



CRUISING NEWS



SEPTEMBER 2015

AUGUST FORUM DINNER: PAUL AND ANGELA WOODMAN VAN DIEMEN'S LAND CIRCUMNAVIGATION CRUISE

WRITTEN BY BRENTON SMITH



Angela & Paul Woodman with Chairman Roger Walker.

One of the central roles of Cruising Group (well it is to this scribe) is to inspire our members and friends to go cruising, and for those of us already cruising, to inspire us to cruise in areas new to ourselves. Every year we have presentations from those of us who have been adventurous and providing inspiration to those of us who may be currently marina bound.

Two years ago, Lou and Marnie Irving presented us with their stories of circumnavigating Tasmania and inspired Angela Woodman to follow in their wake. Angela and Paul Woodman were considering boats at that stage and hence the first step was being put in place. Paul, having raced through these waters had some reservations, but Angela persisted, going on to establish her mettle through various ORCV events in Bass Strait and attending their training sessions.

On a recent cold August night, it was Paul and Angela's turn to inspire us with their presentation on their recent circumnavigation of Tasmania in their Bavaria 44 *Summer Wind* – and the inspiration has worked!! There is a good chance that there will be at least two RBYC boats in the next rally around Tasmania; with both *Chakana* and *Aquacadabra* having further impetus added to their current plans for 2017.

Paul, Angela and various crew joined the Van Diemen's Land Circumnavigation Cruise in February 2015. This is organised jointly by the RYCT and RGYC as a cruise in company, takes 4-6 weeks to complete, is limited to 45 boats and welcomes boats of all shapes, formats and sizes. This year vessels ranged between a 30ft sloop to a 72ft motor cruiser with a professional crew, with most vessels having



Odysseus, Ingenue, Summer Wind and The Secretary rafted at St Johns Falls, Gordon river.

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A subdued Hell's Gate.

husband and wife crews. It is a popular event and so if you are interested you had better register your interest early!

The safety requirements are not onerous, even though the cruise passes through some seas with fearsome reputations. Category 3 is required plus the addition of a working HF radio and life raft. Some of the crew must also have ocean sailing experience. For Paul and Angela this presented no problems because Paul has been racing to and around Tasmania for years. Using Category 3 is a sensible approach because it is a cruise, not an ocean race, and hence skippers are encouraged to 'hole up' when the inevitable cold fronts with their accompanying boisterous south-westerlies come marching through these latitudes. They, and I suspect most of the others, holed up so well that *Summer Wind* motored or motor-sailed for 1100 of the 1200 miles.

With the VDL cruise operating for more than 25 years the RYCT has the routines and organisation well-honed and includes a comprehensive data pack, twice daily radio



Strahan Township, Macquarie Harbour.

skeds including weather forecasts, four boats with large barbeques on board for the regular onshore social activities, and plenty of experience to share to assist the newer cruisers. In fact, with the way that the weather changes so rapidly, particularly on the west coast, it is the weather information from the boats in front and behind that provides the best indicator of what lays in store.

Their itinerary started in the Tamar River and went onto include: Beauty Point, Georgetown, Devonport, Wynyard, Stanley, Three Hummocks Island, Hells Gates, Strahan, Gordon River, Port Davey, Bathurst Harbour, Clayton's Corner, SW Cape, D'Entrecasteaux Channel, Dover, Kettering, Port Cygnet, Barnes Bay, Hobart, Pt Arthur, Triabunna, Freycinet Peninsula, Wineglass Bay, Schouten Passage, Binnalong Bay, Eddystone Point, Flinders Island, Deal Island, Refuge Cove and finally Queenscliff. For more information on their cruising amongst these places read Paul's articles in the Cruising Newsletter.



VDL fleet at Clayton's Corner, Bathurst Harbour.

Highlights for Paul included cruising along the north coast and having the time to appreciate it. Previously he has been racing, and always in a hurry. For Angela the physical beauty of the untouched rainforests accessed through Macquarie Harbour and Port Davey presented special moments together with the SE coast, and in particular Mason's Harbour in front of Pt Arthur.

In a nutshell, it was a fabulous six weeks of cruising, and they whole-heartedly recommend that we follow in their wake.

To Paul and Angela, thanks for an interesting presentation and renewing the inspiration!!

From the Editor: A big thankyou to **Sue Drummond** for editing the June and August editions of the Cruising Newsletter.

Also thankyou to **Trish Jeffery** who runs a graphic design business, **Kaleidoscope Design** and stepped in to do the layout of these newsletters. If you need graphic design work then contact her 0417 333 341. trish@kaleidoscopedesign.com.au

It was great to be able to go cruising and know the newsletter was left in capable hands.

I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD BE HERE! MY FIRST OCEAN CROSSING

BY ROBINA SMITH



Robina and Brenton leaving Noumea.

I never thought I would be here! Three days since I saw land, three days until I see land again. Mid-way through my first ocean crossing from Noumea to Brisbane.

I thought it was clearly stated in our marriage contract 37 years ago that if Brenton intended to sail around the world (he was building the steel boat to pursue this dream) I would fly between ports and he would find crew for the ocean crossings. I was very much a 747 passage maker.

University, career, children, jobs in far flung places meant the dream receded but obviously never went away.

We chartered boats in the Whitsundays, Turkey and New Caledonia. During that last charter, while tacking out to sea on route to Ile des Pins, Brenton casually stated that this is the ocean - there was nothing between us and New Zealand, we were out of the protection of the reef! Sewing a seed? Not sure but I did think it wasn't as bad as my imagination had suggested. Maybe I could do that!

We bought a Noelex 30, *Thunder*, raced a bit, cruised around the bay, out the heads to Western Port and went to Cruising Group events where so many people gave inspirational talks about their experiences. All confidence building. We then started the three year plan to buy a bigger cruising boat, learn its workings and go cruising - within sight of land. Brenton had his list and I had mine - a comfortable bed and 2 heads (built in redundancy). Brenton's list was longer.

When searching boats for sale up popped a boat that had all the features on our two lists and soon she was ours and renamed *Chakana* (meaning Southern Cross in Incan). A boat that had been sailed across the Pacific, a Caliber 40LRC - our blue water cruiser.

In 2013 a Bass Strait cruise whetted the appetite. Bass Strait did put on its perfect weather for us! 2014 saw us heading up the east coast of Australia for eight months after a shake-down cruise in Bass St with the Cruising Group. Couldn't miss that!

We headed out of the heads (the first time that we went out two handed on *Chakana*) towards Eden where we arrived 2 1/2 days later in good condition and having beaten the next Tasmanian low into Twofold Bay. Over the year we did sever-

al overnights and were caught in some stronger winds than expected. All confidence building - ourselves and *Chakana*.

Then the plans for 2015 - the dream blue water cruise. Cut short by a back operation but still able to happen with the help of Tom Hinton to crew over to Noumea with Brenton before I had the all clear from the medical practitioners. Three weeks wonderful cruising in New Caledonia followed and now here I am, on the passage home.

After three days we have eased into the rhythms of ship-board life. Three hour watches from 6pm to 6am then four hour watches during the day: an odd number so that we share the graveyard watches. Dinner prepared at 5pm so we are all washed up by 6pm when it is dark and the night watches begin.

I am loving the wide blue ocean with its gently rolling swells. Sunlight glinting on the swells as they loom up on one side of *Chakana* and pass beneath to continue on their eternal march northwards.

I did not love the seas, created when there was a lot of wind, that had waves and swell across the bow at cross purposes and making a lot of banging and crashing. (Soon abated.)

I am loving our third crew member, Dave the autohelm. So named after Brenton's Dad who instilled the love of sailing in him and would have loved to have followed or joined in our cruising adventures - he is with us in spirit!

I am not loving seeing the change of blue ahead on the chart plotter showing shallower water that I have carefully helped Dave steer between - one side is 150m deep and the other is 65m deep but you can't be too careful! There will be no running aground on my watch.

I am loving the occasional sighting of other ships at sea - I am not alone. AIS makes this stress free. Especially when the sail boat *Shenanigans* appeared over the horizon sailing in the opposite direction with whom I had a chat on the VHF, made brief by her urgent assistance required at the helm to haul in a Wahoo.

I did not like her mentioning that they were near the end of their passage and we were just starting. We had been sailing for 1-1/2 days by then!

I am not loving the depth sounder showing 12m or 4m when usually it showed - - - (as in too deep to register). On my first night watch I went rushing to double/triple check the charts and listened intently for breaking waves, my heart racing. Why does it do this every so often in waters that are too deep (1000+m) for it to have a reading?

I am loving the starry, starry nights, when the sky is twinkling with a mass of lights and reflecting in the water. After

midnight the waning crescent moon then makes its appearance shining across the water guiding our way.

I am not loving the 'localised weather events' that happen a little too frequently during the night. One moment we are loping along in 12 knots of breeze and then it is 2-3 knots from every direction, oscillating from north to south, east to west, until we are finally through it and can continue on our way. Or the squalls where the wind pikes up to 20+knots with a 90° wind shift. These are easier handled when it is daylight and you can see them coming.

I loved waking up on Day 3 to a perfect sunny morning, flat seas and little wind so the engine had to be on to enable us to close the Queensland coast before the forecast westerly change. Hot water - so time for a shower and change of clothes then a hearty breakfast and first cup of tea for 2 days. Life is good!

I did not love the combined seas and swell of the second day that made movement around the boat difficult and mal de mer was experienced. Snakes and iced tea were the go.

I loved the extra 2-1/2 hours sleep the skipper gave me on the second night. Apparently I was so sound asleep he let me continue - I woke up so refreshed. Watch times can be flexible when there are only two of you.

I am not loving waking up at 3am for my watch. Seems to be the hardest one to rouse for and get going.

However I am loving the sunrises that accompany that 3am watch. As the sun peeps above the horizon through the band of clouds it looks as though the horizon is on fire.

I am loving my iPod and iPad to keep me amused on watches. Nothing like a rousing Beach Boys number to waken the senses or soothing rainforest sounds when lying in the sea-berth off watch. I have podcasts of Richard Fidler (ABC Conversation Hour in other states) - great to have an hour long interesting interview to help pass the time.

I am loving the prepared meals stacked in the freezer to make evening meals easy. Great now the appetites have returned. Beef Bourguogne anyone?

I am not loving that the fridge/freezer smells every time we open it. Needs a good clean after too many smelly French cheeses.

AND AT THE END OF THE VOYAGE?

I loved the VHF crackling into life. Couldn't see land but we must be closing in on it!

However I did not love what that voice had to say. 'SECURITÉ, SECURITÉ, SECURITÉ; There is a strong wind warning along the south Queensland coast and in Moreton Bay'. Tell me about it, I only had to read the anemometer and look at the spindrift being blown from the wavetops to know that!

Soon **I loved** seeing the lights of the ships anchored in the distance but **I did not love** the ominous looking cloud hovering above them that broke into a fabulous lightning display – spectacular if you weren't sailing directly towards it. We headed NW to let it blow over before returning to our desired heading.

I loved the feeling of achievement as we tied up to the quarantine wharf in the Brisbane River; I had overcome all my objections and fears of

37 years ago and had done the unthinkable – a blue water crossing. The celebratory champagne tasted that much sweeter as I basked in the glow of my achievement!



Now here's some information you might find useful. Being a good citizen of the sailing fraternity I have all sorts of equipment designed to keep me safe on those odd occasions when I elect to go messing about in boats. This is particularly the case when we make our annual foray into Bass Strait. I think this situation arises because of some form of temporary insanity possibly brought on by exposure to club politics.

So the aforementioned list includes equipment like a bosun's chair to keep me safe as I ascend the mast in a full gale with huge seas. Hmm, perhaps we could send the least experienced, most naive crew member aloft in those circumstances. Of course if the boat looks like foundering we do have a life raft. This is a four person version for our crew of five. I of course will go down with the boat unless I can get the aforementioned crew member to accept delegation for this high profile activity.

Then there's that Epirb thingy. You know, the one that finds you when you don't know where you are. I recently actually tried it out after a post race

drink. After a bit of fumbling I managed to get the light flashing but I still didn't know my location. I decided I'd better turn it off because the helicopter was disturbing people on nearby boats.

It was at about this point that I noticed the battery was past it's expiry date. I considered changing the date but thought that may not be a good idea.

So I reluctantly contacted the appropriate Service Department and found that it would cost more to replace the battery than nipping in to Whitworths and buying a brand new unit. You will now appreciate the humour of this situation because it's 'TRUE'. Someone has designed this comparatively expensive bit of equipment in such a way that it costs more to replace the battery than buy a new one!!

Will Merritt

**Will's
Watch**

DOCKLANDS FIREWORKS

BY PAM MERRITT



Docklands was the destination for our July and August end-of-month on water activities, with the annual winter Friday night Mid-Winter Fireworks a good reason to be there.

JULY 31st saw 4 boats (*Andalucia, Foxy Lady, Summer Wind and Sun Kiss*) motor sail up the Yarra on a sunny Friday afternoon. Probably only 4 boats because Saturday's forecast was fairly ordinary with rain and strong southerlies predicted.

17 of us assembled for 'pre-dinners' in the new Melbourne City Marina facilities - a wonderfully comfortable spot to watch the 7.30pm fireworks from. Following the fireworks there was a hive of activity in the kitchen as casseroles and other delicacies were warmed for dinner. Rod Slater's individual fish pies did look impressive!

Luckily the expected southerly change passed through overnight and by morning the weather had settled to a fine, light wind day.

AUGUST 28th was the final night of this year's Docklands Winter Fireworks, and this time we had 9 boats. The crews of

Alegria, Andalucia, Aquacadabra, Catwalk, Emma Kate, Haida Gwali, Sophistique, Summer Wind and Y Knot revelled in a brisk southerly on Friday which provided a fast sail to Docklands.

Once again we thoroughly enjoyed watching the spectacular fireworks display from the comfort of Melbourne City Marina's facilities. Some were a little concerned about the proximity of the fireworks barge to their boats and the possibility of ash on the decks - fortunately heavy rain overnight ensured clean boats by morning.

We'd decided to self cater for dinner again which worked well. It was a very busy night in the marina kitchen with several groups from other clubs eating there as well. A lively night, which would no doubt please the Marina Managers to see their facilities being so well used.

Some of our boats headed back next day into a big southerly, others sensibly chose to stay another night or two.

Melbourne City Marina is a great Wintry Weekend destination, especially with the added bonus of a fireworks display!



← July - Enjoying the new facilities.



→ August - 3 to a pen! Great views of fireworks and wheel from the verandah.



KEEPING WATER OUT OF YOUR INJECTORS

BY BRENTON SMITH

In our cruising on the east coast in 2014 and New Caledonia in 2015, the issue of water making it through to your injectors in the diesel engine is a recurring one, and also expensive and inconvenient when it occurs away from workshops – which is where most of us aspire to cruise.

Chakana has also been afflicted by this issue causing unnecessary cost and angst when water entered one of our fuel tanks, and then went on to affect the injector pump and injectors. Subsequently I have deduced that on *Chakana* it was seawater entering via the breathers that is the source of the water, whereas for others it may have been condensation in the tanks, particularly if you are in the tropics, or even contaminated fuel from the bowser. To date we have not been affected by the dreaded diesel bug, which is bacteria that thrives at the water/diesel interface. Hence we have not seen primary filters clogged with black sludge; i.e. bacteria.

The stories of water affecting injectors are invariably associated with rough conditions, and *Chakana* was no exception, when we were affected after a touch-up by some strong winds and large seas off Cape Schanck in early 2014 prior to entering the heads. It appears to me that the water is dispersed as very fine droplets in the diesel when the diesel is stirred up by the seas and hence is able to make it through primary and secondary filters to the injector pump and injectors. I am not sure that the filters are designed to remove water via the membranes within them. I suspect salt water, which is the case in *Chakana*, is particularly disastrous for injectors and the injector pump. Remember the proportion of water in the fuel is very low, in our case often less than a cup in a 350litre tank.

Naturally I was keen to prevent a repetition of water in the injector pump and injectors and (touch wood) have been successful in doing so as a result of two factors – primary filters with a clear inspection bowl, and using Fuel Doctor additive each time I top up the fuel tanks on *Chakana*.

The primary filter is a standard Racor 25 micron unit, but it is not the 25 micron element that is significant for preventing water ingress to the injectors. It is the bowl beneath the filter where Racor have designed the flow to facilitate the removal of water through gravity separation (water is 20% more dense than diesel), provided that the droplets are large enough. This is where the Fuel Doctor additive is effective because it seeks to maximise the immiscibility of water in diesel and the water droplets become large enough to fall out from the diesel. The additive also dyes the water red, so that it is immediately apparent by visual inspection that water has accumulated in the primary filter, from which it can be easily drained. If you allow the

water level to reach the filter element then you still have water in your injectors!

The manufacturers of Fuel Doctor recommend an initial shock dose of the additive to kill the bacteria and followed by a maintenance dose. The shock dose is only 1ml/litre and I use it at this rate always because the cost savings associated with the maintenance dose are minor compared with cost of replacing injectors and possibly the injector pump. We also have been leaving *Chakana* in a tropical environment where accumulation of freshwater from condensation can provide a precursor environment for the propagation of the diesel bug bacteria.

Chakana is an American boat which often have primary filters with transparent inspection bowls made from thick plastic beneath them and hence this is what we have. European regulations insist that the bowls are metallic so that they cannot be broken accidentally and thus release fuel into the boat. However, we live in Australia and I am not aware of any regulations or YA safety rules that prescribe the use of metallic bowls beneath the pre-filter units. It is easy to inspect the transparent bowls for the presence of the red coloured water collected, and if the level is high, then it is easy to drain the water from the filter using the valve at the bottom.



View of the layout of the primary filters on *Chakana*. Only one of the primary filters is in use with the other on standby if one becomes suddenly clogged while in service. The transparent bowls extend into metallic cups which function to capture any minor fuel leaks from the primary filters. The valves on the bottom drain the water and sediment from the clear section of the primary filters. On *Chakana* the primary filters are located just inside the lazarette and it is easy to visually determine the level of any red water that may require to be drained by opening the valve at the bottom.

A SAFETY REMINDER

BY TONY GARVEY THUNDER

I was sitting on my boat a few weeks ago having a coffee and a chat with a few friends and the conversation somehow made its way around to the subject of flares. After everyone had left I thought I had better check the Expiry Date on the flares in my cockpit locker. All my flares were out of date by about two weeks, not too bad I thought, but I had better get some new ones on the way home.

I dropped into my local marine dealer and bought a new Flare Kit. He said to me, "Drop the old ones back in here and we will pass them onto the Coast Guard." "Great," I said, "and I have some in the garage at home which I will drop into you as well."

Mark then explained to me that I should not have out of date flares at home because they are classed as an Explosive and if anything happened the insurance company may be asking all sorts of hard to answer questions.

A day later I am telling Brenton Smith the story and Brenton says, "I have one in my study at home," so I went around and picked it up from him that day. Next morning I dropped off 11 out of date flares. Job done.

From there I call into my Mum's, I tell her the story of why I am up this way and Mum tells me that she has two flares in the boot of her car.

"What are you doing with flares Mum?" I asked in surprise.

"When our friends came out from the States they bought me a car breakdown kit and it's got two flares in it."

"Mum that was 30 years ago."

"Yes, that would be right," she replied.

I find the red case in Mum's boot and inside are some tools, two safety triangles and two red flares. They were cardboard cylinders, pretty knocked around and the only writing I could make out was the date - 1986. Mum told me that after her friends had returned to the States they had posted the breakdown kit over to her, maybe something that we couldn't get away these days. So back to Mark with Mum's flares and we have a great laugh and someone says, "These flares will probably still work", to which I replied, "You have my permission but I won't be there!"

So that's my question to you; How many out-of-date flares do you have on your boat? How many have you in the study or the garage at home? And have you any stashed in the boot of your car from 1986?

Might be worth a look, just in case.

MEMBER NEWS

It is with pleasure that we welcome new member **Peter Coleman** to the RBYC Cruising Group. Peter sails *Bettina*, a Beneteau Oceanis 473.



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Allan Haddow, *Ophelia*, our 'Most Improved Cruiser of the year' is cruising his way further north. Having spent some time in Rosslyn Bay marina at Yeppoon getting his pulpit fixed after a little run in on the Burnet River he is now heading towards the Whit-sundays and warmer

weather.

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Peter Strain, *It's a Privilege*, has just finished Magnetic Island Race Week. Had lots of fun and good racing, came home with a late charge finishing 3rd & 2nd in the last two races. Sailed out to the Great Barrier Reef for the last few days in brilliant sunshine and light gentle easterly breezes. Caught tuna, mackerel and cray fish. He is now back in the Palm Group. Will start heading back down the coast soon.

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 Having safely completed their cruise to New Caledonia, **Robina and Brenton Smith** have left *Chakana* at RQYS in Manly until November. They are hoping the northerlies will have set in by then and they can sail her back to RBYC.

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Pam Merritt has started compiling the history of RBYC Cruising Group ready for the 25th birthday celebrations in January with help from **Lyn Bingham**. If you have some photos from the early days of the Cruising Group please let them know and either scan the photos or arrange for them to be scanned by them. willm@hotkey.net.au

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Jenny and Grant Collins are having a well earned break in Europe including some cycling in the Loire Valley in France.

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 Please keep your cruising stories and 'How I Started Sailing' contributions rolling in. Don't forget to write up your 'Worst or Best Anchorage'. We all have one of these stories. This newsletter relies on a flow of member contributions.

"The ocean has always been a salve to my soul.... the best thing for a cut or abrasion was to go swimming in salt water. Later down the road of life, I made the discovery that salt water was also good for the mental abrasions one inevitably acquires on land."

Jimmy Buffett

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

FRIDAY 18th SEPTEMBER FORUM DINNER MEETING

Guest Speakers: Bryan and Sue Drummond

Indonesian Cruise

In 2014 Bryan and Sue Drummond, on *Gypsea Rover*, participated in the Island Cruising Association's 'Sail 2 Indonesia Rally'.

This will be a very interesting and informative presentation about one of our less known cruising destinations.

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

Please book with the office ([95923092](tel:95923092)) no later than Wednesday September 16th. Bookings essential.

26th/27th SEPTEMBER END OF MONTH ON WATER ACTIVITY

A cruise in company to a destination in the bay that will be decided after looking at the weather. This is intended to be a longer cruise to somewhere in the southeast corner of the bay.

Of course there will always be the fall-back of Docklands if the weather is not cooperative.

Expressions of interest to cruise organiser, Rod Watson, so that you can be emailed with further details. rodsandy@bigpond.net.au

SATURDAY 3rd OCTOBER OPENING DAY AT RBYC

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

We encourage cruising boats to participate in the sail past the Commodore's vessel. Dig out your cruising group flag and dress your boat ready to give three cheers to the Commodore. Check the website for the day's timings.

FRIDAY 16th OCTOBER FORUM DINNER MEETING/SOCIAL NIGHT America's Cup Revisited

Where were you when Australia 2 won the America's Cup?
Dress for the 'America's Cup'.
Come for a fun night with trivia, games and footage of Australia's win in the America's Cup.

31st OCTOBER-3rd NOVEMBER END OF MONTH CUP LONG WEEKEND CRUISE

A cruise in company to Queenscliff/Geelong.

FRIDAY 20th NOVEMBER FORUM DINNER MEETING

To be confirmed.

Armchair Chat

When I joined Royal Brighton Yacht Club I found a club that was inclusive and welcoming, with members that were very helpful. There must be many others who found the same thing. What are they thinking now? And those outside the Club must be wondering what on earth is going on at RBYC - our Club.

I have pondered what would be happening now if the slipway had not failed inspection. We would probably be concentrating our efforts on Club-house refurbishment or one of several other projects that had been foreshadowed.

We are a sailing club and a number of our members, with boats in the marina, are finding it difficult to reconcile the reasoning behind not having a convenient method of servicing their boats with the Objectives of the Club: 'the promotion and encouragement of the sport of yachting generally, and racing between sailing yachts in particular, and the doing of all things incidental to or not inconsistent with the foregoing'.

I do understand that some members have large boats that cannot be slipped at our club. However, many of these members understand the impact on fellow sailors and have spoken in favour of restoring the slipway.

The results of the ballot conducted at the recent Special Meeting showed an almost equal division of opinion on retention of the slipway. The challenge for the Club will be to re-establish a unity of purpose, without loss of members.

Roger Walker



Captain Coxswain's Corner

'CHEWING THE FAT'

Some sources attribute the phrase 'chewing the fat' to sailors, who during a period of resting and conversing off watch, or while working together, would chew on their daily ration of tough, salt-cured pork or beef. Cured meats were tough but durable and took a lot of chewing to make them edible. Has come to mean a friendly conversation (or talking too much).