



CRUISING NEWS



FEBRUARY 2014

WEATHER HOLDS FOR HARDSTAND CHRISTMAS PARTY

BY ROBINA SMITH



Blue skies, great socialising!

The sun shone and the corner of the hardstand was sheltered from the wind as 60 cruisers turned out in an assortment of fancy Christmas hats with all that was needed for a great Hardstand Christmas Party. About time we had good weather after the last two were spent on the verandah!

The BBQ's were fired up as everyone cooked their culinary delights before settling down in fine voice for carol singing. Ably led by Kathy De Garis (soprano) and her band of choral singers (Vanessa Twig –alto, James Heywood—tenor and Des Fitzgerald—bass) the Cruising Group sang familiar carols with gusto and were treated to the quartet singing 'Lully Lulla Lullay'. A seriously good rendition by some of our talented RBYC members!



Don, Rob, visitor, David, Don, Roger, Ronda and Barb.

This showed the cruisers how it was done. Tom Hinton decided not to be outdone and steal the rest of the show with his bass harmonies and drumming technique using the shipping containers (cruisers can be creative with what is available!) assisted by Dorrie in accompanying The Drummer Boy and Paul Woodman harmonising in the remainder of the carols.



Our quartet of talented singers!

After joining the hands and singing of Auld Lang Seine, Christmas cake was distributed before the group wished each other Merry Christmas and went their respective ways, some to continue the party in the warmer confines of boats and others to homes.

A fabulous evening to round off a great Cruising Group year.

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Helen, Sandy, Rod, Karen, Andrew, Jo, Pam and John.



Hugh, Jo, Maree, Ted, Roger, Anne, Sally and David.



Pam, Nona, Tom Will, Theresa, Alison and Brian.



Fabulous harmonies!



Bev and Wendy



Kathy helps Tom steal the show!



Shipping container drums!



Christmas cake for all.



So who's doing the Cruising Group 'cruise in company' this year? Those fortunate enough to be going are probably not so fortunate in the throes of boat preparation. Certainly, in the House of Merritt, things are in turmoil. Planning for doing the annual conversion of Andalucia (Lucy to friends) from 'semi-racer' to 'semi-cruiser' is well underway. Much consideration is being given to what and how much food, water, fuel and grog is necessary. Her indoors (H.I.) thinks that more food is important, while I know that one can never take too much grog.

Then there's the schedule for delivering these consumables, along with liferaft, dinghy with outboard, wind generator, extra anchor and chain etc, etc. H.I. thinks we should be getting on with these activities, while I am wondering for how long I can put it off. 'Lucy' has been antifouled recently and that was a wonderful example of the joys of procrastination. I was scrubbing the keel fortnightly just before the slip as a result of allowing the annual yard visit to stretch out to eighteen months. Now I am a DIY'er, but perhaps antifouling a little sooner

may have been worth it to avoid the extra keel scrubs.

But wait, there's more. Last week we had the 'engine man' out to work his magic on the scrap metal in the bilge. We had been experiencing some loud thumps when selecting 'drive' over recent months so I suggested that that could be investigated. It was and resulted in the discovery that the cone clutch in the gear box was hesitating when selected. The cones have been lapped and now appear to be engaging smoothly. I am now back on the valium washed down with strong spirits while waiting for the bill.

I often wonder whether cruising is worth all the effort, but then we set off, arrive, enjoy sun-downers with fellow cruisers and all is well with the world.

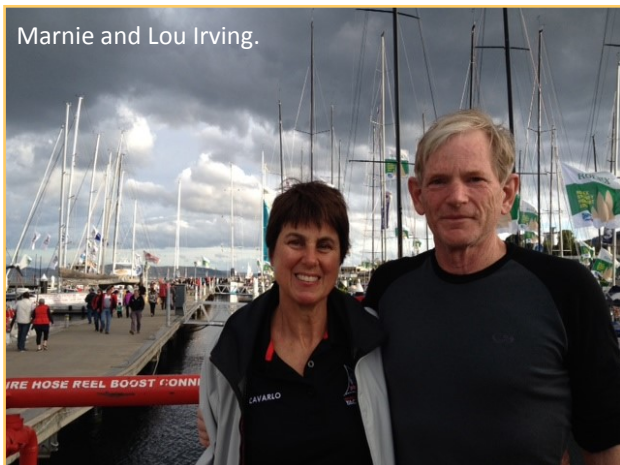
Will Merritt

**Will's
Wise Words**

SAILING BACK FROM TASSIE

BY MARNIE IRVING

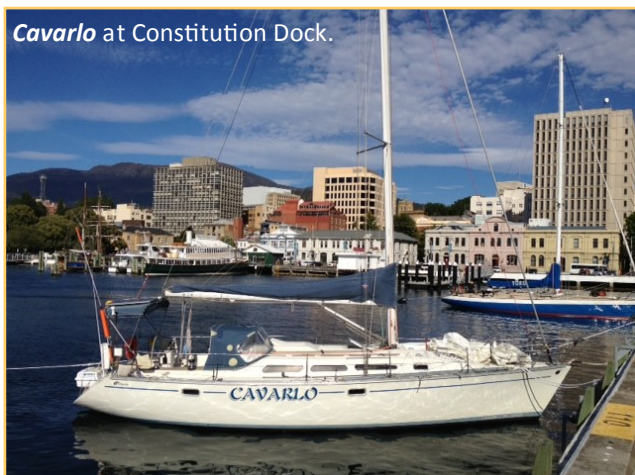
Marnie and Lou Irving.



Our Cavalier 395, **Cavarlo**, spent 2013 in Tasmania. We'd sailed the M2H (Melb-Hobart) Westcoaster at Christmas 2012, the VDL-C (circumnavigation cruise – did you see our glorious photos?) in March 2013 and most recently the L2H race. This begins in the swirling shallow waters of the Tamar River just north of Launceston at Beauty Point, turns right at the mouth, down the east coast inside Maria Island, ending at Constitution Dock with the Sydney and Melbourne fleets in time for the buzz of New Year's Eve. The weather had been tough for the Hobart races, with many boats, including ours, seeking refuge for a number of hours during the worst of it. (I also want to let you know that **Cavarlo** is the winner of the L2H series on AMS)

The next challenge was the 400 odd nm trip back to Brighton; issues of crew, navigation, weather predictions, & timing. We were happy with the condition of the boat, having passed a detailed category 2 safety inspection & replaced the rigging just prior to the race. The main defect is that the auto-pilot only works in calm waters, so we would have to hand-steer all the way.

Cavarlo at Constitution Dock.



The crew was David James, with many decades of ocean experience; Lou's & my son Michael, who'd done Cadets as a teenager and a two-handed trip across the Atlantic; and me. We'd allowed ten days before needing to be back at work.

We left Hobart on the Friday morning after New Year, de-toured via Kettering to pick up a spare anchor, 40 metres of chain, our rubber dinghy and the dehumidifier that we had ditched for the race, as well as 200 litres of fuel, and headed for the Denison Canal at Dunally (to avoid the extra distance of rounding the Tasman peninsula), hoping to get there well before low tide. As it happened we got to within 100 metres of the swing-bridge & became stuck, 1.5 hours before low tide (Our draft is 2 m.) We came off when the tide rose, but by then the bridge-keeper was off-duty (He works 8am till 5pm), and the wind was forecast to rise to 40

knots for the next day and a half. We tied up at the old jetty besides the fish and chips shop, signs of last summer's tragic bushfire depressingly apparent. In retrospect the channel was deeper to one side than the centre – local knowledge would have helped. Similarly, crossing Marion Bay required a good lookout rather than just following the channel markers.



We pulled in at Prosser Bay near Triabuna for a few hours to wait out some more weather, leaving after dark in a strong northerly that Sunday evening and reaching the shelter of Wineglass Bay at 2am. Another dozen or so M2H & S2H boats did likewise, staying until dawn on the Tuesday morning. This was to be our last planned stop until Melbourne, with a 20 knot southerly forecast for a few days, and with the timing such that we sail through Banks Straits with a favourable tide, as it can reach 5 knots.

The wind in fact was 30 knots gusting to 40, south then ESE, till we reached the Heads. The trip up the coast was straight-forward, surfing the waves with Michael at the helm notching 15. Crossing Bass Strait was more tiring



with waves seeming to come in the darkness from all directions at once. The first night we felt we needed two up at a time, so the hour's sleep off watch left us all pretty tired by dawn. The second night of the crossing we shortened sail to a touch of furled no. 3 and a third reef in the main, which made steering much less physically demanding. Our greatest challenge that Wednesday night was the globe in the compass light blowing plus the chart plotter freezing, easy enough to fix in a smooth sea but impossi-

ble in rough. There was neither moon nor stars, so we steered with the wind on the quarter, and stayed on course, reaching Port Phillip Heads at daybreak.

The wind dropped, slack water happened, and we cruised gently in to RBYC on the Thursday afternoon, just under a week since departing Hobart.

RBYC CRUISERS AROUND THE BAY CELEBRATING THE NEW YEAR



Jazz band at QCYC.

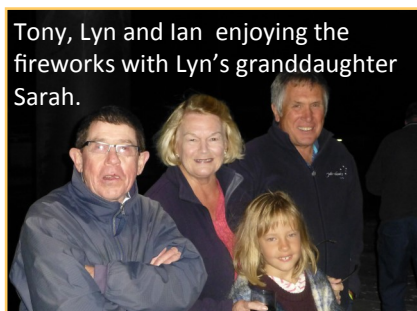


Early morning yoga.



Enjoying the seafood at QCYC.

RBYC cruisers have been seen out and around the bay over the New Year period. A large number were at QCYC where they enjoyed entertainment from a Jazz Band, early morning yoga and a fabulous New Years Day seafood extravaganza. Others gathered at the RBYC marina attenuator to watch the New Years Eve fireworks after socialising on various arms in the marina.



Tony, Lyn and Ian enjoying the fireworks with Lyn's granddaughter Sarah.



Ted, Maree, Alison and Tom.



CRUISING THE GIPPSLAND LAKES ON *FELIX* THE CAT

BY LYN BINGHAM

Lyn and David with *Felix* at Box's Creek.



Some of you may recall that David and friend Max delivered a Seawind 1000 Catamaran, *Felix*, from the Whitsundays to Metung in the Gippsland Lakes late in 2012. Max lives at Nicholson, near Bairnsdale, and having worked for Riviera Nautic for many years knows the lakes like the back of his hand. The three of us were fortunate to recently charter *Felix* for several days to explore a little of this delightful part of the world, the lakes King, Victoria and Wellington and the many lagoons, marshes and narrow waterways.

A catamaran is ideal for the shallow waterways of the Lakes. It was so straightforward to run her up onto the beach and tie up to one of the bollards conveniently placed for this purpose along the edge of the water.

A ladder is then lowered from between the hulls and you step down into ankle deep water – like emerging from a spaceship!! There is also a swimming ladder from the stern. We didn't venture far for our first night, a mile or so south to the Metung Hotel for a meal and a good night's sleep.

We then enjoyed a sail across Lake King into a narrow channel to Barrier Landing where we nudged into the shallows, looped a line around a bollard and enjoyed a swim and then a short walk over the sand dunes to a magnificent view of Bass Strait.

Box's Creek was a delightful place to moor overnight – sheltered in all weathers with lovely tree-lined banks and a short walk up a track to the top of the bluff for a lovely view over Bancroft Bay.

We had heard people speak in glowing terms of Bunga Arm which runs for about 15km parallel to the ocean. The arm is a spit of sand that has built up between the ocean and Lake Victoria so this was a must for us, running the catamaran up

onto the beach at the First Blow Hole. Here again a swim was first and foremost followed by a 250 m walk up a sand dune to the Ninety Mile Beach, Bass Strait. Later on we motored along the arm to Steamer Landing where we tied up to the jetty just in time. A fairly heavy sea mist rolled in for several hours, reducing visibility and lifted just in time to see a pretty sunset. This is one of the most beautiful places on the Lakes. In years gone by before the opening of a permanent entrance at Lakes Entrance, vessels could not always enter the Lakes so stood off shore in Bass Strait and passengers and cargo were rowed ashore. Steamers from Sale and Bairnsdale met their passengers at this jetty where the remains of the original jetty can still be seen.

Picnic Arm and Duck Arm are lovely sheltered waters where we picked up a public swing mooring for a swim and lunch. Lovely farmland dips down to the shoreline.

We hoisted the main and furled out the jib for a great sail across the lake heading for Paynesville, the boating capital of the region. Although we were sailing at 6 knots (without spinnaker) and slightly above the local speed limit, we enjoyed an exhilarating sail through McMillan Straits with the township of Paynesville on our port side and Raymond Island to starboard. What a view this was – canals, marinas, all sorts of boats, etc. On into Lake King, we enjoyed a lively sail to the mouth of the Tambo River for picturesque cruising along a beautiful stretch of sheltered water with lovely scenery. Two nautical miles up the Tambo is Johnsonville landing where we tied up to a small jetty in a quiet setting for the night. We were entertained by a distant thunder and lightning storm and a chat with some other visitors in three small trailer-sailers. One of these blokes had sailed at RBYC with Bill and Marion French (Artemis).

We then returned to Paynesville for lunch supplies and all too soon we were sailing across the lake and back to Metung.

The Gippsland Lakes is highly recommended for a short break, but a longer break is the way to go. *Felix* is on charter at Riviera Nautic at Metung.



Felix at Barrier Landing.

23RD BIRTHDAY CRUISE TO ROYALS

BY ROBINA SMITH



RMYS marina.



Sandy, Sue, Ian, Rod & Brenton.



David, Pam, Sall & Don.



Aquacadabra nibbles.

On Sunday 19th January, eleven boats converged on Royals for the Cruising Groups 23rd birthday. The weather forecast was for 'brisk' winds in the afternoon so some elected to drive.

Andalucia decided on a scenic tour of the new RMYS marina at St Kilda on the way as we had heard that it was almost complete.

After tying up (some not where they were allocated as there was a boat already there), the crews settled in for an afternoon of catching up with friends, swapping stories about cruising over the holiday period and enjoying some great food. Aquacadabra is getting a reputation for fabulous nibbles.

After a warm welcome from Royals, Chairman Rod displayed the new cruising shirts and Pam Merritt expertly modelled the one available to inspire cruisers to get their orders in. Have you ordered yours yet!

Will Merritt cut the birthday cake which was enjoyed by the fifty eight cruisers in attendance.

When it came time to head off the forecast 'brisk' winds had arrived so a quick sail under reefed headsail soon had us tied up in our home pen.

Boats attending were: **Amelia, Andalucia, Andante 1, Aquacadabra, Charliebird, Currawong, Mirrabooka, Odysseus, Summer Wind, Tales, Wild Child.** Apologies to anyone I have missed out.



Lunchtime socialising.



Summer Wind enjoying the afternoon.



Pam modelling the new cruising shirts.



Will cutting the cake.

A BLAST FROM THE PAST

Lyn and David Bingham caught up recently with Robyn and David Piele (*Maajhi-Re* and *Bindaroo*) and they send their regards to all at RBYC – whether you raced against *Bindaroo* or remember *Maajhi-Re* and the Piele's from the Cruising Group.

Robyn was on Cruising Committee when Lyn Bingham was Chairperson.

Maajhi-Re is a Norseman 447 and Robyn and David departed RBYC marina in April, 2006.

Robyn and David have been back in Australia (at their place in Daylesford) and will return to North Borneo at the end of January.

They spent last year in Miri in Sarawak, North Borneo which was rather longer than expected with engine and engine rebuild troubles. New rigging has been ordered and will await their arrival.

Their cruising plan is the Phillipines, Japan and across the Atlantic to the US. Their daughter and one granddaughter live in San Francisco with another grandchild due in April.

It was good to see them both, they are looking well and enjoying the cruising lifestyle.

New Member Profile

Welcome to new members **Rod and Sue Slater**. Following is a short profile.

'We have recently purchased an X-Yacht 382, **Foxy Lady**, from Brisbane which was professionally sailed down to Flinders in mid December where she is currently on her mooring. So far we have been racing her and boldly did an overnight cruise on our own to Cowes! **Foxy Lady** will reside in Flinders over Summer and at RBYC over Winter.

She was built in Denmark in 2002 and in the instruction book it specifies that she was built for cross ocean sailing. Hopefully, when we learn how to sail her properly she will be perfect for Bass Strait and Australian coastal cruising.

At this stage we need to do a navigation course, learn about the Yanmar engine, and get a lot more experience sailing 2 up especially managing the sails in heavy weather. So there is a steep and enjoyable learning curve ahead!

Foxy Lady has been well set up for cruising and came with all the electronic navigation equipment needed (not competent with this yet!). She also has AIS, radar, a life raft, an Archillies tender and we had new rigging fitted in Brisbane.

On a personal note we have belonged to Flinders YC for over 20 yrs and in recent years have raced a Tasar there. Rod is currently Vice-Commodore and Sue is Club Captain. We live between Flinders and Sandringham.

We both look forward to meeting you all and hearing your stories

MEMBER NEWS

Grant Collins, Currawong, has been busy performing renaming ceremonies for boats new to RBYC. **Ted & Maree Masur** have renamed their new boat **Pizazz** and **Sally & Nick Williams** have renamed their boat **Odysseus**. Unlike the previous 3 naming ceremonies Grant has performed, there was no downpour of rain to seal the deal.

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Farr Fetched was seen at QCYC proudly displaying 'Just Married' banners. Seems **Peter Johns** married **Karen Markby** on Christmas Eve and they were spending their honeymoon there, with a boat load of girls!



.....
Sandy Watson distributed Cruising Group burgees on the birthday cruise. If you have missed out then see Sandy and she can put you on the list for when another batch is made.

Editor update:

Barbara Burns, Andante 1, has kindly offered to be the co-editor of this newsletter while I am away. She will be the one hassling you for contributions and organising the write-ups and photos for events.

I will continue to do the computer work of putting the newsletter together. We hope that this works and that you will be patient if I am away from internet access and the newsletter is not so reliably on time.

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Another development is that **Karen Parker, Highland Fling** is going to start a Favourite Cruising Recipes Corner.

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It has come to our attention that every so often a newsletter does not arrive in someone's inbox. Mandy in the office has looked into it but has not been able to find out why this is. There is no pattern to the people it affects and different people are affected each time it happens. If you don't receive your copy then contact Mandy or myself and we can send another one out.

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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 21st FEBRUARY FORUM DINNER MEETING

Guest Speaker: Robert Ireland
Outboard motors and their operation.

Robert Ireland will give a short history of The Haines group and Suzuki Marine and then he will cover the basics of an outboard motor and its operation.

As usual, gather at the Club about 6.30pm, members draw at 7pm, followed by the meal, with the talk at about 8.30pm.

Attendance is a must for all those who want some handy tips to keep their outboards in good working order.

Please book with the office (95923092) no later than Wednesday February 19th.

SATURDAY 22nd FEBRUARY ANNUAL BASS STRAIT CRUISE IN COMPANY

Boats will gather at QCYC on Saturday 22nd February and start trip planning according to the latest weather forecasts. Whether to go east, south or west and on which day will be decided after much examination of the various weather forecasts and wind predictor programs.

The plan is to spend 2 weeks cruising returning on the weekend 8th/9th March.

FRIDAY 21st MARCH FORUM DINNER MEETING

Guest Speaker: Bryan Drummond
Adventures of *Gypsea Rover*

In 2013 *Gypsea Rover* cruised the South Pacific with the Island Cruising Association in their Pacific Circuit Rally. We have been kept enthralled reading the cruising stories of various crew throughout the year but this is our chance to hear it from the Skipper himself. Unfortunately Sue will be away—so no quibbles about deciding who really is the Skipper on the night.

SUNDAY 30th MARCH END OF MONTH ON WATER ACTIVITY SABOT CRUISE TO ROYALS

Cruise to Royals as a combined activity with Sabot sailors and parents. The idea is to give the Sabot kids and their parents a 'Big Boat' experience. BYO everything for a BBQ lunch on the lawn. Buy drinks from the Bar.

We will be looking for volunteer boats next month.

FRIDAY 11th APRIL ANNUAL BOAT PROGRESSIVE DINNER

****Please note that this has been brought forward a week due to Easter****

Gather at the club for predinner drinks, main course on first allocated boat, dessert on second allocated boat then all gather back for port and chocolates. Sandy Watson would love to hear from all boats who would like to host a course. rodsandy@bigpond.net.au

SUNDAY 3rd MAY— Cerebus cruise/race to Royals.

**BASS STRAIT.
HERE WE COME!**

**Chair
Chat**

Next week we head off into beautiful Bass Strait on the annual cruise. There has been a great deal of interest and it looks like there are 10 boats participating with 30-35 members on the boats. The lead up will, as usual, involve much planning, loading and the usual spend of 'boat units'. A few boats, including Emma-Kate, are planning to stay out a bit longer and do some Tasmanian cruising. As usual we have no definite destination and will meet at Queenscliff and follow the wind, tides and our inclinations. Having had a limited sailing summer for various reasons, we are looking forward to getting out on the water.

We head off at a time when Club politics continues to heat up. Wouldn't it be nice if we could get back to a club that's just about sailing and enjoying our boats and each other's company?



Captain Coxswain's Corner

'PLAIN SAILING'

Have you ever used the expression 'plain sailing'? Most of us have, but probably without thinking about the origin of the term. The expression traces back to the flat (plane or plain in middle ages.) earth concept. Even after early navigators realised that the earth was not flat they continued to produce charts making no allowance for the earth's curvature. They continued 'plain sailing' until projections such as Mercator emerged in the 1500's. Does this mean that a situation, which is described as 'plain sailing', is actually erroneous?