



# The Coastal Passage

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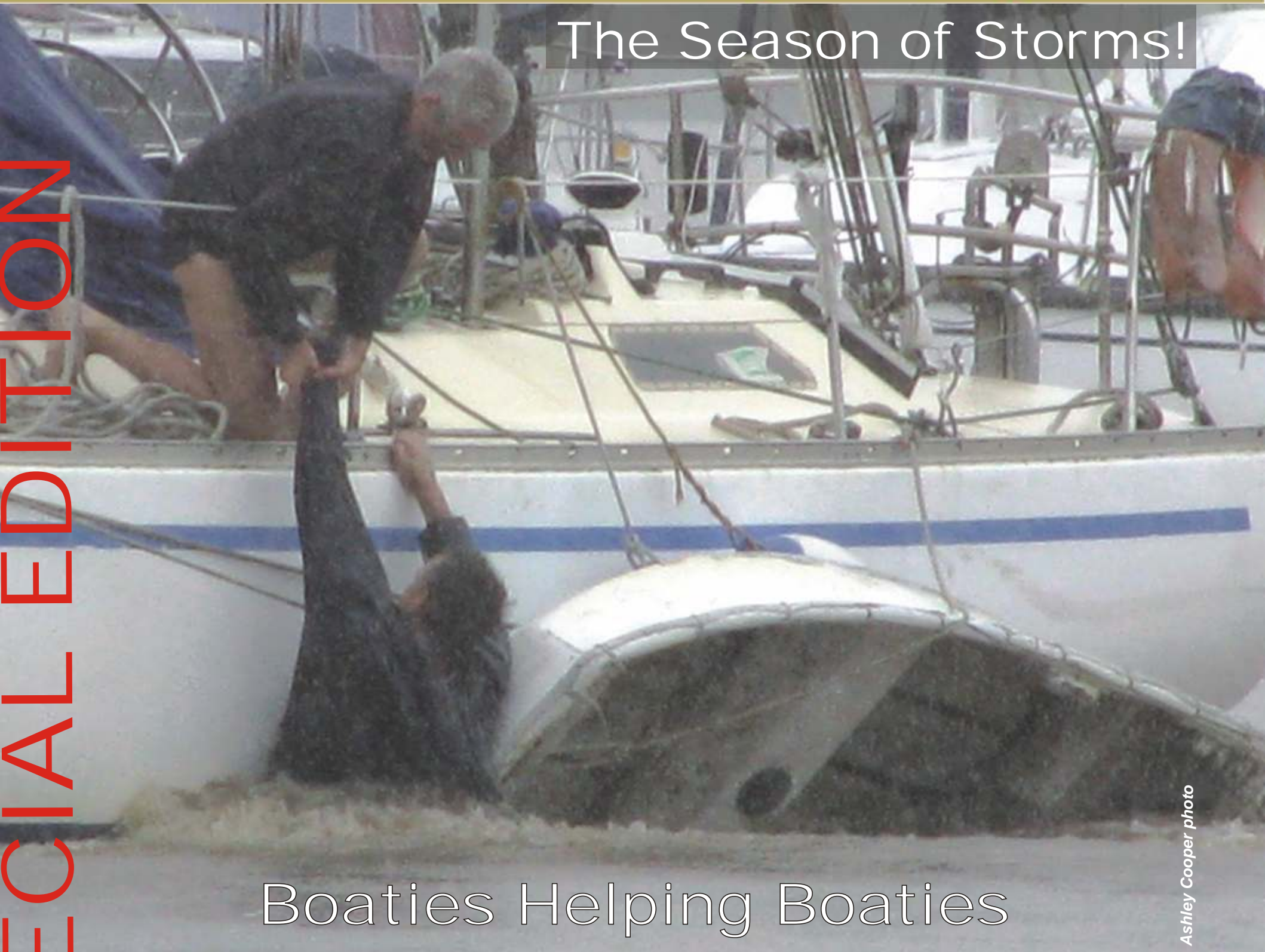
47th Edition  
Mar - Apr 2011

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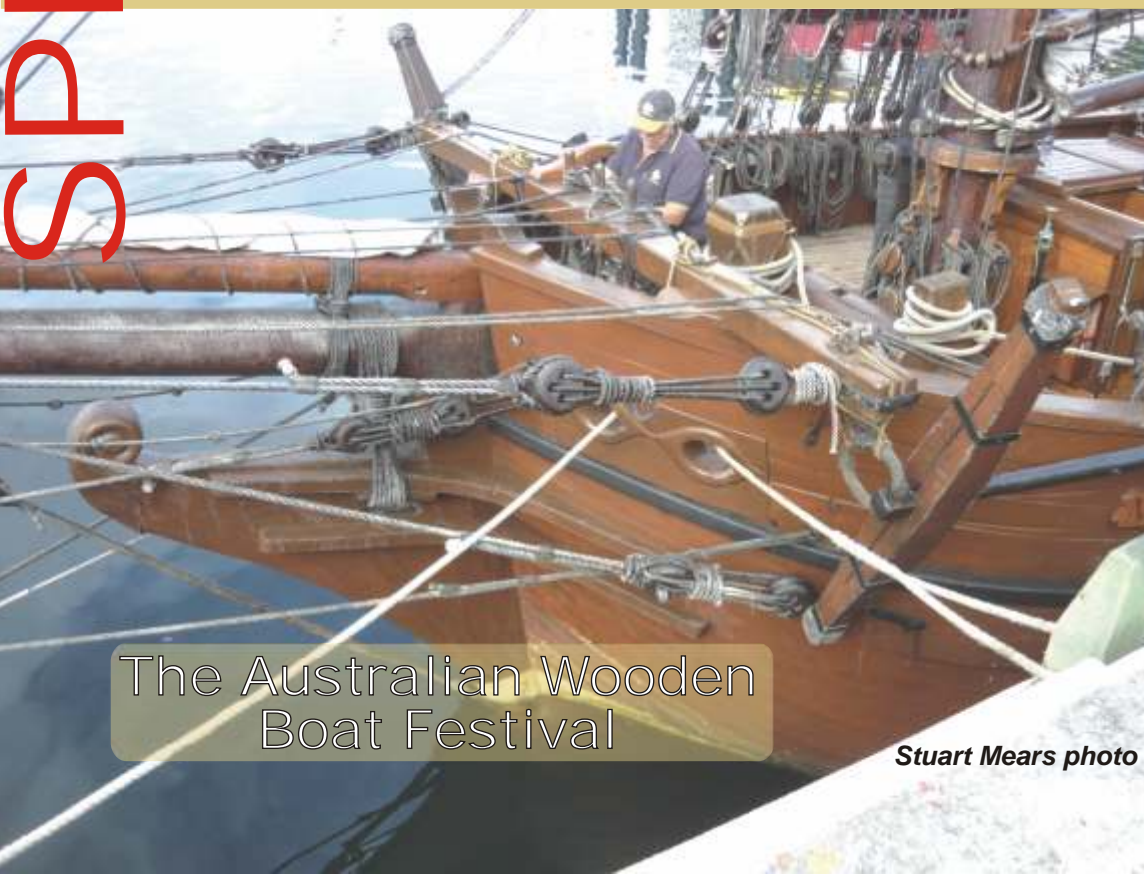
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# Reflections

By Alan Lucas, SY Soleares

## Looking Back

From the first half of the last century, when crossing oceans in small boats made headline news, there came a plethora of books such as *Sailing all Seas in the Idle Hour* by Dwight Long, *The Fight of the Firecrest* by Alain Gerbault and, of course, the classic that started it all near the turn of the century, *Sailing Alone Around the World* by Joshua Slocum. Except for proving that small-boat voyaging was possible without the hi-tech trappings of today, their achievements were low-key by today's standards. However, as snapshots of a recent past, their books give wonderful insights into how cruising was in those days.

Dwight Long's book of the 1930s is a good example. His *Idle Hour* was a gaff-headed ketch of thirty-two feet that sailed from Seattle late 1934 and reached Sydney a couple of years later to anchor in Watsons Bay for customs clearance. After basic clearance, final pratique was carried out in Rushcutters Bay, his ketch being escorted up-harbour by dozens of welcoming motorboats full of excited onlookers. The buzz of public acceptance aside, it seems that form-filling was more complex than it is now, Dwight referring to - "Square yards of forms: all that would have been required for a twenty thousand ton liner such as the *Strathnaver* or *Strathaird*. I wonder why Australia doesn't run short of paper".

His description of our world-famous 18-footers reminds us of their extraordinary statistics, referring as he does to 14-foot bowsprits, 30-foot booms, 25-foot telescoping poles for balloon jibs and crews of *twelve*. He marvelled that six ferries, all packed with enthusiasts, followed races contested by a fleet of 30-odd boats sailing an eleven-mile course. The day in question was squally with more than half the fleet succumbing to strong gusts that collectively tipped 150 men into the harbour. According to Dwight, "All the crews jumped into their sails, for the harbour is full of sharks, and only by swimming inside the canvas were they safe". The din of whistles, sirens and shouting at the finishing line reminded him of Armistice Day, 1918.

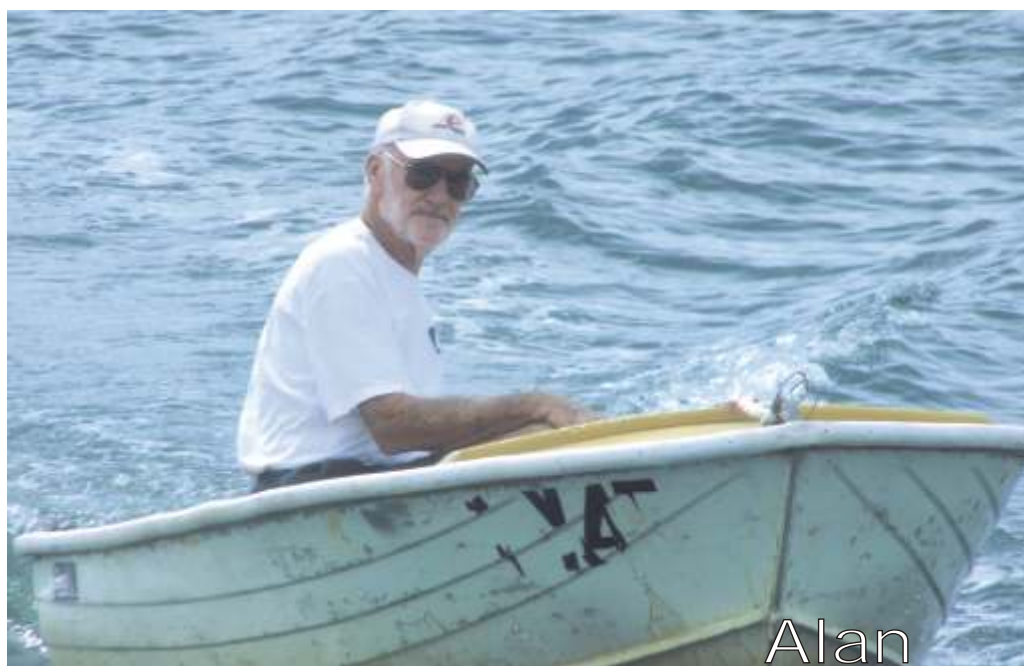
Typical of the days when voyaging yachts were far and few between, the enthusiastic generosity of the people and the favours offered by authorities were impressive: Captain Stringer of the Sydney Harbour Board, for example, allowed him to berth at a public facility to open his boat for public inspection. And Commander Stevens, of the Royal Navy Reserve told Dwight "his Base was at his disposal".

Innocent of their more sinister motives just a year or so before the outbreak of World War 11, Dwight refers to Japanese sampans fishing along the Great Barrier Reef. At long Island in the Whitsunday Group, he was shown 'acres and acres of tree stumps' by the island manager, Mr Tronson, who told him the Japanese use the timber to smoke-cure *beche-de-mer* and confirmed that they were a common sight in the area. It has long since been realised that Japanese 'fishing' in those days was probably as much about spying as it was about feeding the masses.

At Hayman Island, Dwight fell in with a British film company busily making a full-length movie with famous author and introducer of game fishing to Australia, Zane Grey in the leading role. Another star was Colonna, a former grand opera singer who had sung at Covent Gardens. Zane Grey played the part of a fanatical missionary and a group of aborigines in full war paint armed with spears performed a corroboree for the film.

As any history buff knows, the past comes alive when two writers refer to each other but each spin different yarns about the same incident.

This was the case in C. Monckton's book, *Some Experiences of a New Guinea Resident Magistrate* and Captain Joshua Slocum's book, *Sailing Alone Around the World*. It appears the two men met off Port Macquarie, Monckton aboard an ex-racing yacht named *Guinevere* that he had just bought in Sydney for use in New Guinea waters, and Slocum on his beloved *Spray*.



Alan

Slocum refers to Monckton's yacht pseudonymously as *Akbar* and describes being hailed by her crew as he sailed past. *Akbar*, Slocum says, was anchored offshore with mainsail and jigger 'blown to ribbons' and 'her rigging flew at loose ends'. "Up anchor", Slocum called, "and let me tow you into Port Macquarie", to which the crew of *Guinevere*, nee *Akbar*, declined the offer, saying "Report us with sails blown away, and that we don't care a dash and are not afraid".

Monckton's story of the same incident is different. After bad weather north of Sydney and some concerns regarding rig and pumps, he records only that, "At last we made Port Macquarie, telling a steamer that approached and wanted to tow us, to go to the devil, for we had awful visions before our eyes of claims for salvage". *Guinevere* then hailed the port's tug "and we were soon safely anchored in the river". A few paragraphs later, after leaving Port Macquarie, Monckton declares that, "We fell in on the way with the *Spray* and Captain Slocum, who hung on to us one night while he slept".

So who's telling the truth? Slocum, previously a captain of square rigged ships and then a lone hander, is scarcely going to 'hang on' to another vessels at sea while he sleeps. Yet Monckton had sailed pearling luggers and mother ships around New Guinea so it might be equally presumed he would not lie about a serious incident off Port Macquarie. I fear the truth of this remarkable moment must remain in limbo.

Returning to Dwight Long's *Sailing all Seas in the Idle Hour*, since leaving Sydney he had not called into any ports until Townsville, which, surprisingly, he compared to Hilo, Hawaii, "with its main

street lined with coconut palms and a cosmopolitan population including Malays, Japanese, Chinese and aborigines sauntering along under the broad awnings and palms". It strikes me that good old Oz was more integrated then than it is now.

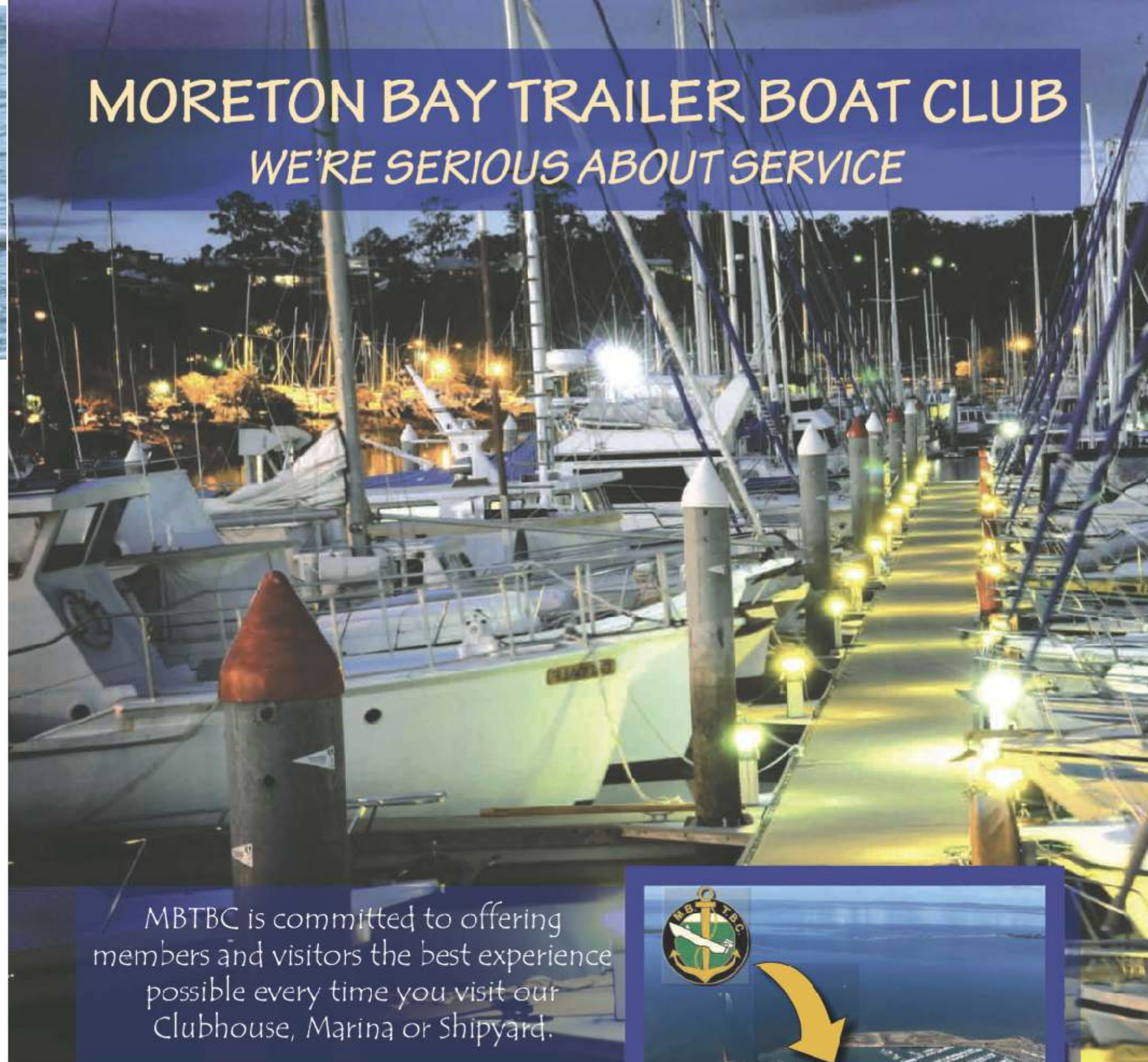
Dwight then sailed to Palm Island, which he described as "a compound for unruly aborigines of the great northern wastes of Australia" and that neighbouring Fantome Island (which he misspelt 'Fathom') "is used to harbour aborigines afflicted with various diseases". This is of particular interest to me because thirty-three years later, in 1971, as Palm Island's skipper, I was involved in the closure of Fantome's leper colony when authorities decided to place remnant patients in Palm Island Hospital. My most vivid memory is of my crew helping patients aboard from the workboat then rigging a cargo sling to bring aboard the seriously afflicted, one being an elderly lady who was blinded by the disease with hands and feet digit-less stumps. The only bright side of that sad event was that it might have been the last leper colony in Australia to close its doors, a stark reminder of how recently society beat that ghastly disease.

Old cruising books remind us how special long-distance sailors were in the days before fibreglass. By the mid 1960s, when production-line fibreglass boats were rolling out by the hundreds every year, allowing dreamers to become instant doers, all that changed. Suddenly we were a dime a dozen.

To those who enjoy such literature, there is no finer pastime than browsing second-hand bookshops or watching for classic reprints. They take the reader into an era that seems positively ancient yet much of it was within one person's lifespan.

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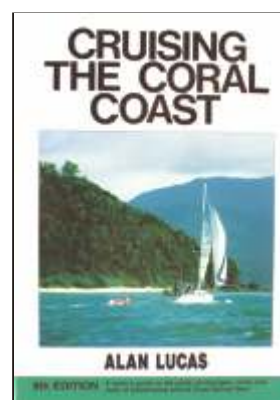
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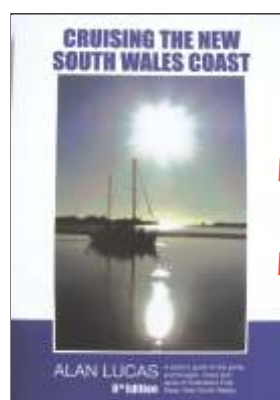
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# Contributors

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Guy Chester, SY *Sanctuary*  
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Keith Owen, SY *Speranza*  
Robert Rowan, SC *Nightmoves*  
Paul & Chris Taylor SY *Insatiable*  
Carmen Walker, SY *Dreamweaver*  
Norm Walker, MSY *Peggy-Anne*

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

- ### Where can I get copies of The Coastal Passage???

New distribution places in red

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    - Ponsonby Cruising Club
  - .....NORTHERN TERRITORY.....
  - \*D A R W I N
    - Dinah Beach Yacht Club
    - BIAS
    - Darwin Sailing Club
  - \*G O V E
    - Yacht Club
  - ..... QUEENSLAND.....
  - \*PORT DOUGLAS
    - Half Moon Bay Chandlery
    - Port Douglas Yacht Club
    - Port Douglas Combined Club
  - \*Y O R K E Y S K N O B
    - Yorkeys Knob Boating Club
  - \*C A I R N S
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    - Cairns Yacht Club
    - Cairns Marlin Marina Office
    - Cairns Cruising Yacht Squadron
    - The Coffee Bean Estate
  - \*MOURILYAN HARBOUR
    - Coast Guard Innisfail
  - \*CARDWELL
    - Hinchinbrook Marina
  - \*TOWNSVILLE
    - The Navigation Centre
    - Motor Boat & Yacht club
    - Breakwater Marina office
    - Breakwater Chandlery Cafe
    - BIAS Boating Warehouse
  - \*B O W E N
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    - Harbour Office
    - Summergarden Cinema (Q.B.)
  - \*AIRLIE BEACH and surrounds
    - Whitsunday Sailing Club
    - Abel Point Marina Office
    - Whitsunday Ocean Services
    - Marlin Marine
    - Shute Harbour Chanlery. & Slipway
    - Quadrant Marine
    - Edges Boatyard
  - \*SEAFORTH
    - Seaforth Boating Club
  - \*M A C K A Y
    - Mackay Marina
    - Mackay's Boat Yard
  - \*PERCY ISLAND
    - A frame
  - \*ROSSLYN BAY
    - Capricornia Cruising Yacht Club
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  - \*R O C K H A M P T O N
    - Fitzroy Motor Boat Club
  - \*G L A D S T O N E
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    - Gladstone Yacht Club
  - \*BUSTARD HEADS
    - The Lighthouse
  - \*BUNDABERG
    - Midtown Marina
  - \*BURRUM HEADS
    - Burrum Traders
  - \*HERVEY BAY
    - Great Sandy Straits Marina Office
    - Fishermans Wharf Marina
    - The Boat Club Marina
  - \*M A R Y B O R O U G H
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    - Mary River Marine Supplies
  - \*T I N C A N B A Y
    - Tin Can Bay Yacht Club
    - Tin Can Bay Marina
  - \*NOOSA
    - Noosa Yacht & Rowing Club
- \*MOOLOOLABA
    - Kawana Waters Marina
    - Mooloolaba Marina Office
    - Mooloolaba Yacht Club
    - Whitworth's (Minyama)
    - Lawries Boat Services
  - \*REDCLIFFE PENINSULA
    - Moreton Bay Marine Supplies
  - \*S C A R B O R O U G H
    - Scarborough Marina
    - Moreton Bay Boat Club
  - \*NEWPORT
    - Australiawide Brokerage
  - \*SANDGATE
    - Queensland Cruising Yacht Club
  - \*BRISBANE
    - Boat Cft Pacific (loganholme)
    - Australian Boating Supplies
    - Whitworths (Woolloongabba)
    - Whitworths (Breakfast Creek)
    - Boat Books
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    - Royal QLD Yacht Squadron
    - Wynnum Manly YC, Marina Office
    - Muir Marine
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    - Raby Bay Marina
  - \*C O O M E R A / H O P E I S L A N D
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    - Coffs Harbour Marina
    - Harbourside Chandlery
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  - Port Adelaide Sailing Club
  - Cruising Yacht Club of S.A.
  - Royal S.A. Yacht Squadron
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  - .....TASMANIA.....
  - Oyster Cove Marina (Hobart)



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Kay Norson: senior volunteer, apprentice sander, level 2 speller & expert postie  
Bob Norson: sometime publisher, editor, journalist, advertising, photographer, computer & marine heads technician, boat builder, etc., etc..

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## THE FLOOD SURVIVORS

TCP features a few of the local boating businesses that have picked up the pieces after being ravaged by the floods and are now open for business! Good on yas! Any others out there? Let us know.



### Mary River Marine Supplies



If we had the room for some "before" shots the shine of the refurbished chandlery would be all the more impressive. Bill, pictured immediately above, had a lot of help, shown upper on the balcony. He and helpers watched from the loft as the river ran right through the place. They were able to move much of the gear upstairs but one of the big losses was his container full of resins and hardeners. It was tied down and secure until another, larger container swept by and took it with it... somewhere down the river. So come on down and do some business. They need the trade. They sure haven't had any government help. Ask Bill about that if you dare.

### MidTown Marina is Back!



Ray's Marina was caught out with everyone else. No warning of how high the river was going to go. Especially with little time to prepare, the devastation was considerable. There were doubts initially that the marina would re-open but a lot of friends pitched in and result is amazing!

Boats are encouraged to return to the marina and moorings that made the reputation Bundaberg has enjoyed for friendliness and charm. The chandlery is open up on Quay & Targo Streets just above the marina and all of the flood affected businesses need your trade to keep afloat.



## In The Last Electronic Edition We Featured A Lot Of Photographs Of The Aftermath Of The Bundy Flood But The Mary River Didn't Recede Until Much Later. Below Are A Few Photos To Give An Idea Of The Damage And Challenges Faced By Local Businesses



Above is the chandlery in the midst of cleanup. The pace of the job was extraordinary. Many hands make short work. Immediately below is the entrance to Walkers Shed, a boat building landmark in Queensland. Many famous boats have been built here, including Solareas, The Lucas's skipjack. At the time the chandlery was up and running the unfortunately named "Muddy Waters Café" was still in disarray, at bottom.



A few pieces of the marina survived. Below is Kent street and the main artery into Tin Can Bay from Maryborough. Not only did it flood but the current was strong enough to pull the steel posts out of the ground.







# 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.

**Dear TCP and Readers,**

I found an article on your website, [www.thecoastalpassage.com](http://www.thecoastalpassage.com) in "Passage People", written by Wendy of *Absolutely Knot* about a boat that my brother and I built, the schooner "Pangaea".

The boat was built in Port Townsend, Western Australia by my brother and myself. We used proceeds from several Bering Sea, Alaska crabbing seasons to finance and spent many months ourselves with the help of skilled builders to complete the project. We fished the boat for coho salmon and albacore tuna for 5 seasons but do to the loss of another brother who was drowned in Bering Sea, we all lost interest and decided to sell.

We can add more anecdotes if the present owners wishes to contact us. It is bitter sweet to see the boat and think of the many memories we had not only building but sailing her for 7 years total.

We have wondered what has happened to it since selling in 1983. Is there anyway, the current owners might contact us? We would love to give them more history and see how the different systems are still performing.

**Thank you,  
Ray T Moe, Seattle, USA**

*TCP NOTE: Will the current owners please contact TCP to forward contact details?*

**Hi,**

My partner and I are in our early 30's and we have been saving our guts out to buy a cruising yacht to follow in my uncle's footsteps. We have just uprooted ourselves from Melbourne and are currently using the Sunshine coast (parents house) as a base to search for cruising yachts. We have business that can be run remotely, so we have an income stream.

We have a lot of boxes ticked to make this a reality, but there seems to be a large issue in way; dealing with the authorities. Reading the articles of tyranny in your fantastic publication is fast putting me off the idea. Is the hard work of trying to achieve a cruising life style still worth the effort?

**Cheers, Tristan**

**Hi Tristan,**

**YES.** This, my personal belief is expressed in two ways. First, I'm building a boat that is a major undertaking. Second, TCP exists. Any income from the paper is secondary to it's purpose. The paper would NEVER be used to lure people into something we wouldn't consider worthwhile ourselves.

The paper has mitigated some of the damage and even managed to wind back some excesses by pointing out where enforcement has overstepped it's mandate and making sailors familiar with our rights. If there were no voice speaking out against the encroaching regulatory environment, I'm not so sure.

**Cheers, Bob**

**Dear TCP Readers,**

We had some things stolen from the Aframe in West Bay on or about New Years day. We are particularly concerned about the loss of the bronze Andy Martin memorial plaque and would like to get it back. The plaque was fixed to one of the front veranda support posts so would be captured in the photos that visitors took of the front of the Aframe during that time. There were visitors on most days over the New Year period so we are appealing to them to contact us and send us their photos so we can determine on exactly which day the plaque went missing. During this period someone also left us a note with the registration number of a motor boat crewed by some lads that they believed had taken honey without paying for it. We would like them to get in touch with us as well so they can provide us with a bit more detail. Whilst we have our suspicions who the perpetrators might be we do not have enough first hand and factual evidence to have the police follow the matter up. We can be contacted at (07) 4951 0993 or [middlepercy@bigpond.com](mailto:middlepercy@bigpond.com).

**Thanks,  
Cate and John**

**Hi Bob,**

Love the Coastal Passage and wish we had something as good here in Tasmania.

The whole internet shopping thing is very topical at the moment as some of Australia's working poor (like Gerry Harvey) bleed because of unfair internet competition.

I have had a recent experience which has put the whole thing in perspective for me.

Our Kiss Wind Generator died on a recent passage back from Noumea to Australia. While in Noumea we had seen the excellent D400 Generator, manufactured in the UK. It was very quiet (important in marinas and anchorages), looked very robust and produced a lot of power. I was keen to replace the Kiss with a new D400.

I contacted a local agent (in Queensland) and asked for a price. The response was: "The current price for the D400 12v unit including regulator and dump resistors is \$3,300.00 + GST. Approx freight cost to Hobart is \$115.00". This totals \$A3,745.

A quick search on the net showed the UK price as 1,200 pounds, while the same unit was selling for \$US2,200 in the States. I queried the price with the Brisbane retailer and got the following response: "The items are purchased in UK pounds which hasn't shifted much against the Oz dollar in the past 12 months. On top of that, there is freight costs from the UK, import duty, customs charges and then finally a small profit margin. All of these costs add up to the final selling price. We understand the price is high compared to other brands here in OZ, so we work on a very small margin to try and keep the prices as low as possible. If you purchase a unit from us you will also receive full backup service and phone support at no extra charge."

A further search on the net found a UK retailer who was willing to ship to Australia. The 1200 pound price included VAT (value added tax) which is not payable on exported items, so our D400 arrived in Australia for \$A2,080. Because the item cost over \$1,000 I had to pay Duty and GST. This was all handled by the shipping company and cost \$345. All up total \$A2,425 compared to the local (Brisbane) price of \$A3,745.

So, the small profit margin is at least \$A1,300 and probably more since I presume the retailer I purchased from also made a profit.

I would prefer to shop locally, but if this is typical of Australian retailers, then it is going to take a lot more than an introduction of GST on small internet purchases to save them from themselves.

**Keep up the good work on behalf of  
cruising sailors,  
Peter McHugh  
SV Honey Bee, Hobart**

**Hi Peter,**

Couldn't agree more. I am not familiar with the retailer you refer to but many Australian retailers, especially larger ones, depend on artificial market manipulation (gubment regulation) to make money; don't know any other way. The result is high price, bland selection and poor quality. I am familiar with brand names that are well regarded in other countries and very poor in Australia. Some businesses seem to think they are ENTITLED to profits...

The internet has done a fabulous job of informing people--of levelling the consumer playing field. That can only be good for consumers and in the long run, merchants.

**Cheers,  
Bob**

**Hi Bob and Kay,**

Thanks for your current report about the Mary River, and the damage to the boats on the Burnett River.

I have a friend who tells a dramatic story about his boat that was moored to the poles at Burnett Heads, he could only look at his yacht as the river flow was around 20 knots and the police would not let any one mad enough to navigate the river.

My friend tells me that the pole behind his boat broke and the boat behind and half the pole was held by the stern cleat on his 35' timber yacht.

After a day the mooring rope finally broke and his yacht with pole and other yacht were washed out through the river to the sea. Fortunately with help from the VMR he was able to get taken out to his boat, and get it towed back at about 1 knot an hour, and anchored up near the sailing club.

Repairs will require a haul out but the hull remained sound.

The Mary River is another place I have kept my boat and have survived a couple of floods over ten years ago. The runoff doesn't reach more than 10 knots, and I was able to shelter in a back eddy where the Maryborough slip rail runs to the river.

I've also like to report that my boat was due for a new coat of anti-foul, and so I did a survey of boat yards from Townsville to Mooloolaba and I just can't go past Lawrie's Boat Yard. Adam Ashby provides all the help needed for those special repairs, and prop-speed. Customer water blaster use takes me 40 mins at \$62 per hour. Only the slipway clubs in Mary River and Rockhampton could beat this. I found that the water blasting varies quite a lot, and was the final charge that broke the bank. Some slipways have lots of extras and gst to add on, and there is always a hidden fee somewhere. You just gotta ask.

**Keep up the good work, really enjoy your reporting,**

**Ginny, SY Overproof**

**Hi Ginny,**

Thank you for your comments. We have been getting really good reports from boaties north and south and have been publishing them. Bob went to Bundy right after the first flood to report and we both went a week later as that is where the paper is printed, and had another look while there. We just made it back that night (Jan 7th) and the rains came again.

We had been ready to mail papers but were cut off by flood, so we waited and added more to the electronic paper.

Glad to hear your friend got his boat back. We got a lot of negative comments about the VMR there from local boats so good to know a positive.

And good to hear your good words on Lawrie's Boat Yard. My impression when I showed up there was very positive. Those guys are proud of their place!

**Kay**

**Hi Kay & Bob,**

I am seriously worried about heading north to Qld. with all the debris in the ocean after these horrid floods.

Debris, chemicals & such will poison our oceans beyond repair I am much afraid.

Nothing is said about this, but I did read that the mines have permission to do what they wish so that means all stored chemicals etc. will be pumped out...also all industries that have been storing toxic waste. It's another death knoll no one is talking about.

Running into even a little debris would be too dangerous for us.

**PJ Halter, SC Cheetah**

**Hi PJ**

The hard debris will eventually recede... sometime, but the chemical waste is a concern we share. I caught that news report that the mines were being allowed exemption to discharge waste into the rivers, "due to the flood". I covered this issue several years ago for local publication in Bowen and the matter is serious and very, very under reported in Queensland. Coal mines use 200 litres of water to process every ton of coal and the used water is a toxic brew of heavy metals that the mines have to arrange long term (decades) storage for.

This is a major burden that if they go as many other countries, will be left to tax payers to clean up after the miners are long gone with the money.

I had a look at the upper reaches of the Fitzroy River and tributaries via google satellite images and found the mines tend to locate along the rivers.. must be more coal there... and I thought of what was really flowing through peoples homes in Rockhampton and onto the reefs.

The TCP website has some of that old reporting.

Queenslanders need to ask where all the reservoir water is REALLY going in that taxpayer funded grid and what happens to it afterward. We have been negligent guardians of our children's future.

**Cheers,  
Bob**

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# Anchoring in Mooloolaba.. or anywhere. Your Responsibilities and Rights

TCP has published accounts from vessels that had been ordered to move on when the skippers claimed that it would be unsafe to do so. This seemed to strike at the heart of the principle that the responsibility and authority for ships safety must rest with the skipper. New information below suggests that is the case and the enforcement alleged in the letters from Jill and Lin was incorrect. The original accounts (edited for space but full versions available in the original editions on the website) are included either side of the letter below.

## JILL KNIGHT REPORTS ON MOOLOOLABA ANCHORING RULES

Dear Coastal Passage,

The letter from *Rose-a-Lee* in TCP #43 rang bells for me. In March I had an encounter with Boating and Fisheries officers in the Mooloolaba anchorage after a complaint from a canal home-owner that I was living aboard. I had not suffered a bereavement, as Lin and her husband had, but was spreading my ten days allowed for living aboard over a slightly longer period in order to accommodate eye surgery.

The encounters sound identical - the Bad Cop so bad he was horrid and the Good Cop completely silent so that I thought he might have been recording; probably not, since the exchange took something like half an hour due to meticulous transcribing of my exact words by the Bad Cop into a little note book.

In any case, I had nothing to hide or thought I hadn't: he claimed I could not stay aboard even for one night, but I knew this was wrong. Nevertheless, I was given an Infringement Notice and a fine of \$200 and told there would be another one if I was found aboard next morning. I left the harbour that night with very dodgy vision.

From further up the coast I phoned Harbour Control, the Dept of Transport guy most of us call the Harbour Master, to find out where I had gone wrong. When I mentioned the eye surgery he suggested I write and request reconsideration of the fine.

That request was refused and I paid the fine. Given that not one of the many sailors I discussed this with was clear on the relevant legislation and how it was being implemented in Mooloolaba, I rang the head of Mooloolaba Boating and Fisheries to clarify what sailors could do in that waterway with impunity: it turns out, not very much.

Section 10 (3) of the Transport Infrastructure (Sunshine Coast Waterways) Management Plan 2000 provides the only exceptions to a ban on living aboard, even for one night: *a watercraft that has entered Sunshine Coast waters from seaward while on a genuine voyage along the coast or an international voyage if (a) entry was made for the purpose of (i) taking shelter from adverse weather; or (ii) making urgent repairs; and (b) the living aboard is for no more than 10 consecutive days.*

**B&F's Rick Exton was patient with my questions and clear in his answers:**

Mr Exton said that there had been conflict in recent months among the various policing authorities in Mooloolaba and that Harbour Control would no longer be advising sailors they had 10 liveaboard days unless their situation accorded with the legislation above;

The reasons Mr Exton gave for the recent strict application of the law were: congestion in the waterways; offence given to canal home owners by people who showered and roamed on decks nude and who hung laundry; indignation of canal homeowners who paid big rates for an environment for which boat dwellers paid nothing. Any complaints from home owners would be followed up by authorities. He said he was not aware of a particular home owner at the far south end of the anchorage, on the island, as an habitual complainant;

I am sorry to say that for those of us who don't want to use marinas or can't find a place there, the days of enjoying this excellent and conveniently placed harbour and this very pleasant and useful provisioning and maintenance stop may be over.

Jill Knight, Yacht Cooee

To TCP,

I have read the earlier letter by the owners of *Rose-a-Lee* (TCP 43) and now by Jill Knight (TCP 45) about the anchoring rules in Mooloolaba River. Both cause concern as both felt compelled to go to sea in conditions that could pose a danger to them and their vessels. Any state legislation is subject to commonwealth law, including the Navigation Act, where there is an inconsistency. In this situation also the Transport Operation (Marine Safety) Act (TOMSA) takes precedence over the subordinate legislation that the fisheries officers are purportedly enforcing.

**If due to inclement weather or some other matter that could endanger your vessel and you cannot put to sea safely then you should not do so. It can also be important to keep a vessel safe to have someone on board to monitor the anchoring of that vessel.**

The actions alleged in these letters by fisheries officials could endanger the lives of those on board and the safety of the vessel for their purported actions under the Waterway Transport Management Plan (WTMP). The safe operation of a ship is a requirement of TOMSA, and legitimate defence to a charge brought under WTMP, which is subordinate legislation, if complying with a requirement of TOMSA. **Safety takes precedence.** If you have to anchor to ensure safety and as an incident of navigation then you are entitled to.

The behaviour of the fisheries officers as alleged could be the subject of a complaint to the Minister and to the Queensland Ombudsman. The Ombudsman does investigate actions of bureaucrats that can be unfair or could constitute maladministration. For reasons that include increased accountability and to ensure the appropriate focus of any complaint investigation is on the actual conduct of officers rather than the credibility of your version of such conduct - it is perfectly lawful for you to record or video conversations and events like those described in the letters.

Under Queensland law you do not have to advise fisheries officers that you are audio recording them so long as they are aware you are present when the recording is made. You must be a party to the conversation. This does not mean you have to say anything, so long as they are aware of your presence. Police officers routinely covertly record their conversations with people stopped in vehicles for traffic offences using recorders concealed in their pocket (and recorder watches in some instances). They also do this to ensure conversations are accurately recorded if the matter needs to go to court or a complaint is made by a member of the public.

You do not have to advise the officers that you are video recording them in a public place or aboard your vessel. Bear in mind that just because officials may (or may not) be rude, that is no reason for you to be. You should politely assert your rights where necessary and act as if the interaction was being viewed by an independent third party. They are doing a difficult task that may attract unfounded criticism. However, we pay them to be accountable for their conduct and the decisions they make that affect our rights and obligations.

Professional fisheries officers should be recording any potentially controversial interactions they have with you for the same protective reasons. They may not tell you they are taping you, but would be obliged under their Code of Conduct to answer you honestly if you asked if they were.

You should tell the officers your reason for not being able to safely go to sea. This could include inclement weather, exhausted or ill crew or that repairs are required to make the ship seaworthy. You should ensure this is recorded (by you and the officer). If the reason for not going to sea is valid and the officers issue MINs (Minor Infringement Notice), their actions may well be unreasonable and potentially unlawful. It may also amount to misconduct that requires referral to the Crime and Misconduct Commission depending upon the circumstances.

Also remember that you do not have to answer their questions if you are entitled to claim privilege against self-incrimination, in most cases however legal advice should be sought. The officers should allow you a reasonable time to seek legal advice.

Fisheries officers have the power to ask for names and contact details if they think you are committing an offence or reasonably suspect you have committed an offence. If they reasonably suspect any name and address you supply is false, the officers can ask for proof of that. (s475Y TIA) but to complicate matters further, as the identity of an individual is an element of the offence the officer may suspect you have committed, you may also claim privilege in relation to that information as well.

**You are not required to consent to them coming aboard your vessel** (see s475I TIA). If you do not consent they may then obtain a warrant to enter and exercise a number of powers including search, inspection, taking documents etc.

The above is a brief and incomplete summary of their powers. If you own or operate a vessel you should read the legislation to better inform yourself about the laws that effect your operations (see Chapter 15 Part 2 of the Transport Infrastructure Act accessed by googling Queensland Legislation and going to the Parliamentary Counsel site OR SEE [http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/Acts\\_SLs/Acts\\_SL.htm](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/Acts_SLs/Acts_SL.htm)).

With the *Rose-a-Lee* owners it is not likely to be material in any way that they owned a home at Mooloolaba or anywhere else. Nor is it likely to be relevant that Cooee has Mooloolaba listed as her home port as clearly Jill cruises all over the place. She appears to be on a genuine voyage, (probably from Brisbane to Maryborough) as were the owners of *Rose-a-Lee*. I think that each of those cases could have been successfully defended on the basis of the versions given.

Given the reasons for enforcement provided, the question has to be asked whether the actions taken by officials were undertaken for a lawful purpose if the reason is to do the bidding of home owners who have purchased a house. However, someone has to be prepared to take action by either making complaints to a proper agency such as the Ombudsman, or the relevant Minister, or by defending MINs issued.

If considering defending then legal advice should be sought so that proper consideration can be given to each charge that was laid and advice given about the prospects of defending the matter, rather than just relying upon the information given above.

Regards, Name withheld

## CAUTION ! no compassion

To TCP,

We have a house on the Sunshine Coast, however, we haven't lived in it for the past 18 months, choosing instead to live on board our catamaran. The house therefore, has been let. After our previous tenants moved out we moved back to the house do some repairs and maintenance in preparation for the next tenant. After about 3 weeks we were finally ready to set off up north for the sailing season.

We had just started packing our things ready to transport them to our boat, which was anchored in The Duck Pond at Mooloolaba, when my husband's mother who was resident in a local nursing home was taken ill. Around 1600hours she peacefully passed away. By the time we finally left the nursing home and returned to our boat it was well after dark.

We decided that as soon as the marina offices opened in the morning we would ring around for a berth rather than move back to the house. We had a funeral to arrange and as with any death there were numerous official matters that required attention. Next day before we could phone the marinas however, there was a knock on the hull. A Boating and Fisheries (B&F) boat containing two officers had arrived.

While the younger of the two officers remained silent the other one started to ask questions. He wanted to know who we were and why we were on board.

The officer then went on to say that because we had a property on the Coast we were not permitted to stay on board overnight at all; that the 10 days allowance to anchor and live on board in the river was for "genuine travellers" only. I exclaimed that we were genuine travellers and the boat was our home. Apparently this was not acceptable. He stated that if my 'story' proved to be true then an exemption might be in order.

By this time the B&F officers had been asking questions and taking notes for about 20 minutes. We had no choice but to move all our gear back to the house. Later that week the B&F officer phoned me to acknowledge that I had indeed told the truth, nevertheless the Department had issued an official Caution/Marine Infringement Notice without a financial penalty! So what happened to good old-fashioned common decency?

About 3 weeks later we were again in a position to depart. We moved our gear back to the boat with the intention of leaving early next day. Unfortunately a strong wind warning was issued overnight, and while it had been cancelled by the time we heard the first weather forecast, the damage was done and the sea was up. We motored out of the river and a couple of miles out to sea but it was too rough and we, together with a couple of other vessels turned back. But where were we to go? We tried the marinas again but still no vacancies so we dropped anchor off the beach at Mooloolaba in the hope that the sea might settle later. It didn't. Instead it became rougher as the tide receded. After a couple of really big swells came though and straightened the S hook on our bridle I said, "To hell with the Boating and Fisheries people, they can lock me up if they want, but we are not staying out here for another second!"

Anyway, we motored back to the Duck Pond and after a relatively quiet night we left the river and had a good sail to Double Island Point.

Speaking of points, what then is the point of this letter? Well I guess it comes down to this: What have my husband and I received for the huge increase in boat registration fees? The answer is harassment from Public Servants (definitely a contradiction of terms) and an Official Caution!

Lin Nemeth, SY *Rose-A-Lee*

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## TCP readers look into Government's apparent double vision

**Robert Rowan reviews Townsville Ports proposal to place a low bridge across the Ross River. Where will you go when the Cyclones and storms hit? This was written before Cyclone Anthony and Yasi hit the coast.**

**At the moment Townsville is undergoing major changes to the Port facilities and new Port Precinct.**

For the last 15 years a bridge across the Ross River has been proposed by the Main Roads Department. Discussions about this bridge being an opening type were canned by Main Roads as being too expensive to build. In their wisdom it was decided to raise the bridge to a height of 6 metres above the river so as to not interfere with small craft being able to use the river boat ramps.

That's fine except that the 60 or so masted vessels that use the river for mooring and as a safe haven will be unable to use the river after the bridge is built. Also the trawler fleet cannot use the river after the bridge is built. Customs and the Australian Navy have their vessels serviced at Halverson Marine which is also up the river.

The Port Authority included in the Port Precinct plans to build into the Precinct a business area for the trawlers and Halvorson Marine, the general consensus for the yacht owners was "find somewhere else to go...."

When asked what the Port Authority had planned for the relocation of masted vessels using the Ross River at a Community Forum Meeting, which was held at the Townsville Motor Boat Club on Wednesday 19th January 2011, no direct answers were forthcoming.

**The question was asked about Ross River being a safe haven during extreme weather including cyclones. Again this fell on deaf ears. It is a big issue taking away a safe haven especially seeing that the Ross River is the only navigable waterway at low water springs in Townsville.**

The argument that vessels could use the Breakwater Marina in times of extreme weather instead of the Ross River is laughable, vessels that draw more than 1.4 metres CANNOT get to the marina at low tide and if the marina was full you would have to take on the elements.

At this stage of the redevelopment of the Port Precinct, it is more than possible to build in an area for masted recreational vessels. The Port Authority have the power to call the shots with seabed reclamation and development, one point put across at the Community Forum Meeting was that the Port Authority is in fact run as a business rather than a government department. At the moment the pile moorings in the Ross River bring in apx. \$3,000.00 per week. This will continue after the masted vessels can no longer access the pile moorings as the demand for moorings far outweighs the supply available.

One of the main concerns here is Big Brother is waving a stick at the recreational yachtsperson as far as safety and the right to use a waterway as it has been for the last hundred years. There are solutions to this problem. If we keep bowing to Government decisions god help our grandchildren.

Regards,  
Robert Rowan, SY Nightmoves

**TCP NOTE:**  
**Robert brought the most current document from Townsville Ports available in PDF format explaining Cyclone Procedures for Townsville to our attention. The following are quotes from this publication:**

"Cyclone Procedures Emergency Contact Details For small boat owners in the Port of Townsville:  
Emergency Services 000 Port Control (07) 4781 1683

All small craft owners are responsible for ensuring their vessel and property is maintained and able to withstand, as much as possible, cyclonic conditions or severe weather and floods.

**It is recommended that:**

\*Persons vacate their vessels before conditions become severe as personal safety is the priority at all times.

\*If in a marina or hardstand area, check with the manager for specific instructions.

**\*If you don't have a mooring, anchorages may be found in Ross River. The area to the west of the Western Breakwater (known as 'the duckpond') is not a safe anchorage area.**

For more information regarding cyclone procedures, refer to Port Notices and Emergency Procedures on our website  
[www.townsville-port.com.au](http://www.townsville-port.com.au)

**TCP understands Cairns Marlin Marina specifically instructed boats to vacate the marina for the safety of the mangroves in the Trinity Inlet with resulting minimal damage to the fleet. See page 15 for the report of SY Kalida. Perhaps even more convincing is the report that was originally published in the TCP Cyclone Larry Special Edition from SY Saroena that is re-published in this edition, page 13.**

**There can be no doubt that denying access to the river will make a cyclone much more dangerous for the Townsville fleet.**

**Peter Kerr asks, is MSQ incompetent or..?**

It is time to put pen to paper again about MSQ (**Marine Safety Queensland**).

Many yacht's may have read the new Queensland Tide Tables for 2011 and noticed the same misinformation still in the Safety equipment for recreational boats. I did, and I am still not happy with the info in the PFD's/life Jackets area. (Page152)

Last year I sent in a notice to you about this same issue. (yup, TCP # 41 page8) I also sent many emails to MSQ advising them about this misinformation. In the end MSQ agreed with me and advised me that they will take out this misinformation from future publications. They failed to do this.

**The issue:**

MSQ have quoted a section of the Legislation which is out of context. They imply that all tenders have to have Life Jackets on board (and by default all safety gear, Flares ext) only with the exception mentioned in the Tide Tables.

Basically they have taken a section of the Legislation out of **TOMSR (Transport Operations Marine Safety Regulation) part 2, division 6.** Then left out the first line of this legislation "registered tenders". Then added "Tender to a recreational boat", out of other Legislation. **TOMSR part 2, division 5.**

I see this as being serious; next thing Yachty's will be prosecuted by Water Police, MSQ, National Parks ext, by using the Tide Tables as there Bench mark.

**Yachty's be aware if you mark your Tender as per Tide Tables Page 149 'Exemptions from Registration', you are LEGAL.**

A tender to a recreational ship operated within 2 n mile of the ship:

Is not required to be registered; and  
Is not required to carry safety equipment.

MSQ should be aware that they breach there own code of conduct by what appears to be intentionally misinforming the public.

This also should make people aware that you and the Gov agencies should only use Approved Legislation for any infringements of Legislation.

Yours sincerely,  
Peter Kerr, LIZARD YACHTS

**TCP NOTE: Peter supplied a raft of legislative references that appeared to be correct but to simplify matters as much as possible (we know legislation can be mind boggling to study) we have extracted the passages below that are most relevant from the "Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2004" which can be found at the MSQ website and through TCP website, "Issues" page. We advise (again) that MSQ personnel and publications should not be trusted for accurate information. Know the law!**

**Division 5**

**Other safety equipment for recreational ships**

27 Application of div 5

(1) This division applies to the following ships

(a) a ship registered under this regulation as a recreational ship;

(b) a ship that is registrable under this regulation as a recreational ship but is not registered;

(c) a recreational ship mentioned in any of paragraphs

(a) to (l) of section 60(2) other than paragraphs (f)

and (i). (TCP emphasis)

Section 60(2)(f) and (i) says;

(f) a recreational ship that

(i) is not powered; or

(ii) is powered by an engine of less than 3kW;

(i) a tender to a registered recreational ship if the

tender is operated only within a radius of 2n miles from the recreational ship;

29 Lighting devices for signalling for recreational ship on water at night

(1) Despite section 27(1)(c), this section also applies to

a recreational ship mentioned in section 60(2)(f) and

(i).

(2) A recreational ship on the water at any time between sunset and sunrise must be equipped with a lighting device for signalling to attract attention.

Examples of lighting devices torches, lanterns,

fluorescent lights and cyalume sticks

(3) Also, the ship must display a flashing white all-round light if the ship

(a) is used for training or competition; and

(b) is not powered but is propelled by using oars or paddles; and

(c) is operated on the Brisbane River.

Dear Kay and Bob,

I do want to thank you for another excellent addition of TCP. Lauren and I are a couple of Aussies who have just moved ashore after 32 years of full time living aboard. We just managed to survive the Bundaberg floods onboard... but despite that have decided to keep the boat for some shorter Queensland cruises in the future.

I particularly enjoyed the last issue of TCP which featured several articles about problems with Australian Customs officials. Personally we have no problems with Customs afloat, but many years ago Customs ashore once detained me at the airport for over two hours and treated me like a murderer in some third world country, all because I forgot to declare an unhidden and obviously cheap \$10 watch on the 'crew form' but declared it verbally immediately on arrival. This however was 'not good enough'!

Over the years I was reminded many times when overseas that Australians in uniform seem to believe they are the redcoats of old and we are the lowly prisoners. This became particularly evident with all the dealings, over many years, that we have had with NSW Maritime. Happily all that is now behind us and in our experience at least, doesn't apply to Maritime Queensland. (TCP note: We applaud your good fortune!)

Even so I wrote a letter that was sent to the ombudsman and applicable ministers etc. I also sent it to 'Afloat' and 'Club Marine' magazines and the Boating Industry of Australia, none of whom even acknowledged receipt of it, let alone print anything 'politically incorrect' about a government department that may provide Maritime advertising and other concessions etc.

That is why it was so very refreshing to see TCP is game enough not to 'just hush up' tax payer funded officials behaving like thugs. Well done!

It is obvious that if impolite and unaccommodating behaviour from officials is 'just accepted' as the Australian way, then it only goes from bad to worse. During our travels we can thank people like you for the fact that officials didn't just jump on board our boat with no reason as they certainly would have liked to.

It's hard to win with officialdom so I was amazed to see that my letter actually produced some results in several different ways thanks no doubt, to the Minister for Ports, Joe Trippodi.

Shortly after receiving his copy, the local Maritime official that was the basis for our complaints, roared up to our boat one morning. He was obviously VERY angry. I invited him aboard but he refused. I was told by him that my letter "was causing quite a stir behind the scenes". Some months later several things happened which, rightly or wrongly, I like to think were partly influenced by my letter:-

- 1/ The NSW Maritime web site page changed to make it far less officious.
- 2/ Maritime's budget was promptly cut by \$3M
- 3/ After 2 months, CEO of Maritime Chris Oxenbould (an ex-admiral) "retired" (fired according to the internet). A more boating-friendly Acting CEO was installed while things were sorted out.
- 4/ Marine police began to issue infringement notices to boats in Georges River, this was normally done in the past by Maritime.
- 5/ The Sydney Morning Herald newspaper, after I sent the editor a copy of my letter, published an editorial labelled "Up to the Gunwales in Bureaucracy" I didn't see the editorial, but it stated that more regulations for boaties, as Maritime wanted would not help improve responsibility.
- 6/ March 30/2009: New boating regulations came into effect which more than halved the number of existing regulations. "these reforms are part of the biggest reforms to marine safety rules and practice in more than a decade" (Club Marine magazine).
- 7/ Volunteer boating patrols were amalgamated and as an incentive they were offered \$4M of the NSW Maritime state govt. budget. The new group will be under the direction, not of Maritime as both I and Maritime would have expected, but under the Water Police.
- 8/ When we went in our boat to Sydney Harbour for a month, and then for a year's cruise in the Hawkesbury River, Maritime actually avoided us like the plague. What an incredible change. They would not come near us, and on the couple of occasions they needed to pass us they would speed by on the other side of the river.

Best wishes and smooth sailing. These days we prefer to maintain a low profile both afloat and ashore so please withhold names.

**TCP NOTE:**

**Thanks to you for your past involvement. And for demonstrating that activism can pay off. The TCP electronic edition will have contact details with hot links to all the relevant Queensland ministers and managers. We hope people use them!!**



# The Season of Storms

Between the Natural and Bureaucratic variety... many Queenslanders are getting edgy

The yachting community has it particularly bad but we are not alone when it comes to over-enthusiastic authorities. If you watched TV coverage of the states involvement in the flood aftermath you may have a very positive impression of compassion and professionalism. But...if you ask the people out there, you might have a different impression. The message below was forwarded to TCP by Rick Lutjens. Thanks Rick. The message was followed up and TCP located the name and phone number of the writer to verify authenticity. We spoke to the writer and found him to be a farmer and successful industrialist. He is the owner of Dingo Australia, an excavation machine maker many readers may be familiar with. [www.dingo.com.au](http://www.dingo.com.au) The sentiment of his letter appears to be representative of many voices. So on this and following pages are a collection of letters from victims of the recent floods to tell *THEIR* side of the story.

## Stupid government... It's our fault for not getting on to the idiots and asking why this is happening!

Bob Norson photo

There has been some amazing great story's come out of the floods. But there are also the ones that will never be told because in this country we tolerate idiots in government jobs and no one wants to point the finger in case it somehow blows up in their face.

Sorry, but at my age, I have become totally disenchanted and someone needs to tell it like it is, so I will start the ball rolling.

Take Qld transport In Dalby district.

Dalby hit the news with a record flood in the Condamine River that damaged the water treatment plant and water needed to be trucked in, in the middle of floods. Truck drivers worked hard to get us water.

Officers from Qld Transport booked drivers for so called over loading..... what Idiots. Who pays? It'll get squashed and probably has already, but what a waste of resources at a time when manpower was critical.

Farmers crossing a road with a tractor to feed starving, flooded stock were pulled up, the tractor measured, and they were booked because it was slightly wide. Not only that, they were forced to leave the tractor and go to town to get an over wide permit before they could move it back into the farm. And this happened on an already closed road where the farmer was the only person around, except for the idiots.

This morning, I was booked for driving down a closed road to check livestock that were reported out on the road and, at the same time, pick up my employee who had walked over the bridge to come to work. My house happens to be 50 metres past the road closed sign, so apparently I cannot even go in and out my gate. I tried

to reason amicably with 2 idiots. Of course I got more than a little agitated when they refused to let me down the road to my farm. As a result they pulled a tape recorder, so I made sure that it recorded their stupidity. I even had to insist that they return my driver's license. I'll definitely win the court battle as my employee witnessed the whole affair, but what a waste of time and resources.

Over the last 3 weeks, there have been Qld Transport officers stationed outside our farm booking innocent locals for about 8 days. 2 guys sit in a vehicle with the engine idling and hazard lights on 24/7. That would be 3 shifts, plus motel and other costs. Now most of these guys were reasonable people. I had to chat with them every time I went out my gate. Some were idiots like my experience this morning. But the real idiots in this case are the people who sent them out here to guard an obviously flooded and closed road. And never bothered to check when the water went down, and left them there. We, the taxpayers, pay them to be there and also pay fines for trying to get on with our lives in tough times.

Wrote the above in the hour before I went to Brisbane to help clean up the mess in our flooded premises there. While in Brisbane I was told about the truck drivers delivering food to Gympie. As it happens in times of desperate need, trucks rolled out of the Brisbane warehouses stacked with as much as they could get in. After all, the media was screaming for food for Gympie. Queensland Transport then intercepted the trucks and fined the drivers for overloading.

What Senior Idiot in Qld Transport decided that he could solve Queensland's financial crisis by fining drivers? And sent dozens of men out to embarrass the Government when they could have been helping people

in need.

And did you hear about the farmer who was ferrying food and other essentials for himself and neighbours across the flooded Condamine? Well, the SES and Police decided that was their job. Apparently it is illegal for us farmers to even launch our boats to help ourselves or rescue our livestock. So they sent him home after warning him that if he continued to help, they would prosecute. As he was putting his boat back on his trailer on the other side of the river, he heard horns blowing and looked back to where he had been sent away from. There were the professional idiots, in the middle of the river, sinking. And, as we normal citizens are stupid, he had to re-launch his boat and go back and rescue them.

Apparently they had forgotten to put the plugs in the bottom of the boat and their training had not taught them how to simply put them in after they discovered it and then how to bail the boat out. He should have let them drown. That would be called "natural selection". But again, they had been sent out with an attitude rather than real training. So who is at fault? Need I answer that?

**As I said at the start, there have been many, many great deeds by the vast majority of people, but when a society gets to the point that ordinary people are stopped from helping each other and are forced into submission by bureaucrats, Where are we going?**

Somehow, we have to reverse the stupidity that makes our nation the dumbest in the modern world.

Our great grandfathers would be appalled.

Gary Briggs, Dalby

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A photograph showing a man on the deck of a white boat with a blue stripe, pulling a large black net from the water. The net is partially submerged, and the man is leaning over the side of the boat. The background shows other boats and a body of water.

*Ashley Cooper photo*

*Ashley Cooper photo*

*MSQ, GET A CLUE!*

 Queensland

Ian was hailed as a hero by many boat owners due to his tireless efforts to save boats. They would be dragging down the river backwards with moorings attached, sometimes two or three joined together. He would jump onto the boat, locate their anchors and throw the anchors and wait until they were secure. Sometimes he would move them to safer anchorage and to get them out of the way of God knows what coming down the river. The public jetty was pushed to the riverbank by Ian, John and Bill from *Takutori*. The fuel dock with 30,000litres of fuel missed *Takutori* by a hairs breath. He and two other men (Barry and John)were risking their life to save boats (manned and unmanned) and lives. I believe Maz from 2A*breast* wrote to you about their ordeal. *(TCP note: indeed they did and credit the survival of their boat and perhaps their lives to Ian's and others effort. A letter is on next page with their more recent MSQ experience and their full report of the flood incident is published in TCP# 46 Special electronic edition available on the website)*

**Ian Willett, Skipper**

[illegible]



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## Storms...continue

Ashley Cooper photo

### Catamaran 2Abreast wishes to thank the heros.

2Abreast is back in the water now. We would like to thank Ian Willet from *The Blue Pearl* and Barry Cotter of the boat *Niue*. These were the brave souls who came to our assistance in their small dinghy on the night of the 30<sup>th</sup> December 2010 and rode the 'rapids' of the Burnett River with us (river was running at least 16 knots).

Without their help 2Abreast would be no more and we may not have made it through in one piece either. What you did was heroic and you would not leave us even though we asked you to leave us to take our chances.

We can never ever thank you enough and you will be in our hearts forever.

**Maz and Geoff from the sailing cat 2Abreast**

Several days after the above note arrived, 2Abreast forwarded their response to a letter from MSQ with the same accusation of negligence that *The Blue Pearl* received!

### 2Abreast replies to MSQ (edited for brevity)

When I read the response to my marine incident I have never felt so betrayed in my life. I put in a marine incident where others did not as I believe (maybe erroneously) that after a serious marine incident it is a legislative requirement. The reply I received was most hurtful. Did anyone actually read the typed incident report submitted?

The part of the letter which states: ***"I would like to draw your attention that all professional mariners moored in the Burnett River moved their vessels to safe moorings prior to the flood event. Your action in not moving your vessel at an earlier time to a safe place clearly placed yourself, other persons and infrastructure in grave danger. Maritime Safety Queensland strongly encourages all vessel owners to take timely action in removing their vessel from danger in times of flood and severe weather. We have investigated the circumstances of the incident and do not propose to take any further action at this time"***, is quite incorrect.

#### I will now address these:

1. All professional mariners DID NOT move their vessels prior to the flood event. Some trawlers were still leaving the town reach many days after we left.

Geoff White, 2Abreast



Ashley Cooper photo

# The Saving Of *Pennant*... A successful, minimalists Approach to Surviving the Flood!



### By Bob Norson

When I arrived in Bundy the flood had receded and I was able to focus the aftermath. I saw the notable cat *Pennant* and was pleased to see it in good nick, a scratch here or there but largely unhurt. So how did it survive where others were destroyed or heavily damaged. Later we were visiting on the cat *Starfire* and Craig and Julie were there and the subject came up. Julie had some photos that tell the story. First thing, the crew were aboard and monitoring the situation. Instead of bolting they chose to rise with the waters, virtually in place. In the photo at the immediate left they are moored over what was the parking lot for the marina.

Thanks to Julie Mahoney for the shots.



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Ashley Cooper photo

I have lived on a yacht in the Burnett River for 15 years, principally in the town reach. I have survived 5 floods in that time and have a very good strategy for surviving... Do not take advice from any authorities! My strategy is simple... when the flow in the town reach becomes 5 knots and over, I get out down river to where the river is widest and tuck in to one of my "Spots", usually a backflow caused by some upstream obstruction. The last flood has been the worst and I was told by the authorities two days before "not to worry, we will call you if it starts to look bad"... (I am still waiting for that call!)

Anyway, I spent the entire flood peak (the first one), less than 5 metres from shore in negligible flow. Unfortunately I saw some terrible sights. I was 200 metres from the Long Reach Moorings administered by the Bundaberg Port Authority. I saw yachts smash into each other, some sinking, others being ripped off the moorings and swept out to sea. I saw two brave yachtsmen get tossed in the water trying to help a stranded couple by diverting an unmanned yacht from hitting them.

Where were the authorities??? They were busy denying responsibility and busy telling everyone they could not touch unmanned vessels and that they were just "doomed". V.M.R. were quick to explain an upcoming court case "tied their hands" from touching unmanned vessels... They could only intervene when life was threatened. Unmanned vessels smashing into manned vessels obviously do not fit that category either apparently. Just as well it was experienced yachties trying to save everyone, from the appalling display of seamanship I saw as the V.M.R. vessel tried to pull alongside a jetty in 8 knots of flood flow...

**TCP Note:** The criticisms of Bundy VMR above and at right were not unique though there was aid rendered to some (assumed manned) boats, see letters section. . If Kev's allegation that he was instructed to remove a line attached to the beacon by a VMR official is accurate, it indicates a need for education. As it is clearly stated on page 6 of this edition, a skippers paramount responsibility is to the safety

## The story that won't go away, or The accidental interview, OR "Don't get me started!"

By Bob Norson

It was blazing hot, Kay was hiding in the one AC room with what used to be MY big computer.. it was a big tide out front.. I was on my way out to the tent to go to work and I just rebelled.. hell it was my birthday... Popped the tiny in around the corner and blasted across the Sandy Strait.

Gary's is one of the best anchorages on the coast and only about 4 miles away, behind Fraser Island. I know every shoal on the way and it's as good a destination as any... saw this boat that was all smiles.. two guys sitting under a shade on the bow, beers in hand, life is good. I stopped by to congratulate that they appeared to be the most comfortable set up in the anchorage.. about 6 boats there. We were invited aboard.. Sure, why not. Aboard about 5 minutes and then he mentioned they were in the Burnett river for the Bundy flood and he started spitting out words about the "D-----s" in authority there (apologising to Kay for the language) and the things they did... Kay and I look at each other... Told them who we were and then it was "You can print every bloody word mate and I got a lot more!"

Kevin reports that the experience was very emotional for his partner Melody. Her reaction was made with every bit of news on the VHF or what could be seen from their boat; elation when a boat was saved by the group of heroes that were boarding unmanned boats in their tinnies to deploy ground tackle to towing dangerous floating obstructions away from anchored yachts and heartbreak at the loss of others as they were drifting in the tide, snagged, broached and rolled under.

And the authorities... the people that recovered their runaway beacons and took them into the duckpond at Burnett Heads and as Kev reports, placed them into the middle of the best water in the restrictive shallow harbour. So when Kev crabbed in *Scorpio* against the roaring tide, he was forced to anchor on extremely short scope in the only place he could find for his vessel. For safeties sake, he tied a line to one of the beacons and claims he received shouted orders from the VMR station within sight of him, saying he couldn't do that.

Kev reported that he responded loudly and negatively. When the VMR boat was nearby later, Kev says they didn't say a thing.....didn't even look in their direction.

Kev also complained about the local VMR's lack of response to unmanned vessels adrift due to a law suit. Kev states he heard conflict between Bundy and another rescue service over the issue on VHF and the other rescue organization determined that an unmanned vessel was a hazard to navigation thus requiring their action. Kev says the experience has shaken what has been years of support. *"I've supported VMR and Coast Guard for years but now if I find out one cent of the money I donate might go to Bundaberg VMR I won't do it anymore!"*



Visitor Brian at left and Kev is at right showing off a big Muddy due for execution later. We missed Melody off on family visit.

of the vessel and crew and why is a VMR volunteer trying to play cop? TCP will pursue the law suit issue and Bundaberg VMR's response to that and update the electronic edition if required.

TCP would venture the opinion that the privatisation of the port authorities has not benefited mariners so far. The

placement of stray beacons and mooring blocks as reported was not thoughtful. TCP would like to remind those in authority that the liveaboard cruising community is a great reservoir of experience and information and should be respected and engaged.

As always, TCP invites correction on issues of fact in the reports published here. See pages 4 or 5 for details.

# The Law Suit against VMR (volunteer Marine rescue) The facts, The Legal principles, What it could mean to you

By Bob Norson

Mr Bill Goodhue of Napier New Zealand is suing Gold Coast VMR for negligence after his ketch Warlock keeled over and filled with water after it was allegedly moved from its mooring by the VMR in November 2003. He claims damages of about \$90,000 from the inundation.

As far as TCP has been able to research, that fact is not disputed by VMR, rather their defence is being built around legislation (The civil liabilities act) from the Beattie government that they say exempts them from any liability. Mr Goodhue argues civil liability laws that protect volunteers from legal action do not extend to the organisations they belong to.

The VMR's legal team requested the court to impose a \$45,000 bond on Mr. Goodhue to cover legal costs if he should lose the case. They called him a "pecunious" New Zealander with no formal ties to Australia and should front the money. Bill Goodhue, who defended himself in court said "New Zealand's not China, it's just down the road".

The judge agreed according to a Courier Mail report, "He said there were "about a million" New Zealanders who probably saw themselves as de facto Australians because they spent so much time here.

"I know a lot of New Zealanders and they would describe themselves as residents of both countries," he said. "(They) come and go on a regular basis."

Judge Wall ruled that to impose a costs order on Mr Goodhue would be "oppressive" and could stifle his legal action.

**Comments:** Very interesting.

If the argument of "intent" succeeds, the cruising community may have secured an important weapon against the atrocious behaviours of Customs as none of their actions against yachts has any direct basis in law, or at least as far as we have been able to determine. In fact TCP has found through records, that they use law clearly at odds with intent as stated by legislators.

If the argument of reckless disregard were to fail, then that would allow a VMR volunteer of unknown seamanship, to interfere with a yacht without

Outside court, Mr Goodhue said the VMR had hired high-priced lawyers to try to defeat him but he was determined to fight on."

VMR barrister Susan McNeil argued that civil liability laws in other states specifically protected community organisations from lawsuits, but not in Queensland. However, it was clearly the intention of the legislation to ensure that the immunity that applies to volunteers also extends to community organisations".

Bill Goodhue, countered that community groups were not immune from being sued if they had been negligent or shown "reckless disregard".

So.. the case may distill to this, Bill Goodhue believes he can show a preponderance of evidence to indicate "reckless disregard" on the actions of the VMR individuals that moved his boat and that the organisation is liable for that even though the individuals are not.

The VMR argument seems to be centred on the supposed "intent" of the legislation regardless of the letter of the law.


At a recent hearing Bill scored a major win when Judge Newton dismissed an application by the VMR for the case to be thrown out.

The judge said it was uncertain whether the Civil Liability Act protected the VMR, and ruled the case should go to trial unless it could be resolved through mediation.

accountability at all. Leaving a boat, un-manned, could be delivering the vessel into their hands without recourse.

And the decision by VMR hierarchy to ignore the plight of the unmanned vessels in the recent floods in Bundaberg as a response to the lawsuit even before the case is heard seems to be a ridiculous over reaction at this stage.

Was this a ploy to arouse sympathy for VMR and create ill will towards the plaintiff? If so it appears to have largely backfired though there will be those who will side with that approach and blame Bill Goodhue.




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## Cyclone Strategy...what works...and what DOESN'T

Ian Gibbs photo

Kevin Rankin photo

# What should have been learnt from Larry

**This excellent account of cyclone strategy by Ian Gibbs, published in the TCP Cyclone Larry Special Edition is instructive and prophetic. Sailors AND the Townsville Port Authority should pay attention... this author knows his subject.**

Our boat *Saroena* is a 42 ft Roberts Spray, ketch rigged, motor sailor. We have based ourselves at Port Hinchinbrook Marina this year and last specifically because the Hinchinbrook Passage has to be one of the best cyclone refuges on the coast of Queensland.

We prepared for cyclone Larry by clearing and securing the upper deck and stowing items below for sea. We held off moving out of the marina as long as possible because the \$1000 excess on our insurance policy is not enforced if we are damaged in a nominated marina.

When Larry strengthened to Cat 5 and seemed unlikely to veer away we considered that the Marina would be untenable if the predicted tidal surge coincided with high tide. I was at one time on the counter disaster Committee in Mackay and in my opinion, all of the marinas in which we have been based (Half Moon Bay, Port Hinchinbrook and Breakwater) are at risk of the pontoons floating off the piles with catastrophic results.

We left in mid afternoon which gave us time to motor to the location shown on the chart and secure the vessel. We chose a creek between Hinchinbrook and Boat Passages because of the reduced risk of flood borne debris, and the particular creek (un-named) because of it's general south easterly direction which permitted mooring with bows into the likely wind direction.

On arrival, we entered a narrow tributary creek with just sufficient depth of water for entry at low tide. We put out 2 bow anchors (1x 60 lb, 1x 80 lb plow) and a stern anchor (1x 40 lb Danforth), and secured to the mangroves amidships on both sides with 2.5 cm silver rope. After lowering and stowing both our foresails we retreated below to avoid the unrelenting attack of the mosquitoes and sand flies. At this time it was calm with virtually no wind and extremely hot and humid.

During the evening the wind slowly increased from the South East and had reached gale force by 2200 hrs with constant rain. We needed to adjust our warps and mooring lines from time to time, but otherwise dozed in our main cabin and monitored ABC Far North until it went off the air suddenly at 0358 hrs.

By this time wind strength according to our mast head anemometer was 50 - 60 knots, gusting higher. We tended to sail around on the anchor warps but were restricted by the breast ropes until the starboard mooring became detached.

This allowed us to lie alongside the fringing mangroves, breaking off a number of branches and sustaining minor damage. On deck it was remarkably calm with most of the wind going overhead and the water was calmer than it would have been in a marina due to the minimum fetch. There was virtually no flying debris.

By first light the wind seemed at it's worst, still from South to South East and consistently in the 60 - 70 knot range with a maximum recorded gust of 101 knots. I was able to go on deck however and clear mangrove branches with the aid of my Gurkah kukri. We enjoyed a healthy fry up for breakfast and soon after regained radio contact, when we heard that Larry was crossing the coast around Innisfail.

As far as tides are concerned we experienced was amounted to a double high tide, both of around 2.5 metres and I guess that the first, which flowed in very strongly, was the surge. I believe that this occurred at around 0830 hrs.

It is very difficult to predict tidal times or flows in this region as the tide enters the passage from both ends, the opposing streams meeting close to our location. The second tide arrived around 2 hours after the first which was approximately the predicted tide time and was slightly smaller.

At 0830 hrs the wind was still in the 50 - 60 knot range but the rain was decreasing affording glimpses of Hinchinbrook Island. Although calm in our side creek, there were waves to about 150 mm in the main creek which at this point runs in an East to West direction with a fetch of about 100 metres.

The squalls, accompanied by rain, could be heard roaring as they approached across the mangroves, and in the main creek could be seen blowing water off the surface and lifting it into the air.

The wind strength slowly moderated during the course of the morning. We tidied up and re-attached our moorings, remaining until the following day before returning to Port Hinchinbrook Marina.

*Saroena* was looking dreadful with mangrove sap stains all down her starboard side, but once this had been cleaned off, damage was confined to some tears in the Dachshund safety netting and some minor scratches. Most vessels which moored in the narrow creeks appeared similar. I know of no serious damage sustained.

Meanwhile, back in the Marina, the manager nearly had a heart attack when the pontoons rose to within 300 mms of the pole tops. Several vessels sustained damage to sails, awnings and inflatable dinghies because their owners had failed to take adequate preventative action.

We would certainly recommend the mangroves as a good place to be in any future cyclone. In future we would make the decision earlier and take down all our sails. We would place only one bow anchor, keeping the other in reserve, and put out 2 lines to the mangroves on either side, probably rigged as springs.

We were close enough to the centre of cyclone Larry for it to be exciting without being significantly scary. I have no desire to be any closer to a Category 5 Cyclone.



Ian Gibbs photo



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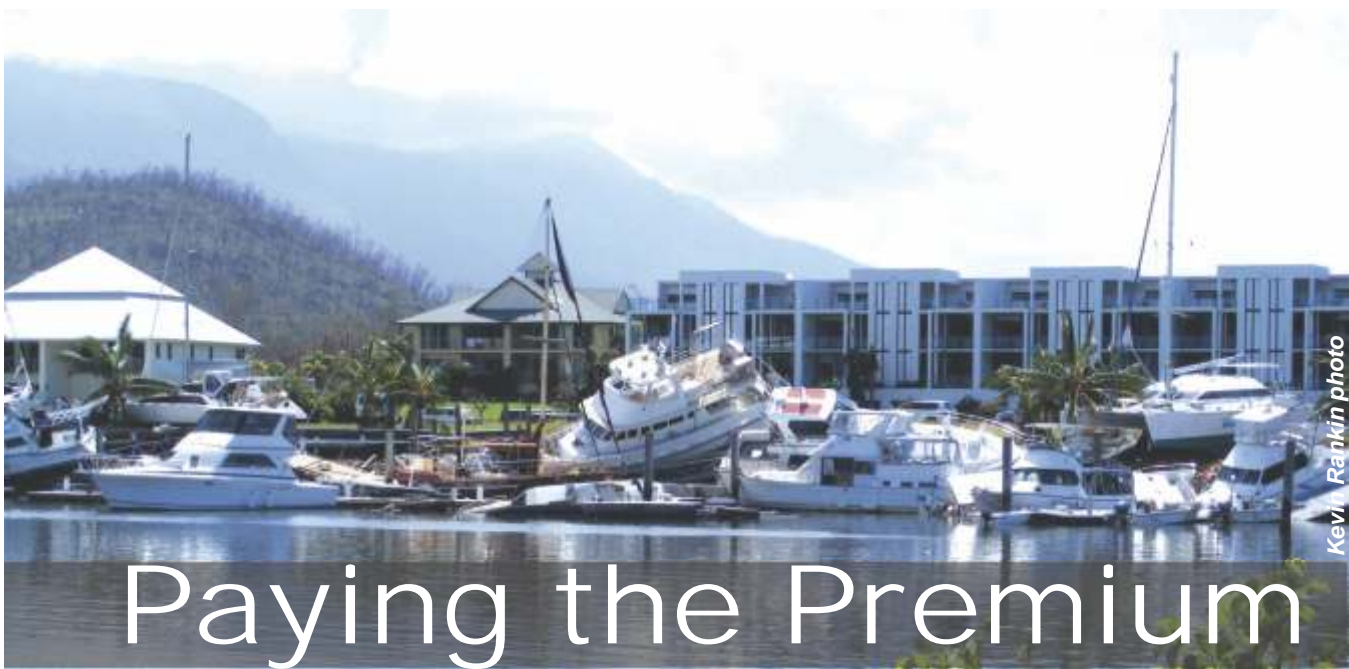
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Our thanks to Kevin Rankin for these frightening photos.



# Paying the Premium

Norm Walker, MSY Peggy-Anne

I guess boat insurance is about to get more expensive after all the wrecked boats I've seen on the front page of the newspapers, get their payouts. I must admit it makes one ponder on why there has been so much loss over the past few months.

The flooding in Toowoomba and The Lockyer Valley which was intense, catastrophic and took many people by surprise, resulting in many unfortunate deaths and losses, was the only natural disaster that happened quickly and without warning.

On the other hand the flooding of The Brisbane River and Cyclone Yasi, were well forecast, with ample advance warning being issued. So why were so many vessels compromised and lost? Is it the complacency or ignorance of owners that is pushing insurance premiums up?

I would imagine it is different for people who live at home and have their boat tied to the pontoon out the back, or down at the marina. But as a live-aboard there is no way known our boat would have been lost in the Brisbane River or Cyclone Yasi events.

I noticed that all the river cats and many private vessels, were taken to Manly and tied up securely while the flood raged in the river. Others opted to relocate to Moreton Island or The Broadwater, saving their pride and joy.

I have also spoken to skippers who had their boats at Port Hinchinbrook and opted to moor in the mangroves while Yasi blew the place to pieces. They returned the next day to clean off a few mangrove leaves, their vessels being unscathed.

I heard one boatie who was preparing to move his boat to safety, asked some others at Hinchinbrook why they weren't doing the same. The reply was that, they knew the marina was going to float off the piles, but as their boats were tied to the pontoons and would float too, all would be O.K!!!! They obviously have no idea of what 100 knot plus, winds can do.

I experienced the eye of Ului, a Cat3 cyclone that pounded Airlie Beach last season. I rode that night out in the marina and it was the last place I wanted to be. I worked hard all night in atrocious conditions to protect our boat and came through it, with nil damage, but there was far too much going on. Other boats were breaking loose in the marina and had to be resecured and after the eye crossed boats were being broken from their moorings outside the marina and sailing in unassisted. Luckily they missed us by metres and were wrecked on the rocks only metres away.

After the event I couldn't believe how many boats (especially charter boats) had been left on their moorings as if it was just another day. Not even a sail removed in some cases.

The two things we learnt were: 1. The marina wouldn't have taken much more punishment and 2. We will never again, use a marina as a cyclone bolt hole.

As our boat is also our home we feel the need to have it covered by insurance, in fact it is nearly impossible to use a marina or hard stand area these days without the boat having insurance cover.

When visiting Port Hinchinbrook Marina when heading south last year, we experienced a spring tide and noticed that the piles only extended a very short distance through the pontoons at the top of the flood. We heard it alleged that the piles were kept short as someone thought they were unsightly and anyway Cardwell had no history of a cyclone landing there.

Yasi didn't care and from what we have seen on tele the marina looks pretty untidy at the moment. Even if the piles were higher, I don't think many would have survived that amount of wind strength. For us the only place to ride out severe weather is tied up in a mangrove creek and there are heaps of spots within half an hour's steaming from Port Hinchinbrook.

I guess a lot of people who use their boats purely for recreation, are going to prioritise, with their home being secured for bad weather, before worrying about the boat.

So the question needs to be asked, is the person who lives aboard and takes measures to insure their vessel survives devastating events, less of a risk to an insurance company? Of course the answer is yes.

The other question is..... should premiums reflect this???

**TCP Note:** The article on page 13 of this edition is very relevant reading to this subject. A heads up liveaboard skipper chose Hinchinbrook Marina at Cardwell specifically because of it's proximity to the channel with it's mangrove security and survived cyclone Larry without damage as a result of making use of it. We are astounded more boats didn't take advantage of that but do suspect... "agreed value" insurance policies may been a factor in some cases. Interestingly, one of the boats that did bolt for the bush was reported "missing" as a result and a search was undertaken for them! The liveaboard vessel was later "found" when she sailed back after the storm unscathed. We knew as soon as we heard about it that the boat was in the mangroves and why was this a mystery to anyone? And one more point, we heard after Ului hit Airlie Beach that some insurers may not have covered a boat taken into mangroves but definitely would cover on a registered mooring! Insurers may not be structuring policies to encourage best seamanship. We agree. Norm has a point.



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15m mono 50ft	\$47	\$253.00	\$ 966.00	\$2477.00
16m mono 53ft	\$49	\$270.00	\$1030.00	\$2640.00
17m mono 55ft	\$51	\$287.00	\$1095.00	\$2803.00
10m multi 33ft	\$39	\$210.00	\$ 800.00	\$2200.00
12m multi 40ft	\$48	\$260.00	\$ 990.00	\$2500.00
14m multi 47ft	\$56	\$302.00	\$1045.00	\$2850.00
15m multi 50ft	\$60	\$324.00	\$1230.00	\$3100.00
16m multi 53ft	\$64	\$345.00	\$1350.00	\$3400.00
17m multi 57ft	\$68	\$367.00	\$1450.00	\$3700.00
18m multi 60ft	\$72	\$390.00	\$1550.00	\$4000.00

\*Liveaboard Charges: Single Person: \$4 per night Family (2 adl - 2 chd): \$7 per night  
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# Cyclone Yasi interrupts our fun!

By Natasha Harper, SY Kalida

On Monday the 31st Jan. we were playing around the dock with some other children at Marlin Marina Cairns when dad came out and said we might need to go up the creek in a few days due to cyclone Yasi getting bigger, so make sure all our stuff is packed back on the boat. Come Tuesday the 1st at 8am we got the call to say we have to evacuate the marina and go up the creek (how sad no school). The news is that it was heading for Cairns and travelling pretty fast. They put the Harbour on **Yellow Alert**.

We headed off and found our little anchorage up Falls creek. We had been up this creek once before for another cyclone and this time we were prepared with more ropes and industrial strength insect spray.

After mum and dad had dropped 3 anchors and tied what looked like a cobweb of ropes to the mangroves we had to do our homework. I thought cyclones made homework go away (not in our family unfortunately). We did take the opportunity when mum and dad returned to deliver a few Coastal Passage newspapers to new boats, they were so excited to get them.

As soon as we were settled mum and dad took off to help others get settled and tie up. When they returned they got busy again taking more stuff off the boat, when we asked what's happening they said everyone is saying the cyclone has gone to a cat 5 and heading toward Cairns.

The next morning, still looking like it was going to hit us, we decided to get off the boat and look after ourselves on land rather than up the creek; I'm not sure if Kalida would fly but we didn't want to find out.



Matthew & Natasha delivering TCP to Jesse & Taiya on *Scuttlebug*

We launched the dingy and packed what ever was important to us just in case we did lose the boat. We did this all in about 10 minutes and I packed some clothes and my guest book that everyone has signed since we have been cruising and Matthew packed a bag that had shells, knives and toys. I told him to leave that bag and put some clothes in another as mum won't let you take that stuff. Mum and dad just took the laptop as it had all our photos on it and a hand held vhf and phones. They said the photos are the most important if all is lost we still have all our memories.

We headed with a few other boats out the creek in building wind, current and rain to land some miles away. Our little dingy was struggling but we finally got to shore and tied the dingy up and headed with *Scuttlebug* and *Planetpuegot* to higher ground to a friend that *Scuttlebug* knew. The roads were empty, all shops were shut and it was pretty scary. We got to this little place and felt safe for the time

being but as the night crept on it got windier and the rain came down. Matthew sleeps through everything, I opened my eyes a few times to see just candle light as the power was out.

After it had all passed the next day we all tried to get back to our dingy (hoping it's still there) and head back to the boat. When we got about half way we had flash flooding that stopped us in our tracks and we had to hide under a shopping centre car park until it stopped some hours later. We headed to our dingy and raced to our boat before a huge electrical storm hit us. The muck in the water was terrible and the outboard kept stopping as the prop was jammed with leaves from the mangroves.

At last, home again back on the boat. It only had few things wrong with it. The electrical storm hit and heavy rain came down but that didn't stop us from having a pot luck dinner on *Scuttlebug's* boat. We had 8 adults and 6 kids and everyone

made some very yummy foods. When we were all done we dinghied back to our boat in the rain and pitch black and went to bed and woke to a calmer day to head back to the marina. We all hate these horrible insects that live in the creeks, they leave us all swollen and sore. When we arrived back in the marina we cleaned the boat up and checked our homework was all done. I was going to try the excuse that a cyclone ruined my homework but that seemed a bit corny.

**We all survived this time but our friends down south had their boats broken and we really feel sorry as we have spent lots of good times with them so if you are reading this we are so sorry but you're a boatie and we can overcome most things; well that's what mum and dad say. Good luck we are thinking of you all.**

*PS: Matthew helped me with this story by asking me to type quicker when he gave me his information. Boys...*



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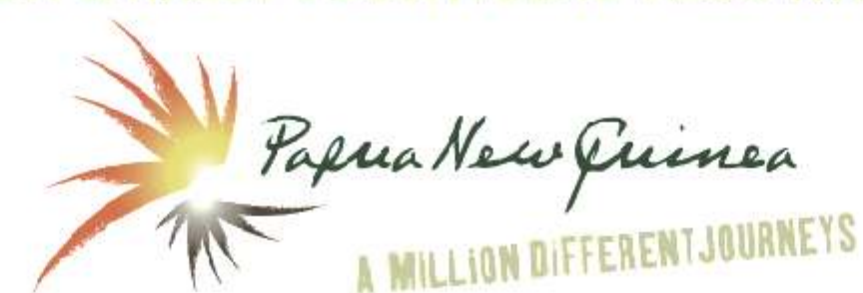
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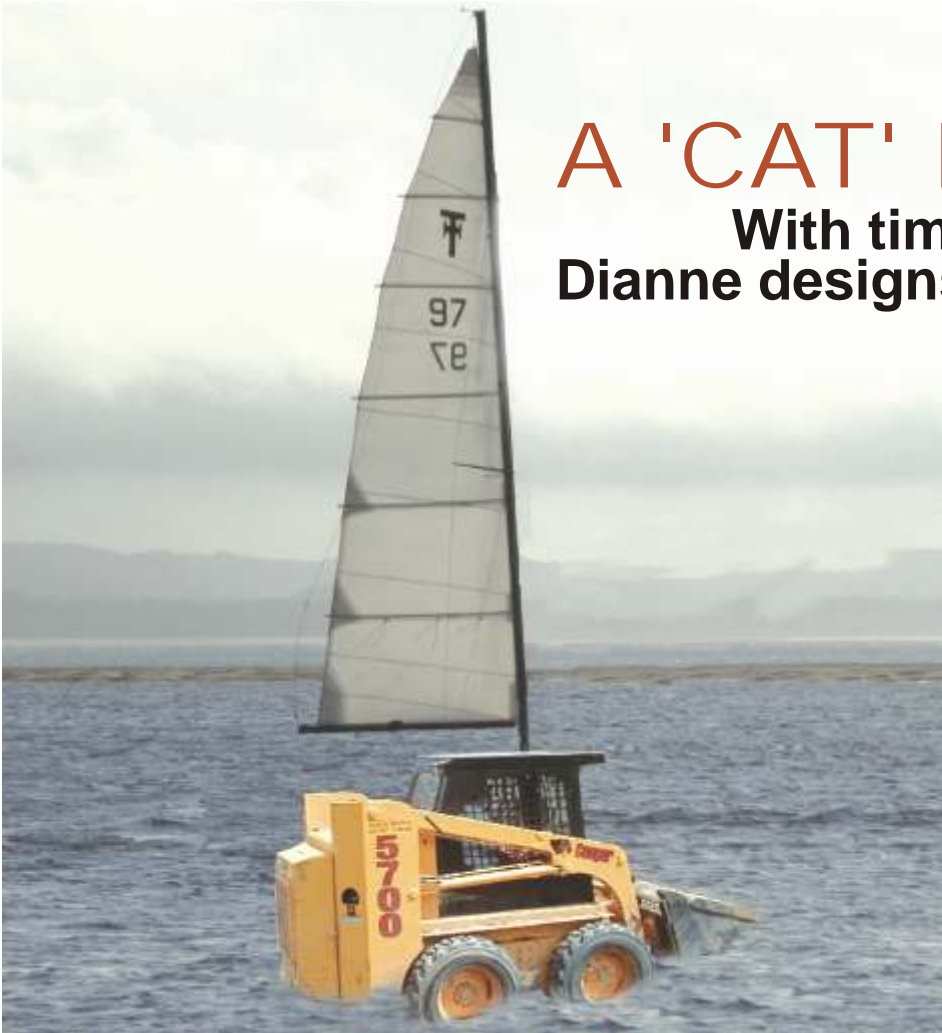
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# A 'CAT' FROM PLY TO STEEL?

With time for reflection during the floods, Dianne designs a new Cat - "be prepared" is the motto



The water was rushing through the boat shed.

By Dianne Challis, Apprentice boat designer

The time had come when new considerations were needed in regards to the building of our catamaran. We worked like troupers with a dream that would have us sailing away within 12 to 18 months. Who'd ever think that life would get in the way with that dream? How dare it! With family issues, health issues, trips overseas, we thought we had experienced it all and accepted that these things took us away from our project. We even beat ourselves up about it and even felt guilty because we were not able to get on with it. But then we resolved ourselves to the fact that this is the way things are. You really need to take each day as it comes and deal with things as and when they are dealt out to you.

When you think you have just about nipped all the hold ups in the bud along comes Mother Nature and spins you into another little world where shit hits the fan again. We are the lucky ones. Our home was never flooded, we were dry and safe. We were 50kms away from the Bundaberg devastation. We were so grateful for our security and safety yet the emotions ran high as we watched the township and the boats suffer such cruelties and damage that water could do. Our sufferance and anguish was the bleeding rain. One day just before Xmas we received 200mm in the 24hr period followed by ongoing rain storms then another day of 150mm followed by yet more rain. The ground was getting sodden; the water just could not soak in let alone run away fast enough.

Then one day we received 80mm in less than an hour. It rushed down the hill and through our boat shed, thankfully doing no damage as the shed is open at the bottom. The damage was done to our driveway.

Our property is on a slight slope surrounded by cane fields and large dams. The culvert on our road could not handle such a deluge in a short time; it overflowed the 'V' drain on the opposite side and poured over the roadway and straight down our 300mt drive like a river. The 80 megalitre dam next door overflowed and flooded the bottom section of our drive and property creating the possibility of starting up a White Water Rafting business. So we were land locked on our own property and were unable to get out as all ways in had turned into the Boghole from Hell.

Luckily for us we have a bobcat but this was useless with the sodden ground. It got bogged more times than I could possibly count. We had to use the poor 50+ year old tractor to pull the bobcat out and that was okay until the front wheels of the Fordson Major dropped off. As well as that the tractor sort of fell down in a very soggy place with its large rear wheels buried half way up their rims and the front wheels off near some trees. It's too long a story to explain how it all happened so I won't bore you. It made quite an unusual picture.

Once the ground had dried out a tad John was able to use the bobcat to start resurrecting our drive. He has been working tediously on it for three weeks now and we feel that we may be getting to the end of the ordeal. While he has been fixing up our access in and out he has also been building a wider and higher drive with cambers and drains so that when the boat Gods allow us to return to our project we will have a safe and dry track for the catamaran's removal down to the sea.

Meanwhile a new form of 'Cat' has arisen from all of this. It is not ply but it is solid steel and if this weather keeps up as it has this wet season we feel that maybe it will be the only way for us to go. What do you think?



In one side and out the other...



The volume of water was incredible...This picture shows the water moving down to the driveway - no way out for a while...

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The boats tied up along the rivers edge and Steffen, Vicki's mate, piloting through the mess to check on Shomi

# The Rockhampton Floods, 2011

Words & photos by Vicki J, SY Shomi

**Have you noticed how much the media has raved about landlubbers turning up to help out their neighbours effected by the floods? It is great, that is for sure, but within a few weeks these people return to their everyday lives and no more is seen or heard from them until the next disaster. Since moving onto a boat I have been blown away by the camaraderie and dependability of my neighbours or even strangers, at any time. Wherever I roam.**

Perhaps it is because yachties are exposed to the elements most of the time that disaster is only a breath of wind away or as is the case in Rockhampton when rain has fallen inland catastrophe can strike at any moment. Not so much by the flooding but the mountains of weed and logs that make their way with speed to the town reach before the flood waters arrive. Every year we suffer this affliction even when there is not a major flood event.

As usual, with Rockhampton floods, we wait for up to 14 days for the flood water to arrive. It is the most sociable time for us as we compare notes and keep one another up to date. The waters have a long way to come from out west as far as Emerald. As the water makes its way east it is joined with the flood waters from the Dawson, McKenzie and all the other rivers, picking up pace as it swells. What, however, can never be predicted is when the islands of weed and logs will descend. This time it was well before Christmas and 19 days before the flood peaked at 9.3 meters.

Returning back to the river at knock off time on December the 15<sup>th</sup> the wind was well up. Storms were on the way and the river was running fast and saturated with vast quantities of weed and logs. There was the usual organized chaos as boats were busily evacuating. Anyone with a large tinny and big outboard were in demand, but all hands were on deck. Literally.

Most of the boats with owners away were moved in their absence. One of the risks is green logs (trees undermined by the water and fallen into the raging waters). They roll along the bottom of the riverbed and catch on a mooring or anchor chain and pull the nose down or uproot the anchor. If the anchor is in well

enough or the mooring a heavy one the weed will even sink a boat.

Boats were secured to trees near the rivers edge away from the main channel and most of the debris, or anchored around the bend past Devil's Elbow where all is quiet but out of the town reach and where the cars are cut off by the rising water. And then we wait for the floodwaters. We opted to anchor behind the new floating walkway next to the ramp. We watched it being built in 2010 and it looked sturdy enough for us. The locals all thought we were mad to trust this structure and warned we were about to lose our boat. They were convinced that as the waters rose, the walkway would break up.

Instead we checked it for the next 9 days, admittedly before the worst had reached us, and it was sitting pretty with the floating pontoon catching and redirecting the weed, logs and most of the current to the point where we sailed forward in the wind and had to set a stern anchor. The main anchor was in well and we were tied to a tree on the river's edge. With 3 boat owners with big dingys and outboards keeping an eye on *Shomi*, we decided to take a road trip to Ipswich as planned for the family catch up that Christmas heralds.

Of course the rest is history. The rain fell and fell and then some more and after Christmas the roads were closed on both coastal and inland highways. Rocky had not yet peaked but Gin Gin was cut off. Next came Bundaberg, Gympie, Theadore, Emerald, Eidsvold and other little places out west.

I am a Queenlander born and bred so floods are not unusual. In fact for children, they were a time of excitement. For a start no one went to work or school, the neighbours were out and everyone was socialising. Instead of a car as transport, there was a tinny. It didn't have to travel the long way the road took, but could cut across some prime pumpkin growing land straight past the Beenleigh Rum distillery to town. No children were told not to play in the puddles. Talk about fun and games.

In the '74 floods my husband of a week and I returned home to pick up a caravan in which we planned a leisurely road trip to South Australia as part of our honeymoon. The floods kept us at my parents home

next to the Albert/Logan Rivers for a week.

My father had bought a hartley ferro cement yacht that looked as if it had been plastered by a thong attached to the foot of a truckie. As the flood water receded the 5 ton of concrete and steel landed fairly and squarely in the middle of the country road. There it stayed until the water had cleared enough for my brother, who ran a crane hire company, to bring one out and lift the boat back into the river. Not long after, my father forgot to close a seacock and again the crane had to be brought out to lift it from the bottom of the river. My father could have written a book entitled *1001 Things You Should Never Do with a Boat*. But that, as they say is another story.

For the 2010 new years eve I had made plans to spend it with my kid sister Alison and neice and nephews when we heard the Fitzroy was 30 hours from closing the highway to the south. Without stopping to pass go, we jumped in my little buzz box and drove non stop almost disappearing into some of the potholes, and arriving home 10 minutes to 2011.

We tried to check on *Shomi* in person but the problem with this plan is the dingy was tied up near the roadway at the Fitzroy Motor Boat Club but the road was cut by water.

So we relied on our trusty friend Dave, from whom we rent a mooring, and who checks on all the boats he has on his books; twice a day and is our insurance policy, security man and hero all rolled into one. Many times in a crisis he is the first there to help, without being called. As I said, this is a common theme with boat people.

**The waters are receding as I write and the lower lying suburbs are covered in putrid brown mud which leads me to wonder why ever they were permitted to build there in the first place. But the worst of all is this is the muck now covering our precious coral around the Keppels and beyond. Coral bleaching is already being recorded and unless we get some fearsome seas to wash it clean there will be death and destruction to the reef that my not be able to be saved. Where are the multitudes with gurneys and scrubbing brushes for this clean up?**

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# The Australian Wooden Boat Festival 2011 - Hobart gets it right!



## Words & photos by Jim Geddes, SC Te Arawa

Of all the myriad of uses that wood and wood products have been put to over countless centuries, surely its use in carving and boatbuilding must be the closest to an art form.

The sight of a mature woman running her hand over the beautiful bright finished side of a 5.5 keelboat on static display as if caressing the flanks of a beloved horse was a memorable sight amongst many memorable sights at The Australian Wooden Boat Show, at Hobart Tasmania, February 11-14, 2011.

myState Financial are to be congratulated for the leap of faith in eliminating the entrance fee. The risk paid off with what looked like the largest attendance ever, with thousands of lookers and lovers of wooden boats padding around admiring craft as diverse as square-riggers to a Japanese Hachoro boat.

With well over 400 boats attending the volunteers had their work cut out for them, however all seemed to run smoothly with nary a terse word uttered, a testament to the efficiency and dedication of all involved.

The festival was not without its share of celebrities; actor Philip Rush, chef Tetsuya, round the world sailor Jessica Watson and that doyen of small boat designs, Ian Oughtred.

Would I go again? You bet, my accommodation is already booked!

THE AUSTRALIAN WOODEN BOAT FESTIVAL WEBSITE:  
[www.australianwoodenboatfestival.com.au](http://www.australianwoodenboatfestival.com.au)  
 The next show is set to be February 8-11, 2013





# Jim Geddes of SC Te Arawa shares a few more pictures from the 2011 Wooden Boat Festival

*"The sight of a mature woman running her hand over the beautiful bright finished side of a 5.5 keelboat on static display as if caressing the flanks of a beloved horse was a memorable sight amongst many memorable sights at The Australian Wooden Boat Show, at Hobart Tasmania, February 11-14, 2011." Jim Geddes*







A large wooden sailboat with a white hull and wooden deck is docked in a harbor. A red cover is draped over the mast. A small dinghy is attached to the stern. The boat has "MELBOURNE" written on the stern. A lifebuoy is visible on the deck. The background shows other boats and a harbor scene.





# Stuart Knows Timber

During a recent road-wise circumnavigation of Tasmania, we discovered the magnificently wild Pieman River region, north of Strahan on the Tasmanian west coast. After coffee at the roadhouse and while waiting for the single vehicle punt to arrive, I had occasion to admire the fine lines of the 1938 bridge-deck cruiser, *Arcadia 11*, still working on the Pieman River, although these days in the more genteel tourist trade.

*Arcadia 11* has a long and colorful history; from the latter days of the Huon Pine era in the 30's to WW11 when she was acquired by the Navy for duty in New Guinea; up until her present incarnation ferrying sight-seers to the heart of what was once Huon Pine country. Anyhow, in one of the exhibition tents, I was lucky to encounter an exhibit telling the story of *Arcadia 11* and those hard men; the 'piners'. Thelma McKay who kindly filled me in, and her husband both have ancestral roots to those hardy Irish piners. Thelma indeed is an authority, having researched a seminal book on the Huon Pine story.

It's easy to understand why in the past when it was available, Huon Pine was treasured as the boat building par excellence. Huon Pine (*lagarostrobos franklini*) has no sapwood but contains an oil that confers remarkable longevity. The oldest sub-fossil Huon Pine log recovered was extracted from a bog on the Stanley River by scientists from the CSIRO in the early nineties and dated at a barely believable: 38,000 years old. Log cross sections are routinely found to contain one thousand plus growth rings.

**In a World where spin and bling dominates everything seen and heard via the media and everything else is 'made in China', each Wooden Boat Show for me: is a reminder that the ancestral roots of boating lie in real boats built by artists and tradesmen of an era that while it may be history; is nonetheless thank God, not dead yet.**





# Julie Long of SY Adagio shares a few pictures from the 2011 Wooden Boat Festival



The Festival's music and art displays are well worth the time



A friend told us there are less than a handful of days where Mt. Wellington is not covered in some sort of cloud during the year, and the last day was one of those.



As you can see one of the boats lost their mast, and a couple of days later we saw a demonstration of how to make a mast, and it was going to be used to replace this one.



Teams built boats from scratch which they had to row, then sail around the course, and stay afloat before then bombarding each other with water and flour bombs etc.



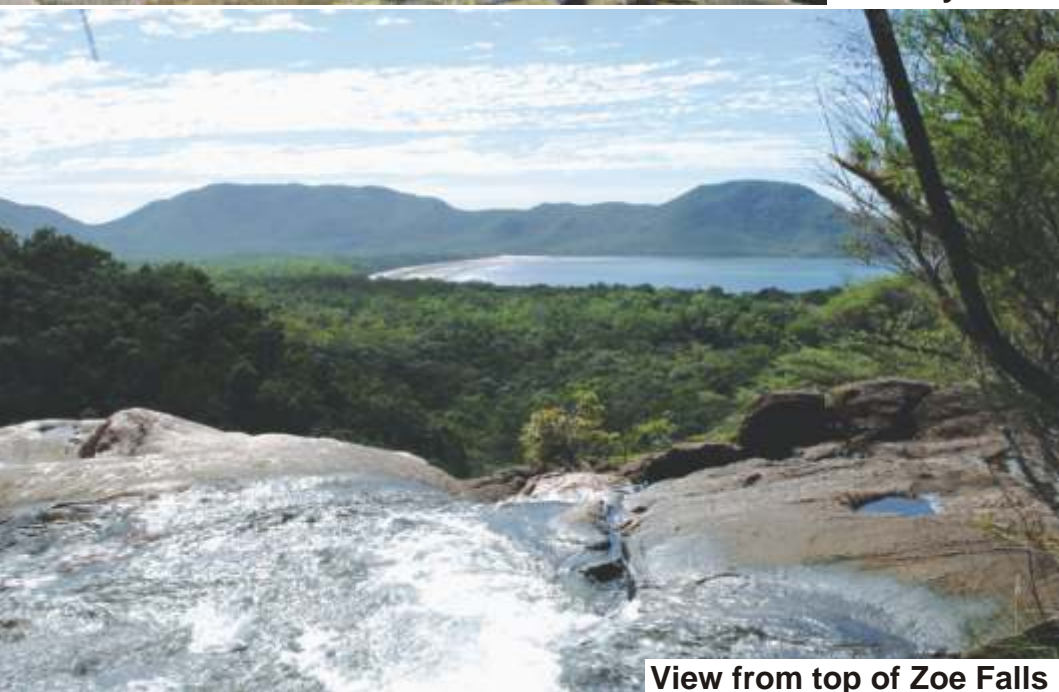


# Home Grown Paradise

***“How often do we dream of far flung islands, way out somewhere over the rainbow... yet oft-times forget treasures right in our own backyard? One such gem is Zoe bay on Hinchinbrook Island.”***  
**Steve Kenyon on SC Felix describes the beauty of this special place.**



**Zoe Bay Falls**



**View from top of Zoe Falls**



**Maggie**

The last time I was here a plan to land up to 200 tourists a day loomed dark and inevitable, so when Chris, Maggie and I recently sailed in, it was a great joy to find this never eventuated. In fact there are no more people ashore now than there were 20 years ago. Our Earths largest Island National Park, has quietly side stepped the on rush of “civilization”, to remain the same pristine wilderness as on the dawn of it's creation.

Towering mountain peaks festooned with streaming white scarves of cloud, misty forest valleys wherein live waterfalls and trails untrod by men. Long white beaches, remote little coves peopled only by oysters, pure Australian Fauna and Flora and mangrove fringed estuaries surrounded by a world of timeless stunning beauty.

The gem of it all, and surely one of the top ten vistas in all Australia for spectacular scenery, is that whispered secret, **Zoe Bay**. Here, on a perfect day, the hardest heart on Earth could not but be moved. A blue ocean washing the feet of rainforest which rises, then rises again through shrouds of gray clouds burnished with generous streaks of orange and gold to titanic peaks standing aloof from time and such small matters of men. Chris instantly decided to move his office from Canberra to the foredeck !

Once ashore in Zoe there is an enchanting path meandering through dappled sunlight and a fragrant profusion of vines and multi colored trees, all standing upon carpets of lichen and leaves. A short walk further brings you to a fresh water pool where “*the water down the rocky fall lets fall her shining hair*”. Then another easy climb will fetch you up on top of the falls. From here you can stand midst the murmur of gurgling waters, and drink in a view which defies description.

How-some-ever, Zoe, like all great charmers, has her foibles, so can either grant or withhold her favours on any slight whim. The bay itself is open to the East, and shallow well offshore over hard sand.

Therefore few Yachts risk it overnight. (The exception on this visit being the wonderfully intrepid pair, Chris and Gilli on “Westwind”). There also be such beasties as sand flies ashore, but what matters this to someone who truly wants to walk in this wilderness. Shallow draught vessels can tuck into the Nth creek, whilst a sturdy Cat or bilge keeler can simply sit down safe and snug in the Sth creek entrance.

Further north, around the corner in **Missionary Bay** there is good holding over mud. Within this bay the small beach at “Macushla” provides a very popular picnic area, while secure anchorages can be found in a series of deep creeks.- plus, incidentally, any number of prawns and hungry fish.

On the inside Channel between Hinchinbrook and the mainland, nature has thrown down a vast array of mangrove creeks, aptly named **The Australian Everglades**.

Here, in perfect cyclone shelter, are any number of anchorages, with all the mud crabs, prawns, and fresh fish imaginable just waiting to be invited aboard. There are also some magnificent estuaries here, which deep draught vessels may venture up. These deserve much more than your casual acquaintance, but be warned, some twilights here may reach out a warm hand, cradle your heart, then bear it gently away to realms previously unknown.

On a more practical note, the entrance to **Port Hinchinbrook Marina** is somewhat silted up. However current heights can be checked via radio. The cheerful Marina staff are very helpful, their landscaped gardens include a swimming pool plus there's a little forest path leading to **Cardwell by the Sea**.

Here one can purchase fresh veggies and meat; stroll an esplanade fringed with rare Calophyllum trees; and chat with friendly locals. The latter pleasure being even better when lazing on Alans' pub veranda with a cold drink, a gentle sea breeze, and the wide Pacific calling.

*continued next page...*

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**Chris, enjoying his new office**

Now, in days of yore when a far greater % of Yachties lived on the smell of an oily rag, **Scraggy Point/The Haven** was a favorite meeting place. Good holding, fresh water, plenty of fish, crabs and coconuts; bush walks; plus a beach for sunset bbq's .. all fitted their free, self sufficient, and gregarious lifestyle.

Since then the tides of life have ebbed and flowed, carrying many ol "Grotty Yachties" away beyond the veils, whilst most affluent modern sailors don't depend on hunter gathering .. yet Scraggy Point/The Haven still dreams on in peaceful seclusion.

In closing, I'd like to also mention nearby Gould Is. There is a walking trail here, plus a campsite complete with shelter shed and gas bbq, so it's naturally popular during school holidays. Yet at other times you can wander in and find no one here at all .. and to stand out on the sand spit at dusk, encapsulated in a vast ever changing sunset, whilst looking deep into the wild free ranges of Hinchinbrook, is surely a moment to treasure.

#### **An update from Steve:**

On a rather sad note, **Port Hinchinbrook Marina** was devastated by Cyclone Yasi in early February. With very helpful staff this Marina had been a delightful spot to stop, explore the mainland, and re-stock supplies .. yet now, as to what the future holds, only time can tell. However, please don't miss **Cardwell by the sea**.

It was given an almighty flogging by Yasi, but, in true Aussie spirit the locals will be up and running again - and no doubt will appreciate any purchases you make. Just for starters the butchery and fresh vegie shop have top quality food, with both them and the servo close to the jetty.

The shore is open to all NE - SE winds, but there's excellent holding over mud either side of the Jetty, and you can work the tides with a tender. The locals are friendly and the pleasure of their company enhanced even further when lazing on Alans' pub verandah, (or what's left of it), with a cold drink, a gentle sea breeze, and the wide Pacific calling.



**Steve's Cat, Felix**



**"The Haven", a famous anchorage**



**"inside" Hinchinbrook Channel**

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# A NEW SCHOOL FOR GIGILA

**Yachties Paul & Chris Taylor of SY *Insatiable* turn an idea of a new school building for the children of Gigila Island in the Louisiades into reality. Another group of boaties and mates doing what they do - “getting out there” and lending a hand!**

**By Paul & Chris Taylor, SY *Insatiable***

*Paul Taylor photo*

It's not often a cruising couple gets a dream run out and back from an offshore passage destination but that's what we had on our sail up to the Louisiade Archipelago 2010. We departed Gladstone August 3rd for what was to be a different sojourn to the PNG island group.

You see this story really began in 2008 when my wife Chris and I aboard our yacht *Insatiable* sailed to Gigila Island in the Calvados group to assist a yachtie group construct a small sailing trade boat for the Island. This small Island has a population of around 300 and the boat was and still is being used as a form of transport and for trade. We walked the couple of kilometres around to the small elementary school from the Valeha anchorage, numerous times over the two months *Toloyot* was being constructed. These small sago palm thatched school buildings are built similar to the local's houses with the exception that it's built on the ground. Although the children don't seem to mind doing their lessons sitting on a dirty sand floor, oblivious to the fact that they are being bitten by flea's and lice left behind by the pigs and dogs that slept there overnight.

Chris and I noticed that the kids and the head teacher Olive had ulcerating sores on their legs and backs as a result of scratching and eventually infecting the bite area, this then without proper treatment turned into ulcers. This was truly a pitiful sight. Each morning when the school bell rang (an empty R12 cylinder) the kids would chase out the dogs, pigs and chickens, scoop up the droppings and start school. We had discussed numerous times while there if there would be any way we could help these kids have a healthier environment in which to learn.

Without offering or promising anything I asked Tony Baigewi the local ward councillor, who funds and builds the schools. He explained that the building is built by the community without funds from the government and that the thatch roofing has to be replaced every two years as it will start to leak. The school is 16 metres by 5 metres so that's quite an area to cover.

These elementary schools are governed by a school council who also sets the fees, this I was told can be anything between 1 & 100 kina per child per year. The council determines this amount by assessing the

islands economy at the time.

Gigila, Kuwanak, Tifur Islands school fees in 2008 was 20 Kina per year. This year it was dropped to 10 Kina per child as the Government placed a 3 year ban on the harvesting of beche-de-mer (sea cucumber). It is interesting to note that the PNG government will open the ban for 4 months starting Jan 2011 so people can pay their school fees!!

The councillor asked if there was maybe anything we could do to help fund putting a concrete floor down and an iron roof on the existing school. Chris and I said we would see if funds could be raised on our return to our home port of Bundaberg.

## Back to the real world.

Work again took on most of our time on our return to Bundy, but all the while considering the pro's and con's of upgrading the existing school. We both decided that it would be a better option to construct a completely new school building (easier said than done).

After working in the Bundy building industry for many years, I approached a friend John Kemps who is a QBSA builder to see if he would be interested in converting my rudimentary 3D sketch of the new school to proper plans. Not only did he agree to this, but also surprised me by saying he would love to come up with us to build the school! John then provided a complete materials list ready for me to start getting quotes from building suppliers on mainland PNG.

Trying to do business with PNG through emails and telephone is excruciatingly slow. But after 5 months of back and forth emails a quote was given that seemed reasonable, approximately \$ 20,000 minimum had to be raised.

From this point on it was full on. First a design was drafted for the printing of the brochures that John & Sandi Kemps kindly donated. Apart from word of mouth and doing the rounds of many service clubs and ladies auxiliaries, most fundraising was done at the Lighthouse Hotel Burnett Heads where the manager Gavin Hales was more than happy to help out with organizing and the supply of many of the prizes for our Trivia and raffle nights.

After six months \$10,000 had been raised; this wasn't bad except for the fact that I had received the quote on chartering a trade boat to deliver the materials from Alotau Milne Bay to Gigila was approx 8000 Kina, about \$4000. We were starting to think that 2010 might be too early, 2011 may be a better option.

A few days later a telephone call was received from a lady on the Sunshine Coast who said she and her husband would like to donate some money to our project and where could she send a cheque. Chris and I nearly fell over when a cheque arrived for \$10,000! This was so out of the blue we both had more than a few tears. The stress was off! School for 2010 was back on. Just when you think things are getting down, something like this happens.

The weeks were flying by, getting ever nearer to our July departure date, we still had to sort out the hardware which was decided to source from Australia and take up by yacht as hardware in PNG was too expensive. Another call was received by Chris while I was slipping a yacht; it was our generous benefactor from the Sunshine Coast again asking how things were progressing. Chris just in conversation mentioned that the value of our dollars were somewhat diminished by that fall of the Aussie dollar at that time and after sending the deposit off it was just bad timing. This beautiful lady then said could we do with another \$5000!!!! How nice can some people be?

By this stage our little band had increased from just Chris & I on *Insatiable* to Bruce & Mandy on *Swaggie*, John & Helen on *Cyclades* and Paul, Francis and Alan on *Monkey Fist*.


For a few weeks I did the rounds of the major hardware stores to see if they may be interested in, if not donating but giving a good discount. After getting the runaround I mentioned it to Paul (*Monkey Fist*) and he suggested I contact a friend of his, Brian Reardon of Protector Rail Tasmania. Brian is a great guy and said I should email our requirements to him and he would see if he could help. Blow me down, he phoned to say that he would be happy to not only pay for the all the hardware but would also pay for all the hand tools needed along with transport from Tassie. Whoopee!!!!

*continued next page...*



Clockwise from upper left, that's Tony Baigewi, local school councilor and Paul, and *Insatiable* at anchor at Bramble Haven (Paul Taylor photo). The Boboeina anchorage (Paul Taylor photo) and finally at left is the old school house with the dirt floor.





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John Boulter photos



The locals keen to get the stumps in and help with the roof trusses.

**Time slipping away**

It's mid July and all 1400 kgs, of hardware and tools from Brian in Tassie had arrived! Where on earth am I going to fit this on *Insatiable* along with about 600 kgs of stores, extra fuel etc. But fit it did, by building special timber brackets we were able to bolt the 45 X 3m cyclone rods and two 1.8m crow bars to the front of one of the saloon settee's. Screwing a dam wall as I called it, across the forward bulkhead we were able to fill the standing area in the forward V berth up to waist high. Every nook and cranny that didn't have stores was brim full of roofing screws, bolts, nuts, truss straps, hand tools, etc. The six posthole shovels went down the cockpit locker with the genset. We had also purchased an air compressor, hoses and fittings. These thankfully were loaded on *Swaggie* in Townsville. All the 8 metre lengths of down pipe and fittings were lashed to the outside of *Monkey Fists'* guard rails. John on *Cyclades* loaded many cardboard tea chests full of clothing that had been donated to us along with boxes full of medical supplies destined for the Misima hospital. At last everything was squared away and a departure date from Burnett Heads was decided: July 25, 2010. 05:00 that Sunday morning had probably the thickest fog of the year as we cleared the fuel dock at the Burnett Heads Marina where I work doing the slipping. We had just poked our bows out of the breakwater getting ready to hoist the main and a port pile loomed through the fog on the starboard side too close for comfort! After a pleasant sail and three days of R&R at Lady Musgrave Island we set off for Gladstone which was to be our clearing port.

**Gigila here we come.**

One handle and a rowlock had to be re-glued to our Aqua-pro in Gladstone, the only place north of Brisbane apparently it can be done. This job done, customs clearance, along with the multitude of other jobs and just as important the loading of liquid refreshment, which was going to be duty free, but an agent fee of \$200 would have negated any savings we would have made so it was decided to have it sent up with John the builder from Bundy. Our course from the Gladstone Marina took us out of the main shipping channel turning into the North East Channel and out past Heron, Nth west Islands and towards Samurai reef turning North after clearing Hickson Cay. A great 7 day sail from Gladstone saw an overweight *Insatiable* cross the Sunken Barrier just East of Kokoluba Island then anchoring West of Panuwabobaiana Island In the Duchateau Group. The next day after a quick stop at Western beach Bagaman we sailed into the anchorage of Gigila where *Swaggie*, *Monkey Fist* and *Cyclades* had already settled in and had started unloading all the extra gear.

**Off to Alotau for the Materials.**

As *Monkey Fist* was going to Alotau for a visit, Myself, John, Tony the councillor and Bernard the Gigila Elementary schools Chairman, was kindly offered a lift the 150nm to this famous or infamous WWII town deep in the crux of Milne Bay. This was the town that all my dealings for materials had been conducted. The company, Alotau enterprises was more than helpful and although very frustrating at times, were great. As we arrived 12:00 on a Friday not much could be achieved this day or the half day Saturday. But Monday was full steam ahead, up to the sawmill in Sanderson Bay, sort our timber, back to the hardware store in town for the roofing iron and guttering, back & forth so many times I lost count. A trade boat still had to be sorted out although I had already booked one from Australia. Many dealings later the trade boat from Grassy Island was secured; this was another fortunate opportunity as the *Weltuso's* home is close to Gigila so a one way payment was only needed. To say the *Weltuso* was overloaded was obvious; she was loaded almost to the scuppers! How they fitted all the 6 tonnes of timber, 40 bags of cement, roofing iron and guttering on still amazes me. John took his life in his hands that Tuesday afternoon by opting to go back with the *Weltuso*. I waited for the Friday flight to Misima. *Weltuso* was fairly well equipped, so John thought. There was a HF radio, GPS plotter, life jackets tucked under the deckhead, what more could you want !!! Neither the GPS or radio worked, the life jackets although in place had all the straps cut off obviously for something more important like keeping their bags of beetle nut secure. But make it they did, arriving at Gigila on Saturday to a huge welcoming team; our second Aussie builder Joe Mc Dougal supervised the unloading. *Weltuso* stood off just outside the reef adjacent to the school and a banana boat was sent out to start offloading the cement, roofing iron and timber. Much of the larger heavier timber was floated from *Weltuso* to the beach where many helping hands were eager to gather and stack behind the old school and right at the worksite. Not a hardhat or safety boot in sight. All unloading was completed by late afternoon and work started in earnest first thing Monday with the placement of the stumps. These stumps were gathered by the community; 22 in all, 2.2 metres long and about 200 X 200 mm transported by canoe or humped along the beach sometimes for around 2 kims. Another special thing about these stumps was that they are all fairly exotic species, Rosewood, Kerosene wood, Kwila, and to everyone's surprise one Ebony stump!! By the time I arrived back at the island from Alotau all the stumps were concreted in and work on the floor joists had begun. The school had generated a huge amount of

interest all over the Louisiades and even word had spread to the mainland. We saw a lot of people just turning up out of the blue from surrounding islands just to have a look at how the Dim Dim built things. They were astounded by the speed at which the new school was being constructed and very inquisitive of the nailing gun that was shooting nails into the timber at lightning speed.

Once the floor joists were bolted to the stumps it only took two days to lay a beautiful hardwood secret nailed tongue and grooved floor, then another three days for the frames. By this time the band of 12 local lads had come to terms with how John wanted things done and became very willing and capable offsidiers. Next to be made were the roof trusses, John had marked out a template on the floor and these were being erected as they were completed.

*continued next page...*



Helen Boulter photo

John, SY *Cyclades* admiring the new library and below the double steps John constructed



John Boulter photo



Clockwise from upper left, Paul Taylor photo, little visitors to yacht. Then Joe and Richard at work laying floor, John Boulter photo. Centre, The veranda in progress and bottom, mounting roof trusses.

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**The school children and their gift bags and Chris presents a gift bag to a student.**

About half the trusses had been erected when disaster struck! I was informed by a local lad who had paddled the 2 kms from the school to the anchorage in a dugout early one morning that John had fallen from a roof truss and his back was badly hurt. Paul, Frances and Alan from *Monkey Fist* headed straight around to the school while I headed to Swaggie to borrow Bruce & Mandy's inflatable kayak which I towed behind our inflatable to the school site.

On arriving we were horrified to find that the local lads had MOVED John from the floor of the school to the house where he had been staying. He was in a great deal of pain so the decision was hastily cut from John to the hospital on Misima Island 35nm away! A lot of the locals were visibly distraught at the sight of John falling and seeing him in so much pain. These loving locals treated us all with a great deal of respect and made us feel part of their family.

A spinal board was hastily cut from a sheet of 20 mm ply including hand holds and tie down points. After Frances had cut and installed a neck brace from a foam exercise mat we very carefully lifted John onto the board, securing him with 100mph duct tape and more foam mat between his legs and down each side to keep him immobile.

The next job was to get him around to the anchorage and onto the largest yacht in our fleet, *Monkey Fist*. The locals carried John on this stretcher about 1 km up the beach to where our dinghy's were beached. We then tied John onto the inflatable kayak and lashed him between the two inflatables to get back to the anchorage. Even though *Monkey Fist* is a large yacht with a big cockpit, it was still a huge task to manoeuvre him around and over the steering pedestal and down to the saloon.

Fortunately for John but unfortunate for the poor souls that perished in a plane crash on Misima a few days earlier a doctor was on hand at the hospital where none exist usually. He was examined and a Twin Otter aircraft was organized by his travel insurance company to airlift him to Port Moresby where a Lear Jet was waiting to take him to Townsville.

While all this was happening the school building progressed with Joe now thrust into the supervisors role organizing the work schedule, things got back on track. Over the next few days the rest of the trusses were erected, bracing of the building was undertaken and the roofing iron went on.

John from *Cyclades*, who is an ex builder from Canberra constructed a magnificent set of double steps up the front of the school with the help of his offsider Bani who doesn't say much but is always willing to help.

I had organized while in Alotau, two water tanks given by Gordon Wesley (MP) Deputy Governor, to be sent to Gigila. These hadn't arrived by the time the school was finished, so a derelict 5000 ltr. tank was delivered from a nearby island by banana boat to the school and we immediately replaced all the rusting flange bolts and resealed the tank just in time for the first big downpour. The tank was filled within a few days!

#### The Grand Opening Ceremony

The whole week leading up to the opening was a huge event with many islanders arriving from near and far in their large sailing canoes packed with pigs, fruit, chickens, vegetables and the human cargo of men, women and children of all ages including a few day old babies. Many of the local islanders welcome these extras into their homes without question, some of course are relatives but most are just there for the opening ceremony and feast. The school was decorated with palm fronds, garlands of hibiscus and frangipani. Opening day, 24th September dawned hot and humid, with just a chance of a storm in the afternoon. Festivities began with a morning mass at 8am with Father Alonso at his makeshift lectern conducting the service. Shortly after he circled the school sprinkling it with holy water and a few prayers. This completed, the school was officially opened by the cutting of the ribbon, then was flocked by the many guests and invited dignitaries.

Entertainment began by each village dancing along the beach to the school and presenting their gifts of pigs strung up on carrying poles, ladies with overweight baskets of fruit and vegetables on their heads, coconuts, mudcrabs and more. This went on for a couple of hours before the feast was prepared and served. The rest of the day was spent watching the ladies playing very energetic netball games umpired by Frances off *Monkey Fist* who also helped the ladies make their playing bibs and the men's volleyball.

#### Gift Giving.

The following morning was something of an anticlimax after the previous days events, then a message was delivered to all our yachts and could we be at the school by 09:00? Oh no, maybe the locals would like us to build an assembly hall. When we all arrived, we were told that there was to be an official thank you from the community. What this meant we didn't know until we were all ushered into the school to a greeting of about 50 locals. Outside stood three times as many. The people all looked very sombre, some crying. What on earth has happened?

Tony Baigewi the ward councillor along with other community dignitaries signalled for us to sit down. When we had all found a place, Tony, with a few tears in his eyes, began his speech to formally thank us for all the work we had done, this was all very nice but hadn't prepared us for what was to come next. One by one Tony called out the names of people that were sitting on the floor in front of us, then called one of us up to receive a gift from that person. Baskets, mats, carvings and much valued bagi necklaces, were presented to all of our now shell-shocked band of yachters. There were

many tears from the givers and receivers; I don't think there was a dry eye in the house. Then the singing began, what a sound in that tiny schoolroom, the harmonies were outstanding. More tears! On leaving the school after the gift giving, we were confronted by the rest of the community lined up for at least 100metres from the steps through the village to the beach, each wanting to kiss or shake hands with us. Chris and I are not spiritual people but the overwhelming feeling of love was something we will not forget and will stay with us forever.

In conclusion this was a very rewarding and satisfying project for a people that are some of our closest neighbours. Chris & I are very happy to have been able to raise the funds needed to complete the school. But this would not have been possible without the help of the crews of the yachts mentioned and all of the good people who donated money, gifts and prizes for our many raffle & trivia nights.

To the one special person who wishes to remain anonymous, donated the balance of the funds needed to complete the school. And a big thank you must go to Brian Reardon and his staff of Protector Rail Pty Ltd Tasmania for the generous donation of all the hardware needs. Other companies who helped Brian with goods or generous discounts from Tasmania are The Fork in the road Mitre 10 Kingston Tasmania, Mals Hire and Hardware Kingston Tasmania, Coventry Fasteners Moonah Tasmania and Gladstone QLD, Accidental First-aid Supplies Kingston Tasmania. The children of grades 3-4, 5-6, Blackmans Bay Primary school Tasmania who provided much of the stationary items that was presented to the kids on opening day. The ladies of the Bundaberg Mature Women's Auxiliary for all their hard work in sewing the hundreds of pairs of shorts, skirts and library bags for the children. There are of course many other people we would like to thank but space doesn't permit, needless to say they know who they are, and a big thankyou goes to these people.

And we mustn't forget the wonderful, loving, local community of Gigila, Kuwanak and Tipur islands of the Louisiades.

*A footnote: After John returned to Australia it was found he had 3 crushed vertebrae. John received treatment first in Townsville, then checkups in Bundaberg. He has now almost fully recovered and is back at work.*

**TCP note: this feature is expanded in the electronic version of the paper. Recommended!**



**Paul and Chris, on the school steps**



TCP congratulates all the crews of the vessels involved, the contributors, especially noting the anonymous doner but equally the organisations and businesses that went further than asked to help. All came through and took a leap of faith that Paul and Chris, as leaders of the quest, could be trusted to see it through. That they had the toughness and integrity to overcome the obstacles that were bound to occur... If that was a question, it's answered.

Now if we could put these people in charge of the Queensland flood relief fund.....

These sago palm partitions were also used on the eve ends of the building to allow ventilation and above, the water tank arrives and is repaired, installed and filled in short order!

Paul Taylor photos.

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# This is who we are

## The Dan Kane Memorial Race

By Carmen Walker, SY *Dreamweaver*

**In 2010 the Whitsunday sailing community was shocked to hear of the tragic loss of a great mate on Australia day. To honour Dan Kane's memory the sailing club named Australia Day a day of celebration.**

We had a memorial for Dan before the race under the "Bali Hut". The new racing Dinghy "Danny" that Cronulla Sailability launched at the Cronulla Sailing Club early January in memory of Dan was mentioned, including his achievements during his life, the fact that he raced 2 Sydney to Hobart racing including the 1998 disaster where men lost there lives.

John and Marianne, Dan's parents joined us for the memorial and were presented with a book of photos of Danny taken with friends over the years.

A special plaque has also been made up with his yin yang picture that he had on his boat and the boat winner's name will go on it for this year. The Whitsunday Sailing Club has also put up a plaque on the smoking balcony which reads "Dan's Lounge".

Held on the 26<sup>th</sup> Jan (Australia Day) 25 boats competed in a 45-minute race out, and back. It was a spectacular sight as we all headed out of the Abel

Point Marina leads milling around for the start of the race. As the long hooter sounded *Wobbly Boot* took the start with *Sandpiper* following close behind her. I was racing on *Sandpiper* with 5 crew.

*Questionable logic* soon caught up, as *Sandpiper* was sailing with only a headsail, the skipper making a joint decision with the crew not to put the main up. With the main up it would have been hard work controlling the boat between all the crew. It was blowing a good 25-30knot southerly. We wanted it to be a fun day, no stress, just enjoy the ride and remember Dane.

*Cynophobe*, a racing catamaran (Dan used to race on her), looking like she meant business, scooted past all of the fleet and was soon way out in front. She was so fast she turned around several times and lapped us all.

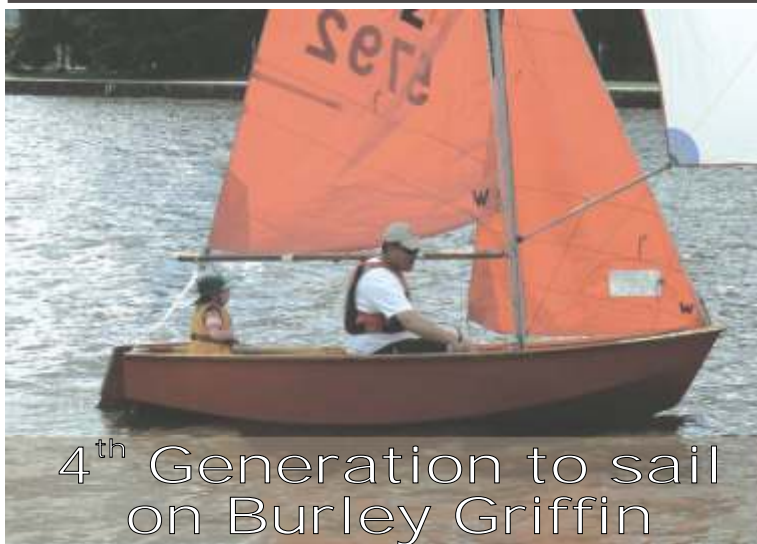
It was a great race, best sail I've ever had. Afterwards our crew went back to Sorrento's Restaurant (water front at the marina) and had food and drinks.

The sailing club continued with the celebrations and other crew from other boats joined in with the festivities. The highlight of the day, a cement mixer rolled out coconuts with boat names on them as the winner of the boat race.

**Put this on your calendar for next year.**



Photo By Carmen Walker while "racing" on *Sandpiper*



4<sup>th</sup> Generation to sail on Burley Griffin

William Owen, aged 4, took his Mirror dinghy for a sail on Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra recently, with his Dad Matthew. In doing so, he became the 4<sup>th</sup> generation to sail on the Lake.

Will's great grandfather John is an ex Commodore of the Canberra Yacht Club. Will's grandparents Pattie and Keith (of *Speranza* fame) learnt to sail in Canberra. Will's father, Matthew (current Australian Flying Fifteen Champion) is CEO of the Canberra Yacht Club. It is great to see William following in the family's footsteps!

**Keith Owen, SY *Speranza***

## How does he do it?

"Monsoon Dervish", has been very popular - lots of books sold since its exposure in last TCP. Phone orders give us a chance to speak to the "orderee", and the books have been selling to quite a variety of readers. From downtown Sydney to Bowen then off to Canada and new Zealand. The most popular question is: Does Kris really hand bind the books? Answer: YES! Kris sent us a few pictures and a brief explanation of how he does it:

In between the showers we took some pictures of our sweat shop. In good weather I work in the kitchen area on the main deck (as in pictures), during the week mostly after work at night. In foul weather I set up the circus in the cabin on the floor.

Cowries shell and coping saw are legitimate bookbinding tools as I practice the craft. To store the all those boxes of books and raw paper, I cut open the main 10,000 litre diesel tank and turned it into a large shelved storage room.

You pick up five consecutive sheets of printed paper, stack them neatly, fold the stack in the middle, and smooth the fold, to create a signature (or gathering), a little booklet which is a building block of a book. To get the spine of the signature sharp, you press it and run over it with a smooth hard clean



Photo by Nat Uhing.

object. Traditionally it was a smooth bone, and modern tool is also called "bone". We had nothing similar when I started bookbinding on the beach in Palawan, so I reached for a cowrie from my African shell collection. Extremely hard wearing and good to handle.

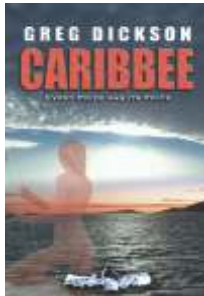
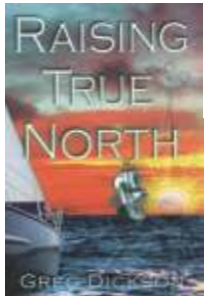
**Kris Larsen, SY *Keehar***

**TCP Note: See: [www.monsoondervish.com](http://www.monsoondervish.com) for direct orders of Monsoon Dervish and more books by Kris.**

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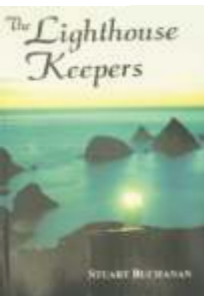
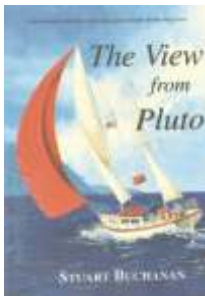
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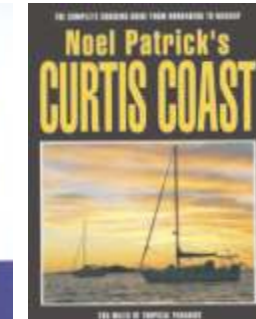
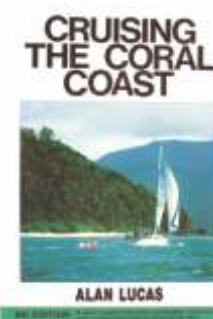


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PHONE BOB FENNEY: 0408 983 823 email: [robert.fenney@bigpond.com](mailto:robert.fenney@bigpond.com)



Some Say he was eaten by a whale! Others say the earth really is flat and Joe is the first since Columbus to find the edge.... Hardly! Joe Adams just sailed away for a while but is still drawing boats and has now drawn a cruiser that he feels is the culmination of his decades of experience.

## ADAMS FAST 40 CRUISING YACHT

L.O.A 12.6m  
L.W.L. 12.0m  
BEAM 3.39m  
DRAFT 1.53m  
SA 85.13 om MAIN & FORE

Words & Drawings by Joe Adams

I have drawn several yachts of this size and they are always popular. I have found that a 40 footer is the best length for long distance cruising. Not so big that a man & wife cannot easily handle and not too expensive to maintain. So over the last few years I have thought to design a 40 footer that combines the cruising features I like personally.

OF REASONABLY LOW DISPLACEMENT so that the handling loads are low and a little overloading doesn't matter. A long L.W.L. to give max speeds and at the same time to design so that the sailing length exceeds its actual length. The sections must also have good speeds in light weather for most of your cruising will be in light weather.

THE ACCOMMODATION SHOWN IS 6 BUNKS, for me 2 is enough. I have never cruised with 4 or 6 people. Don't want to either. Of course you can take your mother in law cruising. No one says you have to bring her back. You have to have space for books, vegetables, fruit, anchor chain, rope (lots). You need a bathroom that you can swing a cat in. After all this yacht will be your home and the shower-toilet can make all the difference. The sole of the shower should have a sump. To shower, pour your hot (or cold) water into the sump and it will be continually cycled with the

use of an inexpensive in-line pump. To get rid of the water just put the shower rose into the hand basin.

THIS 40 HAS TO SELF STEER. No vanes or auto pilot needed. To achieve this the hull sections are veed. The keel is shallow and rudder and skeg are good size.

YOU MUST HAVE A SAIL PLAN THAT MAKE THE YACHT EASY TO HANDLE IN ANY WEATHER. You do not want a rig that requires great strength and cunning to control. All must be very easy. So I have drawn a large mainsail with a ¾ headsail. To reef, roll down some of the mainsail, roll up the yankee and all is under control. For ease of reefing the main, I like a roller. There is a knack with roller reefing but for short handed sailing it is the best. The staysail is on a wishbone. With the wishbone you don't need a trysail. It is easy to heave the boat to or run off before a gale. Once you have cruised with a wishbone stay sail you will never be without. The mast drawn is bending so as to make sailing to windward more efficient. You may opt for a more rigid rig.

ELECTRICITY. Be super stringent. If you have high power requirements you will be ill fated. I have shown 4 solar panels on the house deck. That should be more than enough. Do not fidget with motor car batteries, get one medium sized Ni Cad. Somewhat expensive but the best buy you can make.

REFRIGERATION. You can have a top opening fridge in the table in the galley if you want. Not for me as I have never worked out what use they are on a long distance cruising boat. Only thing I can think of is to make cold water. Is it really worthwhile?

ENGINE. I know I will be in big trouble by saying I would not have an inboard. This yacht will sail wherever you want to go and at better speeds than an engine can push you. An engine, the exhausts, the controls, the tanks; all for close to nothing. I would use an outboard. 9H.P. is enough. That would get you through the canals and its maintenance will not have you waiting in ports for engine parts. And if your outboard expires, no problem just throw it overboard.

LIFERAFT. You may remember Harry Newton Scott and his ketch, The "New Silvergull" he taught me a great deal. I said to Harry once just before picking up courage to sail across to New Zealand, "Harry, I think I will buy an inflatable life raft." Harry paused, looked at me and said, "Why, were you thinking of sinking?" A great answer because of 2 reasons. One because if you are thinking of sinking DO NOT GO. Two because the very last thing you would want to do is get off your boat into a rubber go nowhere dinghy. So with the drawing of this yacht I have included the drawings of a ply or glass dingy that fits nicely on deck, has a neat Gunter

Cat rig and will sail you anywhere you want to go even better than Bligh. Also included is how to make the yacht self steer plus the twin spinnaker set up.

THE DINGHY is 2.03m long and a beam of 1.2m. Has a good freeboard which allows you to free your oars in a slop. Rows beautifully. Has no skeg which allows you to crab out to your yacht keeping the dinghy bow to weather. Also no skeg allows the dinghy to blow sideways in heavy wind when tied to your stern so that it cannot be flipped upside down. Under the seats built in lockers to hold emergency gear. The mast & boom, etc. stowed inside the dinghy. Mine weighed 70lbs.

There was at one time a fleet of these in Sydney. We raced them in the twilight period. One or should I say the only rule was that before you crossed the finish line the crew had to finish off a flagon of wine. So a crew of 5 was found to be good. Huge ensigns and large umbrellas were normal. Paddling and rudder wagging expected. Think about it. It is not as simple as you might think. For the Darwin people I would suggest two stubbies.

TCP note: Joe is on an island somewhere and can be contacted through TCP. Joe has provided TCP with simple plans of the dinghy mentioned above. They will be published in the electronic edition of this paper along with contact details of an Australian builder with moulds.

Larry Pullen of Port Macquarie has the moulds for this dinghy or build it yourself. TCP apologises for the rough copy but this was delivered in an A2 size which we do not have facility to scan. It is included regardless in that the information may be useable even in this rough form.

		0	1	2	3	4	5	6
H. BARKING BASE LINE	SHEER	1-0-4	1-1-2	1-10-8	2-0-2	2-0-2	1-10-4	1-8-0
	CHINE	0-7-6	1-1-6	1-7-6	1-10-5	1-10-5	1-9-0	1-5-4
H.T. BARKING BASE LINE	SHEER	2-3-6	2-3-0	2-2-0	2-1-2	2-0-6	2-0-7	2-1-3
	CHINE	0-11-0	0-10-0	0-9-0	0-8-6	0-8-7	0-9-4	0-8-4
	E	0-7-4	0-5-4	0-5-2	0-5-4	0-6-0	0-7-1	0-8-4

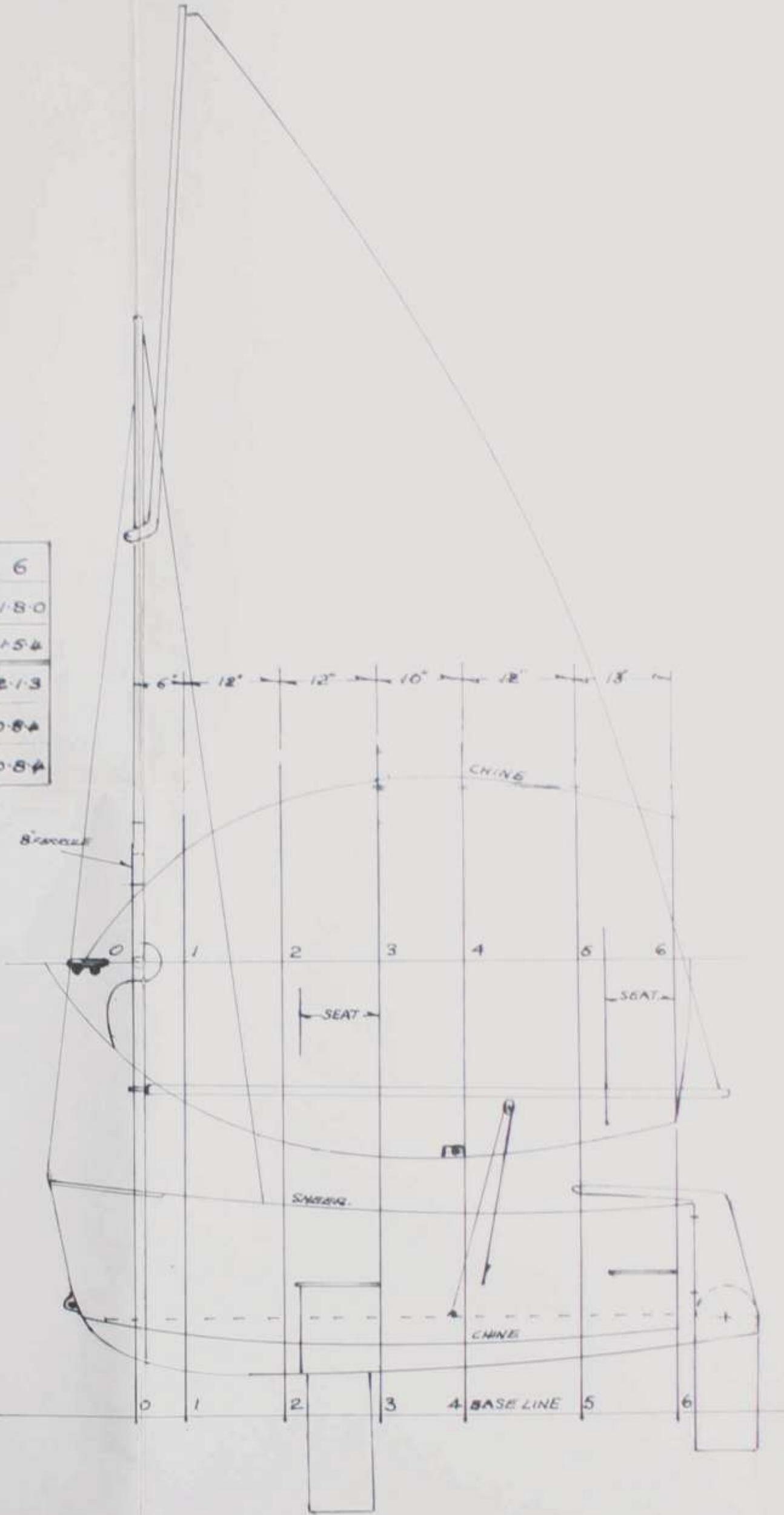
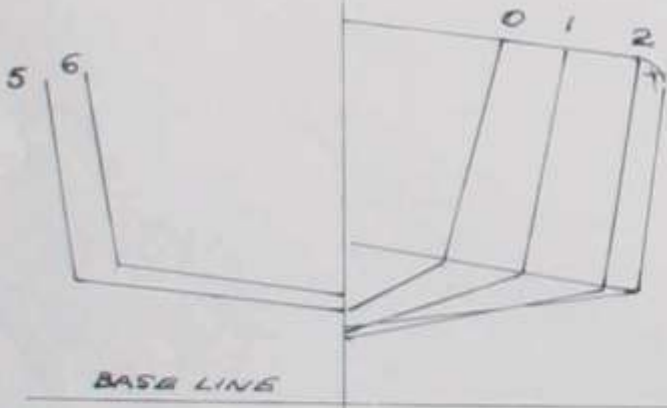
FEET - INCHES - EIGHTS

6'-8" DINGHY

BY JOE ADAMS.  
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SCALE 1" = 1 FOOT.

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# "In Five Years Australia Will Cease to Have Boat Production."



A lot of these brands still have their websites up but no one is answering the phone..

"We will be nothing but a repair and service port." Those were shocking words to hear from an industry professional but if Queensland's recent history means anything, he could potentially be right. "I can name 27 boat production companies that have gone under since 07 Bob." And that number is due to increase within weeks and some readers may be surprised at the names.

This industry manager saw the writing on the wall earlier than most and his company survives because it was savagely downsized before it was too late. Accrued debt will continue to knock off some companies that otherwise may be getting enough recent orders to carry on. And speaking of debt, there is some pain being felt in the supply side wondering how some companies were able to acquire the volume of debt they did before going down, taking some suppliers with them.

This is not to say all of them went down ingloriously. There were responsible operators that did the sums, paid their bills and wrapped it up.

"There will always be guys like you Bob, building a boat out in the cane fields but the best days are behind us." Ah, thanks....?

Does TCP agree with the above assessment? We think it doesn't have to be that bad but it could be even worse. Now that we've cleared that up....

## What are the problems in the Market?

1. The high Aussie \$\$ has punched a big hole in export sales but the foreign (especially US) markets internal troubles would have wiped that anyway.
2. China looms large on the horizon. With Australian companies on their knees or dead the Chinese are in the position to take the market if it comes around unless... well read on..
3. High quality second hand craft from the US market have inundated the world market and that has affected domestic boat sales. For those brave enough to challenge the processes, there are reports of boats being landed in Australia from distressed sales in the US at far below local market. On a dealer level our inside contact reported that a Queensland business was offered 100 cheap second hand craft a month from the US but could only move 3 a month.

4. Ownership expenses such as, but not limited to; annual maintenance, marina fees, registration, insurance. These are mostly government generated expenses as environmental regulations increase maintenance costs dramatically, seabed lease costs are passed on to marina fees and registration fees have tripled recently for many vessels. State mandates for

recovery and liability insurance for 15 metre craft add one more burden for some.

5. Reduction of services. Public access to dinghy landings, public wharves and even water have all been reduced.

6. Over-regulation, abusive enforcement and invasive surveillance. Cruising is supposed to be fun, not a confrontational gantlet.

## The affects of the problems:

1. People are abandoning the lifestyle. Aging sailors are moving on a little quicker than they might have otherwise and fewer young people taking it up. Insurance coverage of recent natural disasters has actually been a blessing for some and those boats are not going to be replaced with the settlements which would otherwise create a small boom in production. And insurance rates are bound to be going up.

I talked to an angry skipper a few months ago. He and his partner sailed a boat they bought in New Zealand to cruise into their retirement, arriving home to the warm greeting of Australian Customs. Because they gave only 75 hours notice instead of 96 they were charged and convicted with a criminal offence. He expressed shock at their treatment. The stress they were put through literally caused his wife serious illness. They sold the boat immediately and bought a pair of motorbikes. The skipper reported that conviction was his first ever brush with the law, never even having had a speeding ticket in his life. Which brings us to:

2. Alternative activities. The industry pro I quoted from above mentioned a dealer in caravans he knew. According to his mate, caravan and motorhome sales at his business were up 47% last year. He pointed out that a retired couple buying a motor home come out way ahead in spite of fuel costs. There are numerous free locations to park and the caravan parks are about half the cost of an equivalent marina berth. Then when they go home for the season, they simply park the motor home in the drive way at no expense.

3. Some yachts are abandoning Australia for Asian waters. We know boats that have been designed and constructed for living aboard in Asia. Punishing fees, impossible regulations (see the new quarantine rules for timber boats!) and possibility of conviction for a trivial offence (many boats report relaxed and reasonable customs experiences and others don't, coin flip enforcement) cause many boats to stay abroad longer or permanently, flying home on occasion as flight costs may be cheaper than clearance and storage of the boat is cheaper in Malaysia.

## The Solutions; First the Bureaucracies....

**It sounds dreadful! Are there solutions??** Yes, but they won't come free. If industry and enthusiasts sit on bums and wait for some one else to fix it, we're all screwed. We can't do anything about the US economy so all the more important to look at the local issues that we can address.

Being Queensland based this state's problems are most apparent to TCP and probably worst of the lot but other states certainly have their issues. Let's start with Marine Safety Queensland (MSQ) and Fisheries.

As noted elsewhere in this edition, MSQ has persisted in providing misinformation to the public via it's publications even though alerted to the problem by concerned industry members. It's agents have a reputation in some areas of bullying and misapplying the law and the controversy concerning the actions of fisheries agents in Mooloolaba described in this edition are disconcertingly common. Charges of a quota system to raise revenues persist and in some areas, regular contact can be expected with officers boarding and according to reports to TCP, sometimes even searching boats regardless of authority or permission. These actions have dampened the enjoyment of being on the water for enough people to have an affect on the industry.

TCP encourages every Queensland boaty or those out of staters that have had opportunity to become familiar with MSQ or Fisheries personnel to contact the relevant persons to express your view.

The minister for Fisheries and Marine infrastructure is Craig Wallace, member for Thuringowa, Townsville area. According to his bio, "*Minister Wallace is passionate about rural and regional Queensland, and has a strong desire to see rural and regional areas continue to advance and prosper.*"

TCP is not certain that will comfort the sailors around Townsville that are about to loose their storm shelter of the Ross River to a low bridge to enhance the profitability of the coal loading port that will "*see rural and regional areas continue to advance and prosper*". His phone number is 07 3896 3691 and his email is; [mainroads@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:mainroads@ministerial.qld.gov.au)

The opposition minister is Fiona Simpson of Maroochydyore at phone number 07 5443 7995 and Fax is 07 5443 7242. Email address is: [maroochydyore@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:maroochydyore@parliament.qld.gov.au)

The General Manager of Marine Queensland is Don Jones. His qualifications

for the job according to an MSQ publication: *"I had no maritime industry experience, and no personal boating experience. I came across to Marine Queensland to assist them in developing their relationships with the maritime industry."* And when asked about the 'Industry's Health Post GFC', his response was; *Unfortunately there were around 120 marine businesses which were forced to close throughout Queensland. However, these businesses have restructured and re-examined the way in which they operate, resulting in a much stronger and healthier industry The public didn't abandon boating during the GFC, in fact whilst they cut back on activities such as dining out and going to the movies, going boating was seen as an 'escape' from the GFC, which I think shows how important the positive Queensland lifestyle benefits are.*

TCP would like to point out to the GM that a closed business is not restructured or merely re-examined or it wouldn't be closed. They are mutually exclusive states. And we wonder what insight lead to the assertion that cinemas and restaurants losses were boating's gains? And if boating gained, why the 120 business closures? Nonsense! Also worth noting is that Australia did not really suffer from the malaise of other countries. There has been no housing crash, cars still sell, unemployment is low but the marine industry, especially in Queensland is in freefall.

But further down the food chain and perhaps more relevant to actions of the agents you meet on the water is Patrick J Quirk, GM of MSQ. Administrators need to know the actions of their underlings to enact corrective measures or at least should be contacted to remove the excuse of lack of information. Mr. Quirk can be contacted at email [patrick.j.quirk@msq.qld.gov.au](mailto:patrick.j.quirk@msq.qld.gov.au) Please let Mr Quirk know how you feel about the actions of his enforcers.

Reports to TCP suggest that some consider MSQ the single greatest impediment to the survival of the boating industry in Queensland, followed closely by customs. .

Australian Customs has shown a history of taking legislation and distorting it to serve its own whims. The surveillance issue for example. Whilst customs admits it has no right to interfere with domestic yachts in Australian waters, it attempts to use a clause in legislation intended for use on the high seas as a tool to circumvent the lack of intended legislation. As a practical matter the use of resource for this kind of intervention is just plain stupid. In a cost V benefit analysis it would fall off the chart and the bad-will created with much of the cruising community insures it is a backward step. A reputable civil rights lawyer has condemned the practise as outside the law. Even in China people may now move freely about the country without being interrogated by police along the way, asking who they are, where they are going and where they have been. Australian cruisers are not afforded the same freedom unless they stand and refuse, placing themselves in stressful, if righteous situations. See TCP # 45 and 46 for more on this. **If the cruising fleet is whittled down to only those that have had positive experiences with customs and don't mind the daily interrogations in northern waters, the industry will have taken another substantial hit.**

The federal minister for customs is Brendon O'Connor and his email address according to his website, is [brendan.o'connor.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:brendan.o'connor.mp@aph.gov.au) and his office phone number is 03 8361 6588, fax 03 8361 6577.

Please contact these people to give your views and concerns. It just might be they do not know enough to realise the impact of their action or inaction. Besides your personal complaints you may find examples of how our industry and lifestyle is being damaged by unreasonable government actions at this page on the TCP website. [www.thecoastalpassage.com/stupidgovhtml](http://www.thecoastalpassage.com/stupidgovhtml)

The means of rebuilding the industry may already be in place and developing. Flexibility may be the small mammalian survivor to the age of dinosaurs. Brent Martz is one example in that his boats can be bought at various states of finish. Buy the hull and deck or just order it done or somewhere in between. Brent is pretty self sufficient and would be able to adapt to conditions quickly. Brent's boats are truly world class for thoughtful design and quality construction. Compare to names like Amel but priced more like the French charter specials, even with our high \$\$.

Peter Kerr of Lizard Yachts in Tin Can Bay is another high quality contract builder- designer that has the flexibility to weather the storm with potential to expand in a better climate. His specialty is (but not limited to) aluminium construction with a range of sailing and motor vessel designs available with pre-cut sections to help home builders get going quicker and can even train in welding technique. Or Peter can deliver a finished vessel to survey.

Schionning Designs are legend and have reputable contract builders for their boats and plans for amateur builders as well. Another one stop shop for sail or power.

Flat panel options may have the most future, especially in multihull construction and may serve a great variety of sizes and designs. Not to say that flat panel construction is a new idea but there has been a lack of variety, competition and in some cases quality that have limited the market.

As our own boat building adventures continue and experience acquired, ideas occur for improvements and we are pleased to see industry reacting in positive ways that align with many of those lesson we have learnt .

## The CNC router!

The Coastal Passage took much of the mystery out of that machine a couple years ago and a reprint of the article is a popular feature on our new website: [www.buildacat.com](http://www.buildacat.com) This is the machine that has been incorrectly called a "laser cutter" by some (especially those wishing to mystify and enhance their product) but is essentially a spinning cutting tool (router) running on a table from an AutoCAD file. See above. Programs that can produce these files can be had for \$30 anymore and the better programs are within reach of home builders with good computer skills. Design experience is still not available at any price however!

The routers have gotten cheaper and bigger! One of the better around available for the professional or amateur boat builder is in Hervey Bay at Advantage Profiling Services. Paul Hance's Machine hires out at \$180 per hour and can cut a whopping 1800 by 6000mm panel. Older machines were limited in table size to 1200 X 2400 or 4 X 8 foot. Thus the smaller panels needed a lot of work in scarfing and joining panels to form whole sections. With Paul's big one a scarfed join or just butt joined means one spot in the length of a 40 foot or 12 metre boat needs to be faired. Meaningless really. See [www.apsp profiling.com.au](http://www.apsp profiling.com.au)

But, where do you get the panels? Glad you

## Found on the web

I AM LISTING A LARGE AMOUNT OF MARINE PARTS, HATCHES, DECK GEAR FROM A BANKRUPT BOAT BUILDER. Auctions ends December 15, 10:11 am

A sign of the times? Well that's how we got our hatches cheap.

# What are the solutions in Production?



That is Paul of APS at the control panel with a large piece of aluminium on the table ready to cut. The cutting head mounted with the appropriate cutting bit is located at the red circle.. when the machine is engaged the bit is lowered to the table and it's carrier can be directed by the program side to side whilst the frame it is mounted to can be directed forward all along the length of the table. Thus this machine can work in two dimensions with great accuracy. The smaller tables, 1200X2400, have been seen for as low as \$9800 new on Ebay but they do not come close to this machines capability. Hiring the service makes sense.

asked! As our boat building project is coming about, laminating full length panels has been one of the learning experiences. I have been very pleased with the quality of my own lamination and feel that in spite of the "upfront" time in getting them, the quality difference over the manufactured ones I got makes the process a winner. But even better would have been to have 6 metre panels with *my choice of composite* delivered router cut and ready to assemble. I suspect there would be a saving in cash as well.

since been sailed to the Louisiades and back and has performed well. I talked briefly with Polycore and they should be able to assist in directing to CNC routers to loft their panels.

So for home builders, Design houses selling kits for delivery and independent contract builders, the flat panel options can allow smaller operations an unlimited range of design with good variety in materials with a price structure that may meet the market.

## Full Kit Boats

Only one that we know of that qualifies is Fusion. Fully finished sections delivered in shipping containers anywhere in the world, ready for assembly. Jim Gard has guided the company through tricky times and has made the right moves. This is reflected in the price of the kit which has just been adjusted to Australian dollars and is less than it was 7 years ago and includes parts that were once options like the targa bar. Finally a benefit to the towering Aussie dollar! See [www.fusioncats.com](http://www.fusioncats.com)

The very sexy Fusion will continue where a raft of Queensland Cat builders have and will continue to fail. Fusion's business model is more flexible. You can order a kit direct or have a local contractor assemble yours for you.

We see the flat panel cottage industry being in place when the domestic market improves to add to the other options, all ready to expand into the slots formerly occupied by a different model. It took the mob in Brisbane and Canberra a decade to do this much damage, we hope it doesn't take that long to repair it.

Now if we can assure prospects that it will be as much fun as they hoped or remembered and the lifestyle compares favourable \$\$ with other competing pastimes, Cruising our coast will continue to be a part of the great Australian experience.

## Words & photos by Bob Norson



Bay City Fibreglass in Hervey Bay has built a lamination table to suit Paul's router! I talked to Malcolm about his new table and he is keen to get more projects going. He prefers laminating in Vinylester at the moment but when asked if a client was interested in a complete kit done in epoxy he said he would be interested. They can laminate balsa or PVC foam and possibly other materials. Ring Mal at 07 4125 1510

Another way to get full length panels is to order Polycore direct from the Australian distributor. [www.polycore.com.au](http://www.polycore.com.au) Their polypropylene honeycomb panels are made in China and can be ordered with full lamination in epoxy to a length of 11.9 metres. The first boat in Australia, made entirely of this composite was covered in TCP and the build is featured on the [www.buildacat.com](http://www.buildacat.com) site. The craft has







# Bare Bones



## Project Update

By Bob Norson

It took weeks to dry out after the flooding and it became merely daily rains. Apologies to those who got their paper a little late but the electronic edition went like sugar at a fly festival. We picked up the papers at the printer the last day the roads were open, then we were cut off for about a week.

But on to the boat building project, my neighbours continue to be real assets and I am grateful for their kindness. "Boonooroo" Bill Kavanaugh, otherwise known as "Mitre 11" keeps an amazing stock pile in a shed that is stacked to the timbers. Malcolm Salisbury down the block has been very generous with his stock of boat building treasures, like the super dense foam for the rudders...

The designer is notorious for drawing rudders that aren't big enough to work for low speed navigation but not long ago the mag Good Old Boat had a brilliant tech article (as they do) on rudder design which gave me the courage to wing it.

After mounting the composite stocks with my patented clamps, upper left, I drew the outline of the profile, top and bottom on the foam and then ground off to those lines, as at left. Using that as a reference point.

I was pleased, and a bit surprised, that after shaping the surface was good enough not to need any filler to be quite fair. I used a 36 grit 7" disc which is pretty savage, then finished up and got final shape with a torture board mounted with 60 grit.

I left the trailing edge a little flat and covered it with bogg. After shaping that to fair with the foam I had something the glass and epoxy could adhere to that wouldn't expose the core material when final finishing. I used two layers of 450 gr DB and the bum wound up with double that by the time I folded over the glass while wetting in. The rudders have since been skim coated with bogg (all they needed), to fair and finished along with the flick-up cassettes and stored away.

I spoke to the builder of another boat of similar design and after years of suffering with the little ones he extended the width about the same as mine, though not the depth. His report is far better response to helm all up and he expects pilot life to be easier as well. He did mention that backing the boat would put more strain on the rudders and that is a downside I will be watching for.

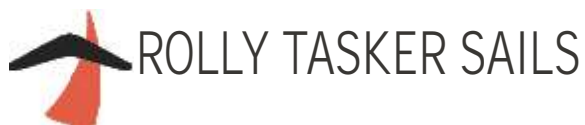
continued next page...



The dotted line indicates the designed profile; only time will tell but I have the confidence to change it later if it doesn't work to expectation.



And this shows the profile. Notice the weather in the background? Normal...



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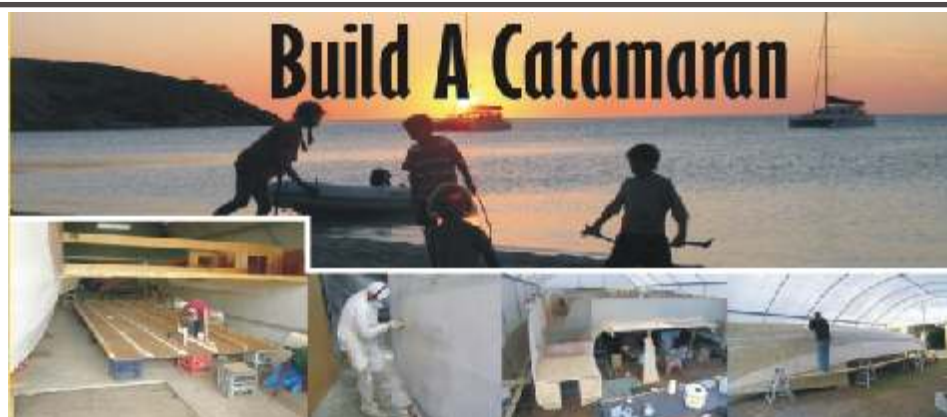
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## Bare Bones

continues...



Inserting the unidirectional glass into the rebated edge of the hatch opening. Why round hatches? Because they were liquidation stock from a bankrupt builder. They were good quality and dirt cheap...round is good!

And speaking of "Fly Festival" earlier, it has been old testament style plague around here. Besides the sand flies.. horrendous! The mud wasps have been unbelievable! When they aren't.. er... reproducing they are invading every nook in every orifice of the boat and dangerously, power tools, building their mud nests. Ah... boat building!

As conditions have been so inconsistent and moist it has been a matter of trying to find small, fast projects. Kay has pitched in to get rid of the mould that was even growing on hardwood marine ply. **My challenge is to organise tasks to suit conditions.**

One good project was the finishing of the back beam and that's where neighbour Malcolm came to the rescue again. The missing part was a piece of clear pine to mount under the top to form a foundation for bolting in the main sheet track. Nothing could be found in any local timber supplier but deep in a corner of Mal's shed, under a pile, was a beautiful, clean, straight piece of what looks to be Hoop pine, estimated to be between 30 and 100 years old! I coated it with Bote-Coat resin with their sealing additive and then a layer of 450gr DB glass before mounting in the beam. So now entombed in the beam is a piece of history if it could talk.

The ends of the back beam were meant to be voids but the top is where some fasteners for the track would be and mounting for winches and cleats. I just can't bring myself to have hardware mounting that kind of highly stressed gear that I can't monitor so... I took a little extra time and built sub-floors into the ends and have some port lights to use for 'doors'. Those are the smaller openings in the photo. The same with the bows. Usually they are sealed as voids but the pad eyes for the prodger are mounted through the hull skin in there, not to mention deck cleats for bow lines. So I separated the compartment into two sections, upper and lower, and fabricated panels that will be bolted and sealed for each section.

Another operation that can be done in between floods is cutting away core material from things like hatch openings and filling with bogg to protect the core, or when stiffness is needed, to fill the space with rolled up unidirectional e-glass then bogg over that. It really makes a difference.

There is a lot more going on but space does not allow much more here. I am getting more installments made to [www.buildacat.com](http://www.buildacat.com) which has this entire project in detail in sections by subject. I have run into a major problem as a result of faulty supplies once again. It will likely delay the project for a week or two to fix and is a hell job but as always, we will get on with it and over it. I was talking with Bob Burgess a while ago and mentioned rhetorically that I couldn't understand how some businesses survived with such shoddy products and he had the right answer I think. It's his theory that when confronted with bad product and recalcitrant suppliers, most people go quiet, throw the boat together and flog it.

Sadly, I think he is right. But as we proved with our first boat, that is not how we are. To see what I mean, visit this webpage: [www.thecoastalpassage.com/rust.html](http://www.thecoastalpassage.com/rust.html)

This boat will be built to the highest mechanical standard I am able to do, full stop.



The photo above shows the beam just before placing the top panels. The timber clamped in place is to keep the wobble out of the front part of the beam. The piece of pine is covered with glue mix to seal against the top and then the ugly job of taping it all in. Not a fun job in tight, upside down locations. The photo below shows the beam ready for final fairing. I'm confident of the strength of the structure. For you techies.. the top is 20mm 80kg foam with 800 grm DB glass. The tape adds another 750 gr.



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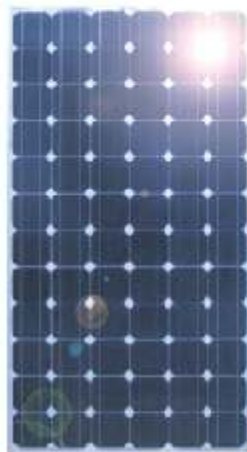
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# Cruising For Communities

Sept 17, 2011 *Be there!*



Raftup of Rally dinghies awaiting the traditional welcome by the school children at Bagaman Island



Lobster for the welcome BBQ at Duchateau, and below, getting ready for the BBQ...yummmmm!



By Guy Chester, SY Sanctuary  
Photos courtesy of Guy Chester, Louisiades Rally & EcoSustainAbility

Will you run the rally again?

I heard this from many during the 2010 Louisiades Yacht Rally. Those behind the scenes know the work that goes into getting a successful event to happen... its run by volunteer effort but we try to deliver a professional event. Those behind the scenes knew of the quandary I was in...could I afford the expense, time away from business and did I have the energy to do it again?

When we returned to Australia after the 2010 Rally I determined to not do or commit to anything until after Christmas. In the weeks leading up to the festive season I had one more business trip to Port Moresby, and a meeting with Peter Vincent, the CEO of the Papua New Guinea Tourism Promotion Authority. I was sitting in the plane, the new Q400 Dash8 that Qantas flies from Cairns to Port Moresby. Reasonably low altitude and it was a sunny day; a few whitecaps on the Coral Sea and an isolated reef had a lazy breaking swell on it. What great conditions for the passage I thought...then stopped myself...am I planning to go again - for a fifth trip in 2011?

Its hard to explain the motivations behind running a cruising yacht rally...just to put any thoughts to bed its not for the money! Whilst Andrew Bishop's World Cruising Club makes a profit, that's with hugely successful events like the Atlantic Rally, the Scottish Malts and many other events, including the Round the World Rally they run. And good for



them! But no, the Louisiades Rally hasn't and isn't likely to make a profit!

If you believe in the importance of a thing it's hard to shake. The folk of the Louisiades get such a benefit from the event.

As I sat on the plane watching the whitecaps, I thought of the conversation on the beach, Nanuya Lailai Island, Fiji, 2002. Over a game of Boules (Petanque... the six shiny balls) on the beach. The discussion amongst the cruising yachties was the preparation and experience needed to cross the ocean from OZ, the USA and NZ to get to Fiji. I spoke of the experience I had gained ocean racing and the Ambon Race (really a Rally) which set me off cruising.

The discussion led to the many folk who cruise the Great Barrier Reef and what it would take to get them offshore... we talked about the "easy" trip across the Coral Sea to the Louisiades.

The germ of an idea of the rally was planted.

Hosting the Bluewater and World Cruising Club Rallies on their Cairns visits fertilised the seed.

The Louisiades community's keenness during our 2007 cruise pollinated the flower of the idea.

With a love of sailing and cruising tropical islands, there is a buzz from organising an event and encouraging yachties on a big adventure. The 2008, 2009 and 2010 events went well... if not without incident. The 2010 rally was very successful, we had 26 entries, 25 yachts left Cairns, two retired and that left 23 yachts in the Louisiades for the last month... over 70 "dimdins" (what the locals call us whitefolk).

However, this is not why the Rally was created. I have preached ecotourism and sustainable tourism for many years. As a consultant, I have written many reports, some of which I believe have made a big difference. There are established resorts I conceived and major projects now built, national parks established etc. BUT I had not "put my money where my mouth is"... and done something myself.

The people of the Louisiades have very little, they live a largely subsistence lifestyle, but do need cash for medical and education. There is a constant need to raise school fees and pay for anything that cannot be grown or caught.

Whilst many cruising yachties help out, make donations and even build boats and schools (see the cruisaiders website and the feature on pages 22-24 of this edition of TCP), I set out to get the Rally established as something which would show that tourism to a remote community can make a long term and lasting difference.

I think the Rally can now say that it does!

*continued next page...*



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Rally Skippers, 2010



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little...

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a lot!



#### 2010 accomplishments:

One of our Doctors gained tens of thousands of dollars worth of medical supplies... all carried up by yachts and given to Paneati, Misima and Nimowa clinic/hospitals.

We were asked by Sister Sera of Nimowa for a blood glucose monitor, heamometer and oxy-pulsimeter... expensive items for an impoverished clinic...these were given to Nimowa clinic.

By commissioning two beautiful model sailaus (lakatois) which we then auctioned, we raised K4000 for the Paneati Clinic...this will be used for zoom (outboard fuel) for the clinic... it will pay for mother/child health clinic on Panapompom Island and emergency evacuations to Misima Hospital...things that otherwise the meager funds provided to the clinic would not allow.

One of our yachties obtained six solar lighting systems... these are now established at Panasia, Little Panasia, Panapompom, Bagaman, Kamataal and Nimowa to provide light for family houses or community centres.

We have fines, bribes and auctions to raise money for Nimowa clinic and their ambulance. In 2010 this exceeded \$5,000 AUD!

Rally participants have carried over a tonne of educational materials and clothes and given these to various elementary schools and communities. ...

For two days there were 15 yachts in beautiful Sabara... we

all put in \$50-100 per yacht and provided the funds for a water tank and collection roof, gutter etc...for Tandeyai village...a village which has been there for over 100 years but has needed to sail 5 miles across to another island for water.

Hoba Bay (Panamurama) asked for a whipper snipper... we brought a new one for them...this beautiful and very neat and tidy village will now have the best lawns in the Louisiades....

The above is our donations and aid for the community... we also pay our way and the Rally spends over \$10,000 paying for events...cash that goes directly to the community. Yachties would have spent well over \$5,000 on handicrafts and other items. Further the local member of parliament sponsors the Misima festival, injecting \$10,000 into the economy there.

The Panapompom canoe regatta has established a hopefully ongoing event to celebrate the sailing canoes of the Louisiades.

To date, the direct contribution to the local economy must be approaching AUD \$100,000.

This doesn't happen without a huge effort. I am trying to find others to help out but many are frightened off as they don't have the time, the money to bring their boat back each year or the confidence to work with the local people.

As I flew across the Coral Sea in December last year... I wondered if I had the energy and the money to again run the event. Peter Vincent offered PNGTPA's ongoing support and indeed cash sponsorship. I almost committed to run the Rally for 2011... then I was in Alotau and saw Nimowa Clinic's Marine Ambulance. When delivering some parts they outlined how the cash we had given them after the 2010 Rally was being used to replace the broken rudder and slip the boat and would allow fuel for a series of antenatal clinics...I realised I couldn't NOT do it!

**The Rally is on again for 2011... yes its for the yachties to have an adventure and lots of fun... but far more importantly its for the folk of the Louisiades.**



**The Rally is seriously looking for folk to help run this years event and get involved or indeed take over for future years. Perhaps an association could be formed to run the event into the long term?**

## The Louisiades Yacht Rally

The Louisiades Archipelago is 100 nautical miles east of "mainland" Papua New Guinea, 520 nautical miles north-east of Cairns. They are truly paradise found, 100 beautiful islands with a friendly people living a very simple life who welcome cruising yachts. The Louisiades comprise sand cays, lagoon reefs, limestone outcrops (up lifted coral reefs) and continental islands with many safe anchorages. With abundant coral reefs there is snorkeling, diving and fishing galore. The local people are exceptionally welcoming to yachts and will paddle out to welcome yachts and, of course, trade.

The Rally is a cruise in company across the Coral Sea and then four weeks throughout the spectacular Louisiades, with a mix of events and time for independent exploration of the islands and their friendly communities.

After a week of briefings and final preparation, yachts will leave Yorkeys Knob Boating Club (Cairns) on 17 September 2011. After a close reach across the Coral Sea the yachts spend the next four to six weeks in the spectacular Louisiades, with a mix of events (ranging from sailing canoe racing, fun race, cultural festival, beach party, feasts, sing sings, skull cave visit, traditional dancing, a remote river trip, school and hospital visits etc.) and time for independent exploration of the islands and their friendly communities.

The 2010 rally was enjoyed by all, in the words of the crew from 2009 Rally yacht, Tribal: "Its been a life changing experience."

#### More Info:

**The Rally is sponsored by Papua New Guinea Tourism Promotion Authority, supported by Yorkeys Knob Boating Club and organised by EcoSustainAbility.**

**The Rally leaves from Cairns (Yorkeys Knob Boating Club) on 17 September, 2011. Yachts muster at Yorkeys by 11th. Further information from Guy Chester**

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# HIGH JINKS AT THE BAR

By Stuart Buchanan, SY *Pluto*

Most yachties who head north on a winter cruise along our magnificent Queensland coast usually spend a relaxed week or two experiencing the delights of the Great Sandy Strait. To access the Strait means having to cross the Wide Bay Bar. Despite its notorious reputation for claiming lives and overturning vessels, with proper planning and favourable weather conditions, it's mostly all plain sailing.

I don't believe in jinxes, but for four successive years, each time I crossed the Bar from seaward in my ketch *Pluto*, an incident occurred that almost convinced me otherwise.

On my second cruise north, I decided to cross the Wide Bay Bar at night, reasoning it would be easier to pick up the directional light on Hook Point than during the day. I was right; the white light, together with its accompanying red and green lights were plainly visible miles out to sea. But as I made my run towards the Bar, I heard the skipper of a yacht call Tin Can Bay Coastguard on VHF radio, advising them that his 4 metre aluminium dinghy had broken free while being towed across the Bar. It was just the sort of added obstacle I didn't need. I couldn't believe that anyone would be so stupid as to tow a dinghy across the Bar; one steep wave and you could be wearing the dinghy as a hat. I safely crossed the Bar without colliding with the dinghy. As I motored into Pelican Bay to anchor for the night, my night vision picked up a shape a short distance dead ahead. I grabbed the spotlight to find it was the yacht that had lost its dinghy; the anchored vessel wasn't displaying a riding light. This moron was a floating hazard.

The following year I again decided to cross the Bar at night. On this trip I was accompanied by my mate Lawrie. It was blowing around 17 knots from the south-east as we made our run towards the Bar. I went below and started the motor; within a minute the engine's temperature alarm began to ring. I quickly turned off the motor, dismantled and checked the filter on the water intake line. Nothing seemed to be blocking it. I started the motor, only to hear the alarming again.

"It looks like we'll have to go in under sail alone," I said to Lawrie.

"OK, mate," Lawrie replied.

No sooner had he said so, when a woman's voice on the VHF radio called Tin Can Bay Coast Guard advising that she and another woman had intended to anchor their yacht behind Double Island Point for the night, before crossing the Bar at first light next morning, but had found the conditions behind the headland untenable.

"Earlier on," the woman said to the Coast Guard, "we saw a yacht that looked as though it was heading towards the Bar. Perhaps it could guide us over."

"Is there any vessel approaching the Wide Bay Bar?" the Coast Guard asked.

"This is the yacht *Pluto*," I answered. "We're about half a mile from the Bar."

It was arranged that we would hove to with our spreader lights on and wait for the two women.

"You're welcome to follow us," I said over the radio, "but you do understand that it will be entirely at your own risk?"

"Yes, of course."

We hove to for over an hour, during which time I made a few more unsuccessful attempts to get the motor running without the alarm ringing.

"Gee," Lawrie said, enthusiastically, "saving the lives of two damsels in distress they'll probably be so grateful, they'll invite us on board for drinks, dinner and you never know what else."

"Yeah," I replied. "More importantly, one of them might be a diesel mechanic."

As the women's yacht approached, I called them on the radio to warn them that we'd be going over the Bar under sail alone. There was a deathly silence. I called again.

"In that case," a woman's voice answered hesitantly, "we'd rather not follow you."

Dare I say it women.

They must have changed their minds again, because before long they were right behind us and stayed there all the way to Pelican Bay. But there was no offer of drinks, dinner or anything else.

The following year, once more with Lawrie on board, we were rounding Double Island Point just on dark, when a 15 metre cruiser passed us and headed in towards Rainbow Beach.

"I don't know where the hell he's going," I said to Lawrie.

"Perhaps he's going to plough a new channel through the mainland into Tin Can Bay Inlet," Lawrie replied.

Forty minutes later, the cruiser called Tin Can Bay Coast Guard on the radio, and asked how to get over the Bar.

"All we can see ahead of us is white water," the bloke added.

"Where are you?" the Coast Guard asked.

"I'm not sure."

As we had logged on with the Coast Guard earlier in the day, the radio operator called us and asked if we could see the cruiser.

"No," I replied, "but I saw a cruiser heading in towards Rainbow Beach 40 minutes ago."

For five minutes there was no reply.

I called the skipper of the cruiser and asked if he had a GPS onboard.

"Yes," he answered.

"Give me your lat and long," I said.

I plotted his position on my chart, worked out a course to where we were hove to and called the cruiser:

"If the lat and long you have given me is correct," I said, "and you have no deviation on your compass, head towards us on a compass course of 040? we'll wait for you and you can follow us over the Bar."

"OK, thanks *Pluto*."

Five minutes later, the Coast Guard called:

"*Pluto*, that course you gave the cruiser will take him straight into whitewater."

A shiver ran down my spine. I didn't reply until I thoroughly checked my calculations, and then said:

"Not according to my chart, it won't."

That was the last we heard from the Coast Guard.

Before long, the cruiser was following us safely over the Bar.

Twelve months later, about eight o'clock at night, we headed in towards the Bar for what we hoped this time would be an uneventful crossing. Lawrie was at the tiller, when I saw a white light ahead of us.

"What the hell's that light?" Lawrie asked.

"I'm not sure," I replied, "it could be a vessel's stern light."

Then the light changed to green and then to red, then to green again. Then I saw red and green lights heading straight for us.

"Quick! Take it away to starboard Lawrie!" I shouted.

Lawrie did, but the red and green lights kept heading for us.

"We're too far up, Lawrie! I can see the green arc of the directional light! We'll have to go hard to port!"

I took over on the tiller, but the red and green lights were still coming at us. Then, very close by, against the



night sky I saw the vague outline of a mast. It was a yacht. Suddenly a powerful spotlight beam was directed straight at us. It almost blinded me and took away my night vision. I shouted at the top of my voice to the yacht:

"Excuse me, my good chap, would you mind turning off that spotlight, it's playing havoc with my night vision!"

Lawrie later told me that those weren't the actual words I used. He said something about a tirade of obscenities that would have made a bullocky blush. Leaving the other yacht doing circles in the shallow water of the Bar, we got back on course and forged in towards the directional light. The other yacht followed us for a while and then I saw its stern light.

"I think he was trying to follow us over the Bar, but he's turned back," Lawrie said.

"I couldn't care less what he's doing," I replied. "I just want to get as far away from him as possible."

Despite those incidents, I still believe that negotiating the Bar at night is the best option; the lights are much easier to see. And as Lawrie says:

"At night you can't see the breakers, so they don't scare you."

Nevertheless, next time I sail up the coast I might go outside Fraser Island and give the delights of the Great Sandy Strait a miss.

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# Let's Share Cruising Tips

## Fantastic Fender Covers

1

Words & photos by  
Leonie Bremmer-Kamp, SY *Bifrost*

Ever wondered what makes those megayachts look so posh? When you've had an eyeful of all the shiny stuff take a look at their fender covers...

Well, if you want fender covers as smart as their's but don't want to pay anything from \$50-\$90 a pair look no further than your local second hand store.

2

**1: Select a pair of track suit pants.** Dark colours are best. Anything with a stretchy leg will do but the best for our purpose has a baggy ankle held in with an elastic cuff or hem. You can pick these up for about \$4. (see pic 1)

**2: Cut the legs off at the crotch line.** Depending on the length of your fender you may wish to have a shorter cover but leave it long at this stage. (see pic 2)

3

**3: Slide them on to your fender with the 'ankle' part of the trackies at the rope end of the fender.** This way, when the fender is hanging vertical the best most finished end is uppermost & most visible. No sewing needed on the 'ankle' end. (see pic 3)

**4: Pull down the leg to cover the fender, generally it's pretty tight.** Cut to adjust length if necessary leaving about 10-15mm turnover. (see pic 4). Sew this turnover with UV stable thread. Running stitch will do.

4

**5: Then stitch around again in running stitch closer to the folded edge.** This row of stitching acts as a draw-string. Keeping your stitches fairly small will give you a neat & even gathering. Once it's pulled in tight, stitch it so the thread holds fast. (see pic 5)

and "VOILA" (see pic 6)

All in all it takes about 15 minutes sewing & costs around \$2-\$4 a pair. I've found that size 12 pants snugly fit a fender 7" diameter x 30" long. But it's not an exact science. Because the material stretches it's very forgiving.

Fender covers are not an unnecessary frippery. They not only protect your hull paint or gel coat from the fender but also protect the fender from toxic fallout that occurs in some of the more industrial harbours on the coast which can chemically react with the plastic, get gooey & leave a sticky residue on your hull, & let's face it, who wants that!



Leonie, almost done



The Finished product

## MOULD! and bonding with BareBones

By Kay Norson,  
Now Expert Mould Buster

When Bob told me he saw some hints of mould growing on the "marine grade" plywood desk top in the main saloon, every bone in my domestic body went on *red alert*. I despise mould. It stinks and feels unhealthy! So it was easy for Bob to "suggest" I give a hand and finish the sealing procedure of the wood that had been delayed with this stinking bad weather.

Malcolm of SC *Coconut Airlines* mentioned to Hilarie of SC *Starfire* that the best product for mould is Oil of Clove. A few drops diluted in a bit of warm water; "It kills the spores". So, as Hilarie had tried many other products, and found the mould always came back, she was keen to try. Hilarie reports after 2 months the mould has not returned - a true test with this very wet, humid weather.

After waiting for the chemist to restock (apparently very popular product for mould - ironically found on shelves for products for tooth aches), I was ready to try in my home. Nice smell and so far no mould. Lynne on MY *Lauraiana* also suggests oil of clove for the mould menace. Sue Bett of "Galley Guide" and MY *Scallywag*, fame suggests eucalyptus spray, found at grocery stores. Brand name is Bosistos - they also sell eucalyptus oil.

Back to the boat and the mould. There it was. Barely visible one place and thick in

another. So a quick wipe with acetone, sand and seal. Mould no more.

Well, I'm all dressed up for this occasion, what else needs sanding and sealing? Then it happened. The bonding began. I then began scanning my new "home". WOW! It's getting there! I can now visualize where all the "stuff" will go.

Now my sanding and sealing takes on more than a chore. Tomorrow I will be back for that second coat of sealer.

The BareBones beast is getting a heart and softening mine.



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# Magical, Mystical Coconut Oil

Words & photos by  
Jan Forsyth, SY *Sea Wanderer*

**Swaying coconut palms, white sand, a blue lagoon, beach umbrella shading a cushioned lounge, and on that lounge a shiny body toasting in coconut oil.**

There was a time long, long ago in my distant but memorable past I was informed that coconut oil was banned from sunning bodies, as it was suspected to boil on the skin and cause bad sun burn.

However in today's better informed world I have found those findings misguided. We have been slopping coconut oil on faces and exposed parts for years now and find we attract little or no sun damage. The many chemicals and goodies that add up to the commercial sun blocks I found did the job and well, but my aging complexion suffered in the process.

So I'm thinking that perhaps it was the preservatives and heady perfume in those colourful bottles that did the broiling and not the pure oil.

Today we buy our coconut oil in used plastic water bottles from a little old lady sitting in a market stall. She charges about \$AU1 for her oil, and although we wonder about the sanitary of these bottles, the oil is pure and fresh.

We have various bottles on board in the heads for the hands and hair, in the galley for cooking and on deck for slurping over the body. The oil is very heat stable for cooking, and because of this it is slow to oxidize and resistant to rancidity.

Another interesting feature of this marvellous oil is that it prevents tarnish. For years I have worked my hands to the bone and lost layers of skin keeping the stainless on the boat up to standard.

A friend had suggested in my early days of cruising and polishing stainless, that scrubbing with Jif was so much easier than rubbing (and rubbing) with polish to remove the tarnish.

I immediately found a lump of plastic green scourer and bottle of Jif and set to. It worked, and in half the time of the polish, but I still had to apply polish when the white paste had been washed off with our precious water. My hands were a little raw from the paste as well, but I was satisfied with the end result and went on to use this method for a number of years.

Eventually laziness took hold and I left off the polish stage which meant I had to do the scrubbing more often to keep the sparkle.

One day as I sat on deck rubbing my heart out on the shining inundation on the bow, inspiration hit me why don't I use coconut oil on the stainless?! Certainly it wouldn't hurt if I tried.

Grabbing a rag I tipped out a drop and rubbed the stanchion. To my delight after a minute of minimum effort I had achieved what had previously taken a good ten minutes and hard elbow grease to attain. Plus the oil not only cleaned off the tarnish it polished as well! My hands had never been so soft, and I didn't have to worry about nasty chemical build up in my system.

The Skipper being a man of tradition scoffed the idea saying that the stainless would be slippery and attract dust, so I made sure to work the oil so there is no residue.

I do realise thought that I am currently living at the source of the coconut, as here in the tropics coconut oil is cheap as chips. But check it out if you can find a reasonable supply, you may be pleasantly surprised.

## A few more coconut oil tips from Gloria, SY *Blue Tang*

### HOW TO "MAKE" COCONUT OIL:

Scrape the nut. Soak the "meat" in water. Squeeze. Drain. Boil the "milk. Cool. Collect the floating oil.

### HAND, FACE, BODY CREAM

Mix equal amounts of coconut oil and almond oil. If you can find it, gently melt the oils with a small amount of wool fat (anhydrous lanolin) until well mixed. Cool. Whip to resemble cream and refrigerate in hot climates. Keep away from the Skipper or he'll use it for everything!

### "NATURAL" HAIR CONDITIONER

Add to a quantity of coconut oil a few drops of Essential

Rosemary and Lavender oils.

Dip fingertips into oil and massage onto scalp first then through hair. Leave on at least ½ hour overnight is best (place a towel over pillow).

The natural oil lubricates and conditions the scalp, helping to prevent flakes and dry scalp without the use of harsh chemicals (men, try it on your beards) and the massage helps blood circulation in the head and neck area. Also helps strengthen the roots of the hair and nourishes the hair shafts, promoting new growth and strengthening existing hair. It helps soften hair making it more manageable, it helps protect the hair from sun damage over time, and it smells nice!



*Pics: A lovely bunch of coconut palms and Jan, enjoying the chore of keeping those rails shiny with coconut oil. With the benefit of the oil keeping hands soft, well worth a try!*

**What's your coconut oil tip?**

## “If you break it I can re-make it!”



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