



CRUISING NEWS



JUNE 2013

SAILING ADVENTURES OF A BONNIE LASS

BY BRENTON SMITH



A great presentation. Thanks Dori!



Dori sailing past the Needles

We have long been used to the adventures of *Bonnie Lass* as Dori took her to all corners of Pt Phillip Bay, usually single-handed, and at the May Cruising Group dinner our bonnie lass Dori regaled us with more tales of adventure, but this time of cruising in Scotland and the Solent.

In addition to her love of adventure, Dori's Scottish ancestry also resulted in an acute ability to sniff out opportunities for thrift when travelling, but with none of this back-packing lark. This time it started with the sharp observation that the RYA instructors in the UK needed to fill their boats and in addition to taking on earnest pupils also took paying passengers. Hence, Dori was able to sail for five days at a time on fully victualled boats complete with skipper and rapidly improving crew for a mere £100 per day. Now that is a bargain. Bothering about listening to the instructor was entirely optional but Dori's insatiable

curiosity made her a keen student. The downside is that you do not choose the crew, but you can be sure that they are all keen sailors, and as it turned out for Dori, they were a diverse mix and a bundle of fun.

Over a two year period Dori cruised in the waters at the Isle of Skye, sailed a passage from Oban to Troon (west coast of Scotland) via Bangor in North Ireland, and cruised the Solent during Cowes Week.

The Scottish cruise at the Isle of Skye was the normal five-day RYA Day/Coastal Skipper course where five pupils line up with a skipper for a week of instruction while sailing amongst some stunning scenery. The effect of the Gulf Stream keeps the waters and air reasonably warm, well warm compared to what would be expected at the equivalent latitude in our hemisphere, which combined

CRUISING GROUP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairperson Rod Watson.....0409 507 480
Home.....9842 6909

Secretary Jenny Collins.....9585 1154

Editor Robina Smith.....9503 0409
Email.....robina_smith@hotmail.com

Will Merritt..... 9598 8626
Pam Merritt..... 9598 8626
David Pollard.....9596 5633
Richard Johnson..... 0419 361 285
Sandy Watson..... 0418 906 417
Roger Walker..... 0407 844 992

CRUISING NEWS JUNE 2013

Loch Fyne



Oban Harbour



with fresh breezes resulted in some very pleasant sailing. There also seemed to be a pub in every bay, well at least in every bay where they stopped! Stranded dinghies at 2am were part of the challenge. One of the advantages of having an instructor is that he/she generally owns the boat and hence has a vested interest in you getting your tide calculations and pilotage correct. He is also a fount of local knowledge i.e. knows where to find the pubs.

The trip from Oban to Troon was a mile builder for RYA candidates and was blessed with good weather for the five day passage. Even though it is sailing in the Irish Sea, much of it is in sheltered waters. Again the skipper's local knowledge assisted to achieve this happy state of affairs.

Those of you that have done an RYA/YA navigation course will know that they bang on about tides/buoyage/ weather fronts incessantly having been developed in the Solent which would be one of the most challenging places imaginable to sail. Always up for a challenge, Dori cruised the Solent not once, but twice.

As part of the preparation Dori purchased the charts and Reeds Almanac (a useful doorstop at home) and spent

many hours working out passage plans amongst the myriad of tides, banks and buoys. These, combined with the unknowns of weather and other traffic, made the task of actually skippering rather daunting and probably a fun killer. However more RYA training with the skipper on board and voila, another great sailing adventure emerged as they cruised the haunts of the Solent. All of these experiences obviously added to Dori's navigation prowess and contributed to her winning the 2012 Stars and Compass Trophy.

Seconding Ross Wareing to collect the trophy, Dori took her sister Lynn and Helen Scott on a bareboat charter in the Solent, but this time added the challenge of being the skipper as well. Unbeknownst to Dori, it was also Cowes Week when the numbers of sailing boats in confined waters makes Sydney Harbour look positively tame! A gale warning and fog restricted the sailing, but Dori and crew were not daunted by the weather and crashed the party at Cowes. Some motor sailing amongst the rivers and bays that surround the Solent followed.

One recurring theme emerged from Dori's presentation; if you want to find the party then take Dori with you!

I'm not getting old. I'm not getting old. I'm not getting old. (Loud voice to drown out others.) Well, ok, I am recuperating from a knee replacement but this is definitely not related to getting old. Bit of a mystery really. Why would a knee of a young healthy bloke (c'est moi) give out like that? Must be due to the amount of time I have spent on my knees praying for good weather for sailing.

You'll be pleased to hear that the recuperation is going well. From where I lie on my day bed I can see the missus painting the wall of the tool shed. Oh dear! This recovery could take ages. How long *does* it take to paint a shed? On the other hand while I have been languishing at home, Pamela has also been performing well

skippering our boat. Perhaps I need to be fully functional before Saturday after all. Talk about a rock and a hard place!

We do have some good Cruising Group activities coming up as you can see elsewhere in this esteemed magazine so I guess I should make an effort to be up and about for these events. If you see me in attendance remember to express deep sympathy for my plight. If you have any 'Bundy' you could offer a little by way of easing the pain.

Will Merritt
(In)famous Land and Sea Explorer

**Will's
Wise Words**

CRUISING NZ IN GYPSEA ROVER

BY KATHY DE GARIS

PHOTOS ALAN RICHARDSON

Alan and I have recently had the most fantastic two weeks cruising the East coast of New Zealand's North Island aboard Sue and Bryan Drummond's beautiful *Gypsea Rover*, a 54 foot Hylas.

Sue and Bryan set sail for Tasmania on Boxing Day 2012, then brought her across the Tasman to explore the east coast of New Zealand's North Island including the absolutely gorgeous Bay of Islands area. They were then setting off on a Rally sailing over to Tonga, Fiji and Vanuatu in early May.

I was lucky enough to be having a drink with Sue on the RBYC deck one gorgeous post twilight race evening and she mentioned that they needed assistance with what surely must be one of the best cruising trips in the world. Just one week later we flew to join them in Auckland. The marina here is huge, is the base of the New Zealand America's Cup campaign and is full of mega yachts. *Gypsea Rover* is BIG by RBYC standards but she was dwarfed by some of the most amazing sailing yachts I have ever seen .



Gypsea Rover



150 foot cruiser crawling with cleaners.

Auckland is an amazing place to sail as it is surrounded by fabulous islands and bays that are only a few hours sail away. As we had limited time we opted for a 40 minute fast ferry trip to nearby Waiheke Island, an absolutely beautiful and very popular holiday destination. We toured the whole island in our hired car and enjoyed the beaches, views, wineries, a historical WW2 Gun Battery and some very pretty typical NZ sheep .



The next day saw us sail away to our first anchorage at the pristine Mansion Bay at Kawau Island . How beautiful is this place! Imagine waking up to this view ,then.....

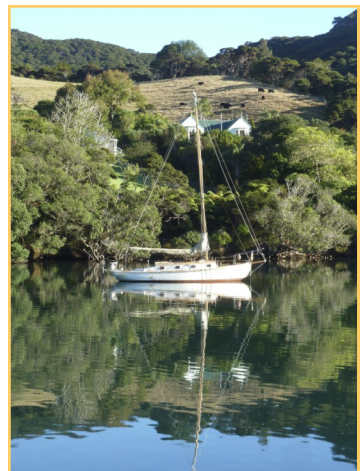


Mansion Bay

swimming in the emerald sea followed by a hot shower at the back of the boat (hot water being available at the aft swim platform).



Each day of the next two amazing weeks was like this. Waking up somewhere beautiful, swimming, then a lazy breakfast whilst we planned our next course and anchorage. We would set off, sometimes motoring, sometimes sailing at 9 knots with 28 knots of breeze. *Gypsea Rover* is so comfortable and seaworthy that 28 knots felt only like a moderate breeze!



We would call in to a beautiful spot to anchor for lunch with yummy toasties made by yours truly. Bryan and Sue have the best system for anchoring with NO YELLING , using the marriage savers (radio headsets that allow easy communication in such a long boat).



Marriage Savers in action!

Most days were mid 20's with gentle breezes. Our night anchorages were all spectacular and sun-downers were accompanied by divine sunsets.



CRUISING NEWS JUNE 2013

The boat has everything. Heaps of power for all the goodies like two fridges, freezer, DVD, sound system, wifi, ensuites for each spacious cabin, electric toilets, water maker allowing generous hot water showers, in mast furling, electric winches and auto helm. Clearly she is full of complicated gear and one needs an engineer on board to run it all so hooray for Bryan !!!



Bryan, Sue, Kathy & Alan

Over the next 10 days we gradually wound our way north up the beautiful east coast of the North Island.

We visited a really cute Yacht club on Kawau island;

Climbed to spectacular views from the top of Peaks in Robertson Island and Great Barrier Island;



Soaked and had romantic moments in hot spring pools.



We ate like kings

and drank too much lovely New Zealand wine.



Sue made baking fresh bread look 'so easy'!



We finally rounded Cape Brett and had to restrain Sue from jumping off the boat in her excitement.

We had now entered the very famous Bay of Islands and visited the very old and historic whaling town of Russell. This is a very popular tourist destination now but is still very beautiful and boasts one of the oldest pubs in New Zealand where we had a gorgeous meal (not cooked by yours truly).



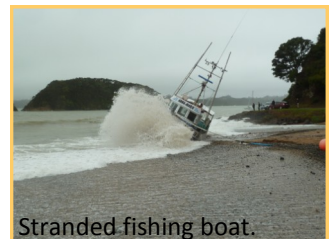
Duke of Marlborough Hotel

This whole area is famous for its big game fishing and we saw some enormous blue striped marlin being weighed and displayed.



Marlin fishermen.

Our final destination was the Opua Marina from which the rally would begin in early May. We were just in time as our 2 weeks of fantastic weather came to an abrupt end and 30 minutes after we were safely tied up in our pen at Opua marina a huge rain storm with 50+ knot squalls blew in. Whilst we sat having a delicious dinner in a cozy restaurant several boats broke their moorings and were washed up on the beach.



Stranded fishing boat.

This was a dramatic end to an absolutely wonderful 2 weeks of cruising through one of the loveliest areas imaginable. Sue and Bryan are delightful company; calm, funny, natural and very capable.

We were both very sad to leave them and count ourselves blessed to have had such a fabulous experience.



Cheers!

HOW I STARTED SAILING

BY DON MATTHEWS



I was brought up in Deepdene, a long way from the sea. My only contact with the sea for my first 30 or so years was the traditional couple of weeks of Christmas holidays, firstly in a rented house in Jetty Road, Rosebud and then, after I was married, at my parents home in Rye.

My major sports were swimming, tennis and football (University Blacks), including 3 years playing football in Sydney (North Shore) in the 1960's. On returning to Melbourne I built a home in Lower Templestowe and when my boys were ready to join Scouts I became the Scout leader.

My fellow leaders and I decided to build a 125 dinghy as a troop project. One of my leaders was a carpenter and, more importantly, lived across the road from the hall and had a large garage, so the yacht was built in the garage over many months. When this was completed it then meant I had a need to learn to sail, which I did, with one or other of my two sons as crew.



A photo of a 125 that represents what Don recalls about 125 sailing - but his had a yellow hull and slash in the sail.

I did not attend any sailing schools, just learnt by going out and having a lot of fun, which included quite a bit of swimming, and reading appropriate reference books on sailing.

Two of my fellow leaders and I also built 125's and over the next few years the troop, including the families of the leaders, went camping at Easter with four 125's in which to sail. This was mainly on inland lakes with camping facilities. Through this activity we introduced quite a number of young boys to sailing. I can't now say how many are still involved but I do hope some of them are.

With my own 125 I joined Rye Yacht Club and as my parents had moved to Rye I stored it down there and raced it for several years. I also raced a Sabre when my sons weren't available.



In 1982 I purchased a Boomerang 20, No 109, which I still own, and raced it at Rye, with my brother and sister-in-law as crew, until 2008 when I moved back to Melbourne to live. I also did a couple of cruises on the Gippsland Lakes with my late wife and I would like to resume that activity with Beverley in the not too distant future. "Tristesse" is getting a bit of TLC so that this might be achieved.

From about 2009 on I was crewing on "Double Malt", until she went to a new home, which was followed by a couple of sails on "Y Knot" until I strained my shoulder which prevented any further such activity for the remainder of this past summer.

In closing I wish that I had found sailing much earlier in my life but then I might not have done as much in the other sports which took up much of my first three decades or so.

VALE MARION FRENCH



Marion French with Miriam Cherry at 2012 Classical Music Night.

It was with much sadness that we were informed of the passing of Marion French on 18th May. She was a valued member of the Cruising Group and the wider RBYC community. Highlights of her life included:

- Sailed 12' Cadet Dinghies as a child.
- Served in WAAF during the war.
- Helped to establish the Victorian Ladies Yacht Club (now the Hampton Sailing Club) when girls and ladies were not able to be full members of yacht clubs.
- Member of RBYC since 1976 when Associate membership was introduced.
- Sailed many classes of boats over the years from 16'skiffs to larger keel boats.
- A willing volunteer at RBYC with contributions to Auxiliary.
- An active participant in Cruising Group activities right up to the day before she passed away.

Tribute by Miriam Cherry

I think Marion is best remembered for her friendliness to newcomers. When we joined RBYC in 1978 the club was a good deal less friendly to newcomers than it is now and she and Bill were very kind to us new chums. I noticed too on Cruising Dinner nights she would often take a new person under her wing and make them feel welcome. She was a table leader at the annual Classical Music Night and brought her friends to share the dinner and the enjoy the music.

She always enjoyed our cruises to Williamstown in January for the anniversary, and enjoyed the company of our son and his friends and the little ones, although this year she and I sadly had to come by car. She came many times to Queenscliff as well, and always brought some goodies for us..

And Marion was a stalwart member of our crew, coming down every Saturday to sail in the pursuit races, as long as it wasn't too cold, and bringing her two cans of VB for the crew - And she would have a glass of red with us "Just a drop, dear."

She was the one who stowed the fenders, and produced

them again when we came home, and checked that we had the lifebuoys out and the winch handles in their proper places. And during the race she would of course "tail" and took charge of letting off the jib sheet when we tacked, having words sometimes with Brian about when was the right time to let go...and she insisted on a down-haul with the lazy sheet when we were reaching. The spinnaker she thought was more trouble than it's worth - always the problem maker on a boat, but she was there ready to stuff it back into its bag when needed.

She would stand no nonsense from other members of the crew. When a young man came to sail with us and started telling me what I should do, she told him "You don't tell the skipper what to do on a boat!" However she was heard on occasions when things were a bit tight to say "Keep her up, Miriam, keep her up!"

Boat maintenance was also an important theme for her too, especially the care of the motor "You've got to look after your motor dear - it's the most important part of your boat". And a favourite saying was "boats need a lot of TLC".

Farewell to a great member of *Lena's* crew - we shall miss her.

ALAN ROBINSON TROPHY RACE TO QUEENSCLIFF

In clear and light conditions, some of the cruisers joined the racing fleet in the Alan Robinson Trophy race to Queenscliff.

No 1 headsails and spinnakers (cruising chutes) were brought out of the deeper recesses of the sail locker in preparation for the forecast light northerly winds.

The heavier cruising boats held off at the start not wanting to get into tight manoeuvring situations. The cruisers maintained contact with the fleet and possible winning positions on handicap until the wind died just as the racers crossed

the line leaving the cruisers with 2+ hours gently drifting towards West Channel Pile.

Richard, *Sophistique*, believed he could have done quite well in the race as he overtook many of the 'racers' - had he entered and followed the same course as everyone else.

A very social evening followed at QCYC as the cruisers and racers mingled in the bar and later in the kitchen. Sunday was a quieter day as many boats headed back to RBYC leaving the last 5 boats to beat home on Monday against vigorous northerlies.

VENUE FOR ANNUAL YARRA RIVER FROSTBITE CRUISE



As mentioned in Forthcoming Events the venue for the Annual Frostbite Cruise has changed this year.

This year we are heading to a pontoon on the south side of Victoria Harbour marked with orange caps on the piles. It is in front of the NAB building. This is normally a commercial pontoon but Melbourne Waterways is allowing us to use it on the Sunday. There are two barbecues at the top of the pontoon and limited seating so it will need to be BYO everything. We are hoping this will be a more protected area than our previous venue.

RBYC Cruising Group has been given a special rate at the Melbourne City Marina (Waterfront City) with 2 nights for \$45. You will need to mention you are with the Frostbite Cruise when you book.

If you are looking to make a weekend out of your cruise some things you can do over that weekend include:

- Friday night July Fireworks in the harbour
- AFL—Collingwood v Carlton @ MCG on Friday night. Kangaroos v Richmond @ Etihad on Saturday
- Geelong v Hawthorn @ MCG on Saturday night
- Multiple Venues for dinner

Views of commercial pontoon at Victoria Harbour from land and water.



MEMBER NEWS

The cruising group welcomes new member **Brian Churchill** who is a regular crew on *Andalucia*. Brian has been sailing with Will since meeting at a navigation course more than 20 years ago. In his words 'Will has taught him many things....'. Another recruit from the Bass Strait Cruise. Must have been a good cruise!

.....
Richards Hawkins, donator of the **Stars and Compass Trophy**, sends his regards to the Cruising Group.

.....
Barbara Burns and Geoff Brewster have been busy readying their new boat *Andante 1* for sailing. She is a Catalina 385 and had a start in the Alan Robertson race to Queenscliff. They found that a pole and spinnaker are needed on the shopping list.

.....
John Lute and Jenny Stone, Corazon, hosted **Ted and Maree Masur** at QCYC while they spent time at the Sanctuary Cove Boat Show. The shops around Sanctuary Cove were also explored to the retailers advantage.

John and Jenny are planning to spend a couple of months exploring the Whitsunday Islands from July.

.....
Immediate Past CW's bionic knee replacement has progressed well. He even ventured down to QCYC for the social activities. Arriving by chauffer driven car (Pam) he used *Emma Kate* as his home base after having a berth reserved on the wharf in front of the club house to enable easy access much to the consternation of the quicker racers who kept eyeing off the prime position as they arrived. Will was even seen to be boat hopping by the end of the weekend!

.....
Gentlemen, don't forget to purchase your lapel anchors from the RBYC office ready to adorn your attire at the Classical Music Night.

.....
The 2013 ORCV Helly Hansen Winter Cruiser Series is being held in June/July/August. Go to ORCV website for details.

.....
It is great to see a How I Started Sailing article back in the newsletter. Note the singular term and the note of desperation from the editor. As Robina and Brenton Smith will be travelling during July, it is aimed to complete the next newsletter from London using the marvels of modern communication. However it would be appreciated if contributions were emailed before Music Night weekend to make life easier.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

FRIDAY 21ST JUNE ANNUAL CLASSICAL MUSIC NIGHT 'SHADES OF AUTUMN'

Featuring Elyane Laussade on piano, tenor Edward Antonov-tenor and violinist Michael Petruccelli.
Playing Mozart, Schubert, Gershwin

Enjoy an evening of fine wining, dining and entertainment—all for just \$100 a head.

Sumptuous 3 course meal, sherry on arrival and some wine included.

Starting at 7pm. Dress—black tie.

Don't miss this wonderful evening.

Of course by now you have booked, but just in case you haven't, please book with Ticket Secretary Sandy Watson as soon as you can get to a phone or keyboard. Ph 0418 906 417 or email rodsandy@bigpond.net.au

SUNDAY 7TH JULY ANNUAL YARRA RIVER FROSTBITE CRUISE

It's that time of year already and with the winter rainy season upon us we need a good social occasion to entice us onto the water. Our cruisers are a hardy bunch and a bit of wind, possible rain and low temperatures are not enough to stop us from having a great time.

So on Sunday 7th July we will all sail up the Yarra for our Annual Frostbite Cruise BYO everything BBQ lunch.

Break out your best and warmest winter outfits. This is your opportunity to vie for the 'Best Silly Hat' prize.

Depart the marina about 10am for a midday arrival or you may prefer to take up the special offer at Melbourne City Marina.

Please note the change of venue at a pontoon on the south side of Victoria Harbour. Details on page 7 of the newsletter.

Call or email Roger Walker (rgwalker309@gmail.com or 0407 844992) about a week before to register your interest and call Melbourne City Marina to book any berths you might need overnight.

Of course cruisers are always adaptable and those registered will be contacted if any changes are forced by the weather.

FRIDAY 12TH JULY RBYC PRESENTATION NIGHT

Come along and support our Cruising Award Winners—Cruising Yachtsman of the Year, Most Improved Cruiser. Stars and Compass Trophy. Details on club website.

FRIDAY 19TH JULY FORUM DINNER MEETING

Guest Speaker: Gordon Syme
Quick fixes and emergencies at sea.

WIDE-BEAMED LADY

from the
Chair

Now you may think that this is a dangerous story in these days of political correctness, equality of the sexes and gorilla stories. I shall tell you the story anyway.

We recently arranged the bottom cleaning of the first lady of the fleet, *Emma-Kate*, at Royals. The lift was delayed, so *Emma-Kate* needed to overnight in a pen. Having to do a car shuffle to take the boat to Royals, we, Sandra and I, were able to inspect the pen, piled pen E06. On seeing the pen Sandra immediately announced that we would not fit between the piles. Being a skilled engineer, I did, I thought, some accurate eyeballing and pacing and concluded she would just fit. The gap is 4 metres and the first lady of the fleet is only 3.88 metres; tight but we could do it.

We sailed across and arrived at E06 and, of course, on arrival I was reminded that it was too narrow and we would get stuck. I, of course, continued to justify my highly accurate measurements, fine judgement and berthing skills. So we very slowly slid into the pen, I was watching the starboard pile and we were rubbing against it. Sandra was unusually quiet as *Emma-Kate* went from slow to extremely slow and about to stop. Should I apply some throttle? Before I did I checked the port side and we were hard against that pile too. Ahh-throttle is definitely required; reality has now set in, but in REVERSE. Full reverse throttle was applied but the first lady of the fleet was stuck, jammed and immovable. Sandra said little but I knew what was on her mind from THE LOOK. Calmness did prevail and after about twenty minutes of strategic rope placement and winching we managed to extract her. I was then informed that "I told you so". I am printing this demoralising confession to get in first because I will be reminded of this minor slip up for the rest of my life - (like the only other mistake I made, about twenty or thirty years ago) and all the girls will be told the story.

Incidentally *Emma-Kate* was undamaged except for some marks which have been polished off and she looks brand new after the bottom clean and a polish.



Captain Coxswain's Corner

'DEVIL TO PAY'

When a particularly difficult situation developed with no readily apparent solution old seafarers were wont to say that:

'There's the devil to pay and no pitch hot.'

This referred to the fact that the seam nearest to the keel in a planked hull was the most difficult (almost impossible) to caulk. The oakum to be driven into the seam was 'paid out' as the work progressed.