



# CRUISING NEWS



AUGUST 2013

## CRUISING AWARDS 2013 CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WINNERS

PHOTOS: SCOTT NUNN AND PAM MERRITT



### CRUISING YACHTSMAN OF THE YEAR: **ANNE & ROGER CLAYDON**

In 2012 Anne and Roger spent their long service leave cruising from RBYC to Bundaberg via NZ, Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu and New Caledonia in their Dufour 425GL *Dreamweaver*.

During this time they kept us updated with their informative blog site and will be giving a presentation of their trip at the August Forum Dinner. Andrew Merritt, occasional crew member, accepted the award on their behalf at the recent RBYC Presentation Night.

*Commodore Paul Woodman, David Pollard, Commodore QCYC Brian Golland presenting Andrew Merrett with the award, Patrons representative Commander Michael Oborn, RAN*

### MOST IMPROVED CRUISER: **DAVID SPENCER**



*Commodore Paul Woodman, Sally & John Spencer, Patrons representative Commander Michael Oborn, RAN*

David was instrumental in *Sun Kiss*, a Northshore 34 participating in the Cruising Groups's Bass Strait cruise in 2012 and 2013. This year they cruised to Port Welshpool via Refuge Cove with the main fleet and then took the coastal route to return.

### STARS AND COMPASS NAVIGATION TROPHY **KATHY DE GARIS**



As Kathy was unable to attend the RBYC Presentation Night, Vice Commodore Ross Fisher presented the award at the July Forum Dinner. Several entries were received with Kathy's being judged as the winner.

## CRUISING GROUP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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# THINGS THAT GO WRONG - AND OTHER MARINE EMERGENCIES

BY RONDA WALKER



Gordon Syme, David & Jenny

In the absence of Chairman Rod, David Pollard hosted the July meeting of Cruising Group and introduced guest speaker Gordon Syme, one of Australia's most highly

qualified and experienced Yachtmaster instructors.

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

Gordon grabbed our attention from the start with video images of various maritime disasters: capsizing, collision, dismasting, grounding and the fire at Yarra's Edge.

With our minds now firmly fixed on worst case scenarios, Gordon encouraged us to think about risk assessment and urged us to consider carefully the consequences of not taking action to minimise risks. He recommended that skippers complete a thorough safety audit of their own boats, identify and prioritise the hazards, and put in place strategies to manage these risks.

Gordon reminded us that that the hazards we might meet are predictable: none of the images in the video were unheard of events, we know what can happen. Cruising group agreed that the realm of possibility includes fire, flood, man overboard, collision, weather change, injury, fuel spill and sea sickness. But we also agreed that the risk of an encounter with pirates is unlikely on the waters of Port Phillip Bay.

Gordon's practical suggestions for controlling some of the risks included an annual check of steering cables, regular inspection of engines and keel and lifting out the mast every two or three years. He reminded skippers that spare cables for steering gear are worth carrying and that

in an emergency, an adjustable drogue can give adequate steerage. He assured us that in the event of dismasting, bolt cutters are of no use at all and that hacksaws are the best tool to cut away the rigging, and should be carried on board.

The most likely source of unwanted water is through in-hull fittings and Gordon recommended carrying spare plugs to control unexpected leaks. However, Gordon also cautioned against overloading the boat, and thus creating instability, extra weight should be kept below and firmly fixed, not above the deck. In response to a question about carrying spare fuel Gordon suggested that this is better lashed on deck, and that an inexpensive fuel absorbent mat is a good investment to help manage the hazards of a fuel spill.

After replaying dramatic footage of an incident that combined collision, dismasting and two crew members overboard, Gordon discussed the need to plan for managing an emergency in such a way that the risks to life and to equipment are not escalated. In other words, don't let a bad situation get even worse. Gordon illustrated this by describing an incident where a line was thrown to a crew member in the water, towing him at perhaps 4 knots, followed by the skipper jumping overboard when the person in the water was clearly struggling. Now there were two lives at risk and one less person to bring the boat under control.

Gordon's presentation provided timely advice. As we prepare for the opening of the next sailing season we might now expect to see evidence of safety audits completed, control measures in place and emergency management plans prepared for most of the cruising yachts in RBYC marina.

On behalf of Cruising Group, Jenny Collins thanked Gordon for his thought provoking presentation.



## Where were these photos taken and who is on the foredeck?

Turn to page 7 to read the story behind the photos!



I did think about having our fabulous editor (pay rise please) skip my contribution this month with an entry like: 'Unfortunately there will be no new words of wisdom from our worldly wise William this month because he is off cruising like every good cruiser should be'.

I changed my mind because I realized that this approach would be unacceptable on two grounds. In the first instance I couldn't bear to deprive hundreds of fans of their monthly wordy delight. Oh, okay, would you believe 'two fans'? Look, causing pain and disappointment to even two readers is not to be countenanced. No, I do not believe that many readers would think that the omission of 'Wise Words' would lift the tone of the Newsletter. Who started that rumour?

The second reason I am not cancelling my contribution this month with the 'off cruising' excuse is because some would quibble about the nature of cruising in which I am involved. You may be aware that we are not in the boat but are cruising in our delightful little 'A Van'. I'm finding lots

of parallels between 'boat' cruising and 'land' cruising. For instance in both activities one is expected to be on the

move with a fair degree of self-sufficiency. Furthermore the people one meets are generally friendly and helpful, and either way you wind up with 'cabin fever'. In fact, as I write I'm seated in our van at Merimbula looking out over the Tasman Sea waiting for 'sundowners' to start. I must say this caravanning life is tough on our waterfront site with own ensuite with under-floor heating. You can quibble all you like but I'd really call that cruising.

Now, there's your monthly fix of erudition. Hopefully the wisdom was not totally obscured by the soporific mood induced by the holiday environment in which I am presently ensconced.

Will Merritt

### Will's Wise Words



# FIRST LEG OF SOUTH PACIFIC RALLY OPUA TO TONGA ON GYPSEA ROVER

BY MARG NEESON



Pressure before I even arrived in Opuia to crew on *Gypsea Rover* on the sail to Tonga!

Anxious that I may not arrive in Opuia in time for the clearing out by New Zealand customs, scheduled 10:30am 30<sup>th</sup> April 2013, Sue and Bryan Drummond were anxiously trying to contact me. *Gypsea Rover* was ready to go apart from me. I was due to arrive in New Zealand on that day

assuming I would be there in plenty of time for the fleet departure on the 1<sup>st</sup> May.

Bryan, Sue and Paul had spent the previous week completing all the last minute necessary chores to prepare the boat for a six month trip. The South Pacific Rally takes cruisers to Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu and New Caledonia. Many of the boats participating had been in Opuia for some time but several were in a panic trying to get their Satellite phones and HF radios to communicate with Skiplr.net, a requirement for position reporting by the rally commander, John Martin. Poor Bryan, it appeared he was the resident expert in this regard and was running around like a 'hairy goat' from boat to boat.

The appointed start time for the rally arrived and the fleet of nearly 40 boats set off on a running start, many with kites flying, you would think this was a race not a rally but there were two bottles of wine up for grabs for the boat closest to the start line. We lost out by 0.5 of a second!

On board *Gypsea Rover* we settled down to routine. The watches were assigned, being three hours on, one person up. My watches included the 0200hrs to 0500hrs which I found very peaceful, (to start with anyway, but more to come on this!). I was happy in the galley making cups of tea and meals for those who could enjoy them. Paul was a wiz at making cappuccinos in the morning, made with the espresso machine and milk frother, for brekky.

We followed a course slightly west of our rhumb line. We chose this course because the weather maps showed a deep depression quite close to the east of the rhumb line which was tracking in a south easterly direction. The conditions we experienced on most of the trip were around 15 to 20 knots from an east to south easterly direction. There was a primary and secondary swell which made the boat rock and roll, which didn't help Bryan and Sue's mal de mer. Despite this, spirits were high and we looked forward to our first stop at Minerva Reef, six days sail out from Opuia. Our first few days at sea were amazingly barren with no wild life

apart from the occasional lone bird. A highlight was a sail in the distance and trying to identify which boat that may be.

On the third night out my peaceful watch was rudely interrupted when the auto-helm decided to seize and the boat spun off course in the wrong direction. A new watch system was hastily devised to cope with the requirement to hand steer. After 12 hours of hand steering Bryan squirted some magic spray into the auto helm works and it miraculously revived, Phew!

Minerva Reef consists of two small reefs in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. The lagoons of both reefs can be entered through narrow passages. The South Minerva Reef is the smaller of the two but is more difficult to navigate due to the many bommies that proliferate in the lagoon. North Minerva Reef is 22nm further north. We entered through a 9 metre wide channel in the fringing reef and once in the lagoon we were amazed at the mirror smoothness of the crystal clear water, a big contrast to the ocean outside. We anchored in 13metres of water inside the 2nm circular lagoon.

Once settled we went exploring in the tender. Our first snorkel was on the wreck of a steel fishing boat which had foundered many years ago but was now the home for many tropical fish. Several of the fleet had now arrived, so off we went to socialise. 'Gallant Cavalier', crewed by four handsome men, greeted us with wine glasses outstretched. I made the mistake of going below for a sticky-beak and found myself bombarded with food to plate up for all the guests. It was great fun meeting our fellow sailors.

After two nights at Minerva Reef, we left heading for Nuku' Alofa where customs and immigration had been arranged to clear us in. **However**, 12 hours in to the sail, the auto helm decided to expire, never to be resuscitated. After 36hrs of hand steering, the wind increasingly heading us, we approached the main island of Tonga, Tongatapu. Just as night was falling we skirted the eastern side of the island then along the northern shore towards the entrance through the fringing reef. In pitch darkness, in bucketing rain and with none of the lead lights working we gingerly negotiated the 0.5nm wide entrance relying entirely on GPS and radar. We came to anchor in 15m of water, frightened to go any closer to shore in case of lurking bommies.

Next day dawned clear and bright. Upping anchor we motored the 5nm long channel, coming to anchor off Big Mamas Resort, on an island just offshore from Nuku' Alofa harbour.

A fantastic experience on a gorgeous boat with fabulous people!



## END OF MONTH CRUISE DOCKLANDS FIREWORKS

BY ROBINA SMITH

The forecast was checked and checked again and all looked good for the August end of month cruise to Docklands for their fireworks display.

*Sun Kiss* headed to Melbourne City Marina in the middle of the day to make the most of the winter sunshine. *Chakana* had the same idea except that an annoying beeping began as she headed out of the Marina which was not to be ignored so we headed back to the pen. Luckily we had Wayne and Ally Sollars on board. Wayne has spent many hours troubleshooting his engine on *Blue Heeler* in some exotic places so between him and Brenton they had parts off here and hoses to check water flow there which all resulted in more water flowing through, so it was thought that the problem was fixed.

Meanwhile there had been action around the marina as *Tales* (singlehanded), *Aquacadabra*, *Andalucia*, *Andante*, *Mirabooka* and *Currawong* gathered crew and left for Docklands.

*Chakana* was pronounced fixed so headed off again, only for the beeping to return every time the engine revs went above 1600. A slow trip and last to arrive but plenty of time to tie up and settle in for the fireworks display. We

are always amazed at how good these fireworks are and we were not disappointed once again.

With Docklands crowded we had to settle for late sitting at James Squire Restaurant - no imposition as some gathered in *Chakana's* cockpit and others on *Mirabooka* and *Aqua Cadabra* for pre-dinner drinks and socialising. A group of eighteen gathered for dinner at 8.30 where anyone who ordered their trade mark Parma did not go away hungry.

Most of the group then adjourned to *Chakana* (setting a new record of sixteen in the saloon) for coffee, port and some of Lyn's yummy carrot cake.

Next morning, with a forecast of 25-30 knot northerlies, *Tales* and *Andante* were the first to set off under the Bolte Bridge back to RBYC. Others followed and with the wind at our backs it was a quick trip back to Brighton with some lively gusts up to 25knots. No need to use the engine and hear the annoying beeping!

*Aquacadabra* took advantage of the free night deals on offer and made a weekend of it at Docklands.

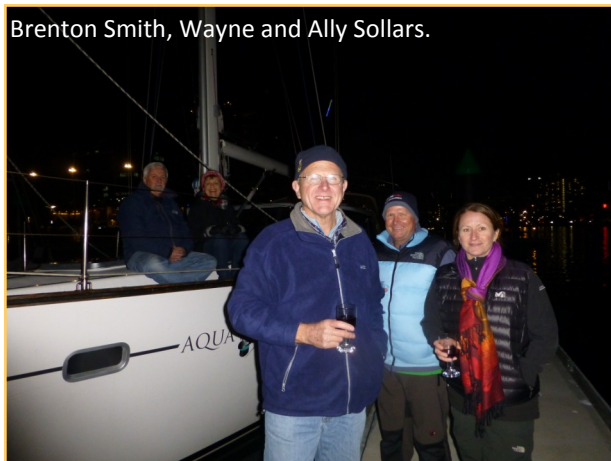


# CRUISING NEWS AUGUST 2013

Andalucia sailing into the sunset towards Docklands.



Brenton Smith, Wayne and Ally Sollars.



Brian Churchill, Brenton, Will Merritt, Barbara Burns



David & Sally Spencer, Brian Churchill



Pam Merritt & Tom Hinton



Pam Merritt & Marnie Irving



David Bingham, Brenton Smith & Lou Irving



Early morning at Melbourne City Marina.



# THE STORY BEHIND THE PHOTOS

BY ROBINA SMITH

'It's a small world!'

In July Brenton and I travelled to Cinque Terre, Italy, for a week to walk the paths between the five quaint villages along a mountainous 9km stretch of coastline. Some of these villages and paths were affected by landslides and inundations over the past three years but all except two paths are now back in action.

After spending the first two days walking with very steep ascents, fabulous views along the coast of a picturesque Mediterranean (with yachts motoring rather than cruising due to lack of wind ) on the middle sections then steep descents into the villages, we decided to give the legs a rest and take the ferry to get the view from the water. How we wished we were on one of the yachts!

Our ferry stopped at a few ports on the way to Cinque Terre to pick up more passengers and on the return trip we noticed a yacht, **Pablo Neruda**, anchoring at Sestri Levante flying an Aussie flag. We gave them a very enthusiastic wave and took some photos intending to see if we could find their blog and send them the pictures of their boat from a different perspective. The following day on our return ferry from a walk to Porto Venere we noticed them anchoring again, this time outside the village of Manorola and took more photos.

Having travelled in Chile we were interested that an Aussie boat was named after a Chilean poet who was awarded a Nobel Prize for literature in 1971. He built some eccentric houses and I visited all three of them while travelling there.

We didn't think too much more about it until Brenton arrived home, perused his photos and did a search for a **Pablo Neruda** blogsite. There followed an extraordinary flow of emails back and forth in which it was discovered that the owners of **Pablo Neruda** were **Rob and Judi Hanke**, former members of RBYC and currently with another boat **Dalliance** at SYC. They are in the second season of their retirement adventure in the Mediterranean on **Pablo Neruda** a 54' Wauquiez pilot saloon.

Therefore the lady on the foredeck was Judi Hanke, wearing a RBYC top at the time! The boat was flying a SYC burgee but we didn't notice it. We have never met Rob and Judi as they were before our time at RBYC but believe many of our cruising group know them.

To follow their travels go to their blog at [www.ourtrip.com.au](http://www.ourtrip.com.au) or just search **Pablo Neruda Yacht** as we did.

The moral of this story - Beware the reach of the long lens!

## MEMBER NEWS

\*\*\*\*\*No Change of date for September\*\*\*\*\*

Although it was advertised in the last newsletter that the date for the September Cruising Dinner meeting was being brought forward to enable **Wayne and Ally Sollars** to speak to us about their participation in the Indonesia Rally it has been discovered that there is a clash with other club events. Consequently we have returned to the third Friday date.

Wayne and Ally have commitments back in Thailand with a refit of **Blue Heeler** planned ready for the next stage of their cruising so are unable to speak to us a week later but have promised to write an article for this newsletter.

We wish them fair winds as they continue their voyage.

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**Ted and Maree Masur, Y Knot**, have become fleet owners with the purchase of a Beneteau 40.7.

.....  
**Pam and Will Merritt, Andalucia** are Avanning along the southern NSW coast before heading to Vanuatu to join **Gypsea Rover** for a couple of weeks cruising.

.....  
**Ronda Walker, Catwalk**, has recently been presented with The National Medal for her volunteer service to the CFA (Country Fire Service).

.....  
**David Asprey** has updated us with some news of our wonderful performers on the Classical Music night.

*'www.elyanelaussade.com is Elyane's new website giving future performances etc. She lists RBYC as a recent performance. Also has details on purchasing a CD.*

*On Tuesday June 25<sup>th</sup> Ed Antonov (Violin) performed his 2<sup>nd</sup> piece at Monash University towards his Masters Degree in Music.*

*Ed performed the 5<sup>th</sup> Mozart violin Concerto flawlessly with his calm expertise, just as we heard. Just one more performance to graduate.'*



.....  
In the write up for the Frostbite Cruise in the July newsletter, Pam mentioned that she had won the 'silly hat' with a very silly bird hat but omitted to send a photo. Thankyou David Pollard for the photo. Now we can see that it was a worthy winner!

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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.



# NOTICEBOARD

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### FRIDAY 16TH AUGUST FORUM DINNER MEETING

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

In 2012 Anne and Roger sailed *Dreamweaver*, a Du-four 425 Grand Large, from RBYC to Bundaberg via NZ, Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu and New Caledonia.

This will be an interesting and informative talk from our 'Cruisers of the Year' so book your spot now.

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

Please book with the office ([95923092](tel:95923092)) no later than Wednesday August 14th.

### SUNDAY 25TH AUGUST PROPOSED ON WATER ACTIVITY

We are proposing an on water activity towards Williamstown for Sunday lunch on 25th August.

Expressions of interest to be sent to **Jenny Collins**  
[currawongb32@yahoo.com](mailto:currawongb32@yahoo.com) or phone [95851154](tel:95851154).

More details will be sent to those who sign up.

### FRIDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER—No Change FORUM DINNER MEETING

Guest Speaker: **Brenton Smith**  
Cruising the Beagle Channel

In 2012 Brenton and Robina Smith cruised the Beagle Channel on a small cruise ship with 80 passengers. There were many zodiac trips ashore with the highlight being a landing on Cape Horn.

Please note that the date for this Forum Dinner Meeting has no longer changed and we thank Brenton for stepping in at short notice.

### SATURDAY 5TH OCTOBER OPENING DAY

Traditionally this day marks the beginning of the sailing season in a fun and colourful way.

### FRIDAY 18TH OCTOBER FORUM DINNER MEETING

Guest Speakers: **Lou and Marnie Irving**  
Circumnavigation of Tasmania

## Waves of ruts!

## Chair Chat

I must firstly thank the Cruising Committee for doing an excellent job whilst Sandra and I are absent on an 8 week trip. We have traded the waves of Port Phillip for the ruts of Cape York. What another great part of Australia. We were particularly impressed by Thursday Island and the other Torres Strait Islands. These are beautiful islands with plenty of anchorages and friendly happy communities. The area has a fascinating sailing history with boats used to collect mother of pearl, an industry that thrived prior to the advent of plastics.

A definite highlight was the crayfish pie from the T.I. bakery. Cruising in the area would be great but there are some quarantine issues as it is a designated special area.

See you all in August when we return to hopefully warmer Melbourne weather.

Don't forget the club elections in September, it is important that you participate and express your views.



## Captain Coxswain's Corner

In the period of Tudor and Stuart monarchs, court favourites would be appointed as ships' captains in order that they might receive plunder and prize money.

They often had no sailing experience and were derisively referred to by seamen as 'Gentlemen Captains'.

Captains who came up through the ranks were preferred by seamen. These captains were referred to as 'Tarpaulin Captains'.

The question is; would you rather sail with a gentleman or a tarpaulin Captain?