part of the coast in

the dinghy using the trusty new 2.5hp Mercury outboard, which I'd bought a month earlier to celebrate my wife's birthday. For some reason, she wasn't as excited about the present as I was, but she did kindly consent to letting me borrow the motor for the trip.

Once ashore we kept mostly to the rocky headland and the well-worn paths made by the nesting Little Penguins and other birds. This was to avoid falling through into the burrows and also to keep away from the large, poisonous snakes that inhabit the island. The valley on the southern part of the island is actually called Snaky Hollow. We snorkelled, soaked up the sun, took photos and quietly appreciated the barren isolation of such a beautiful place.

Adding to the excitement of the region were the large areas marked on the Admiralty chart with dotted lines and the word "Unsurveyed"; quite a surprise in this modern age I thought, but certainly a source for increased vigilance.

Later onboard Tee Pee we caught several good sized fish, which kept us in dinners for the next two nights. It was then a case of settling down to an early night in readiness for the day ahead.

## Heading North

The next day, Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> January, saw us away early again in a northerly direction, with a 25kt southeaster and a following sea up our tail. The weather forecast predicted winds tending north through east over the next couple of days, so we were keen to get closer to our ultimate destination of Port Welshpool, while the winds were going our way. On the way to Port Welshpool we stopped for the night at (our old favourite) Deal Island, arriving at 5:00pm; a run of 62 miles in 11 hours (this time without the aid of the engine). It was on this night that we fired up the charcoal BBQ on the stern rail and James cooked a wonderful meal of potatoes and fish, all wrapped in aluminium foil delicious!!

The 51 mile northwest leg to the Port Welshpool Fairway Buoy was completed in 8.5 hours the next day, an average of 6kts. The Hogan Group and Clifty Island passed us by on the port beam, with the seas rising 2-4m before the 25kt breeze.

True to forecast, the wind moved east and then to the northeast with the final 2 hour leg up the Port Welshpool channel being done with the aid of the flood tide (and the engine), with the wind dying to 10kts in the late afternoon.

## Crew Substitution

Port Welshpool, with access to the open sea, and just a couple of hours drive from Melbourne, is one of those quiet backwaters that leave you thinking, "One day this place will really take off". In the meantime, it's the lack of development and the "original feel" of the place that really gets you in. For us, it was to be the crew changeover point, with Matt, James and Jeremy giving way to the new (older) crew of Graeme, Barry and Michael, who would assist with the sail home to Westernport over the coming week.

A lay-day was planned for Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> January and after an 8:00am sleep-in, a cold shower at the nearby toilet block and much cleaning of our beloved Tee Pee, family and friends joined us at 12:00 noon for lunch and a day afloat.

A quick headcount put the passengers and crew for the hour-long jaunt across Corner Inlet to a secluded bay under Mount Singapore, at fourteen. 14!! (I think the website must have broadened the interest) After counting the number of life jackets aboard, (several times) I was amazed to discover that in the event of drama, we had the exact same number. Admittedly, some jackets had seen better days, but had no doubt survived for years under the forward bunk for just such a day as this.

With the anchor down in 3m of water, some chose the energetic options of swimming and beach football, while others preferred to eat, chat and rest, out of the scorching sun. Wind was warm from the northeast at 10kts, seas were slight and for the brief sail out and back, the tides were going our way.

Home at the wharf, it was all ashore for dinner at the pub, with overnight accommodation for most being the local caravan park, except for the new crew, who settled in for their first night aboard.

## The Final Leg Home

Sunday was to be our day of departure, with the happy souls ashore waving us off as we sailed out of sight. A change of weather, in the form of a howling 30-40kt blow from the southwest, however, changed our plans. Instead, it was us doing the waving, after first assuring them that we would sit tight until it all blew over.

Time passed quickly, as we all sat around listening to a reading of Joshua Slocum's, Sailing Alone Around The World, on the iPod. What better choice and with 22 chapters ahead of us, it was a good thing we started listening on day one.

*continued next page...*



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Monday the 7<sup>th</sup> January broke sunny and calm, with wind strength of 10-15kts from the southeast and seas slight. Our objective this day was to make the short hop down the coast to Refuge Cove; an ideal first-day test for my untried crew. All was going well as we picked up the outgoing tide around 9:00am with the engine pushing us along at about 5kts. That's when the temperature alarm sounded. We were about 400m from the wharf and after quickly killing the engine we set about circling back under sail alone. Back against the wharf it was "diagnostic time" as all the possible causes were investigated. After much perspiration, the engine intake hose was prised off the hull-fitting and the grizzly task of extracting the remains of a small fish, thought to be the (thankfully rare) *pescatoria obstructus* was undertaken.

All fixed and we were underway once more within the hour. Dolphins escorted us the last two miles out of Corner Inlet and from here it was a hard right, south-southwest, to Refuge where we dropped anchor around 5:30pm, a distance of 13 miles

#### Not Many Places Like Refuge Cove

Refuge Cove is another one of those special places. Well named for the shelter it affords and a wonderful place to either explore ashore, or relax amidst the gently lapping waves and encircling eucalypt forest.

After a healthy meal of spaghetti bolognese it was off to bed while listening once more to the adventures of Joshua Slocum; by this time, pitting his considerable skills against the vagaries of the south Atlantic.

The next day, Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> January had us sleeping in to the un-seamanly hour of 9:00am, before taking a gentle walk ashore. It was then a short 6 mile sail down the coast to the inaccessible southern corner of Waterloo Bay where we dropped the pick for lunch. A more perfect beach would be hard to find. Pure white sand, sea-blues of all shades, plus the ever-present eucalypt forest; green and inviting from a distance, but dry, hot and forbidding up close.

After much swimming and snorkelling it was back to Refuge Cove for the night. The stars were bright and the sea so still that while doing the dishes in the cockpit, Graeme beckoned us all to come out and identify a particularly bright object. Certainly it was bright, could it be the planet Venus? Then all of a sudden it began to fade. Now that's strange we all thought, given there's no cloud. So it was that after 5-10 minutes of studying and postulating the penny finally dropped. "It's the masthead light from that yacht further inshore!" The night sky somehow lost all its splendour after that.

#### The Honour Board

Wednesday began in a lazy manner, much like the day before. The big task this day, however, was to firmly mount

the Tee Pee sign we had been carving from a piece of driftwood, onto the boaties honour board ashore. The National Parks Service introduced the "Honour Board" many years ago, in a way, to appease the yachts and other craft that up until then had recorded their stopover in paint on the granite rocks that encircled the cove; a tradition dating back decades. Cleaning the rocks of all signs of human interference, has certainly given the place a more pristine feel. But as the passage of time gives currency to this type of graffiti, I couldn't help wonder whether a similar mark, if left by the likes of James Cook, Matthew Flinders, or Joshua Slocum might have gone the same way. Measured by the eco-friendly standards of today, Cook, Flinders and Slocum would be lucky to score a 4 out of 10.

It was also at Refuge Cove that a certain crewmember, (who shall remain nameless) discovered the importance of checking for cutlery in the washing-up bucket before making that final heave. And while we're at it, the lifespan of an "unbreakable" glass coffee plunger aboard Tee Pee, now stands at 18 months. (Having included the above, I should also pass on my sincere thanks to the unnamed crewmember for the wonderful replacements, bought since!)

#### Home Sail Gets Serious

After lunch, the 95 mile return leg home began in earnest as we bade farewell to Refuge Cove and headed around the Prom lighthouse and up the western coastline to Oberon Bay. The wind by now was northeast at around 30kts, straight off the beach, with the sea a tropical turquoise shade under a sunny sky. With the anchor firmly down, we relaxed while listening to several more chapters of sailing Alone Around The World; building up strength for the night sail ahead.

The plan was to head off around 8:00pm in order to time our arrival at the San Remo bridge for the next day's 8:30am low tide. Judging by the strength of the wind, we initially thought we'd make the tide with five hours to spare, but within an hour, our expectations were dashed as 7-8kts under little more than a handkerchief, gave way to 4kts over lumpy seas with the aid of the engine. A small amount of wind returned throughout the night, necessitating several adjustments to the sails, as we each took our turn on watch.

The night was black, the stars were bright and as a special treat we were joined by a pod of dolphin around 2:00am with their phosphorescent wakes weaving their green sparkly magic in all directions.

#### Westernport Once More

Dawn found us closing on Cape Woolami and by 9:00am we were once more approaching the San Remo bridge. From here it was a familiar jaunt up the bay and back to the snug marina berth from where we'd set off just 15 days before. As the temperature began approaching the day's top of 42 degrees, we completed the task of unloading the boat and making our way home, thanks to my ever supportive wife and "ground crew", Linda.

So there it is. Fifteen days aboard, 566 miles, 61 engine hours, a circumnavigation of Flinders Island and some wonderful memories shared. My untried crew did remarkably well and gave the impression of maybe wanting to do it again sometime.

As for Joshua Slocum and the audio recording of Sailing Alone Around The World, we finally made it through Chapter 22 and his return to Boston, just as the Yaringa Boat Harbour came into view and it was time for us to once again re-attach the lines.

Now let me tell you about the plans for my next journey ... A previous Tee Pee adventure (2006) can be found at ... [www.thecoastalpassage.com.au/latimerbasstrait.html](http://www.thecoastalpassage.com.au/latimerbasstrait.html)



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# Before the mast's



and went to work on the opposition. We soon found that we needed two new masts to improve our sailing performance. I was on Shute Harbour jetty one morning talking to two blokes on a 60ft. ketch out on the harbour. I think she was an ex trawler refitted as a salvage vessel. I remarked to the skipper that the masts were good gear, he said he did not like them as they made too much noise in windy weather and that he had plans to swap them with a yacht that was motoring up the coast and in return he would fix the radar on the trawler. He was mumbling about the yacht being two weeks overdue.

It was one of the few times in my life that I had \$1,000 in my pocket, so I duly offered the money for the masts and he could then afford to pay to fix his radar. He said it's a deal if the yacht did not arrive by next week. I sweated for the seven days all the time looking for strange yachts with no masts. On the 7<sup>th</sup> day I parted with the cash and with both vessels alongside the wharf we plucked the masts out of the trawler. We had to make a decision where to position the masts. Because the wheelhouse was over the mizzen mast step we put the main mast aft and the mizzen mast as a fore mast and so she became a schooner.

I remember Bernie Katchor from Nari (another yacht operator) walking past as we were doing the job and remarking that she would sail backwards. He was right if you did not make sure to keep plenty of fore sails and stay sails up. As my old mate Joshua of "Sirius J" said "it's a Jackass rig", but it sailed well on a reach. We had only secured the new masts a couple of days, when a steel yacht arrived with no masts. I felt sorry for him and donated our old mast to him. The last I heard he was still sailing around with it.

The story I think shows that you never know what will come along with the tide, or as an old mate Bill Williams "Capt. Seaweed" used to say "The lord will Provide" or "Ask and you will receive".

## Story & photos by Allen Southwood, MV "Solaray"

Back in 1974-5 my brother Dale and I bought the derelict hull of the Torres Herald 11, a 58ft. ex mission ketch from "Cockie" & Mick Watkins in Townsville's Ross Creek. She was a beautiful hull easily driven and an excellent sea boat, originally built in 1938 by Norman Wright of Brisbane, for the Church of England to ply the Torres Straits.

The hull was completely stripped out with only two rusty fuel tanks & the old 5LW Gardiner diesel sitting on its bed, the deck aft of the engine was missing owing to a fire, but the hull was sound and all red leaded & clean.

Dale and I decided she was like a beautiful women who just needed a new dress and paint to make us proud. We bought a new aluminium dinghy with borrowed oars, an old aircraft compass, chart etc, from "Cockie" with an old mattress in the forward bilge, an esky with a couple of cold chickens and a carton of cold stubbies. We filled the tanks at the motorboat club with 80 litres diesel and amid prophecy's of doom from everyone around except "Cockie". We set sail for Airlie Beach our homeport some 130 miles. I have to admit we were mad, I now know better but it was fun.

We anchored in Cape Upstart bay in the shallows, as we only had a rusty old chain & rope with an admiralty pick anchor that could have been used by Capt Cook, it was so rusty. We had a feed of chicken and a couple of beers. Having no radio we rowed to a nearby trawler & for a few beers he radioed a message to Airlie Beach that we were O.K.

We were thirsty, sunburnt and tired when we were met by our mate Doug on "Sea Roo" with all of our loved ones aboard near Armit Island, and as we slowed down to catch a six pack from Doug, the old engine died.

About 5 minutes later after checking oil etc. etc. it started again and ran sweetly for the rest of the way. We were to find out later that it actually seized in no. 1 cylinder, owing to a build up of salt etc. in the water jacket, and owing to the mass of the engine and large amount of wear, it would cool quickly and start almost straight away.

I should mention that the two Oregon masts were lashed to the deck for the trip down. One had been cut in half to see if it was rotten, it wasn't.

After building a cradle for the Torres Herald on the bank of Muddy Bay at Airlie Beach, Dale and a team of locals worked full time to

install watertight bulkheads to survey requirements, fit bunks, galley and a wheelhouse aft. All this took about 9 months. At the time I was busy with our first charter vessel "Empress" and "Nagari" doing fishing trips and charters around the reefs and islands. When we put the wheelhouse aft, we considered that she would hang on the anchor better for fishing, as that was our main business. At that time the 42ft. ketch "Nari" was very busy doing day sailing out of Shute Harbour with fishing included.

We then decided to join the two sections of the Oregon masts together and used the old main mast position; we scrounged an old Jib

## Torres Herald some thirty years ago with her "jackass rig"

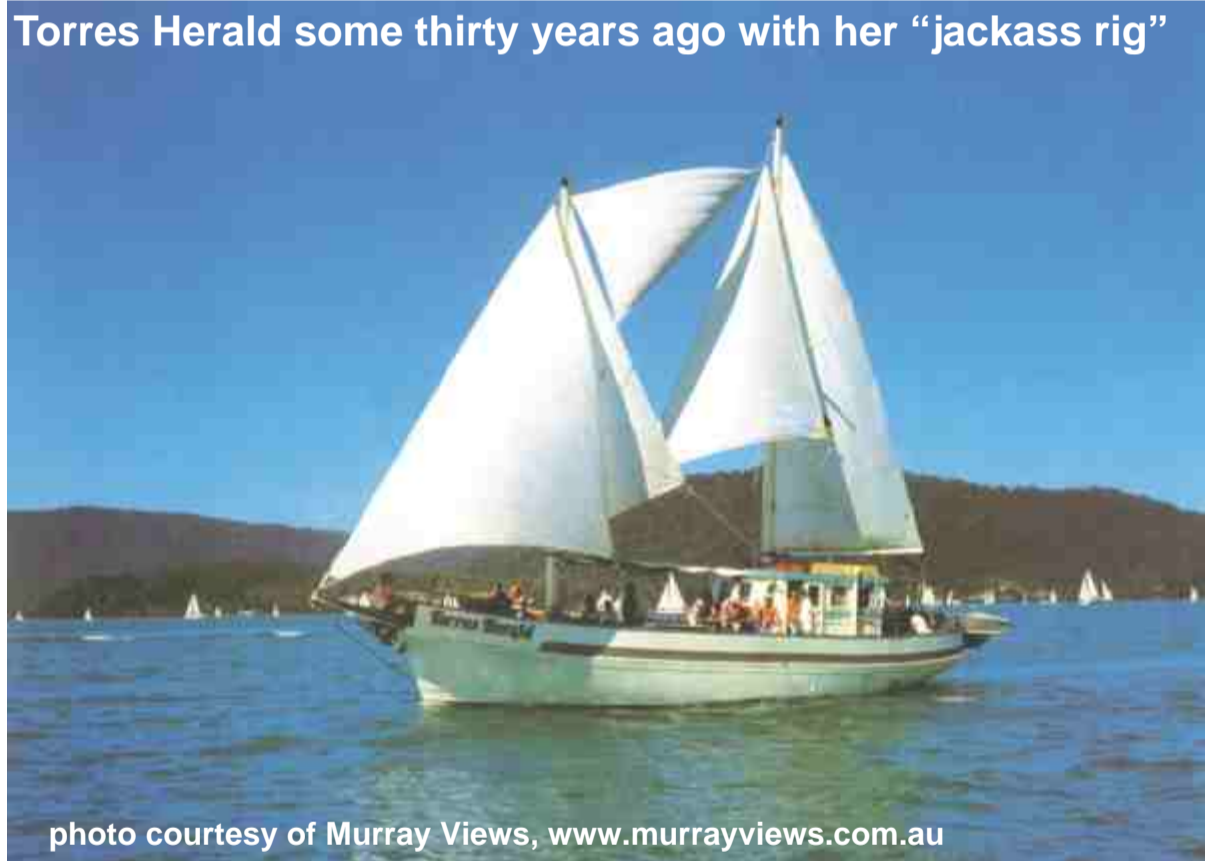
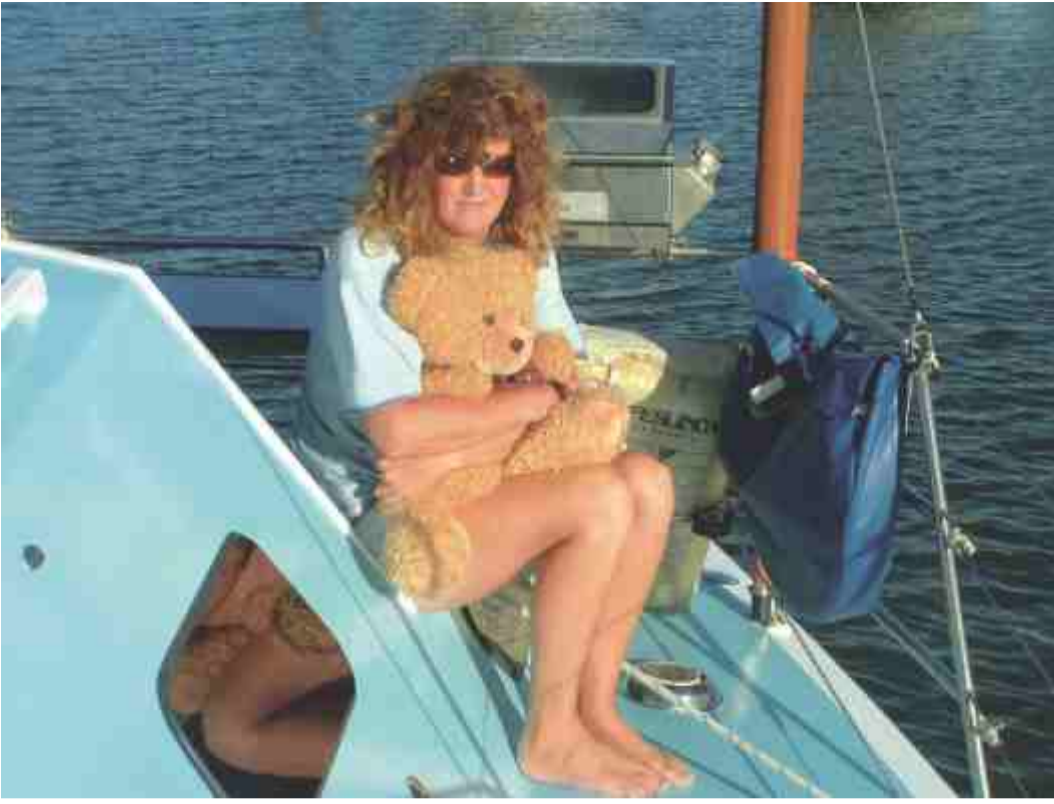


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# It's all about Teddy Bears, or...



## Essentials for living on a boat from a woman's perspective

By Wendy, SY *Absolutely*

We women all know living aboard a boat means balance, seasick pills, the ability to do ropes (as well as the captain) and a sense of humour. We also know there are single sailors out there hankering for a first mate. Has there ever been a check list of absolute necessities that encourage women to stay on boats? Maybe not.

From conducting a detailed and in depth study of this topic, number one priority appears to be teddy bears. Skippers please note that these faithful companions never growl if you miss the mooring with the boat hook, or if the bog roll hasn't been replaced and are always willing to listen

with a comfort hug thrown in for good measure. They don't take up much space (providing one bear will suffice) and are low maintenance. They never, ever, ever get scared.

Bottle openers rank nearly as high as teddys. These don't need to be multi purpose as they are carefully hidden away from people who may need a hammer, screwdriver or paint mixer in a hurry. Absolutely indispensable, these gadgets are always on hand for sundowners, pickmeups and a quiet swig in the galley. Even hardened goon guzzlers have one in case of gifted bottles.

Family photos are next, with grandchildren higher on the list than siblings, preferably attached to every vertical surface and some not so vertical. Canny skippers should not allow such blatant displays of affection as it prompts expensive flights all over the place, often at inopportune times, however a discrete album that can be removed to a 'safe' place whenever more than 60% of chat revolves around the 'family', is suggested.

A working head, preferably electric, has to be up there in the top ten. Skippers must remember that women sit down *every* time, and while needs must in a bucket or similar, 'needs must' rhymes with emergency, and I mean *emergency*. Fixing a broken loo must be done immediately or risk losing your galley wench. This is not negotiable.

Mirrors are indispensable to women, however in making sure there is an accessible mirror on board, skippers are advised that it should be coverable for those times when his mate *really* doesn't want to know exactly what she looks like. A 6"x4" hand held mirror doesn't cut it, especially if it is promoted as a full length mirror by suggesting it is held above the head to enable a view right down to the toes. Handy to have just near the door though, for those quick checks just before visitors climb aboard.

Now to the skipper himself. Those of you in the more experienced age bracket will know that lots of compliments, hugs, smiles (yes, even those through gritted teeth), will get you a long way. If you didn't know that, you should. Never show fear; it's contagious. Help to clean up where possible, especially your own mess. Pretend to prioritize things like a shower before bed, clean sheets and veggies for tea. In the case of an absolute beginner who has never set foot on a boat before, learn to identify things on the boat by colour. The mainsail rope is not the mainsail rope, it is the yellow rope with the blue things on it. Winches are 'that silver thing with rope wrapped around it'. She will get the hang of it eventually.

If all else fails, my skipper suggested handcuffs, ball and chain and lockable doors. These are negotiable depending on A; how much time you are prepared to spend in jail, B; how badly you need female company, and C; how far off land you managed to get before locking the aforementioned doors.

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# Swinging the lead down in

# Pumicestone Passage

Story & photos by Norm Walker,  
MY Peggy-Anne

Yeah I know, I'm supposed to be retired. Got a call back to arms from my old employer and with the way the stock market and our super nest egg has been decimated lately, thought that it might be prudent to do a couple of weeks of toil to boost the cruising account. Anyhow a couple turned into five and we were lucky that we had friends with an empty pontoon at the back of their ranch in Newport Waterways where we left the boat.

So now we're back on board. The provisioning has been done, as has the refuelling. Our plan is to head north (of course) for the season. We're in no hurry so decide to take the Pumicestone Passage route up behind Bribie Island and cross the bar at Caloundra. No mast and shallow draft makes this very doable. We overnight off Bongaree (southern end of Bribie) just to get the tide right for the trip further up. Next morning as we get the boat ready to depart, we punch the button on the Chart Plotter, but didn't get the usual chirpy greeting beep or the text that says Hi I'm ready to take you to your next destination. The bloody thing was dead. Didn't even give us one of those fault codes, that you don't have a clue of the meaning, cause you chucked the book out a few years back. Just a blank empty screen. Checked the power to the unit, all O.K. Turned it on and off and on. Just a blank empty screen. Pressed every button twice and then with fingers and legs crossed tried the unthinkable and pressed many different combinations two at once. Just a blank empty screen. Shit this is getting serious. How the hell are we going to find our way around now.

We send the plotter on a little trip to Sydney to the plotta docta. (I'd register

that name if I was into electronics)He tells us he'll take a look but it could take a while. Bongaree is a great spot, but we really do want to make some miles.

Hold on, I seem to remember in a far away galaxy, a long, long time ago, when charts weren't raster scanned, they were made of paper. Come to think of it I think I have one of this area, stuck away in the bilge somewhere. After a lot of filtering through a bad filing system (It takes the now defunct plotter, about a millisecond to carry out the same procedure) I find the required chart. It's eight years old, but I don't think the land has moved that much. Will have to revisit Variation and Deviation and something I remember from way back about, Timid Virgins Making Dull Company.

Yes, I think we can do this.

**Hold the bus!** When the plotter went on holidays, we also lost our depth sounder. Bugger!!!

*A great reason not to have too many systems in the one basket.* A lot, if not nearly all new age navionics, have many systems displayed on one screen. So if the unit fails you lose the lot.

This Pumicestone Passage is pretty dammed shoal in a lot of places and we've got some pretty expensive parts hanging out of the bottom of this boat. On the plus side, it is marked laterally for it's entirety. We really do need a depth sounder though, just for peace of mind. Why don't we make ourselves a lead line. Got plenty of fishing sinkers on board and all we need is a bit o string with some knots in it. Marvellous!!!! I suppose we should tie the knots in at fathom intervals, but we decide

to go for metres, as we understand them now.

O.K. we're set. We've gone from a \$5000 piece of electronic wizardry to a 20c sinker on the end of a string. But hey! This is how Captain Cook used to do it.

Off we go. 1800 rpm please engine room, and be prepared to stop all engines.

Captains on the con. First mate in the bows calling "By the mark 5" Even the dog knows we don't know what the hell it means. And so we go on for most of the day, sounding our way along Pumicestone Passage.

We navigate past Gallagher Point, The Stockyard and Mission Point. It's a winding track and getting shallower. Once we get to "The Skids", then it gets really shallow. "It's only half a metre"!! We are making slow progress on a rising neap tide, A guy off a houseboat, comes alongside in a tinnie and enquires if we know what we're doing. Thinks we are nuts. We push on unfazed. We end up touching and decide to anchor and check out the passage ahead in the dinghy. The channel is well marked but we found that by taking an unmarked route around an island gave us better depth. We used "Brownies Beacon to Beacon" as well as the chart which gave a better idea of the buoyage.

We sneak through the "The Narrows" and find a bit more depth, anchoring in 1.8 metres. We do the calculations to make sure we're not going to be on the bottom overnight. A great sunset gives promise of a calm night and the good thing is that tomorrow mornings tide will be half a metre higher than the one we just had.

By now we thought that we were through the worst of it, but to our dismay "The W's" were shoal and very curvy. The lead line didn't let us down and with a bit more advanced dinghy sounding we negotiated our way through. From here the rest of the trip was a soda, with two and sometimes three metres of water under our bottom.



By mid morning we find ourselves anchored in "Blue Hole".

We made it!

What a great spot for sundowners. We have to admit that having a draft of only .7 of a metre made this trip a lot less stressful. Locals say that any vessel drawing less than 1.1 metres can do the trip as long as you work the tide.

Although challenging, we reckon that it was a bit of fun "swingin the lead."

Maybe we'll use this method and not get the electronics fixed at all. I don't think so.

We got the news from the plotta doc a week later that the plotter had died on the operating table. So we broke out another 40 boat units (we don't use dollars, it's too scary. 1 boat unit = \$100) to replace the dead machine.

The new plotter has all the bells and whistles and we were told was a steal at that price. Unfortunately it is also a two in one unit, so we're going to keep the lead line just in case.

Wonder if there's any more work going, so I can get a few boat units back???????????



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# The New Offices of TCP .... Progress report!



For those of you that are new to this, I am building this boat to accommodate production space for this paper. Producing from an office risks TCP becoming like the others. I started this thing barefoot and am not ready for the white shoes yet! During this last cycle so much has been done that to feature an account here would take half the paper... or more. For a more complete report go the web site and click on the link on the home page. You can't miss it. Some brief notes on the photos.. the hull at above right has been flipped over and work on the outside begun. The junk you see piled on top is holding down a layer of plywood being glued in that will be used for a buffer when grounding. She will be a beach cat. The hull immediately above is nearly ready to flip. Once both bums are done they will be joined. the pics at lower right show the keel panel in place on the forms and then further at right 4 days later. The cloth laying about that pic is not fibre glass but "peel ply", a protective covering that is removed after the epoxy has set or when you get a round toit. All up the project owes me 38 days not including time for preparation like the tent. Keith and Patti of *Speranza* dropped by for a couple days to work. Keith couldn't wait to get stuck into the epoxy... with a case of obvious brain damage like that I figured I could talk him into helping flip a hull... he had to think about it (see below left) as did I but somehow us two skinny guys did it! Cheers, Bob



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# The 28th Annual Bay 2 Bay Regatta

by Bob Norson



Last year I grabbed my camera for a go at shooting this great event for the first time. I was impressed! A fantastic fleet and good sports. As a courtesy to any event covered by TCP I offered a disc of the photos taken to any participant. Figured we might mail a couple or a dozen... HOW WRONG I WAS!! We lost track but it was a huge and friendly response. There is something about this crowd that clicked. So when this rolled around I intended to do the thing again. I drove my "media boat" (10ft tinny and 6 hp outboard) down to Gary's Anchorage to meet the boats coming in for the first leg from Tin Can Bay (Bay 1) and next day intended to catch the fleet coming into Hervey Bay (Bay 2) but sometimes the best laid plans....

So here are a couple of pics taken at Gary's Anchorage which I would guess was the scene of much fun that evening if I have any measure of the crowd.

Next year I will endeavour to insure I will be out there. If I have to swim! For results of this spectacular event see

[www.herveybaysailingclub.org.au](http://www.herveybaysailingclub.org.au)

And expect race notice again to be mounted on the TCP web site in advance of the event.



Thanks to Brad Poulton of Misty II for the very interesting pic above. Brad took this the day after the race on the way back to Tin Can. Obviously.. a light day. Above right was looking from the anchorage south as the boats were coming in around the shoal. Evergreen, last years big winner is on the right in this pic. At right is my specialty, catching that embarrassing moment! Immediately below is a shot that gives an idea of the gathering crowd and below that the row of smug Farriers and other multi offenders who no doubt had been there for hours waiting for the rest to show up....



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The 600 mile downwind race began in 1976 after a chance visit to Ambon in the Spice Islands by a Darwin local and has since earned a reputation amongst returning yachts for textbook "champagne sailing".

This year the race will be hosted by the Dinah Beach Cruising Yacht Association for the second time and hopes are high that the popular annual sailing event will continue to grow and attract more intrepid crews from far and wide. This year's race organisers say the excellent facilities Darwin offers for yachts and their crews, teamed with July's perfect weather and packed social and cultural calendar combine to make the race an attractive event for sailors world-wide.

For the first time a rally will be held between Darwin and Ambon and beyond in conjunction with the official race, opening up the event to recreational yachts. Yachts traditionally follow 'the rhumb line' from Darwin through the Arafura Sea past the Indonesian island of Barbar onto the Banda Sea and then sail into the tropical harbour of Ambon, where crews are greeted by enthusiastic locals and treated to an unforgettable

cultural experience. Returning yachties tell stories of the "overwhelming hospitality, scenic beauty and great food" experienced whilst visiting Ambon. The presentation ceremony held on the Saturday following the race start is a ceremonial gala event attended by the Governor of Maluku, the Lord Mayor of Ambon and senior government representatives from Jakarta and the Northern Territory. The next day skippers and crews invite excited locals on board for a sail around the harbor truly a memorable experience for any yachtie.

Many international skippers use Ambon as a starting point to explore some of the Indonesian Archipelago's 13,000 islands. Some sail north to Manado and onto the Raja Muda Selangor Regatta in Malaysia, while others head southwest to the gorgeous Buton Passage, and then onto Macassar, Bali and beyond. The Darwin to Ambon Yacht Race offers a rare and rewarding sporting and cultural experience for sailors of all ranks. It's a great community event that's worth your support, so why not enter this unique tropical challenge and cruise Australia's tropical north and Indonesia's enticing Spice Islands this July!

For more information visit [www.darwinambonrace.com.au](http://www.darwinambonrace.com.au) or lodge and expression of interest at [info@darwinambonrace.com.au](mailto:info@darwinambonrace.com.au)

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Rally Director Peter Seymour, who visited Mackay in February, commented: "I was delighted with my visit to Mackay Marina and to the city. Australia has always been an important stopover for our crews, who particularly need good boatyard facilities for refitting their yachts halfway round the world.

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"Our visit to Mackay promises to be a great success and we look forward very much to arriving in August."

Further details of the Blue Water Rally with stories and pictures from the fleet as they sail towards Mackay can be found at [www.bluewaterallies.com](http://www.bluewaterallies.com).



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# Dud & Dave go to...



The harbour in Noumea

Story & Photos by Jenny Maruff, SY "Tropical Cat"

Dud (Dudley Young), Dave (Dave Macbeth) and Patrick Barker left Brisbane on Friday August 3<sup>rd</sup> at 1 p.m. Four and a half days later, they were in Noumea, tied up at the marina at Port Moselle. Pat flew back to Brisbane on Saturday August 11<sup>th</sup> and I flew in. I am the cook and I speak French). On Sunday, we went to the big market near the Marina and stocked up on fruit and veg. Then we drove the hire car out to Carrefour, a huge supermarket on the outskirts of the town and did the rest of the food shopping. Early Monday morning, we took the washing in to a nearby laundry and persuaded the manageress to have it washed and dried by 1p.m. The car was returned, the marina fees paid and TROPICAL CAT motored out of the marina by 1.30 p.m.

That night, we anchored at an island in a big bay opposite the domestic airport. There were two local yachts there. At night the shore lit up with thousands of lights. It was a tranquil night. No thudding noises of kids running up and down the marina walkway.

We were up at sunrise and sailed off when the sun strengthened. Later that morning I took a photo of Isle Porc Epine, which looked like a cushion stuck with pins, the pins being the pines, araucaria columnaris, which were commented on by Capt Cook. We had lunch at the Baie Ngo where we could see two nickel mines and a coconut plantation which were typical features of the New Caledonian landscape. We went around to the Baie Ire and had a walk on the maroon sand. Dud found four juicy coconuts. That evening, he caught a remora, which was cut up for bait.

The next day we motored over to the Baie de Prony, the best known bay south of Noumea. It has a massive nickel mine with a giant conveyor belt and its own wharf. Tucked away on the other side of the bay, we found the remains of a 19<sup>th</sup> century penal settlement set in a sub-tropical jungle. There were some amazing banyan trees that had spread their roots over the walls. A natural spring gushed into a water trough. The locals had restored and painted the powder magazine. Dudley picked

up a pair of Raybans near it. We walked on to a village built on the site of the convict settlement. We saw the log slide used for the prisoners and sent to Noumea. Here we were approached by a Frenchman who had lost his Raybans. We handed them over.

That night we anchored in a quiet cove. We could see the lights of the mine in the distance. We awoke to birdsong and a beautiful morning. After breakfast, we left for the Isle of Pines. It was a spectacular sail through the reefs to get to the Ilot Moenoro in an area called Gadgi. There are strange coral outcrops topped by trees. The overall effect is like a mushroom. It was cool, windy and overcast but the sand on the little beach was white and the water aqua. There were six yachts in the anchorage. It is a favourite spot for underwater activities.

Next morning was grey and drizzly. It fined up a little in the afternoon so we moved on to the Baie de Kuto. This is where the action is. The cruise ship PACIFIC SUN was moored at the entrance. Lots of boats were anchored off a beautiful beach. There was a large wharf for the tourist cat and a small jetty where dinghies could be tied up and yachts could come in to fill up with water. The convict ruins were nearby. A shop that sold fresh bread was in walking distance. Great!

BUT it was Friday and the guidebook said there was a market at Vao, the principle town on Saturdays so we sailed off to find it. We stayed in a quiet bay opposite the town that night. Early next day, we went across to the Baie de St. Maurice, anchored TROPICAL CAT and went ashore to find the market. The natives were friendly and showed us the way. There were several yachties there buying up loads of fruit and veg. They had come by car. We found the local store that sold fresh baguettes, frozen meat, eggs and everything else you might need. Dudley bought a Magnum. On the sail back to Kuto we had guests. At the market Dud had met a N.Z. couple who had never been on a catamaran. They jumped at the offer of a trip on TROPICAL CAT. They couldn't believe how well the boat sailed in a light wind and how flat it sat in the water. I served morning tea. When we got back to Kuto, we met



Dave and Dud inspect the "border security"

their friends Jenny and Eddie. We then met a cruising Swiss family and an Austrian couple. There were a dozen international yachts in the Baie de Kuto.

We spent four more days around the Isle of Pines. This is the most famous beauty spot in New Caledonia but we could not catch any fish and it kept raining. Dave was fed up so on the fifth day we left for Noumea. By 3 pm, we were back in the big bay opposite the domestic airport anchored at the Ilot Ngea.

In the morning, we sailed around to Port Moselle. It was raining. Unfortunately, the marina there was full so we contacted the marina at Port du Sud. Luckily, we got a berth. A French friend, Joseh helped to tie us up. He lived at the marina on his motor cat. That night we went to a great restaurant with Joseh, his family and his friends Danielle and Regis.

Next day, a Sunday, Dud, Dave and I took a bus to the Jean-Marie Tjibao Cultural Centre. Its architecture is amazing. Inside are paintings, sculpture and photographs of the Kanaks of New Caledonia. It also has a fine library and bookshop.

Monday was sunny and windy so we sailed off up the West coast to the Baie de St Vincent. We stopped at a coral island the Ilot Mba where we saw the famous tricot rayeh sea snakes resting up the beach and digesting their food. We also saw sea cucumbers in the shallows. The weather was sunny and the scenery was pleasant with hills and bays and occasional mining scars but no fish.

Then finally on August 31<sup>st</sup>, our twenty-fourth day in New Caledonia, Dave caught a beautiful coral trout on the trawling line. We were doing 3kts with the jib half out, drifting over coral when the fish jumped up on the lure. Encouraged by this, Dud and Dave motored out towards the reef where they landed a cod, a parrot fish and a mackerel.

continued next page...

The Bonhomme Rock at Bourail



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# New Caledonia

After that, we went into the bay near Bourail and anchored under a cliff. It was a long dinghy ride across the bar and into the river. We tied up at the Dive Club ramp at the beach side suburb of La Roche. I asked a woman walking on the beach about the distance to town. She said it was 6 kms. There was no bus or taxi so people hitched. However, if we wanted to go into town, she would give us coffee next morning and a ride into the supermarket.

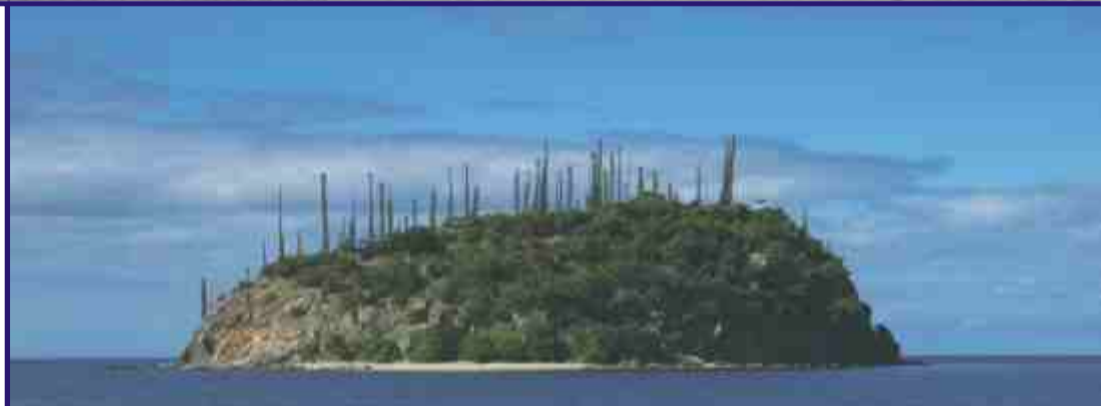
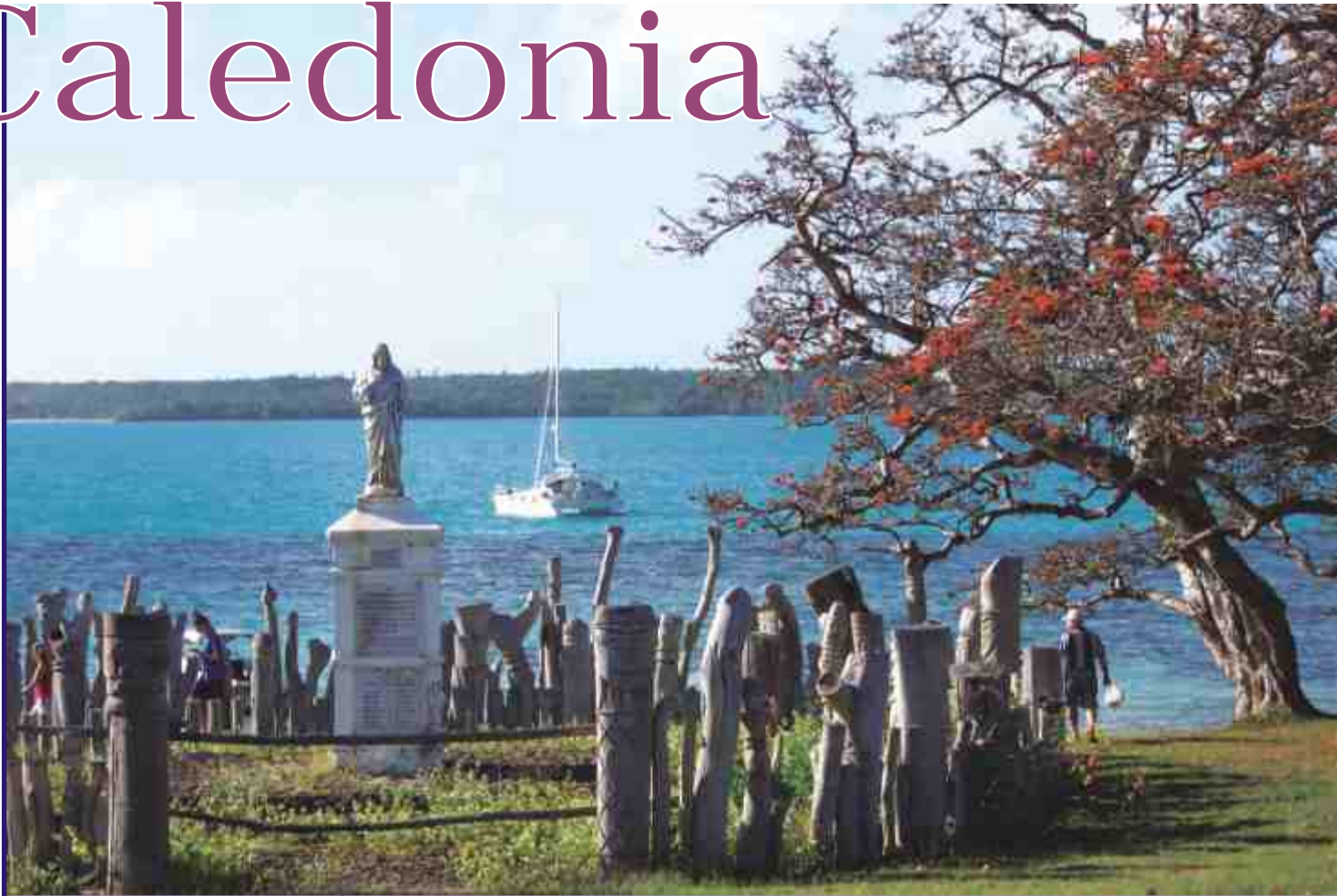
We found her house and met the family. Emmanuelle was a nurse, her husband Jean-Michel was the Deputy-Principal of the Catholic secondary school and Baptiste and Vincent were their young sons. Jean-Michel and Baptiste took us shopping as Emmanuelle had guests coming for lunch. Jean-Michel who spoke good English drove us back via La Roche Percee and the Bonhomme, two famous landmarks of Bourail.

Dud invited the family for a sail that afternoon. They arrived at 3.30 pm. We had a lovely trip to the reef and back. Jean-Michel and his sister Marianne had sailed in France and felt comfortable on board. The boys ran wild. I was terrified that they would fall off. When we got back, Baptiste was diving off the boat!

Next morning was Monday. Dave was given a lift into town by Emmanuelle's friend. He had to find out about the bus to Noumea. He hitched back with a neighbour of Emmanuelle's. In his backpack were the sausages, salad and baguettes for the BBQ we gave the Rabut family on board that night. Dud charred the sausages while Dave entertained the boys.

We spent over a week at La Roche, going into Bourail with Jean-Michel or Marianne and meeting more locals. They all spoke some English. On the Thursday morning, Jean-Michel drove Dave to the bus station at 7.30 am. Dave's holiday was over. He caught a bus to Tontouta. The next morning, he flew to Australia. On November 10<sup>th</sup> he would fly back to sail TROPICAL CAT home to Brisbane.

**Sailing note:**  
In August and September, the prevailing wind was S.E / E from 5 to 15 kts. There are reefs everywhere. Good charts are essential.





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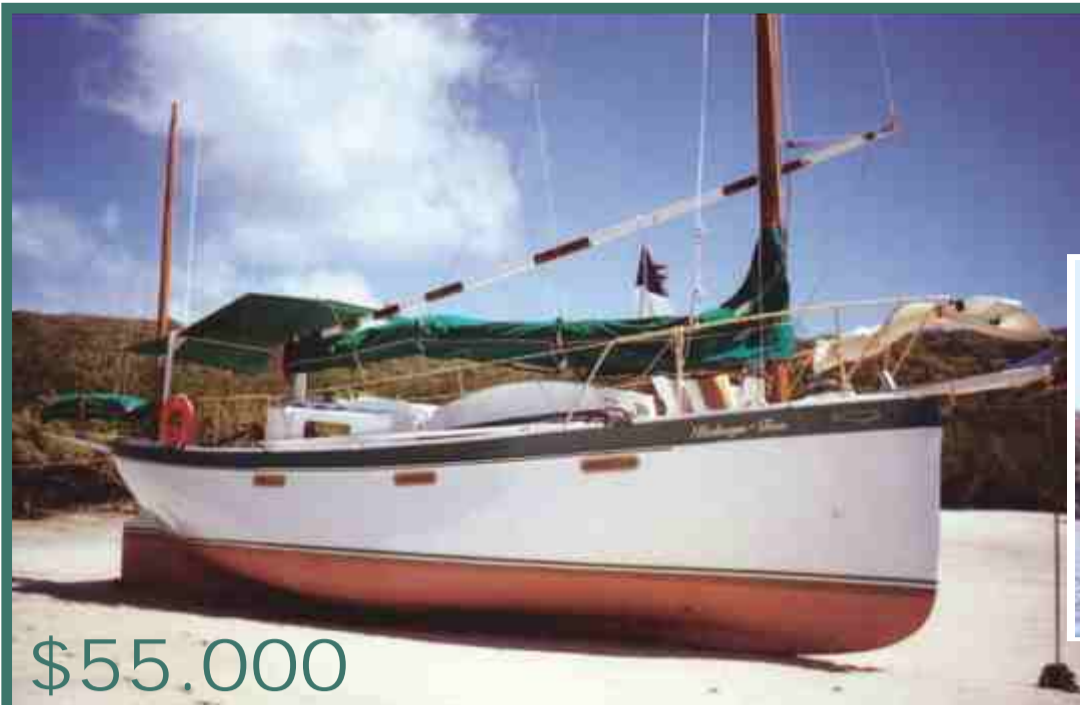
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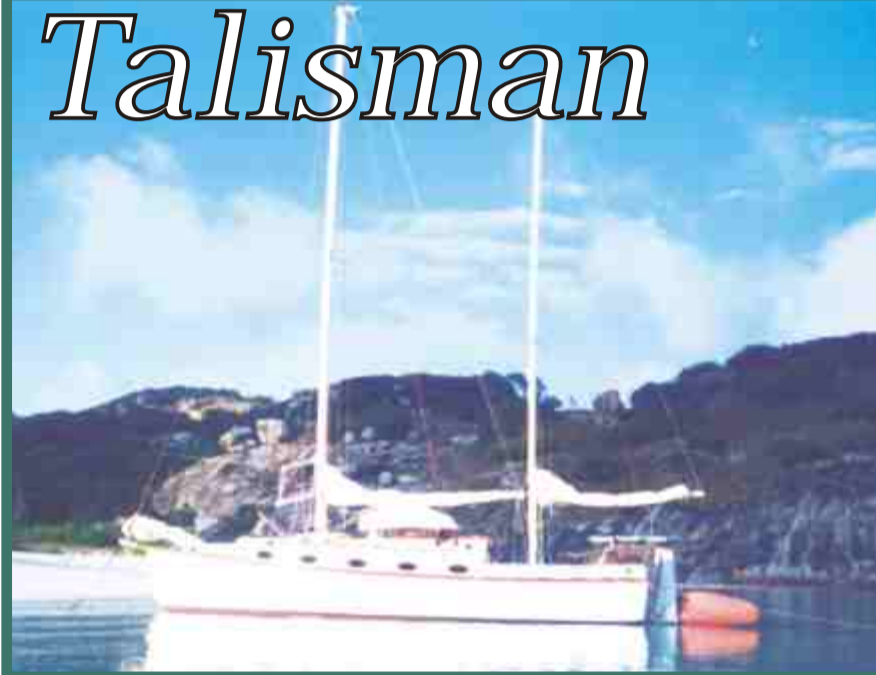
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# Heads up, tail down

By Chris Ayres, SY Lady Lonsdale

Contrary to opinion held in some places, I do occasionally drag my head out of the intoxicatingly fascinating Customs Act, and engage in more practical pursuits. The one I loathe the most is the dark art of marine toiletry. It is as if humanity's inventive genius went berserk when the toilet particularly the marine toilet was created.

2005 was a bad year not just because of the activity of Customs officers but more grievously because that was the year of the Five Toilets. The last two were in our house. We returned from a trip sailing Lady Lonsdale to and from Townsville to return to not one but two leaking cisterns. Since these are not marine, I will not bore you with the details suffice it to say after much grumpiness, threats of and actual acts of physical violence to these offending objects (the toilets not the former occupants of them), the problem was solved.

But that year had started badly. I crewed on a yacht from Brisbane to Bundaberg. The new owner of this old vessel had spent time and money so he assured me in rectifying and repairing all problems of a marine and of a nautical nature. So imagine my disappointment when, after a none-too-pleasant overnight passage from Manly to Garry's Anchorage, I felt relaxed enough to avail myself of the heads and answer a scream from nature. Some sixth sense made me check the operation of the manual loo before going. Good job. The pump was jammed and the seacock to the holding tank as the owner put it "Oh that hasn't worked in years old boy!".

Now much as I detest unblocking and servicing my own marine loo my

detestation reaches manic proportions when it is someone else's that needs to be unscrewed, pulled apart, cleaned (ugh!) oiled, re-assembled and tested with the owner all the while watching and commenting on my demonstration of practical mechanics all in the space of a telephone box.

By the time I had finished the repairs, retrieved tools from the bilges and cleaned up, suffice it to say I was happy to take a shovel ashore. The jammed holding tank valve remained jammed, saving excessive use of Queensland's three (at that time) pump-out stations.

In 2005 Lady L received two new marine loos. One a hassle-free Blake's Lavac pump-out which as we all know does not comply. It is of course, locked off and legally unusable whilst anywhere within the most distant sight of land. It is the 'seatoilet. Utterly dependable, but for Blue Water use only. It also doubles as an emergency bilge pump. Right, the second toilet the complying toilet is the last in a succession of electric macerator pump toilets that I experimented with. All drew a cool 15 amps. Some macerators didn't macerate adequately, some used too much water, some lacked the oomph to empty fully. Believe me I tried them all before I got it right. The one I have now empties directly and smoothly into the holding tank.

The holding tank itself is emptied at one of the three pump out stations mentioned above, or one of those ever decreasing zones where sewage may legally be released. Read your own TOMPA Regulations to find out where these are! I'm rather proud of my system that is if a toilet can instill a sense of pride. The ensuite sink drains into the toilet inlet. A clever idea in 1969, but one that doesn't work well with electric macerator pumps.

The latest variation of the theme has required I install a ball-valve to allow the sink to empty into the toilet bowl whilst the valve is open. However, the valve must be closed to prevent air sucking into the inlet water line and reducing the volume of the flushing water. Simple physics eh? The tank which holds 64 litres (not the 65 I attempted to fit and which required me doing a complete sanitary clean and polish of my engine room and bilges simple maths eh?) is above the waterline and empties by gravity and the venturi effect of Lady L's motion. It can also of course be pumped out, with the suction outlet directly above the gravity drain outlet. Hence the tank can be cleaned and any blockages removed ... neatly and discretely. Above all it works. And it complies. Clever eh?

But the installation! Firstly, the get the maximum size tank to fit into the minimum space available in the starboard locker. To do this, Rhon had to go to the locker after the tank was in and connect up the hoses as I passed them through to her. Oh the things we skippers ask of our partners. And they never complain. Or if they do, we take the complaints because we know the alternative. Do it ourselves. Ever been jammed in a locker with nowhere to turn?

The white anaconda sterile marine toilet hose must be bent, twisted, heated coaxed, begged and finally forced by sheer physical violence onto those expensive marinegrade fittings (bends, reducers and the laughingly named 'joiners!') whilst all the time resting a blazing heat gun one one's blistered knees whilst it blasts hot air up one's shorts. And finally the tightening of the utilux clips in impossible places where screwdrivers and hex wrenches (the ones not already dropped into the bilges) just will not fit. All lubricated with fresh blood from lacerated hands and fingers. But then the jobs done. Is there a sense of accomplishment, of triumph, a flush of success? Don't be daft. By that time if you are not in intensive care, then all you are interested in is alcohol. Lots of alcohol.

Get a professional to do it, I hear you say. What a great idea! Now I know of one yachting who did precisely that. He now has a system that converts his waste at 45 amps a time for 5 minutes on each pee into Cat 2 sewerage. Until they (ie the government) change the zones again he



may lawfully empty his holding tank is places where we may not. The system has an electrolysis waste conversion machine, a treatment tank and a holding tank, with a heavy-duty alternator on the engine. The only problem is you cant use the loo. You cant get into it. The small heads compartment is full of wires, extra banks of batteries, bottles, some 27 utilux clips, polyethylene tanks, and miles of white anaconda writhing around the utterly inaccessible bowl. But if you could use his loo, you can rest assured, it complies! And for a mere 10% of the total insured value of his craft.

Now I have just come back from a few weeks in the UK where I caught up with some other owners of Lady Lonsdale's sisters, Moody Halberdiers. My friend Tom has one that proudly possesses the original Baby Blake toilets. Forty years old they are. Built to last. A throne for a lady. Vitreous china bowls as white as a wedding dress, honey coloured glowing oak seats, gleaming piston pumps leak-free and sucking like a heart lung machine. The brass, gleaming like gold and the chrome like a mirror. Works of art they are. And work they do. But do they comply? Don't ask. But they look magnificent.

Is there a message there?

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# Passage People and More..



## Hidden Dragon

Sheena and Hamish are, wait for it, Westralians! Yes, another couple of sandgropers have made their way over to the best cruising grounds in Oz. Their boat is an elegant 42 footer named **'Hidden Dragon'** which can't be missed being black nearly all over. She is a Colvin Gazelle junk rigged schooner who, Sheena says, will just as happily go backwards as forwards. They have sailed from Brisbane to Cairns so far, and are planning a trip to the Louisiades either this year or next. Cruising the Kimberleys is also on their list of things to do. Keep your eye out for them at Lizard Island this year, they both love a chat.

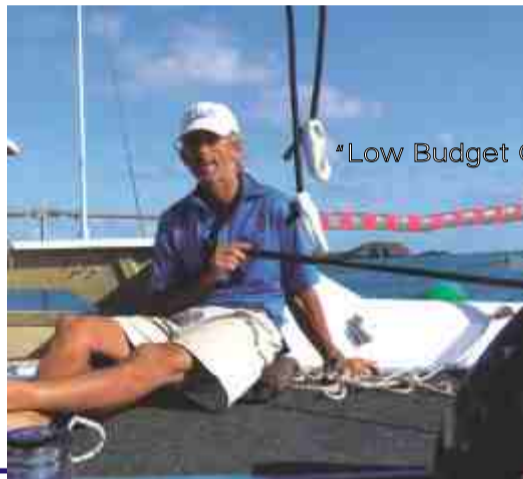
Wendy & Eddy of Absolutely



## Ulukara

Watch out for the skull & crossbones flying, it will be Captain and Mrs Pugwash on **'Ulurkura'**. Mal and Sharon have just purchased the 37' Alan Payne sloop and are busy tarting her up for this year's cruising season. They are also in the middle of moving over to the east coast from Kalgoorlie WA (yep, another couple of sandgropers), so looks like being a busy year for these guys. Pugwash is an ex-professional fisherman but Sharon is a newbie to sailing, and so far loving it. Being a horticulturalist she thinks she might miss her garden but that's what potted plants are for on a boat. A boilermaker by trade, Pugwash is keen to get going with his mobile welding business in Cairns and as he specializes in stainless and ali, fellow boaties take note. The kettle is usually on and there is always beer in the fridge, so give them a hoy.

Wendy & Eddy of Absolutely



"Low Budget Cruising but priceless adventures"



Capt Robert Cleveland sent in a couple pics whilst delivering a Crowther cat south from Cardwell. The skipper is an old multihull man and says, "Fast and flat is fun!"



## Matthew and Natasha of Kalida

Announce the Grand Opening of their new club. **The Lizard Island Yacht Club**. The place needed more action but who is gonna run the bar? They also have been advised they need to open a newsagent next door.. for TCP!

## It's Whale Season..

Bob Burgess and Annie were on shore when they saw this horrific sight! Several Humpback Whales were being lead on a charge by one particularly aggressive whale. Bob says they were in shallow water heading right toward B52 and going very fast. Bob and Annie helplessly watched from shore but after having a look... a very close look.. the whales left... WHEW!!

What's the last thing you want to see charging your boat?!



At left.. Very smart looking vessel "Zedux" caught in the act of sailing free.. pretty sight!

At right... the "Shadow Boat" is off the slip and ready to move north. The skipper needs crew.. how about the experience of a lifetime?! Ring Patrick @ 0410 674 446

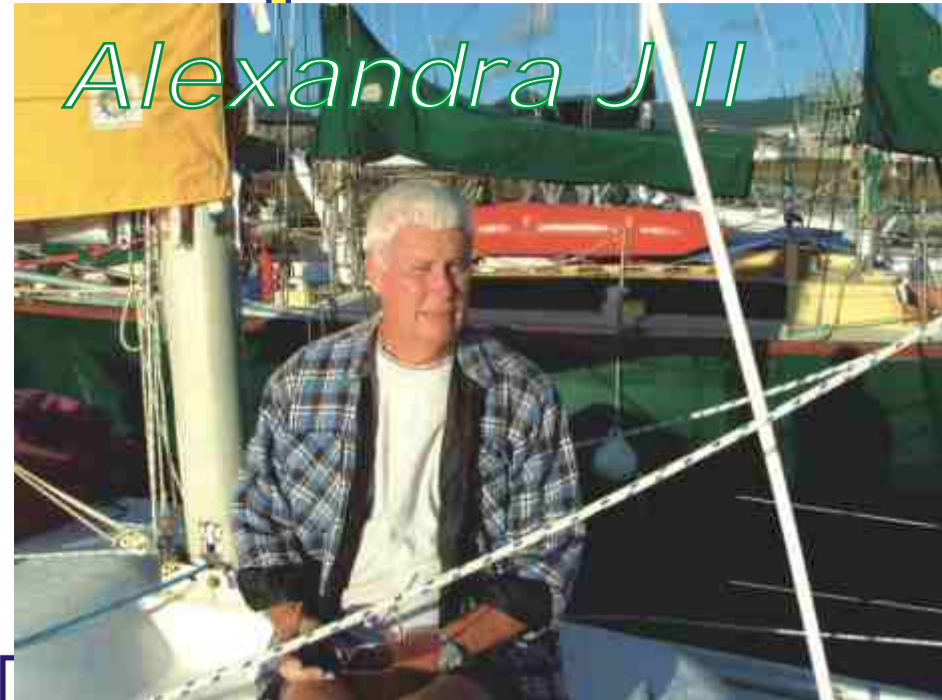


# Passage People



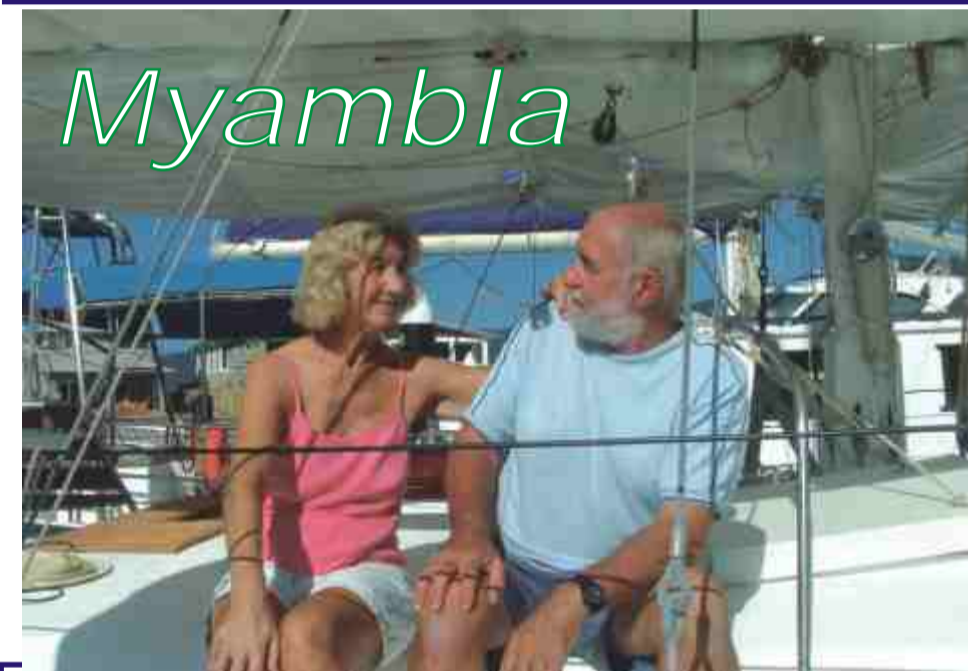
*Pangaea*

There is quite a bit of history to **'Pangaea'**, a 16m schooner. Built in 1978 with a fiberglass hull and various SE Asian and North American timbers throughout, she was originally a salmon troller from Alaska, then retired to become a shipwreck locating boat in the South China Sea. She has had quite a chequered past; suffice to say that her current owners Jim and Debbie just enjoy living and cruising on her. Jim works for the Australian Fisheries Management Authority in Darwin, which by his own admission means he tries to manage traditional Indonesian fishing in Australian waters, and Deb is a teacher, also in Darwin. They've sailed her from Langkawi where she was purchased, to Cairns via Thursday Island and up to Darwin. If you see **Pangaea**, say hello as Deb & Jim are usually good for a chat.



*Alexandra J II*

Gary first saw **'Alexandra J'** in Mackay, tied up next to 'Alexandra J II'. She is a 27' fiberglass Westerly Pacific, originally from New Guinea. He liked her lines and a partnership was formed. That was about 10 years ago and they have been sailing up and down the east coast since. She is currently in Cairns where Gary is working to top up the sailing kitty and looking to meet that special lady who will share his passion for sailing and adventure.



*Myambla*

Picture living on a 61' sailboat for 30 years and you'll see Bill and Sheila on **Myambla**. She was built in Fremantle by Bill yes, another proud West Australian, and is based on a Jean Roux design. The three of them have done the Darwin to Ambon race and sailed extensively throughout Indonesia, with their favourite place being Port Essington. Bill is the musician of the family and happily tinkles the ivories; yes, there is a piano on board! They are in Cairns after a trip down from Darwin a few months ago where, sadly, **Myambla** is for sale. It will be the end of an era for Bill and Sheila but they not going to be land rats for very long, with plans for a catamaran on the go.



*Rubicon Star*

Tim and Barb just love their 42' motor sailor, **Rubicon Star**. She is a John Pugh design and a toughie, having sailed from Cairns, where Tim and Barb bought her in 2001, down to Tasmania, then back again. I caught up with 'Rubi', as she is affectionately known, in Bluewater marina, where Tim & Barb were doing all those things yachties do to get ready for a major trip. They will be heading off to Darwin very shortly, there to join the rally to Kupang. After that, who knows where the wind will take them, as there are no plans to come back just yet. Barb, hang onto that hat, it's a beauty.

The above photos & captions are from Wendy & Eddie of **Absolutely**. Thanks again to our **Passage People** roving reporters!



*Mango* sails north

Yes, this is that Mango.. The boat Bob Oram built and sailed around the Queensland coast. Paul was up from Sydney looking for a Wharram in Bundy and came across an ad in TCP and decided to buy Bob's boat instead. Then as luck would have it.. an opportunity came about to take the boat home where the water is warmer and mangoes grow. So I caught up with the boys doing the delivery. It was good to catch up for a beer at the Boat Club Marina.

That's Paul at left, then Isaac and David and Mark..or is that Mark and David? I shouldn't bring beer to an interview I guess... Thanks for the visit guys, had a great chat!



**Send us your pics!!**

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