



# CRUISING NEWS



MAY 2016

APRIL FORUM DINNER: BRENTON AND ROBINA SMITH

## CROSSING THE CORAL SEA AND CRUISING NEW CALEDONIA ABOARD *CHAKANA*

WRITTEN BY SANDY WATSON



Roger thanking Brenton and Robina.

New Caledonia in 2015.

They were motivated and encouraged by other people who had done the same passage and could advise accordingly. Brenton had a long-standing desire to do a blue-water cruise, a wish to see a volcano, a different culture and to assist villagers by taking donations of school requisites, etc. They also had some experience from having chartered a yacht in the region ten years beforehand. *Chakana* is well set up for long-range cruising in all important respects but extra preparation was needed in some areas. This included rigging, sails and an Iridium Go! satellite link.

The stars were beginning to align, when unfortunately Robina's back needed surgery and put 'a spanner in the works'.



Tom at Ilot Amadee

This, however, was no serious deterrent, as once Robina's recovery was well underway, it was clear that a trip to New Caledonia was still possible.

Tom Hinton stepped up and helped Brenton sail to Nou-

mea. The inclusion of Vanuatu, however, was no longer possible; the volcano viewing may have to wait till another cruise!

The passage across took six and a half days after a first of July departure from Manly, Brisbane.

Brenton used Bob McDevitt (MetBob) from New Zealand for passage forecasts and plans, whom he highly recommends. Robina was the land support, checking the daily weather and updating Brenton when he called each day. The passage went well, the only repair required was to the rod-kicker which had failed. Customs clearance was smooth and a great sense of achievement felt by the crew of two.

Robina arrived in Noumea to cruise with Brenton and they had a lovely time around Ile des Pins, Ilot Casy which was a highlight due to the beautifully clear deep water, Ilot M'be Kouen and Baie Maa. Port Moselle Marina in Noumea was a good place to stay with patisseries and chandleries at hand. Maintenance and replacement of the auto helm with the spare were jobs needing attention.

A week's wait preceded the passage home. When Bob McDevitt gave the 'go ahead', there was only just enough time to complete the passage before a



*Chakana* anchored in Baie Du Carenage.



Robina and Brenton setting out on passage to Australia.

### CRUISING GROUP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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# CRUISING NEWS MAY 2016

Baie Maa on left from the top of the headland.



Fish market at Pt Moselle.



Fruit and vegetable market at Pt Moselle.



Ile Des Pins

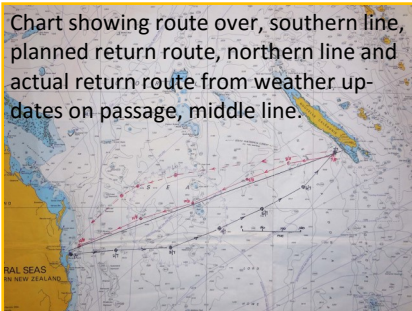


Chart showing route over, southern line, planned return route, northern line and actual return route from weather updates on passage, middle line.

forecast vigorous westerly was due to arrive near the Australian coast. Not wanting to tempt fate by leaving port on a Friday, these canny sailors left on Thursday evening and anchored 4 miles away at Ilot Maitre to resume their voyage the following morning! After some initial 'mal de mer', Robina and Brenton settled into their watch routine and enjoyed the passage home. Daily weather updates were received by text from Bob enabling the passage plan to be shaped to suit actual progress. The forecast strong westerlies did catch up with them, along with a thunderstorm, in approaches to the Brisbane Channel. To make things worse, the auto helm failed at this point, so hand steering was required.



Fabulous sailing on return passage.



Taking down the Q flag in Brisbane River.

A jubilant end to a great adventure was celebrated after clearing customs, with what else but French champagne!



Celebratory champagne after 6 1/2 days at sea.

Robina and Brenton's presentation concluded with a movie clip taken whilst sailing home, accompanied by some great music. Very inspiring for those would-be ocean cruisers, to be sure.

## Royal Brighton Yacht Club Cruising Group Presents *More Magnificent Melba*

FRIDAY, 17TH JUNE, 2016

Featuring:  
*Fiona Lepson*  
*Timothy Newton*  
*Bronwyn Douglass*

Accompanied by  
*Simon Bruckard*



Ticket Price: \$100 includes 3 course dinner

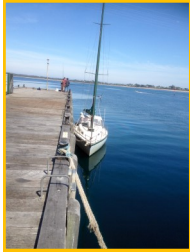
Dress: Black Tie

Bookings: Mandy  
ph:95923092

# CLEELAND BIGHT

CONTINUING OUR 2016 BASS STRAIT CRUISE IN COMPANY ARTICLES

BY PAM MERRITT



It's always a little concerning when the Bass Strait forecast of 'wind/waves/swell' includes not one but two swells ie 1st Swell: 2.5m easterly, 2nd Swell: around 2m south westerly.

And so it was when we set out from RBYC, down the bay and straight through the Heads on this year's Bass Strait cruise. The seas weren't huge, but they were lumpy, confused and uncomfortable as these opposing swells met. Luckily there was enough wind to move us along well but by early evening, as 'mal de mer' had taken hold, we began to look at closer options than the Prom.

It's always good to have a Bolt Hole on hand. We were about 10nm offshore and roughly abeam of Cape Woolamai so decided to alter course for Cleeland Bight, which immediately improved our angle to waves and swell as we headed for Cape Woolamai light. Arriving about 11pm was no problem with excellent leads (blue lights) to guide us in. We'd planned to pick up one of the three public moorings, but on a moonless night couldn't spot them so dropped anchor near *Corazon*

instead. Next morning we could see why the moorings weren't obvious - they were close to shore in fairly shallow water, too shallow for our 1.6m draft.

Cleeland Bight is an excellent anchorage in all but E / SE winds, so naturally by afternoon a good SE had set in making it a little uncomfortable until the wind dropped out.

Next morning, in calm water, we ventured over to San Remo jetty for a couple of hours. The jetty is close to Phillip Island bridge so the impact of tidal race needs to be considered. San Remo has every service a yachting could want including supermarket, ice, fuel - and an available doctor to check out a nasty chest infection. And according to a Parks Victoria Official we were welcome to stay overnight (or even several nights) if we moved around to the inner side of the jetty. Handy to know!

*Boomaroo* joined us during the day and that evening we departed at 2am for Refuge Cove and once again appreciated the well lit leads and Woolamai Light to see us on our way.

Is it my imagination or are we having more than our fair share of overly windy days recently? Maybe it has something to do with global warming. I notice that the pundits say that global warming is a bad thing, but they obviously haven't stood watch on the heaving deck of a small yacht in the wee small hours of a cold wet night. Actually I'll confess to being a fair weather cruiser, steadfastly avoiding watches of that nature, but I've been told that it's an awful experience.

Anyway now that I'm in my prime (some would say 'way past' but ignore them) I'm looking forward to having warmer days so I won't have to move to Queensland every winter to escape the cold in Melbourne. Other advantages of global warming will include enjoying gin and tonic year round, berthing our yachts against the front verandah as sea levels rise and enjoying seeing the Great Barrier Reef looking alpine

white for a change.

I can hardly wait for improvements to arrive. Perhaps I can start an association of 'Friends of Global Warming'. We could urge governments to build more coal fired power stations and make large families compulsory to boost global population growth.

If you wish to be part of this totally idealistic movement you can begin donating to the cause. Just forward a cheque made out to me to ensure that the donation will be well used.

Will Merritt

**Will's  
Wacky Words**

# OUR FIRST VENTURE INTO BASS STRAIT

BY PAUL JENKINS



*Kathleen B* at anchor in Refuge Cove.

Although our little Peter Cole designed Traditional 30 has a race history with the Ocean Racing Club of Vic across the Strait to Grassy and Devonport she was known then as *Trad Jazz*. I purchased her two years ago where she was lying at Sandringham poorly neglected and named *Secret Men's Business* (sic). Although her hull was in relatively good condition I have spent the past few years rewiring, replumbing, replacing sails, repowering, repairing worn out rudder bearings, fitting new electronics resealing deck fittings, replacing windows and generally getting her into order.

We had made the decision to take part in the annual Bass Strait Cruise in Company last year and so realised we would need to make her ready for ocean sailing. Refrigeration of the ice box, replacing running lights with new LED versions, fitting jack lines, a boom brake, replacing the anchor rode and chain, battery replacement, spare parts, tools, purchasing charts and then purchasing safety harnesses, tethers, new wet weather gear - we thought we were well organised and then came the consideration of provisioning. This included water, fuel and food, grab bag and first aid kit. A great deal of effort went into provisioning. I am happy to say we had a great deal of food leftover and our 140 litres of potable water was adequate however, fuel was underestimated but we managed being able to pick up extra fuel at Port Welshpool.

Jane and I did the Rip Tour earlier in the year with the Ocean Racing Club of Vic which was very educational and we would recommend it for anyone that has never navigated the rip before. The passage out through the heads and back in on our return was easy and made confidently because of this. Also the fact that we did it in the company of fellow experienced cruisers and we are very grateful for their help and encouragement.

The only thing I regret was that despite my best efforts I could not get our old Auto Helm Wheel Pilot to work correctly prior to our departure and it became evident only days before that it would need to be repaired or replaced thus I ran out of time to do so. It was either don't go or go without a working autohelm. We had prepared so much for this adventure that we decided on the latter.

Our first leg saw us exit the heads at around 1400Hrs in company with *Foxy Lady*, *Yknot* and *Beaujolais*. (Ed note: *Andalucia* was somewhere about too!) With very little wind we motor sailed most of this leg and our best sailing without the motor running was through the night. My navigation lessons too many years ago during a coxswain's course came to hand and picking up coordinates from the charts I entered them into the plotter which allowed us to easily navigate the entire journey. By the end of the cruise we were both expert at using the plotter. Our course from the heads to Cape Schanck, Cape Liptrap and Oberon Bay saw us arrive with most of the fleet and drop anchor

at 1100 hrs the following morning - a challenging 20 hours. Adding the 4 hours before that we left Queenscliff to get under way this was a tough introduction to our first Bass Strait Cruise!

After spending a night in Oberon Bay we all departed the following day to Refuge Cove. Choosing to follow *Foxy Lady* between Wattle Island and South Point was rewarding as the view up close on the inside of Wattle Island was well worth it. We had a good sail out into Bass Strait and as the wind dropped out we turned back to the coast and motor sailed around South East Point past Waterloo Bay and into Refuge Cove. This was Jane's first time in Bass Strait and I was pleased that she found the coastline and Refuge Cove as spectacular as I did the first time I saw them. Descriptions such as beautiful, dramatic, colourful and magical do not seem to do it all justice.

Although we had intended to sail to Deal and Flinders Islands with the majority of the fleet, we had concerns as to whether our fuel supplies were adequate. We had not anticipated motoring so much and with a new motor not yet having its first service (less than 50 hours) we had not yet been able to assess our fuel consumption correctly. Our tank holds 65 litres and we took an additional 40 litres of fuel in case we needed it. We did find we were using around 1 ½ litres per hour at 2000 RPM.

On top of this Jane suffered a knee injury exiting the dinghy at Refuge Cove which greatly reduced her mobility and caused her a great deal of pain. So we followed *Haida Gwaii*, *Boomaroo* and *Andalucia* to Port Welshpool. We all restocked our fuel supplies and enjoyed dinner at the local pub then headed back to Refuge Cove the next day. I have to say Refuge Cove was not a bad place to spend our time and the weather was great.

Finally, after several more days in this little piece of paradise we jointly decided to make a dash back to Port Phillip before the forecast bad weather arrived. We had a weather window and we took it arriving back at the heads for the tide at 0700 Hours on the Monday morning. This trip took us 22 hours again motor sailing through the night. However now we knew what to expect and the coastline was more familiar to us. It was still a hard slog having to hand steer the entire way but we did what had to be done and made it safely home.

As Jane said after all of this we were still talking to each other. We have agreed we will do the Bass Strait Cruise again and we have learnt a lot from this experience. Things we would do differently would be to carry more fuel maybe 60 litres spare and definitely with a working wheel pilot we would be able to manage proper watches more easily. I would also replace our fixed gas stove with a gimbaled stove and oven.

We thoroughly enjoyed our first Bass Strait Cruise despite the minor shortcomings and I believe it has given us an enthusiasm to cruise outside of our home waters in Port Phillip in the future.



Coastal fleet enjoying sundowners at Refuge Cove.

# 2016 BASS STRAIT CRUISE BOCCE CHAMPIONSHIP WITH A TOUCH OF SILVER

BY ROBINA SMITH



Bocce Championship in full swing.

With the eleven boats of the fleet of twelve assembled in Refuge Cove (Corazon had stopped at Cleeland Bight and returned to the Bay for another engagement) and knowing this

would be the only opportunity before the fleet split again the Annual Bocce Championship took place on the beach. The coveted trophy of the orange plastic cake plate bought by the *Enyans* a few years ago at an Opportunity Shop was hotly contested.

We also took the opportunity to celebrate the Silver Wedding Anniversary of Pam and Will Merritt, even if a week early, by wearing a touch of silver. Some came prepared with glittery silver top hats, bow ties, tinsel and one imaginative person came dressed as Long John Silver but took so long getting ready that he missed the majority of the sundowners and Bocce competition. Nothing to do with only just arriving in a very full bay so having to anchor on the other side and row across - well done Tom! Those who had not taken the hint before we departed had to be even more imaginative. We had alfoil done many ways - decorating glasses and hats, and a necklace made with nuts threaded

on string.

With so many boats this year we drew lots to divide the fleet into two groups with the winner of each group playing off for the trophy. Some Tasmanians who had joined our sundowners on the beach were

coerced into playing to make it an even number in each group. *Boomaroo* crew were rather late in their appearance so had to forfeit their games. With Robina keeping score, churning the games over before darkness set in and high tide took over the playing field and Brenton adjudicating on rules, each team in the group played each other in an abbreviated form of the game from only one end.

At the end of the group games *Chakana* was tied with *Andalucia* on points so a play off was needed to see who went into the grand final. *Andalucia* won this and played *YKnot* represented by Steve and Aldi in the final game. The problem of different sizes and weights of balls played with by each group was overcome with each team playing with one of each type of ball. *YKnot* won this game and became the Champion Bocce Players for 2016!

Another great sundowners full of fun and hilarity!



Aldi and Steve, *YKnot* presented with the trophy by Brenton.



Assortment of silver hats, tinsel and necklaces.



The guests of honour with Brenton.



Steve, Brenton and Robina pondering Bocce tactics.



A couple of celebrities!



The 2016 Bass Strait Cruise in Company Group at Refuge Cove.



## STARS AND COMPASS TROPHY

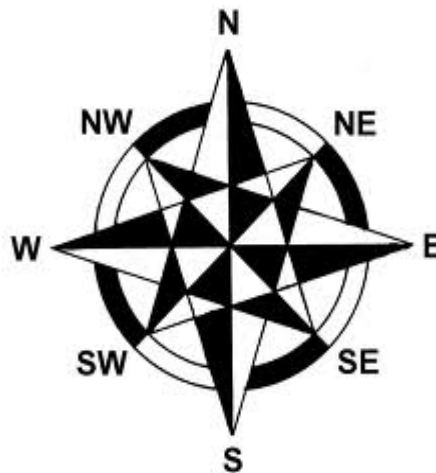
Yes—it's that time of year again!

The Stars and Compass Trophy was donated by Richard Hawkins with the aim of encouraging the practice and use of traditional navigation methods. No answers are to include the use of modern computer based devices such as GPS.

The beautifully etched glass chalice, created by Leisa Wharington, is awarded for the best individual entry in a competition based on answering a number of questions and completing navigational exercises. The competition is open to all navigators with an YA number, not just RBYC members.

This year's question paper, set by last year's winner Chris Reynolds from Hobsons Bay, is available now from RBYC office, email [reception@rbyc.org.au](mailto:reception@rbyc.org.au), or contact Mandy on (03) 9592 3092. All entries must be submitted to the RBYC office by close of business on Friday, 17th June 2016 with the winner presented with the trophy at Presentation Night on 10th July.

**We urge you to test your navigational expertise and give it a go!**



## WYNDHAM WANDERING

BY PAM MERRITT

It's been a long time coming, but after years of delays and some last minute hiccups Wyndham Harbour Marina in Werribee is finally finished and operating.

On April 23rd and 24th a select trio of boats were the advance party to check the marina out on our 'end of month' on water activity. At about 14 nm's WSW of Brighton it's a great destination for an overnigher, a longer stay, or even a day sail there and back - with a reach in a good northerly or southerly.

*Andalucia*, *Haida Gwai* and *Kathleen B* were treated to a fantastic sail over in a 15 knot southerly and a pleasant motor home in light northerlies.

At this stage there are very few boats in the marina but hopefully this will change over time. The Marina Office area has excellent new shower and toilet facilities for visiting boats but when we visited we were informed that hot water wasn't yet connected. To make up for this we were given the key to Unit # 6, a nearby vacant unit in the marina development with a lovely hot shower! It was obvious there

were a few such teething problems but the Marina Manager was very helpful and made every effort to ensure our stay was a pleasant one. The whole Marina development is huge with large apartment blocks and new homes grand enough to almost rival Werribee Mansion! We were amazed. Happy Hour was on *Haida Gwai*, which led onto a 'pot luck' dinner where we pooled our gourmet delights. At this stage there are no restaurants nearby, but there's an excellent cafe open during the day which is part of the marina development. The six of us had a most enjoyable time.

After meeting for coffee on Sunday morning we walked along the foreshore path to the mouth of the Werribee River - a very pleasant walk.

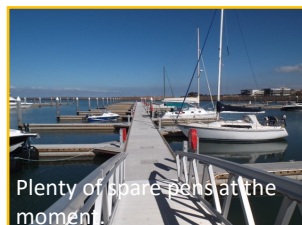
For years we've said that Port Phillip Bay needed more good all weather destinations. In recent years we've added Docklands, Martha Cove and now Wyndham Harbour. We, as a Cruising Group, are sure to support them and enjoy their facilities. For \$50 a night we had power, water, modern facilities, and best of all - a new destination to cruise to.



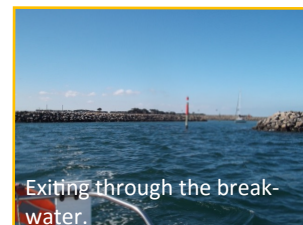
Meeting at the coffee shop.



View over marina.



Plenty of spare pens at the moment.



Exiting through the breakwater.

## Keeping Air out of Suction Lines



For some obscure reason the hose used on some yacht water supply systems has a very shallow spiral on the inside of the pipe. After you have heated the end of the hose so that you can slide it onto the pipe fitting followed by a hose clamp to hold it in place, you would think that there is sufficient circumferential stress, engineer's jargon for pressure, on the hose at the connection to seal it thus preventing air from being drawn into the pipe along the internal spiral if it is on the suction side of water system.

However, many times there is insufficient pressure on the connection, and small amounts of air are sucked into the system which can cause all sorts of grief, such as irregular flow from the taps as the air is continually purged from the system, or the pump not reaching sufficient pressure to turn itself off automatically because there is air in the system providing a cushion.

The remedy is simple and cheap. Smear a small amount of silicone sealant on the inside of the pipe immediately before pushing it over the fitting. Make yourself a cup of tea to allow time for the silicone to harden, and voilà, a perfectly sealed connection on your suction line.

This **Skippers Tip** contributed by **Brenton Smith** who is indebted to Jason of JSA Marine in Manly, Brisbane for this hint after many hours of troubleshooting an air leak when replacing a fitting on *Chakana*.

## MEMBER NEWS

Several members are away cruising, up the east coast, the waters of Malaysia, far north Queensland, canal boats in Europe, land cruising to the Kimberly's or sailing the west coast of Italy researching a future talk. Maybe some articles coming up!

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**Steve Harnett and Jude Harris, *Beaujolais***, left RBYC last Saturday to sail out of the heads and up the east coast of Australia on a 6 month adventure. They are currently in Queenscliff waiting for a weather window. We wish them fair winds for their second time away cruising. The Bass Strait Cruise was their first and shakedown cruise.

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**Sue and Bryan Drummond, *Gypsea Rover***, are currently cruising the coast of Malaysia having joined the Malaysia Rally. They are enjoying snorkelling and sheltered anchorages behind reefs.

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**Allan Haddow, *Ophelia***, has begun his journey further north after summering in Mackay. He is currently in Bowen and still catching the occasional fish.

.....  
**Kathy DeGaris, Alan Richardson, Peter and Karen Johns** and friends are exploring the canals of Holland in a 14.5m canal cruiser.

.....  
**Rod and Sandy Watson**, after spending some time on *Emma Kate* in Sydney Harbour, have left her there to go land cruising to the Kimberleys.

.....  
**David and Sally Spencer, *Sunkiss***, after many red lights and setbacks have had their engine put back together early last week and went on a two hour sea trial with the mechanic last Friday. They are looking forward to getting back out on the water again.

.....  
Please keep your cruising stories, Skippers Tips and other articles rolling in. This newsletter relies on a flow of member contributions.

## CHANGES ON CRUISING COMMITTEE



Richard Johnson has tended his resignation from Cruising Committee due to the pressures of his work and other commitments.

Richard has been on the committee since October 2012. He has made valuable inputs into

the running of Cruising Group and it's various functions over this time.

We thank Richard for his enthusiasm and participation in the committee over the past years.



Rob Hurrell has joined Cruising Committee after many years of membership and participating in cruises and functions organised by the Cruising Group.

With retirement looming he was wondering what to do

with his time. No need to worry now Rob as we will find plenty of jobs for you to do - while you are also completing Nona's list!

There is no truth to the rumour that Rob's frozen shoulder was caused by heavy handed coercion!

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### FRIDAY 20th MAY FORUM DINNER MEETING

Guest Speaker: Russell Kenery  
Matthew Flinders Open Boat Voyages



'*Matthew Flinders Open Boat Voyages*' is about his remarkable adventures in open boats - including his investigation of Port Phillip Bay - voyages that not only embody Flinders' outstanding seamanship but also his skills as a small boat sailor.

Russell Kenery is a yachtsman, an enthusiast for the heritage and elegance of classic boats and a member of both the Flinders Yacht Club and Sorrento Sailing Couta Boat Club. He is the author of the recently published monograph '*Matthew Flinders Open Boat Voyages*'. **These will be available for sale at \$15 each.**

We will also be having a short presentation before dinner from **Andrew Garrett**, President CYAV, giving us an insight into 'How we did it!' - the production of the major publication, *Cruising Victoria*. Andrew will be bringing some copies of this publication for sale at **\$65 for non-members**. Or you could become a member and pay \$45!

As we will be having a speaker before dinner we ask that you organise drinks and meal ticket before the members draw at 7pm ready for a prompt start to the first presentation at 7.05pm. This will be followed by the meal and the second presentation..

Please book with the office (95923092) no later than **Wednesday May 18th**. Bookings essential.

### WEEKEND 28th/29th MAY END OF MONTH CRUISE

A cruise in company with destination and timings determined by the weather. Register your interest with contact person Jenny Collins [jacngrant@gmail.com](mailto:jacngrant@gmail.com) to receive updates closer to the time.

### FRIDAY 17th JUNE ANNUAL CLASSICAL MUSIC NIGHT

#### *More Magnificent Melba*

Three young Australian Opera singers, Fiona Jopson, Soprano; Bronwyn Douglass, Mezzo Soprano; Timothy Newton, Bass, with Assoc. Artist Simon Bruckar, will perform a range of arias and contemporary pieces from well known musicals. Selections will include pieces from Carousel, Madam Butterfly and Barber of Seville.

Enjoy an evening of fine wining, dining and entertainment - all for just \$100 a head.

Pre dinner sherries, delicious three course dinner and some wine included.

6.30pm for a 7pm start. Dress: Black tie.

Booking with Mandy in the RBYC office. (95923092)  
Individual tickets or tables of 10.

**Start planning to attend now and organise friends and family to make up a table for this wonderful night.**

## (Arm)Chair Chat

You are no doubt wondering why there are brackets in the heading of this piece of nonsense.

At our last committee meeting, on Tuesday night last, it was pointed out to me that I had added (ARM) to CHAIR. This happened when I penned my first Chair Chat.

The committee members were far too polite to question the error so early in my tenure.

Now this error of addition occurred because quite often you read what you believe you see.

I now have a new pair of reading glasses!

Roger Walker



### Captain Coxswain's Corner

#### 'ABAFT vs AFT'

There is often confusion about the correct use of these terms.

According to the 'Bible' (Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea) 'abaft' should be used as related to another object or position: ie 'something abaft the anchor winch' may be located well forrard of midships'.

'Aft' may be used to express position: ie 'an aft mounted gun', or to express motion: ie 'the seamen were sent aft to man the gun'.

Hopefully (perhaps optimistically) this clarifies the distinction.