



CRUISING NEWS



OCTOBER 2016

SEPTEMBER FORUM DINNER: PETER MITCHELL

TENACIOUS IN SPIRIT, AND THE BOAT

WRITTEN BY BRENTON SMITH



Peter Mitchell, Roger Walker and Chris.

There is no doubt about it, when the Brits decide to do something well, they excel at it. We have seen it in the recent summer Olympics and we saw it again at our

confidence.

In 2016/17 *Tenacious* is to spend nigh on 12 months in Australia and NZ providing day sails and passages for both able bodied persons, and less able bodied persons. For the nautically minded she is a bark, which means she has three masts with square sails on the foremast and mainmast, and fore and aft sails on the mizzen mast. Although it is a traditional rig configuration (Cook had the same arrangement on the *Endeavour*), and the hull has largely traditional lines, she has a modern construction of strip planked plywood encased in epoxy inside and out. This provides a light(?), very strong and rot resistant hull that should last 100+ years. The accommodation is also very modern – with all crew having a bunk and not a hammock in sight.

last Cruising Group meeting when Peter Mitchell from the Jubilee Sailing Trust spoke about the how they provide sailing opportunities for all comers; and this is from a country that only knows it is summer because the sun takes a long time to disappear for three months of the year.

Using two aptly named vessels; the *Lord Nelson* – named after Britain’s most famous handicapped sailor, and *Tenacious* – a word that inspires sentiments of gain from pushing through adversity; the Jubilee Sailing Trust provides sailing opportunities for less able persons, and some of them appear to be very less able, but through their experiences on board, find out that they have some remarkable abilities.

We have all sailed enough to experience that sense of exhilaration that occurs when we push through our own barriers, and gain the self confidence that comes from pushing through them. Through sailing on these two largely conventional sailing vessels, those who have some rather special challenges of their own, go to sea and experience what I am sure are even greater moments of exhilaration and self-



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Tenacious is a large ship of 65m (215ft) from the tip of the bowsprit to the stern and 42m (138ft) from the waterline to the top of the mainmast. She has a registered tonnage of 586 gross tons and displaces, i.e. actually weighs 740t. The two foremast each have five yard arms and the sails on these combined with those on the mizzen mast enable up 12,200ft² (1,130m²) of sail able to be carried;



and with 740t she would need all of that sail area to drive her in light airs.

To enable the less able bodied people to move around she has 6 wheelchair lifts in the accommodation, and block and tackles to enable them to be lifted to the

crow's nest at the top of the first futtock shrouds (google it to find out what these are!). There is little need to go above the first futtock shrouds because the top three yard arms have roller furling sails. The fore and aft sails are roller furled also.



The use of these modern sail handling methods enables her to be sailed with only a small crew of 40, half of which can have a significant disability. A good combination is seen as having the 20 less able crew being 4 deaf, 4 blind and 8 being confined to wheelchairs. These are all expected to take part in one of the 4 watches alongside of the able bodied crew. Less able or not, the common denominator is that both groups of people are vulnerable to seasickness – I am sure we can all relate to that!!

Running a vessel of this type is not cheap, and even with the huge amount of volunteer support, the cost of running *Tenacious* is \$4million/year. About \$2.5million of this is from ticket sales and the rest is from donations. The tickets are \$400/person/day. Grant Collins has already signed on for the passage from Adelaide to Melbourne in October.

If you are into square rigged ships then you can volunteer to take on a leadership role by training as a watch leader, where being a good shepherd is a key aspect of the role.

Go to their website – www.jst.org.uk or open the files that accompanied this newsletter to find out more information and how you can assist this group of people that provide opportunities for the less-abled amongst us.

Following is the link to the first video shown at the presentation shot in Costa Rica on *Tenacious'* voyage from Southampton to Australia.:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4EjfQwelAw&feature=youtu.be>



CRUISING YACHTSMEN OF THE YEAR

At the September Cruising Dinner Roger Walker presented our 2016 Cruising Yachtsmen of the Year, **Brenton and Robina Smith, *Chakana***, with their trophy as they were unable to attend Presentation Night.

Brenton and Robina spent 2014 cruising up the east coast of Australia as far as Gloucester Passage in *Chakana*, their Caliber 40LRC. They left *Chakana* in Manly, Brisbane, for the summer. In 2015 Brenton sailed across to New Caledonia with Tom Hinton, who stepped in after Robina had an unexpected but very successful back operation. Robina joined Brenton in New Caledonia, and after exploring some cruising grounds they sailed back to Brisbane two up. In November they sailed back to RBYC with Tony Garvey as crew for part of the journey.

NEW BOAT TO THE RBYC MARINA **BIRUBI (SOUTHERN CROSS)**

BY SUE DRUMMOND

A Leopard 42



I am not yet ready to swallow the anchor. When we sold our beautiful *Gypsea Rover*, a mono, somewhat unexpectedly, in Malaysia, I was already convinced of the safety and comfort of cruising catamarans. We have friends on 2 Fountaine Pajot 41's who have completed circumnavigations. We have also met a South African couple who sailed theirs round Cape Horn.

On the half of the East Malaysia Rally that we did complete, there were at 7 catamarans. The owners of each design or build generally say that theirs is superior and were keen to show them off so this was great experience. Most were over 45ft and we had the good fortune to spend a month on a beautiful Lagoon 50, *Songbird 50* from Melbourne. There were Lightwaves 38 and 45 which are Australian designed (Schionning) and built in Queensland. One Fusion 40 catamaran was built in Thailand. Fusion are an Australian company who deliver kits in a container. The story of the build was a trying one...very cheap labour but skill level not so good and the build took 3 times longer than anticipated. The company will also build to completion in Australia. A new company of American origin and design but built in China, Balance Catamarans, was represented by the brand new 45ft version. It looked very fast and the owners were happy with her performance from Hong Kong to Kota Kinabalu. Amongst the production cats were a Fountaine Pajot 41, a Catana 47, a Kronos 45, a Leopard 47 and the big Lagoon.

Yachthub and Yachtworld were thoroughly examined on a twice weekly basis. A comparative list of available catamarans of interest was drawn up. Unfortunately suitable cats in Australia were located north of Sydney. Having just returned after 8 months away, I was not keen to do another trip so I was very quick off the mark when *Birubi*, located in Martha

Cove, came up for sale 3 weeks ago. (7weeks ago by the time you read this.) My reading and discussion tells me that catamarans need to be light, have high bridge deck clearance to reduce slamming in a seaway, have the weight a mid-ships, have a prodder and gennaker for propulsion and then the other trimmings.

In fact, *Birubi* is a bit low in the water and at 11 tons she is not light. She doesn't have a prodder and is a bit stern heavy with her 2 shaft drive Yanmar 40hp engines BUT....she has a great layout, a bar, great cockpit clears which are ideal in Victoria to keep out the biting wind and very good accommodation. She has a Northern Lights generator (thankfully, not a "fix me Panda") and a spot, wired and plumbed, for a washing machine, which I consider pretty essential for cruising.

She is 11 years old, built in South Africa, sailed out to Hong Kong (so she must be able to offshore), then sailed to Australia, where she was sold and kept in the Whitsundays until 2 years ago. She has been well kept but has the original gear from 2005 so will need some updating. The Engineer has already started research on the most recent Raymarine gear. We have organized a rig check and sail servicing.

Birubi will be ideal for cruising to Tassie, which is as far as I want to go at present....well may be Vanuatu and New Cal....at some point in the future.

Editors Note: There are now three boats I know of in the marina with a name that means Southern Cross. *Birubi* and *Mir-rabooka* are both aboriginal words for Southern Cross. *Chakana* is Incan for Southern Cross.



I CROSSED THE GULF OF CARPENTARIA YIPPEE!

BY ALLAN HADDOW

In 2015 Allan left RBYC to sail single handed up the east coast of Australia in Ophelia, his Compass 29, while continuing his paid work from the boat. After leaving Ophelia in the Mackay marina through the summer cyclone season he has continued the journey in 2016. This is the continuation from last newsletter of his voyage.

I stayed at Horn Island for 3 weeks while waiting for replacement parts, so was able to get a lot of work done. I rather liked the area, but did not make the time to walk around Thursday Island which is so steeped in history. I left Horn Island on 13-09-2016 0630hr to catch the flood tide going west in the Torres St. However it took ages motoring west against the tide to get around the north of Horn into Torres St. Once into Torres St. I had the SE 15kn breeze and tide with me reaching up to 10.2kn a couple of times. I intended to call into Seisia but the wind direction prevented me and the tide carried me past the entrance so off to Weipa I went. At the west end of Torres St is the Sand Banks – a very wide shallow area with numerous deeper channels – according to Navionics. I followed one channel but had to cross into another channel to make my exit into the Gulf. Water depth went from 6m to 1.9m under my 1.5m deep keel. Navionics was spot on. By this time the slight ebb tide was against me.



Spanish Mackerel

It was just after I entered the Gulf about 1500hr that I hooked onto a very large Spanish Mackerel – I managed to get he/she up

to the yacht three times before running out again and to my good luck broke a hook on the lure so was free. There was no way I could have lifted it into my yacht. I estimated it at 1.5m long. Out went the lure again and soon after I landed a 1.1m Spanish. It was bled, filleted and into the fridge within 1hr. It was far too much meat for me so I gave most of it away at Weipa the next day.

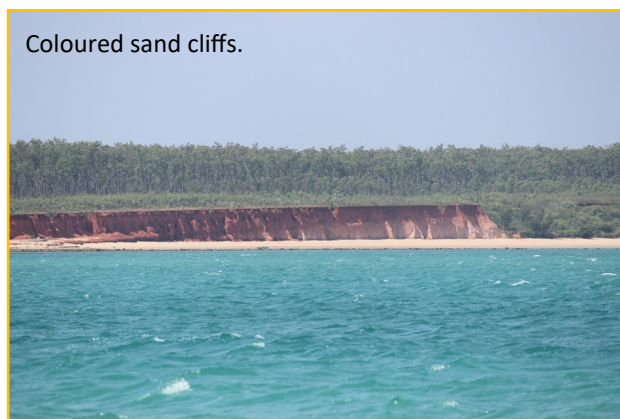
The remaining 140nm journey down to Weipa with both sails was easy going - easterly winds from port side, although I had to motor at times due to no wind. I arrived at the start of the 10nm long shipping channel about 1300hr on 14-09 but after calling Weipa VTS I had to wait 2hr for a ship to enter. I

motored slowly beside the channel and was told by VTS to follow the ship in. Then came the call from a ship inside Weipa that wanted to go out at 1530hr, so I received the call to wait for that ship. I eventually anchored at 1800hr and promptly had a good size scotch to celebrate. I stayed at Weipa for 3 days and did not get to the town. The area is very brown, dusty and not real inviting but I could have stayed a few weeks looking around. The current mine site for bauxite runs out in 2 years and another site is being opened up with new roads currently being constructed. Once the roads are complete work will start on the open roadstead wharf into the gulf. Rio Tinto runs the mine. It seems the area has a lot of commercial enterprises compared to Groote Eylandt, with self employed contractors.

So on Saturday 17-09-2016 at 0700hr I lifted anchor after receiving VTS clearance and left for my 350nm Gulf crossing via some coloured sand cliffs 10nm south. The channel poles make good drying spots for the local bird life. In the information center there are some photos of these cliffs with spectacular red bauxite upper layer and silica sand lower layer near the future wharf. These cliffs have to be protected under the new lease arrangements. I nearly did not get there due to the fickle winds from wrong direction. I thought I saw them so headed west, but there they were, by now too far from me, to see them close up. There was a yacht anchored off them.



Local bird life!



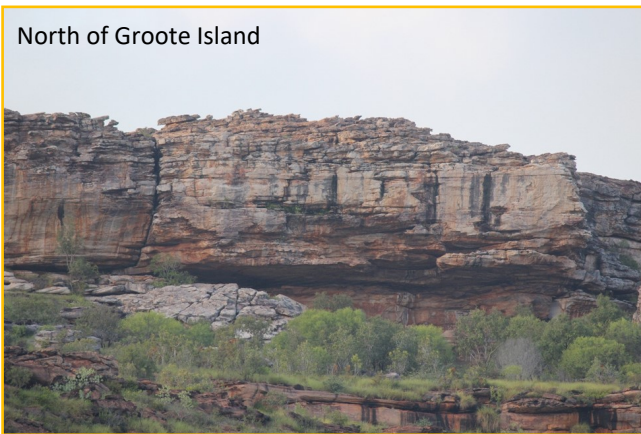
Coloured sand cliffs.

CRUISING NEWS OCTOBER 2016

Meteye was showing easterly 10-15kn for the first 30hr or so then nothing shifting to variable (mainly from the NE for the last 24hr. The actual was light east, north, west and south for the first 30hr. An hour or two after the 10-15kn southerly came in, the SE swell arrived and with a NE swell it was very roly. The wind was not strong enough to keep the sails full while rolling. For the first 30hr I could sail with both sails except when the westerly arrived so decided to motor into the light breeze. Fish – they were everywhere jumping out of the water, including dolphins. I did put out the lure at one stage to see what they were – big eye tuna 400mm long. There were larger silver looking fish below the surface, presumably mackerel. Even the birds were having dinner – this was in the middle of the Gulf. I slept for 2hr every 4hr and even managed some work on the laptop.

However at 43hr into the journey the autopilot motor packed up with a message 'ships battery low'. I checked and the batteries were full as I had been motoring a fair bit. I could not get it going so had to hand steer for the next 30hr. I did park the yacht twice for a couple of hours and slept. Apart from that the crossing was incident free arriving at north east corner of the 3rd largest island in Australia about 0400hr on 19-09. At this point my eyes were closing while standing up steering and I would go off course so had to have a sleep – woke with the sun rising. I had drifted a short distance. The north of Groote Island is solid rock as the photo shows.

North of Groote Island



So finally at 1130hr on 19-09 I set the anchor off Alyangula township north west corner of Groote Eylandt. I had an even bigger glass of Shivas Regal scotch to celebrate.

Alyangula is a mining town run by GEMCO – Groote Eylandt Mining Company – previously BHP and now South 32. Everything in the town is on a lease and owned by GEMCO. There is no hotel as such, one can have a beer at the golf club or join the Recreation Club. To buy liquor at the bottle shop, one has to have a liquor license, but the catch is you have to be a resident of Groote. So I was grogless since leaving Weipa, except for whisky. The town is very clean and green – I am very impressed.

The following photo is from the BBQ area overlooking the non-swimmable beach and manganese loading wharf in the back-

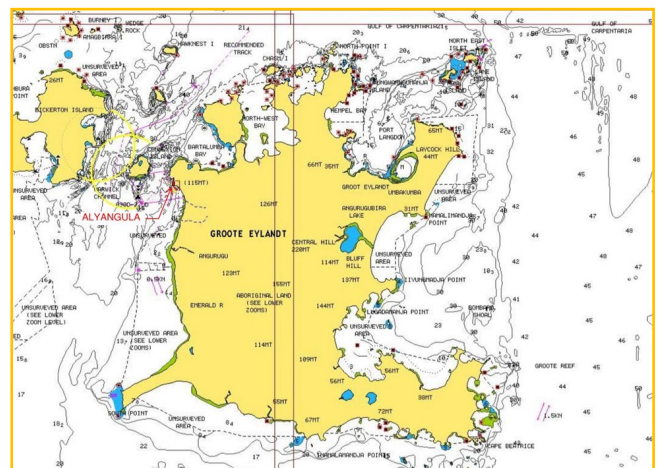
BBQ area and non-swimmable beach at Alyangula.



ground. There is a local crocodile and I have seen him/her stalking a stray dog on the beach. Luckily the dog walked into the bushes just in time. Apparently the bays around Groote are very nice but I don't have time to check them out. Internet is good with 4G 2 bars.

I took the autopilot motor apart and found it had a broken something inside so was replaced by Raymarine. So all is fixed and ready for the 130nm trip to Gove. Darwin is having early rains and thunder storms this year. I hope to be there by the end of October.

The anchorage at Alyangula gets rather roly with tide against northerly wind and south swell and is uncomfortable. I spent a few days in the north east corner of Bartalumba Bay – around the corner to the north – where I had good internet and fishing. One cannot go ashore without a permit.



Crossing the Gulf was my first time over 2 days at sea and first time where one cannot see any land, not even other vessels. The crossing took 76.5hr and I used the motor for 63hr. Take out the 2 x 2hr sleeps and this works out to be 4.8nm/hr – quite slow. What did I do on the trip – first 43hr I slept, worked and hand steered a bit. Last 30hr I hand steered!

Ed Note: Allan has now spent time moored off Nhulunbuy (Gove) after motoring all the way from Alyangula with lots of trawlers and tuna to keep him company. On Monday he set off from here on his first leg to get to Darwin.

PLANNING A COMFORTABLE PASSAGE



Various crew and spouses may not believe it, but cruising skippers actually do try to plan a comfortable passage. This has been made easier with the wind forecast information, which in my experience, has been remarkably close to reality, sometimes even 6-7 days from when the forecast was made.

For all passages, short or long, there is no doubt that the wind forecast (speed and direction) dominates when it comes to determining comfortable cruising. However, when it is time to plan a passage across the paddock, aka Bass Strait, we have another wealth of forecast information that we can use to improve comfort levels, and these are the wave forecasts. In fact, Bass Strait is so complex, that it rates its very own specific area for wave and swell forecasts. Others locations only rate such generalities as 'North East Australia'.

Chakana is soon to make a delivery trip from Melbourne to Hobart in readiness for the Van Dieman's Land Rally and the passage plan will need some decisions and the sequence is broadly shown below. Note, that when considering options for departure times, I look at weather and sea conditions in 12 hour increments. I find anything less is 'noise' and just adds to information overload – but then my brain is losing agility!

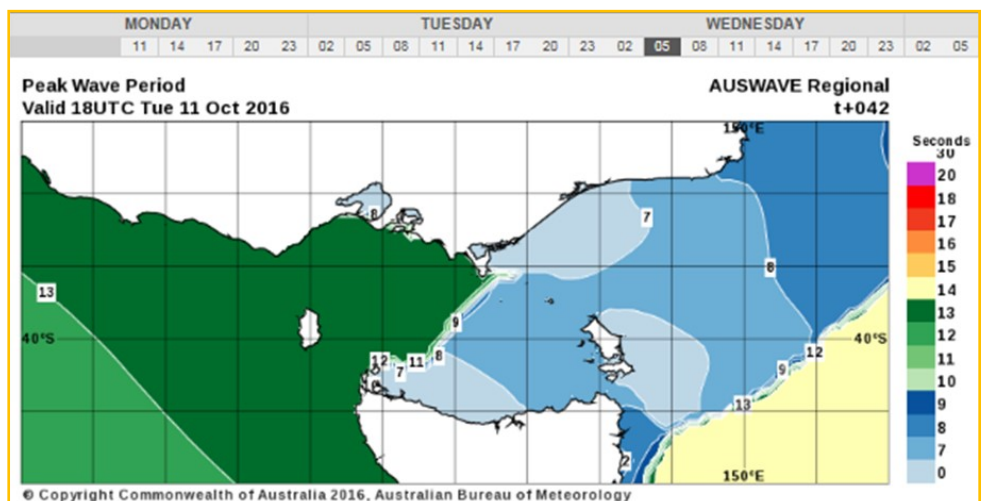
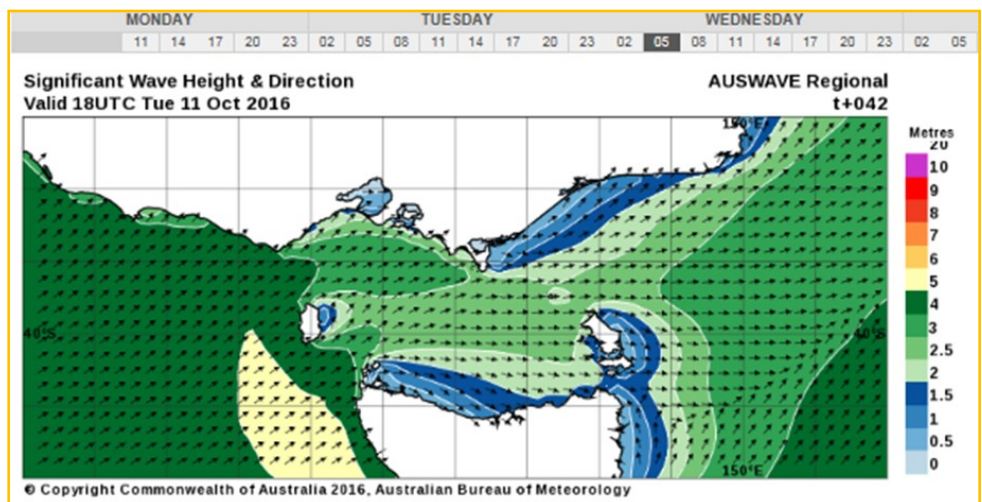
After the wind, it is the 'Combined Sea and Swell' that becomes a determining factor for choosing between the option of south, then east to Banks Strait; or mostly east and then south around Flinders Island; or dare I suggest it – non-stop around the west coast. Combined Sea and Swell is shown in metres – and clearly a 2m sea is considerably more comfortable than a 4m sea – or is it?

Large seas are not so significant if the wave period, this is the time between wave crests, is long – say more than 12s, and very pleasant if the period goes up to 15s or more. Anything less than 7s and you should be checking the 'Combined Sea and Swell' very carefully!

Look at the examples to the right and the 3m seas south of the Heads may look like an uncomfortable option, but these are a leftover swell and as can be seen in the second chart the wave period is 13s for most of the crossing to Tasmania. The wind throughout is W at 15-20kts. Maybe a good passage plan would be to head towards the '11', and then head to the NE corner of Tasmania as the wave height lessens.

In summary, use the wind forecasts to make the initial decisions on when to go, and then shape the course based on the wave forecasts – and in particular the Combined Sea and Swell and Wave Period. The distances sailed may be longer, but add the comfort factor and the choice may become obvious.

This 'Skippers Tip' contributed by Brenton Smith, *Chakana*. There must be other skippers and crew who have ideas to share!



Vale Nona Hurrell

10 May 1955 - 23 September 2016



Members of the Royal Brighton Community were saddened to learn of the unexpected and untimely death of our respected and highly regarded Member, Nona Hurrell, after a short illness.

Members will remember Nona for her big, radiant smile, her sincerity, her aura of gentle calm, her warm and quietly supportive manner and her strength of spirit. She was a generous and welcoming hostess, with a good sense of humour and liked nothing more than entertaining, or being entertained, on a boat.

Nona and husband Rob spent many years as sailors, "mucking about on boats" and they had owned everything from trailer sailers to ocean racing vessels. Nona, with Rob, as an active member of the Cruising Group regularly participated in on and off the water activities. She and Rob sailed their boat, "Acquacabara" in the Bass Strait cruise earlier this year. Nona loved this adventure, exploring new places, going on walks, enjoying the Sundowners and the camaraderie.

It was little known that Nona had contended with various health issues for much of her adult life, but had determined to positively confront this with strong Christian faith, and embraced all that life had to offer.

She and Rob were looking forward to undertaking the Tasmanian Circumnavigation of Tasmania in 2017. In anticipation of this Nona completed the Sea Safety and Survival course in May of this year. Their future plans included taking their boat to Queensland for extended cruising.

A large contingent of RBYC members and of the Cruising Group joined the congregation of over 500 friends and family at the Bayside Church on Tuesday 4th October to support Rob and her family in celebrating her life and legacy, and to mourn her sad passing.

We extend our sincere condolences to her adored family Rob, daughter Amy, son-in-law Ben, grandson Levi, her mother and two brothers.

Farewell Nona - You lived well, laughed often and loved much. You will be sadly missed.

Ross Fisher

MEMBER NEWS

Cruising Group gives a warm welcome to new members:

Paul Pascoe Vice Commodore RBYC

Alan Sherratt and Maree Cox whose Jeanneau 26, *Sans Souci* (meaning Carefree), will soon arrive in pen 221 after some work is completed at Sandringham. Alan sailed a Boomerang 21 at Sandringham many years ago and a recent enjoyable sail on Lake Macquarie with his daughter and her husband re-awoke his interest in sailing.

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Spring is supposed to be here and with that the wedding season begins in a big way.

Saturday will see **Rod and Sandy Watson, Emma Kate**, celebrating the wedding of their middle daughter Kate in the Yarra Valley. The name of their boat gives it away as to what they called their first daughter!

The following Saturday **Robina and Brenton Smith, Chakana**, will be celebrating the wedding of their son Lachlan who will hopefully arrive back in time from his work in the US.

We wish both families a lovely day as they celebrate with family and friends.

Jude Harris and Steve Harnett, Beaujolais 1, have returned to Mackay, after sailing as far north as Gloucester Passage, to ready the boat for an extended stay in the marina over the summer cyclone season. Their 6 months leave has flown by and left them wanting to spend more time up north when holidays allow. Their blog has been a great read for the last 6 months. It seems it won't be long before they return to Melbourne (and work) and we may be able to hear some of their stories first hand. They have plenty of stories to tell about 'How not to catch a fish' and 'How many types of fish there are in the sea'.

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Fiona and Dean Cook, Time Flies, have continued their leisurely voyage up the East Coast and are currently enjoying the beach and sunsets at Cape Gloucester.

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Please keep your cruising stories and contributions to 'Skippers Tips' rolling in. The 'How I Started Sailing' and 'Best or worst anchorage' articles ran out of steam a while back when it seemed all who wanted to write something had done so but if you are new to the group or find you now have some spare time please feel free to revive these by emailing a contribution to Robina. robina_smith@hotmail.com This newsletter relies on a flow of member contributions.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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.

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

Find out how they kept the education of their children progressing. Did they venture through the Red Sea? Hear their stories about going through the Panama Canal and the long ocean crossings.

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

Please book with Mandy in the office (95923092) no later than Wednesday 19th October. Bookings essential.

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

A cruise in company with a bay destination or two as determined by the weather. Possible destinations are Portarlington and Wyndham Harbour, Werribee.

Cruise coordinator is Pam Merritt.
willm@hotkey.net.au Please contact her with your expression of interest in joining the cruise. Further information and updates can then be forwarded to you as the destinations are decided by the forecast .

FRIDAY 18th NOVEMBER FORUM DINNER MEETING

Guest Speakers: Vannessa Twigg and James Heywood
Mediterranean Mariner Boating Holiday

Croatia Rally with RBYC members.

SATURDAY 26th NOVEMBER END OF MONTH ON WATER ACTIVITY

To be decided but keep the weekend free.

SATURDAY 10th DECEMBER HARDSTAND CHRISTMAS PARTY

Always popular, our BYO everything bbq on the Hardstand with carols and great company.

Armchair Chat

I had reason to be in Geelong on a recent Friday morning, with enough time to drive further down the peninsular to Portarlington. I have not been across to that part of the bay for some time so I was amazed to see the work being done to set up a new marina. As those who have moored off the old breakwater are aware it could sometimes be very uncomfortable.

The Parks Victoria website notes that "Completed work includes the construction of two rock breakwaters to the east and north of the pier, a new 190 metre long concrete commercial berthing jetty and a suite of marine industry access upgrades for the pier and harbour." A floating berth, still to be completed, will sit alongside the new Jetty.

You might like to check the Parks Victoria website for details of the plans and updates as new works are completed.

As you will read elsewhere in the newsletter your Committee thought that over the Cup Day weekend Cruising Group members might like to sail in company to Portarlington and then to Wyndham Harbour.

Roger Walker

Ed Note: Or where the wind dictates!



Captain Coxswain's Corner

'ABOVE BOARD'

Well m'earthies I 'specially enjoy words from old-en sailin' days which 'ave slipped into English and commonly used, often not knowing where it came from.

I reckon, on a sailing ship all manner of skulduggerly might be goin' on below deck, (just be askin' William Bligh) but out on the open deck or 'above board' all could be seen and heard so you could be reasonably certain that what was seen and heard had no hidden meanings or motives. Land lubbers liked the idea and used those words on shore.