



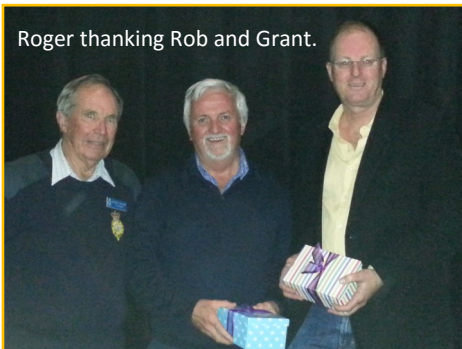
CRUISING NEWS



SEPTEMBER 2016

AUGUST FORUM DINNER: ROB HURRELL & GRANT DUNOON A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF CRUISING

WRITTEN BY RONDA WALKER



Roger thanking Rob and Grant.

There was a quick change of program for August's Forum Dinner when our expected speaker, Peter Bland, withdrew at short notice. Instead, members Rob Hurrell and

for some time in the military and in the business world they are now very accessible for recreational use. He outlined some of the issues to consider before purchasing both drone and camera and assured us that this is user friendly technology. The gimballed mounting for the camera gives smooth images and with GPS tracking the drone can be set to predetermined pathways, rather like the autopilot on your yacht. If you purchase dual controls, one person can concentrate on the flight path while another manages the filming.

Grant Dunoon introduced us to the potential of photography from a whole new angle and the possibility of creating our own movies.

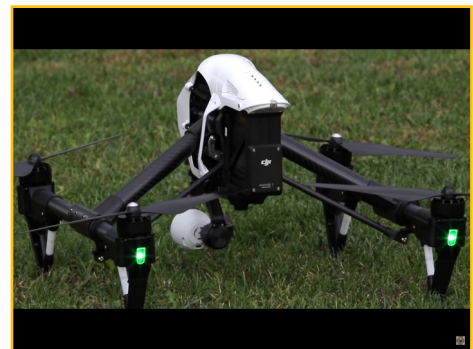
There were also some cautionary notes: it is important to avoid crash landing your drone into rocks or into the sea. The drone has the capacity to return to its launch site if it is close to running out of battery but that may not be helpful if the launch site was your foredeck, at that stage some nautical miles away from your current location.

After capturing our attention with a 'YouTube' video of drones in action, Rob Hurrell shared his video of Cruising Group's 2016 Bass Straight cruise, created from images taken with his drone borne camera. The result was a spectacular 'bird's eye' view of boats, crew members and anchorages in a

30 minute movie with a stirring sound track. After promising not to 'drone on', Rob explained that while drones have been used while in response to a question, Grant suggested that it would be wise



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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

Killiecrankie



to check before operating a drone in the Docklands area since this is close to the Moorabbin – Essendon flight path.

Of course the next step is to turn those hours of marvellous images into a short movie. Grant demonstrated the seemingly simple process of cutting and pasting video and still images to create a 30 second movie. Starting with about 15 minutes of footage Grant selected key sequences, joined them with smooth transitions and added a soundtrack and titles. Grant made it all seem very easy to do; how many members tried this out over the following few days?

The number of questions asked of Rob and Grant indicated the level of interest in this topic. Chairman Roger thanked them both for an interesting and informative presentation.



Deal Island

Queenscliff Cut



Rob has suggested some useful sites for further information on drones and the available options.

dji.com
uavcoach.com
thewitecutter.com
tomsguide.com
pcmag.com

Editors Note: Grant uploaded the video to youtube that was created on the night in the hope that it may inspire others to create their own now after seeing how easy and fun it can be. Use this link.

<https://youtu.be/4OTAVIlyGU4>



Refuge Cove

G'day. As I put pen to paper, I'm sitting outside our van in a delightful almost tropical park in Nambucca Heads. The sun is out, the sky is blue etc, etc. Of course I'm wishing I could be in cold wintry Melbourne with my Cruising Group friends (ha). However I have to do my bit by spreading largesse over the nation to help the struggling oil companies and keep the cash flowing through the vaults of our banks.

You will be surprised to hear me say that I'd rather be here than doing a night watch on a sailing boat in Bass Strait in the middle of winter. I know you will all be astonished to hear me say that perhaps I've reached an age whereby creature comforts have become increasingly appealing. I appreciate that you all think that I'm just

a young bloke (go on, you know that's what you think!) but we had one stormy night here with strong winds and roaring surf and I couldn't help thinking, as I lay in a warm, comfortable, stationary bed, how pleased I was to not be out at sea.

Perhaps Madam Editor could drop me a line when Melbourne's average daily temperature has stabilised at above 20 deg and I'll return.

Will Merritt

**Will's
Wayward
Wanderings
Words**

POSTCARD FROM *OPHELIA*

SAILING IS THE LIFE: COOKTOWN TO HORN ISLAND

BY ALLAN HADDOW

While in Cairns I was checking Meteye for Cooktown to Cape York winds. Every day was 20-25kn SE with a strong wind warning most weeks – to 30kn. Some days the wind dropped down to 15-20kn. I was wondering how I could do it but accepted that everyone else goes north in the same conditions, so why can't I. I planned to go close to the west side of the Barrier Reef to hopefully get some relief from the wave action. This worked where there was reef above water and to a lesser degree for submerged reefs. For no reef it was still okay with a slight swell. Against the mainland the swell would have been awful.

I left Cairns on 01-08-16 via an overnight stop at Low Islet, possibly my worst anchorage to date due to a swell side on, and arrived at Cooktown on 02-08. It was a great sail all the way.



I spent 9 days at Cooktown and finally on 11-08 the perfect window opened for 2 full days with 15-20kn SE for the planned 235NM 47hour non-stop sail to Lockhart River. I wanted to spend a week at Lizard but with no internet for work, I had to bypass the island. I spoke to others later who said it was 30-35kn that week so I was lucky. It actually worked out to be 237NM on the chart plotter and 45hours.

I could sail at 5-6kn with just the #2 genoa up in 15kn breeze – tide, don't really know and did not feel it. I passed Cape Bedford and then Cape Flattery, 35NM north of Cooktown with its open roadstead sand loading jetty and the turn off to Lizard. I was 2hours ahead of my schedule when I reached Cape Melville, 106NM north of Cooktown, at 2am Friday. The wheel pilot could handle a full genoa up to 15kn over the starboard stern quarter, mostly SE, but I had to furl to about $\frac{3}{4}$ when sleeping for my 1hr on 1hr off rotation.

I did not pole out the genoa at night. Sailing up that coast is quite difficult as often the heading was close to NW +-10 deg. so one had to be careful not to gybe the genoa, which I did numerous times while hand steering in the stronger winds and at night. The autopilot would do it as well when a wave passed under and *Ophelia* wanted to turn towards port and sometimes starboard into the wind.

So the waypoint alarm went off just before Cape Melville and just as the wind increased to a constant 30kn. It seems Cape Melville is like Gabo Island – wind wise. It was a quick trip around the cape and past Flinders Island with no moon. A tug (no AIS) was heading south towing a barge – thank goodness I was east of the shipping channel at that stage.

Once past Flinders Island the wind dropped to 15kn and I went down for a sleep. I awoke in Princess Charlotte Bay to the sun rising and many trawlers (no AIS) to the east on Saturday 13-08 with no wind, so on went the motor for 4hours. Then the wind belted in from the east at 20kn so I flew along west side of the reefs at 6-7kn for the next 6hr. I had to furl the genoa to $\frac{1}{4}$ so I could get an hours sleep.

From about 7pm to 4am I had to hand steer to Lockhart River in 20-30kn SE. There was a $\frac{1}{2}$ moon but it went to sleep 1hour before setting the anchor at Lockhart – a perfect anchor in the middle of a very large river system. Later that day I moved up the river further to escape the stronger winds. I caught two trevally and a barracuda – the barra was used in the crab pot, the fish carcass used in a soup and the flesh I cooked numerous ways – one was the Street Kitchen cuisine packaging found at your local supermarket. No crabs in the crab pot and I was told later there are no crabs in the Lockhart River system – no idea why. There are 2 local yachts and they are looking at Cairns or Weipa for haul out. I met a couple on a 42' seawind catamaran named *Sunny Girl* from Perth. They are heading to Darwin.

I stayed at Lockhart for 7 days working with reasonable internet and then set sail at 5am for Escape River via a night at Margaret Bay, Cape Grenville – 70NM each. The autopilot belt broke not long after leaving Lockhart so it was a long 14hours each day. I motored with the full genoa in 15-20kn

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Cape York Lighthouse



Horn Island



SE to get to my destinations faster – at times doing 7.1kn. *Sunny Girl* was in Margaret Bay after visiting some reefs. I left Margaret Bay at 2am with *Sunny Girl* 2 hours after me on 21-08. They soon passed me with genoa poled out. I was floundering for the first 4hr in 20kn S directly along my rhumb line so had to gybe a few times, with no autopilot, until I could clear a few reefs and then head NW. I rested for 1/2hr in the lee of Hannibal Islets, then had a wonderful sail into Escape River for anchor down at 1620hours. The entrance to Escape River is shallow at 3.5m at that time with a SE swell running. It is very deep inside at 10-20m.

I left Escape River at 0600hours on Monday 22-08 (a work day) to catch the flood tide (going north) at 0930hours for the southern entrance to Albany Passage. (12NM from my anchorage against the tide and a couple of miles south of Cape York). *Sunny Girl* left 1hour later and passed me 1/2 way with spinnaker flying. We both stopped at a beach in the passage for a look. They went onto Mt Adolphus Island while I headed to Horn Island for the week's work. I would like to get to Adolphus, but is 30+NM east – going backwards. I rounded Cape York at 1206hours on 22-08 – another milestone completed. I could not afford the time to stop and go ashore as a stronger wind was on the way and I had to make the most of the flood tide, now moving west, for the 20NM motor sail to Horn Is. In the 20kn SE I was hitting 8.3kn while pointing 10 deg. up from my rhumb line due to the current. *Sunny Girl* arrived later the same day at Horn Island.

So at Horn Island I have had to organize the following replacement parts; autopilot belt and NMEA2000 network cable (under warranty), two autopilot spare belts, remote VHF radio (battery went to sleep after I was buzzed by the border security plane) and water pump gasket on the Bukh engine. While doing my 4-6 week maintenance I found the single bolt holding the forestay/furler had corroded – averted a sure disaster with losing the rig.

Horn Island is the port for Thursday Island with all cargo being barged over. It seems all ships traverse Cairns to Horn Island. One can catch the ferry to Thursday Island for \$15 return for the 20 min. trip. There are 3 companies involved so there are plenty of times available. The airfield is also on

Horn Island. The Thursday Island people are very friendly.

I caught a nice trevally so used the carcass in the crab pot last night – the net has been ripped with no crabs and the culprit has taken off with my last bait container, probably by those 4 legged prehistoric creatures.

Thursday Island is steeped in history with 3 large cannons pointing in 3 directions overlooking the town. The cannons were erected in 1891 in preparation for a Russian invasion (which never happened).

It was near Thursday Island that the Dutch vessel *Duyfken* sighted land in 1606 – thought to be the first European sighting of Australia. Captain Cook took possession of the east coast of Australia from latitude 38 deg (appears to be just south of Lakes Entrance) on 22-08-1770 for King George III at Possession Island (just west of Cape York) – exactly 246 years ago from my arrival at Horn. No one seems to know who named Thursday Island. From what I can tell pilots board ships just north west of Thursday Island and hop off at Cairns. The book I am reading now mentions 40 pilots on the books. And of course one cannot leave here without having a beer at Australia's most northern pub – did that last week.

My after thoughts about the trip from Cairns to Horn are that it was made difficult with no autopilot, but I had champagne sailing conditions all the way by choosing my sailing times.

I am now planning Horn to Weipa to Groote Eylandt to Gove. There are 4 aboriginal communities from Gove to Darwin with internet – one, Milingimbi, has a 2km exclusion zone from low tide – that makes it difficult for me. I applied for shore access but have been refused due to a 3 week window with 5 days ashore for a morning walk somewhere in that time. They wanted 2 to 3 days with no lee way. That's life. 3 videos I uploaded to YouTube – to show the fantastic sailing.

Allan has uploaded 3 clips to YouTube - to show the fantastic sailing!

Cairns to Lockhart River - <https://youtu.be/ELQhf9mLHpk>

Lockhart River to Escape River - <https://youtu.be/KTodeBd2biw>

Escape River to Horn Island - <https://youtu.be/Kitty037d14>

Allan met Vernon Deck, a professional photographer who has also downloaded some great photography. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgF3P33zmbewXrksprcvFJA>

USE YOUR GPS TO SWING YOUR COMPASS



I know, I know, in this day of electronics it is all a bit passé to use that funny thing with the swinging card near the helm to steer your boat, aka known as the ship's compass, but one day, you may just have to when all those square screens requiring electrons no longer have them.

When you do, you had better know the deviation for each heading, or you may be 10° or more off your desired course which could lead to all sorts of embarrassing and/or disastrous scenarios. Deviation is the product of the magnetic forces acting on the compass from the bits of iron and other magnetic influences on your boat, and most of us have several hundred kilos of iron, aka the engine, in close proximity to the compass, plus numerous bits of wiring, and best of all, speakers in your cockpit sound system.

Finding the deviation for your compass is done using a process called 'swinging the compass' and for digital compasses, i.e. those that need electrons, you can practically eliminate deviation by simply swinging your boat through a continuous circle while the digital compass is in calibrate mode. Five minutes and it is job done. At the end I always find a transit and just check that the calibration process has actually worked!

However, for the ever-reliable compass in the steering binnacle, it is a little more complicated, but if you use your GPS (boat or hand-held) it is almost as easy. In the old days swinging the compass involved finding some suitable transits and then steering back and forth amongst them while someone kept an eagle eye on the compass reading; or sitting still and have someone gently swing your boat around its axis while using a pelorus aimed at a transit and reading the ship's compass.

So, how do you do it?

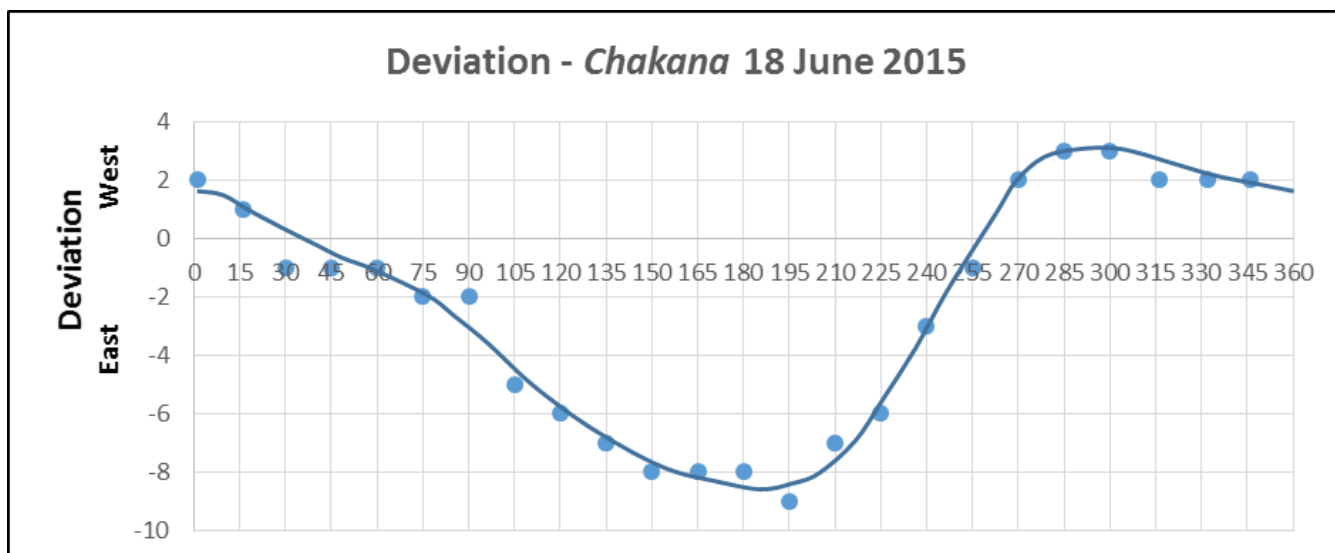
First, pick a calm day with no tidal current affecting your boat, and preferably where you can steam in a circle without hitting sandbars, other boats etc. Also change the settings on your GPS so that the COG is in °M. This eliminates the effect of earth's magnetism (Variation) from your calculations – just making life easier for you!

Next start steering in a direction that is a multiple of 15°; 0, 15, 30...225, 240, it does not matter which one, lock on the autohelm and let the boat attain a steady heading. Read the COG from the GPS and the compass bearing on the lubber line of your compass. Record both readings. Dial up a course change of 15° on the autopilot, or request your helmsman to do the same, and take another set of readings. Repeat until you have gone around 360°.

Now head back to the marina, and before going to the bar and you are still thinking clearly, plot your results. A sample of the results from *Chakana* is shown below. Remember the old adage: Error East – Compass Least; Error West – Compass Best. If your Compass reading is less than the COG, then the error, i.e. the deviation is EAST. Similarly if your Compass reading is more than the COG, then the deviation is WEST. Do not become confused at this point!!

Plot the results on a graph and voilà – your very own Deviation Card for your Compass. Put a date on it, preferably laminate it, and keep it ready for that inevitable day when you have to start chanting 'True Virgins Make Dull Companions' at the chart table and the crew starts speed dialling the local shrink. The time taken to prepare your Deviation Card will then become the best 60 minutes of your life, particularly if visibility is poor, or land is many miles beyond the horizon.

This 'Skipper's Tip' contributed by Brenton Smith, *Chakana*.



DOCKLANDS FIREWORKS CRUISE

26th TO 29th AUGUST

BY ROB HURRELL *AQUACADABRA*



Our monthly cruise for August ended up with 6 boats heading up to Docklands for the Friday night fireworks and activities over the weekend. *Boomaroo* was away early in the day to supervise the arrival of the fleet during the afternoon. *Haida Gwaii* was given a few minutes head start around 3.00pm from RBYC followed by *Aquacadabra* who stuck to a one tack course to Williamstown and managed to get some sails up to try out the new rigging recently complete down at SYC. *Aquarius* were also along to give the new engine a good run and try out their motor boat minus the mast. *Summer Wind* and *Coba Libre* joined later in the afternoon.

We were all settled into our pens at Melbourne City Marina - MCM by 6.00pm and headed to the MCM lounge for Happy Hour before the 7.30 fireworks. As most cruisers know, the MCM moved to new facilities about 2 years ago, directly overlooking the Docklands waterfront. Facilities include 2 spacious lounges, dining areas and outside decks and BBQ facilities, full kitchen equipment with hardly a utensil to have to take from your boat. Showers and towels provided and daily papers each morning to read after a shower!

At 7.25pm the warning signal was given by Rob to encourage us to take better positions to watch the fireworks. Of course

the firework display didn't disappoint and is a highlight of a cruise up to Docklands during July and August each year.

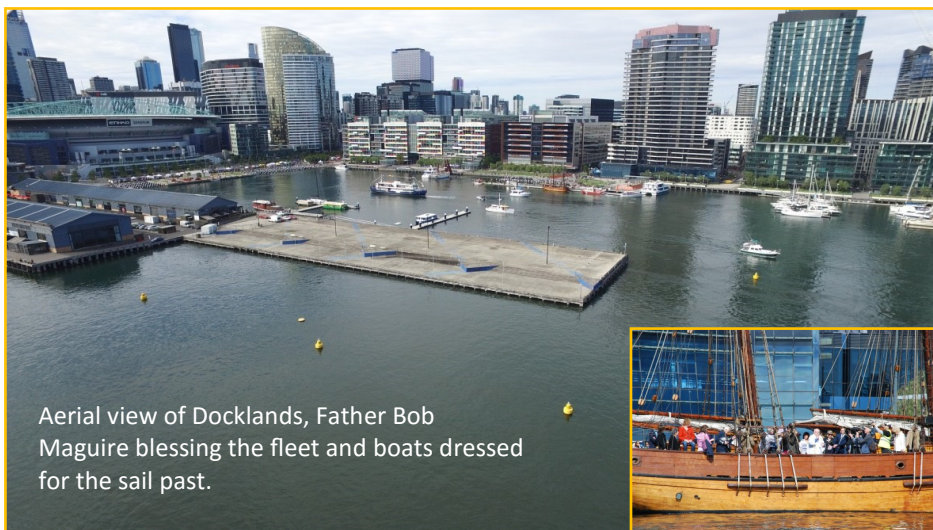
We all returned to the MCM lounge to enjoy the self-catered dinners we had all prepared. Conversations and many laughs continued on until late in the evening before returning to our vessels assured of a good night sleep in a calm anchorage!

Most boats just made it a one night visit and by mid-morning only *Aquacadabra* was left to enjoy a couple more days of R&R.

An added attraction on the Sunday was the annual Melbourne Regatta and Blessing of the Fleet held in the Docklands precinct. Festivities started around 12.00 noon with the blessing of the fleet by Father Bob Maguire, mass singing of the sailors hymn *Eternal Father Strong To Save & Auld Lang Syne*. This was followed by a flotilla led by the schooner *Enterprize* sailing out of Victoria Harbour and under the Bolte bridge to join the *STS Tenacious* and return to Victoria Harbour.

Keep the July and August dates in mind next year, to enjoy a night or two in Docklands and the fabulous fireworks to start it off.

Featuring more of Rob's drone photos!



Aerial view of Docklands, Father Bob Maguire blessing the fleet and boats dressed for the sail past.



2016 STARS AND COMPASS WINNER



Doug Harper was presented with the 2016 Stars and Compass Navigation Trophy at the August Forum Dinner by the Chairman of RBYC Cruising Group Roger Walker.

He had been unable to attend Presentation night.

Doug races at Royals in Williamstown, is very interested in navigation and enjoys navigating.

We hope he can put these skills to further use.



MEMBER NEWS

What number of boats makes a fleet?
With the arrival of **Bryan and Sue Drummond's** new catamaran to RBYC joining *It's a Privilege* and *Kirra Kirra* do we now have a fleet of catamarans in Cruising group?
We will have more details on Bryan and Sue's new toy in the next edition of the newsletter.

Members have continued to head to warmer climes although this week is giving us all a hint of spring weather and hope that we can roll up the winter woollies and wet weather gear soon. As written in an article on page 3 *Ophelia* has reached the most northern part of Australia. **Will and Pam Merritt** have gone land-cruising up north.

Maree and Ted Masur, Pizazzz, have joined the exodus to warmer climes with a trip to Europe starting in Italy and then on to Greece and taking in some big ship cruising.

Steve Harnett and Jude Harris, Beaujolais 1, have arrived in the Whitsunday's after spending time at Brampton and Goldsmith Islands on the way. They are intending to spend a month or so there and assessing their options as to where to leave the boat when their leave runs out for a convenient take off point next year.

Also spending time in the north, **Paul Jenkins and**

Jane Cooper, Kathleen B, have spent 10 nights cruising the Whitsundays on a Jeanneau 37 chartered from Shute Harbour. They have caught up with Beaujolais 1 for dinner at Hamilton Island and shared sundowners on each others boats. They have been lucky with the weather according to Jude who has had some ordinary weather on their trip up the coast.

Fiona and Dean Cook, Time Flies, are taking a more leisurely pace on their exploration of the east coast of Australia. Having navigated through the narrows from Gladstone they are now at Rosslyn Bay Marina after spending time at Great Keppel Island. *Ed Note: Marine Traffic App is great for keeping up with the movements of these guys.*

Our best wishes to **Nona Hurrell, Aquacadabra**, as she continues to deal with recent health issues. We hope you are back on deck soon!

Rod and Sue Slater, Foxy Lady, have returned from their camping trip to FNQ and beyond. Rod is having a shoulder repair done before he mans the winches again. Hope it is a quick recovery and the covers are off Foxy Lady soon!

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

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Chakana will be participating in the Van Dieman's Land Circumnavigation Rally in March/April 2017. Due to limited internet coverage Robina will be unable to edit the newsletter in those months. **My inbox (robina_smith@hotmail.com) has been empty** of any offers to volunteer services during this time. We can make this as easy as possible for the volunteer- combine the issues so only one needs to be done in April, have someone else do the layout etc.

Please consider volunteering as the newsletter is important part of communication within the Group.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

FRIDAY 16th JULY FORUM DINNER MEETING

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

Peter Mitchell will be speaking about "the Jubilee Sailing Trust which is a globally unique charity which utilizes the adventure of tall ship sailing to unlock human potential and break down barriers between people of different circumstances - especially between the physically disabled and able-bodied".

Tenacious is a specially built tall ship that can be sailed by everyone; irrespective of age, background or level of physical ability. She arrived in the bay last month for a programme that includes day sails and longer voyages.

This is an exciting addition to the bay and it should be a very interesting presentation.

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) no later than Wednesday September 14th. Bookings essential.

SUNDAY 2nd OCTOBER OPENING DAY AT RBYC END OF MONTH ON WATER ACTIVITY

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.

Fall in behind Chairman Roger, *Catwalk* and the other cruising boats after the Juniors and racers have sailed past. Check the website for further details about the timings for the day.

FRIDAY 21st OCTOBER FORUM DINNER MEETING

Guest Speakers: Justin and Deb Page
Miss Behaving Circumnavigates the World

Justin and Deb spent 4 years circumnavigating the world on their *Discovery 55* with their two children. They arrived back at SYC last December.

Their YouTube playlist to whet your appetite can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8ai7b1vH5kPQxluA77adLH3KjPDMJc1s>

29th OCTOBER - 1st NOVEMBER END OF MONTH CUP LONG WEEKEND CRUISE

Keep this weekend free for a cruise in company with a bay destination to be decided

Watch out for the Pt Phillip Passage Destination Series. Can be entered as a cruiser. Destination Race on the Saturday and Female helms on the way back on Sunday

Don't forget the Blairgowrie Yacht Club Deal. Free berthing for up to 7 nights until 28th October. Contact nicky@bys.asn.au Only 1 used - 9 spots still available!

Armchair Chat

Cat Walk's autopilot developed a mind of its own recently and suddenly turned to port without letting me know why!

This unexpected turn had a devastating effect: the wine went everywhere. Now the cost of one, the lost wine, plus two, the probable purchase of a new autopilot was not a very appealing combination. But wait! Paul Jenkins has already been down this track and he is a man who knows how to repair the pesky thing. Now somewhere in a recent newsletter there was an article about this very problem, written by the man himself; of course it was only last month. Thanks Paul.

The other part of this little ramble concerns the solution. A spare belt was purchased from a local supplier but a subsequent web search was instructive. The local purchase cost three times the price quoted in the US, even allowing for currency conversion.

Chairman Roger Walker



Captain Coxswain's Corner

'THREE SHEETS TO THE WIND'

A sheet is a rope line which controls the tension on the downwind side of a square sail. If, on a three masted fully rigged ship, the sheets of the three lower course sails are loose, the sails will flap and flutter and are said to be 'in the wind'. A ship in this condition would stagger and wander aimlessly downwind.

Hence, the term is also used to describe a sailor who has imbibed too much and is said to be 'Three sheets in the wind'.