



# CRUISING NEWS



JULY 2013

## ANNUAL CLASSICAL MUSIC NIGHT

# SHADES OF AUTUMN

Edward Antonov, Michael Petruccelli & Elyane Laussade



James Ide, Sandy & Rod Watson, Julie & David Jessup



Adele & Warren Parker, Barb & Don Richmond



### AUTUMNAL BRILLIANCE

BY BRENTON SMITH

For more than 20 years the Cruising Group has hosted the Annual Classical Music Night at RBYC and it has proved once again to be a popular event as 96 members and friends gathered to enjoy outstanding performances from three talented musicians: Elyane Laussade – piano; Edward Antonov – violin and Michael Petruccelli – tenor. All are soloists and we were treated to three outstanding solo performances before the final ensemble.

Michael gave us five pieces sung in German, French, Russian and Italian – an outstanding multi-lingual array for a young person. His crisp clear diction combined with the richness of his voice made him a joy to listen to. The mu-

sic and lyrics ranged from sombre themes about longing for death (Schubert) through the classic themes of conflicts in love (Lalo and Tchaikovsky), and on to some light hearted frivolity of love, passion and lust (Tosti – Italian of course!)

Edward performed three pieces, one each from Mozart, Chausson and Kreisler that gave him ample opportunity to display his technical mastery of the violin. Who of us was not in awe of the high pitched vibrato in Kreisler's 'Tambourin Chinois' as he took it to its final crescendo?

Elyane proposed the theme 'Shades of Autumn' prompted by her choice of 'Automne' by the French

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# CRUISING NEWS JULY 2013



Dori, Will, Jo, Ted & Maree



Jenny & Grant, Margaret, David & Bev, Robert Ruggieri



Wendy and David

composer Chaminade as the first of her solo pieces. Autumn is traditionally a time of reflection, particularly for our rural ancestors, when the fortunes of the spring and summer seasons were pondered on. 'Automne' started with rustic tones, intense, moody from the lower pitch end of the piano that built into a brief almost angry crescendo; a foretaste of the winter storms to come, and quickly relaxed into peaceful melody before fading quietly; the cool of autumn evenings closing in.

Elyane's solo performance of the timeless Gershwin favourite of 'Rhapsody in Blue' followed. It has probably been more than 30 years since I have heard the complete score, and my memory was of the combination of passages of brilliant piano supported by spells of exuberant orchestral backing including that haunting sax – almost as a way of giving the pianist and the orchestra each a breather to regroup ready for the next onslaught of their respective brilliant exuberance. As a soloist, Elyane had to use the piano to create and sustain the mood of the orchestra between the solo piano performances that we have come to recognise and admire so much. And she did it brilliantly – no autumnal shades here!!

We all know the energy contained in 'Rhapsody in Blue', and prior to her solo performances there was the tension of whether the RBYC baby grand would actually withstand the physical intensity that Elyane would have to bring to this piece. Fortunately some quick running repairs by her husband, Robert Ruggieri, whose ingenuity would have made any cruiser proud, had the piano ready for her performance.

The world premiere of Elyane's own composition for an ensemble of piano, violin and tenor was the final performance of the evening. 'Chanson d'Automne' (Autumn Song) was inspired by the poem by Paul Verlaine which is probably the best known in the French language. The English translation of the poem starts with:

The long sobs  
Of the violins  
Of autumn  
Wound my heart  
With a monotonous  
Languor

Naturally enough the piece was led out by Edward Antonov using long strokes of his violin bow in a low register introducing sombre tones on the piano. Michael Petrucelli sang Verlaine's lyrics now passed into modern French history having been used as radio code by the French Resistance. It is a sad piece reflecting on the allegory in life by the fading brilliance of leaves, that swirl in the autumn winds before all dying – the music from all three fading away to silence.

Amongst the music we were treated to a fine three course meal that commenced with sherries and chatter in the Olympic Room before moving upstairs for the musical performances between courses.

Our thanks are extended once again to David Asprey for his contacts amongst the classical music scene in Melbourne and beyond.



Lou & Marnie Irving



Rod & Pam



Roger & Ronda Walker, Brenton & Robina Smith



Elyane Laussade on piano.



# The High Life on *GYPSEA ROVER*

## Highlights from [gypsearover.info](http://gypsearover.info)

*Gypsea Rover* weighed anchor on May 1 en route from NZ to Tonga via the mid-ocean sea mount, Minerva Reef. Preparations included taking on 1,100 litres of duty free diesel to compensate for any light winds. Also on board were Paul Wise and Margie Neeson as crew who brought more than their sailing



Margie in the galley

skills. Mal de mer and migraines laid Bryan and Sue low for the initial days—Margie and Paul, both experienced sailors, stepped up while they were driven by fair winds at 8+knots at the front of the rally fleet.

Well founded superstition has bad things in threes and it was no exception on *Gypsea Rover*. Exacerbation of Bryan's mal de mer no doubt occurred when he blocked one of the heads with a giant turd (probably too much info here) and we all know who has responsibility for blocked heads! In the middle of the night (when else) Otto died followed by the mainsail outhaul disintegrating leaving the main flapping and boom threatening to cause severe injury as it swung crazily in the lumpy sea. All hands on deck; Bryan and Paul used a spare outhaul (now that is a good idea), Margie steered and Sue kept herself in trim as the tool gopher. However the adrenaline rush was not sufficient to subdue Bryan's seasickness and the hunt for a suitable preventative/palliative continues. Ample quantities of stugeron have proved fruitless. A liberal dose of WD40 fixed Otto-temporarily-but so far Bryan hasn't tried this for his seasickness.

Day 6—a gentle breeze ushered in their arrival at Minerva Reef at the bommie spotting hour of 10am as the wind died and setting the anchor in 13m of clear water. The old saying, cruising is fixing your boat in exotic locations, is ever valid, and part of time of calm was spent unblocking the head—and realising that the job of descaling the pipes proba-

bly had to be repeated for the other head. It was not all work though with the day concluding with sundowners amongst a stunning sunset—bliss.

Day 8—Pulled up the pick, and set off in strong SEasterlies that backed to the east and became more fickle. Motor sailing enable good progress until a speccy 360 turn in mid-ocean indicated that Otto was ill and this time ER with WD40 did not revive the patient. Hand steering in fickle easterlies for 30 hours had them at the entrance to the lagoon for Tonga—but in the dark, no moon, rain, no operating lead lights, crook skipper, others knackered. Prudent seamanship says heave-to, but Bryan and other skippers developed a plan for them to follow '*Taranui 3*' into the lagoon. Bryan, following Captain Cook (the chart plotter) and *Taranui*, steered them safely into the lagoon and dropped the pick in calm water, which the morning light revealed beautiful clear water with waving palms on a tropical island—straight out of those cruising magazine stories! Most of the fleet entered the lagoon in the morning and they headed across to Pangaimotu and by 10am were all cleared into the Kingdom of Tonga.

Evening saw the crews gathered at Big Mamas to share stories and island hospitality. The rally leg from NZ was over!

Sunday was a day of worship; and then work. Jobs on board included fixing loos, but not completely, loading the washing the machine, which overloaded the generator—for a short time only—cleaning and other general boat work.

Perspective was restored when chatting with '*Pussyfooting*' which left NZ three days before the rally fleet and sailed into a severe storm. Breaking waves swept their decks clean and other damage included bent



Paul the barista!

self steering and the rudder requiring replacement—ouch.

Margie and Paul flew home and their cheerful enthusiasm and calm in crises were missed. Paul proved to be a mean barista and Margie was a deft hand in the galley—both priceless assets on any boat!

New crew arrived in Tonga bearing gifts in the form of parts for Otto whose health was restored. Very pleasant cruising amongst the Tongan archipelago found them snorkelling amongst spectacular coral bommies. Life is blissful.

Crew changed again—this time no parts were required—and were treated to a rough night at anchor. A combination of 80m of chain, anchor watch all night and some use of the motor kept *Gypsea Rover* in one place unlike some of the other boats which dragged their anchors. Not wanting to spend another uncomfortable night, *Gypsea Rover* returned to the lagoon with its fixed moorings—much more relaxing for the skipper and first mate!

After the crew departed, several days with just Bryan and Sue were spent sailing with four other rally yachts out amongst the eastern islands. *Windflower* led the fleet through the submerged obstacles using his set of

magic waypoints—the channel markers having been blown away in the storm. This provided a GPS track for Bryan and Sue when it was time to return to port to check out of Tonga and leave for Fiji. Lots of time just chilling out, book in hand, and chatting with the locals.

After some serious R&R and a new crew, Fiji beckons.



Do you think you are enjoying your Club membership? Are you getting value for money? I'm really not being a busybody, I ask because some of our representatives on various committees are once again becoming restless. They do this at regular intervals when they notice that there aren't a sufficient number of gold bars in our dungeon or there's some doubt about the cost of running a race for two boats. At this stage they cast their anxious gaze around the marina and note that some boats rarely move out of their pens. At this point, readers who own boats which regularly put to sea can heave a collective sigh of relief and go back to contemplating their navel since they aren't in the firing line. Those who answered 'no' to the original questions should read on.

Given the costs associated with boat ownership, it makes little sense to own one and not use it. We really do have an excellent Club with good facilities and a generally friendly membership. I say 'generally' because, given the infinite variations in human personalities, it follows that there will be some of us who are incompatible with others. Individually, we realize that those

not compatible with oneself must be misfits and need not be further considered in our discussion.

I have often advocated yacht racing to cruisers as a means of extending their interest in sailing and improving their boat handling skills. This can be achieved without becoming an Olympian while still enjoying the pleasures of Club racing. Our Club offers a wide ranging racing program with events to suit all experience levels. For newcomers to the activity, pursuit races off the breakwater provide an ideal starting point. Alternatively, a beginner could leave the new boat in the pen and spend a season crewing for an experienced skipper for a season. Just one thing, if you do decide to 'give it a go', my advice is that you should drop back to be astern of *'Andalucia'* and just follow her around the course.

Will Merritt

**Will's  
Wise Words**

# HOW I STARTED SAILING (OR 'I MARRIED THE BOAT!')

BY PAM MERRITT



I'd had a few brushes with sailing before I became a 'real yachtie'. To begin with my dad had sailed in his youth until WW2 intervened and, while he didn't take it up again seriously after that, his love of the sea must have sown a seed.

The seed didn't bear fruit until many years later when my 'ex' and I built a small catamaran, an Arafura Cadet, from a kit and plans we'd purchased by mail order. We built it in his mother's garage, which was all very well until, after a few months of slow progress, his mum decided that she'd like her garage back again. The project escalated and pretty soon our boat was launched at Parkdale Yacht Club. We couldn't afford a trailer so transported the boat upturned on top of the station wagon. We had a couple of years of sailing. We learnt to sail and spent a lot of time on and in the water. As our knowledge and experience developed we even tried racing. And back then a big day out was to pack a picnic on Sunday morning and sail to Ricketts Point and back. All went well until, as usually happens,

children came along, and the Arafura was left to rot in a corner of the backyard. By the time the children were in their teens the marriage had suffered a similar fate to the boat!

Fortunately for my continuing interest in sailing, some good friends had

bought a trailerable yacht which they kept at Gippsland Lakes. This provided the opportunity for some great sailing holidays exploring the Lakes in a boat well suited to this activity. This may well have been the topic of conversation on the occasion at a barbeque when I started chatting to a friendly yachtie. I must have sounded really interested in sailing since he invited me to sail in a race with his crew the next day. This led to repeat invitations for two or three Saturday's of racing in brisk sea breezes. I was hooked. I became a regular crew member and after several weeks 'The Skipper' asked me out to dinner. He must be well off, I thought, he owns a boat! (and back then I thought an Endeavour 26 was a big boat.). Needless to say to my Cruising Group friends, my sailing career and new relationship both blossomed.



Arafura Cadet

Twenty five years later, after racing two or three times a week and enjoying many miles of cruising, I'm still as hooked on sailing as I was back then. Each time we take the boat out of the pen I still get that feeling of exhilaration. The things that keep me coming back for more are the things I loved about it all those years ago; the freedom, the challenge, the people and the sheer joy of being out on the water under sail. Not to mention the wonderful lifestyle that goes with being a member of RBYC.



Pam's dad, Jack, sailing at Mordialloc (middle person).



# 2013 YARRA RIVER FROSTBITE CRUISE

BY PAM MERRITT

The first Sunday in July is always the date for the Annual Yarra River Frostbite Cruise. At this time of the year the weather can range from calm and sunny to downright miserable. This year we were in luck with a light northerly, flat water and even some sunshine at times.

About 20 cruisers braved the cold on July 7<sup>th</sup> – not a bad turn up considering that a number of our cruising stalwarts were away in warmer climes. Rob and Nona's *Aquacadabra* actually headed up to Docklands on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> in a stiff northerly and took advantage of the '2 nights for 1' offer from Melbourne City Marina (ex Waterfront City). *Currawong's* Jenny and Grant opted to wait until Saturday to sail up in an easing northerly and *Andante* and *Charliebird* joined the group on Sunday in an even lighter north westerly. The *Andalucians* and *Highland Fling's* arrived by car due to other commitments later in the day.

We tried a new venue this year, a pontoon on the south side of Victoria Harbour right near d'Albora Marina – a very protected spot with a

great barbeque area just a few steps away. With a top temp of about 14 deg, the barbies were fired up and the usual gourmet delights quickly and effortlessly prepared. Winter woollies were the order of the day, which brings us to 'silly winter hats'! Roger Walker wore a hat with 'GRUMPY' in rather large letters (is there something we don't know?), there were a couple of tam o' shanters complete with hair (for those without much of their own) and several other interesting head warmers, but this year the prize went to 'yours truly' with a very silly bird hat which some said looked better pulled down over the face.

At about 2 ish a shower of rain saw the group pack up and rapidly disperse, with some deciding to regroup back at the club by the open fire in the bar. Those in cars smugly noted on the way home that the rain became heavier and set in for the rest of the afternoon. That's cruising for you!

Thanks go to Jenny Collins for organising such an excellent venue and Roger Walker for being Cruise Coordinator for this event.



*Charliebird* crew arriving at the new venue—a pontoon on the south side of Victoria Harbour usually reserved for commercial use.

Dressed prevent frostbite



Gourmet delights being cooked



Grant and Jenny



'Grumpy' and his Scottish friend!



## MEMBER NEWS

Chairman Rod and Sandy, *Emma Kate*, are working on the cruising groups outreach program and spent a week on *Kirra Kirra* before heading further north to visit granddaughter Audrey and the rest of the family then 4 wheel driving to Cape York. The outreach program will continue later in the year as they will be joining *Gypsea Rover* for some Pacific Island cruising.

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*Kirra Kirra* has continued to cruise her way up the East Coast. After spending some time at Coffs Harbour Jo and John sailed then motored through the inland Main Channel to Manly where they stayed at the Moreton Bay Trailer boat Club. Most impressed by its proximity to the Manly shopping strip and its excellent coffee shops!

Sailing north they dropped the anchor at Mooloolaba then continued on to Fraser Island where they made their most challenging bar crossing to date at Wide Bay Bar.

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Will and Pam Merritt have enjoyed a week at Inverloch RACV resort for some R&R.

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Lyn and David Bingham, *Mirraboona*, have recently returned from travelling in Morocco and Spain.

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Robina and Brenton Smith, *Chakana*, are currently travelling in Europe. Having spent a week at Cinque Terra in Italy walking the many marked paths and travelling by ferry between villages the dream to sail once again on the Mediterranean has been awakened. We gazed longingly at boats with sails up or anchored in secluded bays.

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Please keep your cruising stories and 'How I Started Sailing' contributions rolling in. This newsletter relies on a flow of member contributions.





## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### FRIDAY 19TH JULY FORUM DINNER MEETING

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

Gordon Syme, Principal of Yachtmaster Sailing School, is a well known identity at RBYC and has had many years of experience in leading charter fleets, cruising, ocean racing and instructing at the highest level in RYA/YA.

Gordon will cover a range of emergency scenarios that we may face at some time in our cruising in the bay, Bass St and beyond.

As usual, gather at the Club about 6.30pm, meal at 7pm, followed by the talk at about 8pm.

Attendance is a must for all those who want some handy tips to enrich their cruising experience.

Please book with the office (95923092) no later than Wednesday July 17th.

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### FRIDAY 26TH JULY END OF MONTH CRUISE

A cruise in company on Friday July 26th to Melbourne City Marina (ex Waterfront City) to see the Fireworks.

Arrive at about 6 pm, with a meal at a local restaurant following the fireworks. Contact for this cruise is Pam Merritt. Please email her with your intention to join the cruise [willm@hotkey.net.au](mailto:willm@hotkey.net.au) Book your own berth at the marina.

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### FRIDAY 16TH AUGUST FORUM DINNER MEETING

**Guest Speakers: Anne & Roger Claydon**  
*Dreamweaver* in the Pacific

In 2012 Anne and Roger sailed *Dreamweaver* from RBYC to Bundaberg via NZ, Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu and New Caledonia.

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\*\*\*\*\*Change of Date\*\*\*\*\*

### FRIDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER FORUM DINNER MEETING

\*Please note the change of date for the September Forum Dinner Meeting\*

**Guest Speakers: Ally and Wayne Sollars**  
Sailing the Indonesia Rally

Over the past 3 years Wayne and Ally have sailed *Blue Heeler*, a Hallberg Rassey HR39, from RBYC up the east coast of Australia, participated in the Indonesia Rally from Darwin and continued cruising through Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.

## RACING CRUISERS

from the  
**Chair**

What a delightful end of month of May cruise we had to Queenscliff. There was lovely weather, good sailing and great company at Queenscliff. The sail down as participants in the Alan Robinson Trophy did, however, have its moments. Whilst it was a delightful day, the wind was very light and seemed to be much lighter for those of us with the heavy boats and no spinnakers at the back of the fleet. We patiently persisted and finished with a bit of a flurry when the wind increased as we approached the West Channel Mark. It took us some seven hours to make the trip, but we had participated in a Club race which was good fun and satisfying. I was, however, a little challenged when we heard that some slackers who had not raced and left Brighton after us had had a great sail down with a nice breeze. Racing is not always the quickest, but we did rise to the challenge and not sleep in. At the moment I am cruising the Great Sandy Straits on the lovely catamaran Kirra Kirra. It's a hard life!



## Captain Coxswain's Corner

### 'BETWEEN THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP BLUE SEA'

This expression is akin to the modern phrase '*Between a rock and a hard place*'. It is (for those paying attention) related to the expression given last month. It also refers to a seam which is devilishly difficult to caulk, this being the seam in the deck planking next to the hull planking. When afloat it is, of course, next to the 'deep blue sea'.