

Cruising Group Half Yearly Report (2025 / 2026)

Over the past six months, the Cruising Group has carried on its program of 3rd Friday Guest Speaker Dinners / social events, and on-water cruises.

Cruising Group members have continued to venture beyond Victorian waters. Rob Hurrell on *Aquacadabra* participated in the Sail2Indonesia rally over the latter part of 2025, joined by several Cruising Group members for various stages of that journey. *Aquacadabra* is currently in Jahor Bahru, from where Rob is planning to cruise Malaysia and Thailand in the coming months. Meanwhile, in early 2026, Brenton and Robina Smith on *Chakana* and Craig Walton and crew on *Y-knot* sailed to Kangaroo Island and Adelaide. *Y-knot* has subsequently returned to Brighton, however, *Chakana* is still in South Australia as Brenton and Robina explore the waters between Adelaide and Port Lincoln.

The Guest Speaker Dinners have continued to be well attended. In August, Peter and Susie Strain, and John and Jo Walker presented on exploring the Abrolhos Islands by boat, a remote region of fascinating early Australian maritime history. October's talk was by Marnie and Lou Irving, when they related three aspects of their voyages to Tasmania - the natural beauty of the Island, the vagaries of the weather and unexpected medical issues (and how to deal with them). In February, Rob Hurrell and his crew shared the story of *Aquacadabra*'s participation in the Sail to Indonesia Rally, sailing east to west across Indonesia over four months last year - over 17,000 islands, spectacular scenery, active volcanoes, remote reefs, and some of the most welcoming & challenging sailing you'll find anywhere in the world.

The ever-popular annual progressive dinner on boats in the marina was held in November. Fortunately, unlike last year, the weather behaved, and great time was had by all. Not so for the annual Carols on the Hardstand BBQ in December, when inclement weather for the third year in a row forced a retreat to the Jock Sturrock Centre. Nevertheless, it turned out to be another enjoyable and social event.

The Annual Birthday Cruise to Royals for the Cruising Group in was once again held in January. Several boats and their crews made the brief passage to RYCV, joining others who had cruised over by car, for a BBQ lunch and birthday cake on the lawn.

With a number of our regular cruisers away on long term cruises, it was decided to forgo the annual Bass Strait Cruise in Company for 2026, and instead, to hold an "explore Port Phillip Bay" cruise in company. This attracted, seven boats ("*Blaise Pascal*", "*Kirra Kirra*", "*Lynx*", "*Reliance*", "*Saffron II*", "*Ulu*" and "*Wirraway*"), who in the last week of February, headed off to QCYC at Queenscliff. Whilst the weather once again did not play ball, all had a great time, and it was especially pleasing to have three new crews joining a Cruising Group event (Karen and Greg on *Blaise Pascal*, Dan

and Janya on *Ulu*, and Nigel and Sharon on *Lynx*). After one or two nights at QCYC, the fleet then split, with the catamarans heading to Sorrento for a night on the moorings, and then off to Martha's Cove, to be later joined by *Wirraway*. Meanwhile, the monohulls, dodging storm cells along the way, headed to Geelong, where we enjoyed the hospitality and facilities of the RGYC. By the end of the week, with forecast easterlies and rain, all headed back home to Brighton.

Looking forward, we are confident of building our cruising participation and are working to rebuild our on-water cruising program, in addition to continuing the Guest Speaker Dinners and social program.

The Cruising Group Committee currently consists of Rob Hurrell, Tony Garvey, Peter Gebhardt, Jo Walker, Brenton Smith and Terry Frankham. In closing, we would like to thank committee member and past chair, Peter Strain, who this year has taken well-earned retirement from the committee after many years of contribution and service.
