



# CRUISING NEWS



AUGUST 2015

## CRUISING AWARDS 2015 CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WINNERS

BY ROBINA SMITH

### CRUISING YACHTSMAN OF THE YEAR JOHN WALKER

In 2013 John and Jo Walker sailed from RBYC to Tasmania to explore the east coast before heading back across Bass Strait to continue cruising up the east coast of mainland Australia in *Kirra Kirra*, their Seawind 1160.

They went as far north as the Whitsundays before sailing back to Manly, Brisbane to leave the boat for the cyclone season. In 2014 they returned to *Kirra Kirra* and cruised north to Lizard Island before sailing back to Victorian waters.

During this time they kept us updated with their informative blog site and gave a presentation on their trip at a Cruising Forum earlier this year.



John Walker accepting his award from QCYC Vice Commodore John Mooney

### MOST IMPROVED CRUISER

## ALLAN HADDOW

Allan is currently sailing up the East coast of Australia single handed in *Ophelia*, his Compass 29 (see July newsletter). This trip has seen him doing many firsts, among them being his first time out of the heads and first time setting an anchor in 30kts wind.

### STARS AND COMPASS NAVIGATION TROPHY CHRIS REYNOLDS

Chris Reynolds from Hobsons Bay, submitted an excellent entry. He was the winner of the novice Stars and Compass Trophy last year so has challenged his skills even more to submit this entry.



Roger Walker presenting the award to Chris Reynolds

## CRUISING GROUP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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# FRANCES, THE YACHT THAT KEEPS BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

BY SUE DRUMMOND



On Friday 17th July, Cruising Group were the privileged recipients of a talk by Past Commodore Peter Johns with Karen Johns on the projector. The subject was their Classic 8m Yacht, "Frances".

For both Peter and Karen, she goes back along way... well before they knew each other. When the opportunity came up to buy her several years ago, they couldn't say no.

She was built in 1947 by a Shipwright, Ernie Digby, in Williamstown, one of the three 8m yachts he built. After WW2, yachts built to the 10 m rule were too expensive so a new rule was devised and there are over 500 8m yachts, worldwide. She is 51ft in length, 8ft 6ins in beam and draws 6ft 6ins. The planking is NZ Kari and the ribs Queensland Oak. She has a ply deck. Restoration has cost "twice what we paid for her" according to Peter. She didn't have an engine so an electric motor and 3 blade, feathering Autostream prop, has been fitted. She's had a paint job inside and out and a head with curtain fitted "for the ladies".

She had the distinction of winning the Sayonara Cup in '52, '53 and '54 but was eventually defeated by "Saskia" from RSYS, who was imported specifically to beat her.

She was initially sailed at RBYC and was named *Brigitte*. That is when Peter was the bowman... gaining this position when he showed he was able to shimmy up the forestay to retrieve lost halyards. As it turns out, Karen was a wee lass whose best friend's dad also sailed on her and so Karen and her friend played cubbies in the sail locker while Peter was a young adult, doing the bowman thing.

Peter sailed her with a Bruce Roberts who died prematurely in the 1960's and now has been joined by his son, Andrew Roberts as crew.

*Frances* has already shown her mettle by winning the Classic Yacht Series in 2014-15 on Port Phillip Bay, with a scratch crew, soon after refit launch. Karen and Peter now plan to take her to the UK next year for the World 8m Regatta. They may have a crack at the restored "Saskia". Whilst in Europe it would be a pity not to do the Classic Regatta in Cannes and in 2017 the King of Norway is having a big birthday. He happens to be a patron of the 8m class and will be hosting the 2017 Worlds. What a plan!





# VAN DIEMAN'S LAND CIRCUMNAVIGATION CRUISE 2015

## QUEENSCLIFF TO BEAUTY POINT, DEVEONPORT, PORT SORRELL, WYNYARD, STANLEY, THREE HUMMOCK ISLAND

By Paul Woodman

The VDL around Tasmania Rally is conducted every two years by the Royal Yacht Club Tasmania in conjunction with Royal Geelong Yacht Club. More than 12 VDL cruises have been conducted.

The cruise begins at RYCT around the 4th February. The fleet makes its way up the east coast to the Tamar River to meet-up with the RGYC group and any other Cruisers who may have travelled from other ports, one as far as the UK.

Given we are both working we decided to join the RGYC group, therefore having less total time away from our respective jobs.

Our crew Don Richmond, Bryan Drummond, Angela and I set sail on the 18th February for Beauty Point to rendezvous with the fleet of more than 40 boats.

Our yacht *Summer Wind* is a 2004 Bavaria 44 design by J&J Yacht Design for Bavaria Yachts Germany. Her class was designed for the European charter market and is well appointed for coastal cruising. *Summer Wind* is a light cruiser for her size and has an easily driven hull form. Her powerful 55HP Volvo diesel engine and three blade propeller is capable of driving *Summer Wind* up to 8.25 knot in flat water and can average 7.5knots in a medium sea. This makes for fast passage making when motor-sailing.

We motor-sailed most of the way a round Tasmania, at times experiencing fuel contamination that fouled the injectors. Miraculously the engine kept running and did not miss a beat. The exhaust fumes, however, caused some discomfort for the crew.

The injector problem was easily fixed in Beauty Point at the end of this first leg, but would plague us again on the west coast of Tasmania.

Our 27 hour passage from RBYC and across Bass Strait to George Town at the Mouth of the Tamar River had been a comfortable start to our seven week voyage.

George Town is a place of significant historic interest being the first settlement in Australia. George Town has modern facilities but is essentially a period township with many old style buildings located along the wide streets within the town precinct. The maritime museum in Elizabeth Street provides a wonderful insight to the Bass Strait maritime past. A full size replica of the Norfolk is positioned in this one time picture theatre. Built of beautifully crafted Huon pine timber, the Norfolk is a sight to behold.

The timber is finished in clear varnish and looks magnificent. This original vessel carried Flinders on his exploration trips around Bass Strait and Port Phillip.



*Angela, Paul, Bryan and Don aboard the Huon Pine replica of the Norfolk.*



*Summer Wind tie-up in George Town harbour at the end of Elizabeth Street Jetty*

From Georgetown we headed for the Tamar Yacht Club some five miles south of the entrance down the Tamar River. There we were to spend a few days making repairs and meeting fellow cruisers who had traveled from Hobart and other ports to join the fleet.

Whilst at the Tamar Yacht club we hired a car, which we used to travel to Launceston, some 40 miles south along the Tamar River. Of particular interest is Tamar Marine, the best stocked yacht chandlery we have ever seen. Here we found all we needed to get us back on our way. Albert's Fuel Injection workshop was a must stop location in Launceston, where we met Mick Hogarth who installed the new injector nozzles. The new nozzles were not to specification but were

extremely close. Our plan was to continue with our cruise schedule and have the specified nozzles sent to Devonport, our next destination. As it turned out the non-spec nozzles worked perfectly and so we decided not to install the new parts in Devonport.

While staying at Beauty Point we participated in some enjoyable tourist activities including lunch at the delightful Rosevear's Hotel. We visited the Beaconsfield mine site and toured the old buildings now converted into a museum. Low Head at the mouth of the Tamar was a must visit location, being another historic site consisting of 18th century army barracks, a ships pilot boat-harbour and a famous light house equipped with a unique fog horn warning device designed to warn the square rigged ships of the past. The weather during our stay at Beauty Point was beautiful around 26 degrees each day which added to the enjoyment of our touring activities.

On the last evening before our departure we dined at the Tamar Yacht Club to celebrate the event and to bring all the cruisers together to meet and exchange experiences so far, Tamar Yacht Club did wonderful work entertaining us, a great night was had by all.



#### *Tamar Yacht Club*

While most of the fleet were at the Tamar Yacht club for the VDL dinner, departure times and movement of cruisers varied. Some yachts went directly west to Three Hummock Islands, other yachts like us chose to visit some of the seaside towns and harbours along the northern coastline.

Our first days sail and overnight stop was Port Sorrell, an attractive but shallow harbour to the west of the Tamar River on the north coast. We passed through the narrow opening late afternoon at high tide. This should only be done at high tide and only when seasonal tides are at their highest. A very pretty spot, but you do need to be careful just how close to shore you anchor. We heard later on, a yacht from the rally was left high and dry the evening before our visit!

Devonport here we come! Having participated in many Melbourne to Devonport races in the past I was keen to revisit my very first ocean racing destination.

We stayed at the Mersey Yacht Club on the eastern side of the Mersey River; the town centre is situated on the western shore opposite the Spirit of Tasmania depot. Devonport is a well-established industrial township. Some parts are still very old and in need of rejuvenation particularly on the

eastern side of the river where the bulk of the local industry is located. It was here that we were able to refuel and buy stores to replenish the galley.

To the west Devonport is expanding its territory with the construction of new roads, suburbs and shopping centres. It was in this area that we collected our new fuel injector nozzles and refilled the gas bottles at Rays' Outdoors.

The Mersey Yacht Club is a good building but in need of some TLC. We understand that a new committee has plans to renovate the clubhouse and revitalize the membership. Don Richmond disembarked here to return later with his wife Barbara in Strahan on the mid-west coast.

After a two-day stay we moved on to Wynyard. This seaside town was well known to my father, as his yacht *Benicia*, went aground at the entrance to the harbour in 1963. Interestingly we meet a yacht owner who recalled helping my father tow *Benicia* off the rocks that very year. He recalled that later when the *Benicia* was along-side the wharf he was invited aboard for a drink only to find the bilge was full of beer cans and a nine gallon beer barrel was lashed to the stern complete with gas bottle, hoses and pouring tap!

It appears sailing those days was full of entertainment and fun, and so it should be!

Wynyard township is a beautiful tourist destination situated on the eastern shore of the Inglis river.

We dined at the John Boags Hotel just 100m away from the new wharf where we birthed *Summer Wind* for the night. Having enjoyed a pleasant meal at the hotel we returned to find *Summer Wind* was not floating at the same level as when we left her.



#### *Angela and Summer Wind in Wynyard on the Inglis River*

Wynyard has a 3m tide rise and fall. The tide was now at its lowest point leaving *Summer Wind* sitting in soft sand alongside the wharf. There was no wind or sea movement so no harm done. As with Port Sorrel we were fortunate to have seasonal high tides in our favour otherwise entry to Wynyard would not be possible for a yacht with a 2m draft. Next morning we left Wynyard just before sunrise around



6.00am. It was still very dark and visibility was poor. We knew we had to sight the green light at the entrance and keep it on our left hand as we were to make our passage out of the river. We were to learn that there were unlit white channel piles on our left prior to the green light at the entrance, with breaking waves on our right hand side just 20m away there was little room for error.

We closely followed the chart plotter to retrace our entry line in the hope this would provide us with a safe passage out of the river. Then suddenly Angela yelled we're going to hit a pile! A quick turn to the left and the pile was avoided without collision, at that moment *Summer Wind* lurched as the keel slid up onto the sand.

With the help of the in-coming tide we reversed back off the sand with ease, and then drove full speed ahead giving more clearance to the port side shore. With the green light on our left we made safe passage from there on. Well that experience brought back memories of my father's experience in 1963. I wonder if father was watching!

As the sun rose we began to see the coast line and our next destination.

It had been 23 years since I had last sighted Stanley and the Nut. I recall the town to be of the Victorian period style with single and double-fronted weather board and some brick buildings lining the streets. Stanley is now a major tourist destination and has undergone a significant amount of restoration to enhance its appeal. The town buildings looked beautiful.

Having missed the last chair-lift to the plateau, Angela, Bryan and I walked to the plateau of the Nut. The walk is quite steep and a challenge for the less fit like me.

Bryan and Angela took it all in their stride!

Once atop the nut it was a pleasant walk across the plateau to the southern side overlooking the harbour then back to the chairlift terminal above the township. The views of NW Tasmania and Bass Strait were magnificent.

Following a two day stay-over at Stanley and after refuelling we set sail for Three Hummock Island to the north west of Stanley. This was to be our first full day of sailing so far.



*Angela at the helm en'route Stanley to Three Hummock Island*

Three Hummock island is so called because of the three hump like mountains forming its profile. Here was our

first opportunity to use our new dinghy, *Zephr*, to get us ashore. We had a really present walk across the island to a homestead, explored the abandoned jetty, previously used for birthing visiting trading vessels. A highlight of this walk was seeing the Cape Baron Geese flock. The juveniles were circling each other looking to choose a mate in a large field while the adults were on the outskirts supervising.



*Ashore at Three Hummock Island*

### Three Hummock Island to Strahan

After listening to a lot of debate over the radio between some of the participating yachts about when to commence the long haul down the west coast, we decided it was time to go between 'two cold fronts'



*Sunset on the west coast of Tasmania*

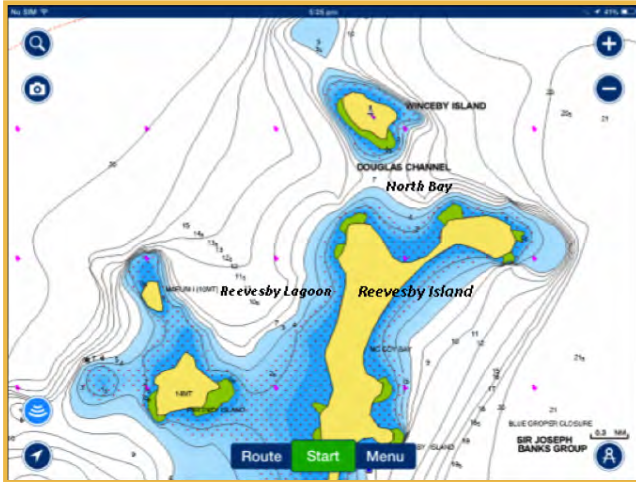
The overnight trip provided light winds and a rolling swell. Being off Cape Grim and seeing over 50 windfarms on the horizon was a wonderful experience. We all breathed deeply when passing Cape Grim reported to have some of the cleanest air in the world! We could see many mast lights of fellow rally yachts as we travelled along the west coast that night.

Winds were light when as we entered Macquarie Harbour via Hell's Gate to then a peaceful morning motor towards the enchanting and picturesque town of Strahan.

*Paul and Angela*

# MY FAVOURITE ANCHORAGE

BRENTON SMITH, VICE COMMODORE OF REEVESBY ISLAND



Reevesby Island, one of 21 islands in the Sir Joseph Banks Group, known locally as 'The Group' at the lower end of Spencer Gulf, South Australia was discovered by Matthew Flinders and is a favoured cruising ground for South Australian yachties. The Group has a particularly strong pull on my heart, probably because it was a large part of my early cruising days when I sailed with my family, which went on to include Robina in our courting days.

We cruised the lower end of Spencer Gulf in January for several years in Dad's boat *Coorari* a 33ft steel sloop of Temptress design built in our backyard.

Holidays were only two weeks and invariably the cruise south from Whyalla occurred in a 15-25kts southerly. Fortunately *Coorari* had good performance to windward. After 150nm, and that was on the rhumb line, Reevesby Island provided the first available anchorage and hence was much anticipated, particularly on the second day of huddling behind the dodger.

With a similar latitude to Victoria the summer weather patterns are also similar; strong southerly winds accompanying the onset of a new cold front that gradually moderates as the high pressure cell behind it dominates. Gradually the wind backs around to the north, which can set in for a day or two with 25kts, ready for the next cold front to come through. Hence shelter is required for south through east to north. Reevesby Lagoon provides shelter from the south through to NE, and is also a splendid beach for walking and swimming. We spent many days anchored here.

As the wind went to the north we would move to the southern side of Winceby Island, a short distance of about 5 miles.

The transition from north to south often occurs in minutes with the south change often being very vigorous and hence ideally you should have an anchorage that copes with strong north and south winds, or in the case of the northern end of Reevesby, a short distance between them because

the changes invariably seem to occur in the wee small hours of the night.

In the days before GPS, chart plotters and iPads, pilotage relied on traditional pilotage and the northern end of Reevesby had the additional advantage of a lighthouse on Winceby Island that you kept on a back bearing of 0° (allowing for variation) as you moved the two miles from the lee of Winceby to North Bay of Reevesby. Both locations had excellent holding in seagrass on sand and even though we hung off a fisherman's anchor with its 'poor' holding power relative to modern anchors, we never dragged even in the fiercest of blows. Always very reassuring!

Reevesby was large enough to sustain some minor pastoral activity in the early 1900's but has been uninhabited for the second half of the 20th century. Remnants of an old homestead remain to remind us of the intrepid spirit of our pioneers. Particularly venomous snakes are reported to inhabit the island but we never saw any and were happy to keep it that way. Swimming from the boat was a popular pastime until one year we saw a rather ominously large grey shape cruising in the Lagoon. A quick risk assessment concluded that swimming was best confined to the shallows on the beach.

Long beaches at both Reevesby Lagoon and the North Bay encourage long walks ashore – particularly when accompanied by the love of your life.





## BATTERY TALK

BY BRYAN DRUMMOND

Well guys, it was all about batteries at the last but one cruising dinner.

We were first entertained by James Heywood, our club Captain, who reminisced about his Whitsunday charter cruise. Naturally charter yachts are the very basic models with often insufficient battery power.

James mentioned that after a few reds, a movie and general lights on, the batteries were nearly flattened.

His advice was to do a AMP-HOUR audit on all likely devices, add 30% on to this is approximately half the battery capacity. It is good practice to only discharge the lead acid batteries to half their capacity, as this obtains a greater number of charge/discharge cycles from the batteries.

The killer unit, especially in the tropics is the fridge(s), as it's doing 24 hours, 7 days a week to keep the beer cold. The fridge duty cycle may go from say 25% in cooler climate to 85% in hotter areas.

He mentioned that it pays to do much research on new batteries as the new AGM (Absorbed Glass Mat) and Lithium Ion types often much better performance, but unfortunately cost more.

Next was a fellow Hobson Bay sailor and engineer, Peter Clark, Founder of Lithium Power, who tailor makes Lithium Ion batteries for marine applications.

He had 3 models on display, which were well manufactured. His experience in Li-Ion battery monitoring systems made the units safer and can provide reduced weight, greater discharge to 85% and a smaller footprint.

The batteries are significantly dearer than the more conventional types, but the above listed advantages will probably offset this extra initial cost.

He is most happy to discuss your particular battery issue with you. This mobile is 0411 520 920.

It was heartening to see a local take a punt, do the research and promote new technology to the sailing community.



## sounding

/soun·ding/ noun

Aye, begorra y' young spalpeens, y' reckon' y' wise to the meanin' of 'sounding' as related to depth?

In fact, the expression pre-dates any form of echo sounder. It was used in the days of 'lead and line' and came from 'SOND', being an Anglo Saxon word for messenger.

## MEMBER NEWS

**Alan Haddow** in *Orphelia* has, since the last newsletter, sailed from Urangan to Yeppoon and is at the Great Keppel Marina for a bit of internet. On the way he stopped at Glastone, Pancake Creek and Great Keppel Island.

**Geoff Brewster** and **Barbara Burns** have bought yet another boat and **Geoff** and **David Bingham** delivered her (see article) safely from Hobart. Lucky they're not there now or they would be shoveling snow of the decks.

**Tony Baird** informed us, at the last Cruising night, that he has been sailing his X-Yacht the last 2 years around the north Atlantic with a detour south last year to Morocco, the Canaries, Cape Verde Islands, across to the Caribbean and on to Maine.

Next year, he's planning to return to Norway via Greenland and is looking for crew. Contact him at anthonyhbaird@gmail.com if you fancy a spot of high latitude adventure. His yacht has a diesel heater.

**David and Wendy Pollard** are back from northern hemisphere too. They cruised aboard a luxurious ship with lots of heaters and visited many wonderful places.

Several cruisers are land cruising in Queensland, and having just returned from a quick trip to Cairns myself I can understand the imperative. Whilst there, I ran into **Paul and Kathleen Wise** who have been up to Cape York. **Rod and Sandy Watson** are still at large. **Will and Pam Merritt** have returned safely from Longreach.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### AUGUST 21ST - Forum Dinner

Paul and Angela Woodman will be our speakers. They will be sharing their adventure of circumnavigating Tasmania earlier this year. Please mark the date in your calendar and don't forget to ring Mandy in the office to book in.

### AUGUST 28TH - End of Month Cruise to Melbourne City Marina at Docklands.

It is such a great venue now with the new lounge (with open fire) that we will make use of it while the weather is still pretty chilly. The fireworks are around 7.30pm and so meet in the Lounge prior for drinks and then join with others with a self catered meal in the lounge. The kitchen facilities and BBQ are excellent. Melbourne City Marina have offered us a special deal. If we get 10 boats booked in then they will give us 2 nights for the price of one (providing one night is Friday night). So plan to come on up and ring Melbourne City Marina to book your berth and advise them you are part of the RBYC Cruising Group. Phone number: 9658 8733. Also let Roger Walker know of your intention to join the group. Roger is the co-ordinator this month.

### SEPTEMBER 18TH - Forum Dinner

Bryan and Sue Drummond will talk about their Indonesian Cruise.

# HAIDA GWALI DOES BASS STRAIT

BY GEOFF BREWSTER

Rather than pay for slipping, antifouling, engine maintenance, sails or any maintenance whatsoever Barbara and I have developed a policy of selling the boat before this comes due... hence 3 boats in 3 years.

Accordingly, having moved our previous boat on, we have been searching for another and after and looking here and there and viewing each prospect through a prism formed by the carefully folded pages of our bank statement we found a boat with a strange name in Hobart.

"Haida Gwaii" is a 36' Catalina Mark II with a 35HP Universal engine, slab reefed mainsail, roller furling headsail and conventional keel and conventional bits and pieces... all in very good condition.

After the usual negotiation which involved much squawking and protesting from the owner a deal was done and my bank balance depleted.

The problem of longitude having long been solved we were able to turn our attention to the problem of getting the boat back to Brighton. After making use of the slipway at The Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania... we figured it may be some time before she can be slipped again we set out to bring her back.

Enter stage left one Mr David Bingham and Maxwell Young who joined Barbara, myself and a long standing friend Jane in Hobart on Monday 6th.

We set off about mid- afternoon pushing various buttons and pulling levers and hauling on various lines with the mutterings of "I wonder what this is for" wafting away astern on a gentle southerly.

Around Iron Pot we went in the gathering darkness inside Betsey Island across the top of storm bay, with lumpy seas sneaking up on us in the dark, to anchor for the night in Lime Bay, within the much larger Norfolk Bay.

Next day we chiselled the ice off the decks and headed across Norfolk Bay and through the Dunalley canal out through Blackman Bay and on up the east coast to anchor for the night in Shoal Bay Maria Island. We were apparently so entranced by the seascape that we missed seeing both reported wreckage from a boat and two Southern Right Whales in Mercury Passage... I do wonder if there is any connection here.

After a very tranquil night in Shoal Bay and research as to whether flathead like squid jigs we headed of motor sailing to

Coles Bay with Huey being kind to us with a gentle breeze and slight seas.

Barbara and Jane were decanted at Coles bay and reluctantly spent the night in a resort while waiting land transport back to Hobart and then on to visit a long lost friend in the deep south at the appropriately named Lune River. I have not seen Jane since.

On we went up the east coast choofing along nicely intending at that stage to head for Prime Seal island and on to Deal, but after a muttering of something from some long dead poet along the lines of "on the battlefields of indecision lie the bleached bones of thousands" David led the general agreement to head for George Town instead...manoeuvrings we spent Thursday night tied up to the public jetty.

On Friday we fuelled up at Dalrymple Bay yacht club and that night I listened in awe as David and Max swapped boaty stories with some gents in the bar of the yacht club.

Saturday saw us heading out on a direct run to Port Phillip motor sailing into a 5 - 10 knot northerly... this continuing much longer than anticipated as the expected SE change did not happen until many hours later than expected and when it did it had more north and more west in it than it was supposed to.

10 Pm Sunday night saw us outside the heads in a gale and 3m seas and our perfect approach was disrupted by slowly moving white light with a great big ship under it ( never did make out its navigation lights) which required us to do an abrupt pirouette on top of quartering seas.

After a flurry of activity we found ourselves under a jury rig sailing the western channel in a direct line to home with a motor which refused to run on sediment, and a confused headsail which couldn't decide whether it should be in or out so chose somewhere in between.

With something approaching a southerly gale behind us, in the natural course of events we arrived off Brighton and with great flapping's of sails swung in behind the breakwater and headed up. With no motor how did you get in from there you ask?... thank you water police.

Haida Gwaii is now gently bobbing in her new home at pen 108.

Now, how are you enjoying winter sailing? Fair dinkum, it's been cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey. No I'm not being rude. If you think that comment was anything other than nautical I must suggest you go for further counselling and that you dig out old copies of the Cruising Newsletter to see what my old mate Captain Coxswain has to say about balls and brass monkeys.

As I was saying, winter this year seems to have been particularly cold. Before you think something you may regret, be assured this has nothing to do with my age. My doctor says that I'm as fit as someone twice my age.

Now, what was I saying?...

Oh yes, sailing in the cold.

Don't think that cold weather will be accepted as an excuse for not attending Cruising Group end of month 'on water' activities.

I realise that Chairman Roger seems to have been leniently avoiding the use of the dungeon for recalcitrant members, but I still have a spare key so be warned, attend our activities or you might find yourself sitting on the brass monkey.

**Will's  
Wonderful  
Wonderings**



# SWISS CHEESE MODEL OR MURPHY'S LAW

BY PETER STRAIN

In corporate speak the Swiss Cheese model, an organisation's defenses against failure are modeled as a series of barriers, represented as slices of cheese. The holes in the slices represent weaknesses in individual parts of the system and are continually varying in size and position across the slices. The system produces failures when a hole in each slice momentarily aligns, permitting (in Reason's words) "a trajectory of accident opportunity", so that a hazard passes through holes in all of the slices, leading to a failure.

The experience of two or three problems happening simultaneously is a challenge worth experiencing to raise your awareness and skills of managing a crisis. I believe it probably explains the mystery of the catamaran found floating North of the Whitsunday's some years ago with no one on board, sails ripped, all instruments still on and lunch on the table. There were three men who departed Airlie Beach the day before, after some training from the previous owner, who had planned to meet them further North up the coast to ensure they had support. They did have some experience but not great knowledge. Apparently one of the men could not swim. A video found on the boat when she was recovered showed one of the men sitting on the transom stairs fishing outside the safety lines. If he was the one who could not swim and something caused him to fall in, it would be natural for one of his friends to go in after him to the rescue. Weather reports of the time support that the wind got up to around 30 knots. With two men in the water, quite logically the third on the helm, may have stood up to keep an eye on the men overboard. With the wind gusting and the man on the helm watching and planning to get back to the men overboard an unplanned jibe would be highly possible. The third man gets hit by the boom, now three men in the drink and sails still up wind gusting over 30 knots the boat keeps going at speed, leaving the three men stranded. This is all conjecture, not fact, but it is believable and is the sort of explanation which could explain the catamaran found with no one on board.

We were sailing up the East Coast and on the passage from Narooma to Sydney. We left at dawn and decided to run

overnight. Weather reports confirmed that there would be no great challenges, so with the driving force to get as far North as possible, as quick as practical, in search of the sun we set sail. Humming along on one diesel (still no wind) "too easy". Sure enough the chart plotter lost its fix. We had been keeping a manual plot and had a backup hand held GPS. OK, manageable. Next an unforecast squall hit us off Wollongong gusting to 35 knots. OK, slow down head into the squall, we're coping. Next the Auto-helm, confused by the chart plotters lack of fix, starts behaving badly. Not too bad. My son has been telling me to spend more time steering to learn the boats characteristics. The squall also brought heavy rain, so visibility was very poor and there were ships steaming North and South from Wollongong, We had the radar on and were conscious of keeping well clear. An hour later as dawn was breaking the wind died off, and we were are sailing past Port Hacking 15 Nm from Sydney Heads all is well with the world again.

Another occasion Susie and I were sailing from Vanuatu to New Caledonia with a friend from Mooloolaba on his 43 foot X-Yacht. An overnight passage we sailing down the East Coast past the Loyalty Islands to arrive at the entrance of the Grand Lagon Sud at the South end of New Caledonia between the mainland and Iles de Pins. Strong tides rip in and out as the lagoon empties and fills from the Pacific. We arrived at midnight with a planned change in crew shift. Holding a bearing of 247 degrees true with the lead lights aligned, I handed the helm over just as we hit the entrance. The confusion of tides at the time swung the boat quite dramatically. We were running with a 15 knot breeze on the port quarter, by the time the new helmsman had taken over we were quite off course and heading towards reefs. Great credit the new crew jibed and had us back on course very quickly. I can understand why that entrance like our Rip is notorious.

The experiences did highlight to me that you have to be prepared to handle more than one problem or issue simultaneously and timing of shift changes need to be planned carefully.

