



CRUISING NEWS



AUGUST 2016

CRUISING AWARDS 2016 CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WINNERS

CRUISING YACHTSMAN OF THE YEAR: **BRENTON & ROBINA SMITH**

Congratulations to Brenton and Robina Smith who are worthy winners of the 2016 Cruising Yachtsman of the Year award.

In their Caliber 40, *Chakana*, they have cruised the east coast of Australia, participated in several RBYC Bass Strait cruises and in 2015 completed their first offshore passage to New Caledonia.



During this time they kept a blog of their travels and even managed to edit and publish most of the Cruising Group Newsletters from *Chakana*.

We wish them well in future sailing endeavours.

Roger Walker accepted the award at Presentation Night from John Mooney, Commodore of QCYC, on behalf of Robina and Brenton.



MOST IMPROVED CRUISERS

STEPHEN HARNETT & JUDE HARRIS



Stephen Harnett and Jude Harris, sailing *Beaujolais 1*, a CSY 44, participated in their first Bass Strait Cruise in 2016. This was their second venture out through the heads.



In May, they left RBYC to sail up the east coast of Australia for six months. Their adventures can be followed by reading their blog; beaujolaisi.wordpress.com

Lloyd Hetrick accepted the award on behalf of Stephen & Jude at Presentation night.

STARS AND COMPASS NAVIGATION TROPHY

DOUG HARPER

Doug Harper is very interested in navigation and enjoys navigating. He currently races at Royals at Williamstown but would love to do some cruising where he can use his navigational skills.



Lloyd Hetrick accepted the award from Roger Walker, Cruising Group Chairman, on behalf of Doug at Presentation night.

Presentation Night Photos - Anastasia Jackson

CRUISING GROUP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairperson **Roger Walker.....0407 844 992**

Secretary Jenny Collins.....9585 1154

Editor Robina Smith.....0403 791 347
Email.....robina_smith@hotmail.com

Will Merritt..... 9598 8626

Pam Merritt..... 9598 8626

David Pollard..... 9592 6554

Peter Strain..... 0418 530 385

Rob Hurrell..... 0409 781 477

JULY FORUM DINNER: PETER AND SUSIE STRAIN

ICONIC ITALY

WRITTEN BY PAM MERRITT



Peter and Susie being thanked by Chairman Roger.

In May this year Peter and Susie Strain were lucky enough to be invited to join friends on a charter yacht on the Ligurian Sea which is between the Italian Riviera and the island of

way.

They quickly became aware of the advantages of being early in the season with marinas and harbours less crowded and berths readily available. Weather wise they reported generally very little wind, so take 'sailing' to mean 'motor sailing'. There were several boat issues which were quickly and efficiently sorted by Charter World's Brook Felthensal.

Now you would think, being in the home country of 'fettuccine' and 'marinara', that fettuccine marinara would be a staple on any restaurant menu. But no - they searched far and wide in local restaurants when one of the crew had a craving for the Italian dish. Finally they gave up looking, purchased the ingredients, and enjoyed a wonderful fettuccine marinara on board.

Corsica off Italy's west coast. The charter was for seven weeks, with Peter and Susie joining the boat for two weeks beginning at Saint Florent in Corsica.

The yacht, a Harmony 47, 'Grande Plaisance', was solidly built and comfortable for seven crew. It was well set up complete with bow thruster and electric winches.

From Saint Florent on Corsica's northern coast they headed to Macinaggio on the NE coast, then Marcianna Marina on the island of Elba, with a bus trip to nearby Portoferraio. Then a great 35nm sail to Cecina on mainland Italy. From Cecina heading north they saw some spectacular coastline as well as endless beach huts and deck chairs on the pebbly beaches.

Continuing north they visited Marina Di Pisa (including a visit to THAT tower), Viareggio, Portovenere and Italy's largest naval port, La Spezia. From there they sailed on past the beautiful and quaint little towns that make up world heritage Cinque Terre, five villages and surrounding hills on a rugged part of the coast on the Italian Riviera. They completed their cruise at Santa Margherita, with a visit to the well known harbour of Portofino only 5 kms away.

In all only 195 nautical miles covered in two weeks, roughly the same distance as Queenscliff to the Tamar River so not a long way by Australian standards, with plenty of beautiful old harbours, modern marinas and spectacular sights along the



Some of the crew.

Peter's presentation was accompanied by some great photos of the Italian coastline and harbours, which undoubtedly whet the appetites of many for some Italian cruising.

Before the talk about 50 cruisers enjoyed an Italian themed meal - no, not fettuccine marinara!!



Portofino.



Vernazza

TALL SHIP *TENACIOUS* ARRIVING IN PORT PHILLIP

The Jubilee Sailing Trust Tall Ship *Tenacious* will be arriving in Port Phillip on Sunday 14th August 2016.

RBYC Cruising Group will have **Peter Mitchell**, a representative from the **Jubilee Sailing Trust**, as our guest speaker at the September 16th Forum Dinner. He has sent this message to our members to encourage participation in this day.



"*Tenacious* gets into Melbourne on Sunday 14th August to much fanfare and if you happen to be sailing that day she will be meeting a flotilla including the *Enterprise*, *Lady Cutler* and others in private yachts and motor boats at Fawkner Beacon at 12pm midday, having come through the Rip at 7am, for a 'stern chaser' into Williamstown.

We hope to get plenty of media coverage as I will be taking a 9News crew out to *Tenacious* at 6am and plenty of media at the arrival party at Seaworks at 2pm. If you are not sailing we would love to see you down at Seaworks for a Welcome to Country and a bit of a party atmosphere to welcome her in."

Now I'm think'n that this 'as to be a slightly (Would you believe 'extremely') severe winter even by Melbourne standards. We've been back from our European holiday for about a month and because of bad weather we have missed more races than we have sailed. (Ignore the editor's frown. I'm fully aware that this is a CRUISING Newsletter but we do a bit of competitive sailing to keep our sailing skills up to the mark.) Did I mention that we placed second on Wednesday? Of course, my mood isn't helped when I'm aware that the European weather was warming up about the time we left. You are aware that we came second on Wednesday, aren't you?

We really are trying hard to re-acclimatise. We've even made a guest appearance at the latest Cruising Committee meeting. The others were very polite. No one mentioned our absence from previous meetings. Now, now, don't be nasty. Of course we were missed. I only refer to a 'guest appearance' because we are now planning a van trip to Northern NSW before the end of August. Please don't cry. I will be back in time to provide you with our monthly dose of wise words and sparkling wit. Perhaps best not mention this extra time away to Chairman Roger until I've had a chance to break

the news gently. By the way have you heard from the rumour mill that we placed second on Wednesday? Actually, it's not just a rumour.

Rest assured that I will return. I mean to say, the boat needs antifouling, it's time for the mast to come out, and I have new windows awaiting installation. At home, the garden is looking neglected, the roof on our 90 YO house has sprung a leak over the inside of the back door and 'er indoors is suggesting that a couple of rooms need to be repainted. Come to think of it, staying away a bit longer would have some advantages. Perhaps our editor could approach some of our delightfully erudite, illustrious readers for extra contributions to cover the rest of the year.

That's it. Just try to rug up and keep warm while we are up north. Perhaps a hot rum toddy will help.

Will Merritt

**Will's
Worrisome
Words**

REPAIRING AN AUTOHELM WHEEL PILOT

BY PAUL JENKINS *KATHLEEN B*

Attempts to use the Wheel pilot on *KathleenB* always resulted in mysterious sudden turns to starboard and the rudder hard over on its stops with an alarm going. Numerous attempts to 'calibrate' the thing carefully following the step by step instructions in the manual never resolved the problem.

Being a 'belts and braces' type of person I was not going to let this problem beat me and so set aside the time to completely remove this cursed piece of technology from the boat and connect it all up on a test bench where I could more easily try and diagnose just what was causing it to behave in such a wayward manner.

The system is comprised of 3 components.

1. A Control Head with buttons and display
2. A Fluxgate Compass
3. A Wheel Drive Unit

I had long suspected the fluxgate compass but it was a task finding where it had been installed and when I did it was in such a small hard to access position I would have no hope of inspecting it properly where it was.

Some may ask '**What is a Fluxgate Compass?**' Wikipedia gives a more technical description but simply put it is the electronic compass that senses the direction you are going and tells the Wheel Pilot to correct the course by altering the steering each time the boat veers off course from wave, wind or tide forces.

On the bench all things connected correctly and with the control head on Standby I rotated this fluxgate compass through 360° (well 0-359°). The display on the control head read from 6 to 124° or thereabouts but would not display any compass bearings outside of these.

Doctor Google revealed a simple test procedure using a Multimeter which showed a fault on one of the five wires connected to the Fluxgate Compass. I removed the cover from the unit and found that the offending wire was loose on its terminal and when I flicked it with a small screwdriver it fell away. This is what is referred to as a 'Dry Joint'. A dry joint occurs when solder joints are made and is the result of the molten solder not flowing correctly to form a good electrical bond. Instead the resin in the solder forms a bubble holding the joint together weakly and a partial electrical connection is made. Over time the resin causes corrosion and eventually the electrical connection fails. This would have occurred when the Fluxgate Compass was originally assembled and as my luck would have it, failed at some later stage leaving me with the problem.

I was able to find a new Raymarine branded one on EBay for a fraction of the cost of a new Wheel Pilot system so ordered it.



The Raymarine ST4000+ and the Autohelm ST4000 Fluxgate Compasses are Identical.

With this side of things looking promising I also decided to investigate why the wheel was always sticking when trying to steer the boat. It didn't always stick but when it did it was annoying.

The Wheel Drive unit has a timing belt inside it which is driven by a geared electric motor. For manual steering the belt is loose so it allows the wheel to be turned easily by hand. When operating in Auto Pilot mode the belt is tightened by operating a clutch lever which uses a cam to tighten the belt so it grips on the inside of the wheel drive unit. The wheel drive unit consist of two plastic wheels that clip together using as series of small internal plastic wheels on brass bushes that allow the driven wheel to rotate centrally.



As can be seen in the adjacent photo one of the plastic wheel posts was broken off. The wheels slide over the brass bush and are secured using a pan head screw and large washer.

This was repaired by gluing the post back on and then drilling a screw hole all the way through with a 4mm drill and then using a 4mm metal thread pan head bolt with a nut on the opposite side with loctite.

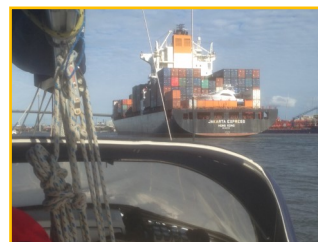
It may only be a matter

of time before the other five small rollers also break so they were all through drilled and secured in the same manner for added protection.

Doctor Google also revealed that there is a concealed belt tensioning adjustment at the rear of the unit (when facing For'ard) beside the drive motor. It is revealed by removal of a small plastic plug. This enabled me to correctly adjust the belt tension so that the wheel drive unit was no longer sticking with the clutch lever off and tensioned correctly with the clutch engaged.

Further bench testing proved the system was now working correctly and was ready for installation back on the boat. The control head was relocated from the cockpit port bulkhead to the helm and the Fluxgate Compass more central and lower down in the boat. Final calibration and sea trials and I am pleased to finally have a working system. The old fluxgate can be repaired and kept as a spare.

Now this is Cruising in Company!



As *Sun Kiss* approached the entrance to the Web Dock after the Docklands Cruise in Company they

were confronted with this ship coming out.

What to do? David decided to do a big loop away from the ship and come up behind it and follow it down the Yarra.

ADD THE HIGHWAYMAN'S HITCH TO YOUR REPERTOIRE

You know the scenario – you and your good spouse are in the dinghy which you have diligently tied to the boarding ladder with a respectable round turn and two-half hitches, the sea is sloppy, and the time comes to depart. You ask your beautifully turned out spouse to untie the painter, and just as this is being done a larger than normal wave slops under the transom just as the transom is heading downwards, and the aforementioned spouse is now sporting the wet t-shirt look and muttering expletives aimed at you. You will notice that I have not mentioned the sex of the skipper or the spouse.

You, being a smart skipper, can avoid this scenario by replacing the round turn and two-half hitches with a highwayman's hitch before even climbing into the dinghy. When you and said spouse are comfortably in the dinghy you can float back away from the mother ship and with a sharp tug the line is released in an instant. You can now head inshore for that 25th wedding celebration or other event that required you to be in your best attire.

The knot is simplicity itself, and one that I used for a year or so on *Chakana* to lash down the liferaft before we set up our current arrangement where all tie down harnesses are lead through a single eye to the quick release shackle. Lashing a liferaft using knots that may take tens of seconds to untie did not appear to be sensible.

The knot is simplicity itself and has the further advantage of being able to tie it on the bight of the rope - rigger jargon that means you do not have to use an end of the rope. The main advantage though is that to release the knot you just have to give a sharp tug to the non-loaded end – hence the reason why highwaymen were reputed to use this knot for tying up their horses. A sharp tug and he could be on his way.

The sketches to the right show how to tie the knot, and animated versions can be readily found by googling 'highwaymans hitch'. It is always good if you can have a memory jogger and I use the one found in the aforementioned google:

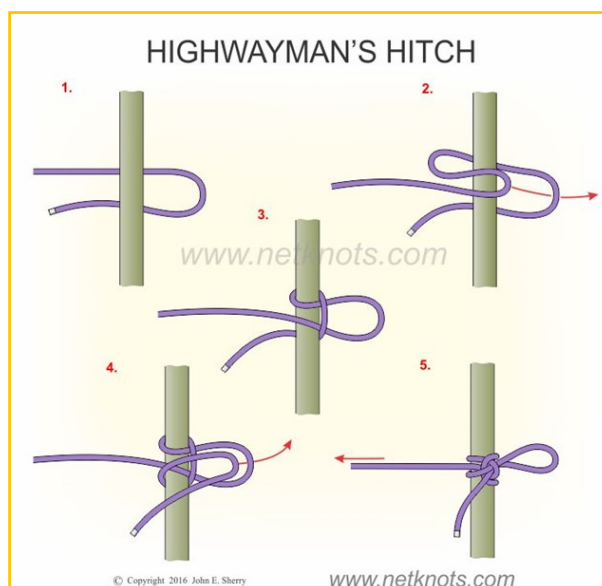
- Make the loop behind the spar/ladder
- Pull through a loop from the loaded end
- Pull through a loop from the unloaded end
- Tighten the knot

It really is that simple!!

The caveats when using this knot are:

- ⇒ Do not use it to tie up your dinghy overnight – this knot is only for temporary use
- ⇒ Do not use it to support a person
- ⇒ The rope and spar need to be a similar diameter – don't use it to tie your boat to a ship's bollard. Your painter and boarding ladder are a perfect combination.

This 'Skippers Tip' contributed by Brenton Smith, *Chakana*.



END OF MONTH ON WATER ACTIVITY

DOCKLANDS FIREWORKS



BY ROBINA SMITH



Robina, Ronda, Sally, David, Pam, Will, Susie, Peter & Roger

The forecast was for fine weather and a moderate westerly wind that was to drop out at night as five boats headed to Docklands for the end-of-month on water activity on July 29th. The Annual Friday night Mid-Winter Fireworks was the lure.

I managed to find a crewing position on **Andalucia** and was pleased to see that the boat was in cruising mode with the 'conservatory' erected over the cockpit. No need for the heavy duty wet weather gear!

After several tacks the headsail was furled as we approached the Yarra River but as we steamed towards the West Gate Bridge, the skies started to look ominous, the beacon lights turned on and suddenly we were engulfed in a downpour. Thank goodness for the conservatory! On our approach to



Early morning at Melbourne City Marina.

Docklands the rain eased but wet weather gear was still donned for docking. **Sun Kiss** was ahead of us and had to tie up in the downpour!

On arrival we found **Catwalk** had the best of the weather by sailing up in the morning and **Summer Wind** had also had a faster/earlier trip up. **It's a Privilege** arrived soon after and provided warming drinks (Peter loves his Cappuccino maker) to all the crews.

As dusk settled we headed to the Melbourne City Marina facilities to enjoy predinner drinks before taking in the spectacular fireworks from the comfort of the balcony.

The marina facilities were then put to further use with the barbecue fired up and salads prepared. The 'Great Potato Cook Off' was between Susie's potato frittata and Robina's Jamie Oliver smashed potatoes with both delicious and warming on a cold night.... But not so cold as we had the fire blazing!

Catwalk made a wise decision to leave early the next morning before the strong northerly set in. The crews of **Sun Kiss** and **Andalucia** had a leisurely morning and sampled Docklands cuisine for breakfast before a fast trip back with a strong northerly under furled headsails. **Sun Kiss** was soon tied up in her pen but **Andalucia**.....well, we all make a mess of coming into our pen sometimes! Lucky there were a few people around to help them out of a tricky situation.

It's a Privilege had decided to stay another night or two and enjoy the delights of Melbourne and Docklands before heading home.

If you are reading this and wishing you had come, you have the opportunity to join the August end-of-month cruise to Docklands for the last night of the Winter Fireworks! See back page for details.



Plates are empty. Dinner must have been good!

RHINE - MAIN - DANUBE CANAL

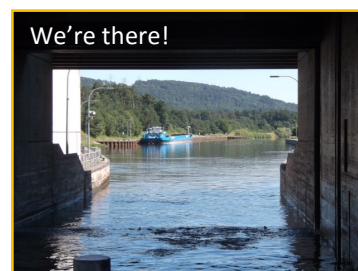
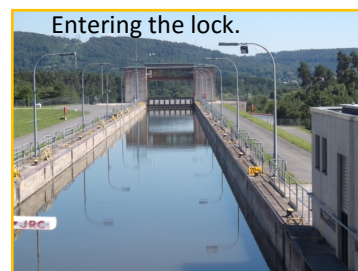
BY PAM MERRITT

On a recent river cruise between Amsterdam and Budapest we found ourselves on the Main-Danube Canal in Bavaria, Germany. It connects the Main (pronounced Mine) and Danube rivers from Bamberg via Nuremberg to Kelheim.

The dream of creating a waterway linking the North Sea with the Black Sea was first initiated by Charlemagne way back in the 8th century, then in the 19th century the King Ludwig gave it a go with his Ludwigskanal. It fell into disuse because of the narrowness of the canal and the large number of locks, making it unsuitable for commercial craft and therefore unprofitable.

The present canal was begun in 1960 and completed in 1992. It is 171 kilometres long and connects the North Sea to the Black Sea, providing a navigable waterway between the Rhine delta at Rotterdam in the Netherlands and the Danube delta at Constanta in Romania. Overall 2,200 miles long and passing through 13 countries.

We were quite fascinated with this incredible piece of engineering. At its highest point the canal is 406 metres above sea level and is currently the highest point any ship can go above sea level in the world. A series of locks takes ships to this height, with the deepest locks being 25 metres. River cruise boats like the one we were on - 135 metres with 11 metre beam, fit snugly into the locks. Amazingly there are two huge locks near Vienna 310 metres long and 34 metres wide which can hold up to four of these river cruise boats at once - thanks to the wonders of modern engineering!!!



MEMBER NEWS

With the rest of us in Melbourne experiencing a cold wet winter is it any wonder that RBYC Cruising members have been travelling to warmer climes.

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Rod & Sue Slater, *Foxy Lady*, are on a camping/four wheel drive trip in northern Australia.

.....
Rod & Sandy Watson, *Emma Kate*, have returned from their camping/four wheel drive trip to the Kimberlies and have been reunited with their boat on Sydney Harbour.

.....
David and Sally Spencer, *Sun Kiss*, are heading off in the middle of August on a holiday that will feature some ferry "cruising" between the various islands and countries of Scandinavia and the Baltic states and Russia. They will be spending a week on the Isle of White in the UK, so are crossing their fingers that they might get some sailing in there.

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Allan Haddow, *Ophelia*, is on a mooring in Cooktown after a great sail from Low Isles.

.....
Jude Harris and Steve Harnett, *Beaujolaïs*, have arrived in Pancake Creek after spending some time repairing the autohelm in Bundaberg.

Fiona and Dean Cook, *Time Flies*, must be loving Mooloolaba as they have spent a couple of weeks there, some of the time in the marina and now back in the pond.

.....
Our best wishes to **Nona Hurrell, *Aquacadabra***, as she recovers from her recent illness. ***Aquacadabra*** has been out of the water having new rigging and others jobs done ready for circumnavigating Tasmania and heading north next year.

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Please keep your cruising stories, contributions to 'Skippers Tips' and best and worst anchorages rolling in. This newsletter relies on a flow of member contributions.

Newsletter Editor Needed for March/April 2017

In March and April 2017 *Chakana* will be participating in the Van Diemens's Land Circumnavigation Rally. Due to limited internet coverage Robina will be unable to edit the newsletter. Please consider volunteering your services. Contact Robina (robina_smith@hotmail.com) for more information on what is involved for the two months. The newsletter is an important part of communication within the Cruising Group.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

FRIDAY 19th AUGUST FORUM DINNER MEETING

Guest Speakers: Rob Hurrell and Grant Dunoon
Drones: New advances in Photography
Plus a movie of the last Bass St Cruise in Company
including Drone footage compiled by Rob.

A change from the previously advertised speaker due to the double booking of that speaker.

We thank Rob and Grant who have stepped in at the last moment to give us an overview of Drones and what is involved in taking footage from this new perspective.

Rob has compiled an excellent movie with background music that includes Drone footage, movies and stills from the 2016 Bass Strait Cruise in Company. This will be shown on the night.

There may even be some footage from Grant launching his Drone from *TryBooking.com*.

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

Please book with the office (95923092) no later than Wednesday August 17th. Bookings essential.

FRIDAY 26th AUGUST END OF MONTH ON WATER ACTIVITY

A cruise in company on Friday 26th August to Melbourne City Marina to see the fireworks.

Arrive by 6pm, fireworks at 7.30pm with a meal afterwards either self catering in the marina facilities or you could go out to a local restaurant.

Make a weekend of it! Take advantage of the Melbourne City Marina Special Offer. A 2 for 1 voucher that will last until the end of the financial year ie June 2017. Voucher must be collected in person from the Marina Office.

Contact for this activity will be Rob Hurrell. Please email him with your intention to join the cruise. Further information and updates can then be forwarded to you. robnona@bigpond.net.au

Book your own berth at Melbourne City Marina and let them know you are part of RBYC Cruising group.

As this is the last Docklands Friday Fireworks for 2016 it may be busy so get in early.

FRIDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER FORUM DINNER MEETING

Guest Speaker: Peter Mitchell
Jubilee Sailing Trust: Tall Ship *Tenacious*

See article on page 3 about *Tenacious* arriving in Port Phillip Bay.

Armchair Chat

As is reported elsewhere in this issue, five boats ventured to Docklands over the last weekend in July.

I know that it can be cold at this time of year but don't be deterred; Melbourne City Marina provides a very comfortable facility for yachties. We have the use of a well equipped kitchen, complete with dishwasher, a warm and comfortable sitting room, a dining area, and a BBQ on the outside deck. Wi Fi is available and the large TV screen is appreciated by footy fans.

So now you may be wondering why I am giving you these details; I have noticed that it is often the same members who venture to Docklands and I would like to encourage more of you to participate when we cruise to that destination.

If the weather does not meet your style of cruising come across by car and enjoy!

ROGER WALKER



Captain Coxswain's Corner

'ENGINE POWER'

Do you have an adequately sized engine fitted to your boat? The first small powerboat to cross the Atlantic did so as a maker's promotion to demonstrate the reliability of a 10HP paraffin fuelled marine motor. The vessel was a single screw, 38-foot launch. The crossing, from New York to Falmouth was completed in 1902, without any serious problems in 36 days.