



CRUISING NEWS



SEPTEMBER 2020

Brisbane to Melbourne along the bush fire coast. January / February 2020

By
Geoff Brewster

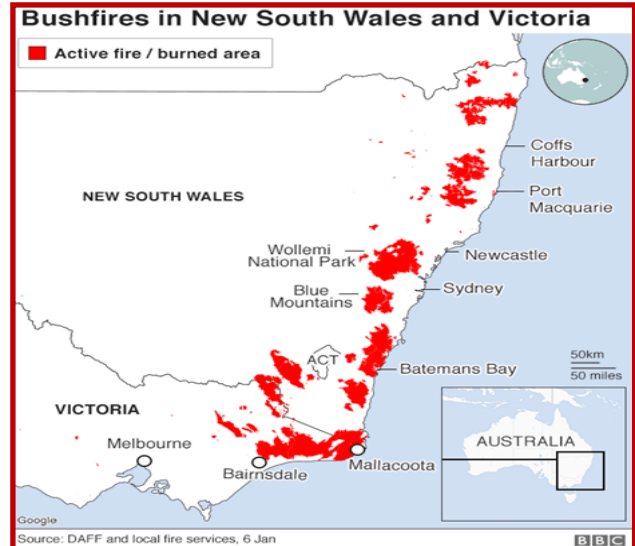
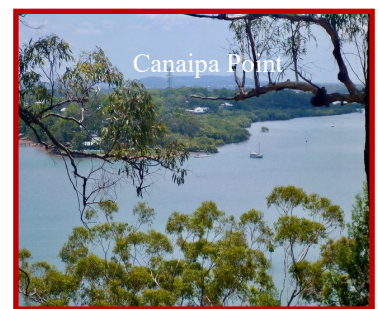
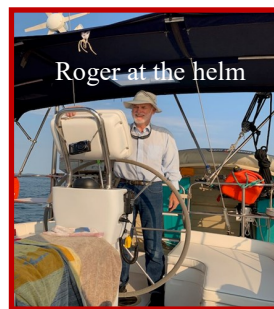
While anchored in Tin Mine Cove on our trip up the east coast in 2019, we were covered in smoke and ash from fires on Wilsons Promontory, this seemed to set a pattern for the next year or so. We sailed through smoke from fires on Bribie Island near Brisbane, on our way North, and in January / February this year on our return trip to Melbourne, Saffron was again covered in smoke and ash from bush fires raging at numerous locations down the east coast.

After a low key new year's celebration at the Manly Marina Brisbane we farewelled our new-found friends at Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron and set off for Melbourne on 2nd January 2020: first stop Peel Island in Morton Bay. Going ashore at Horseshoe Bay it was a bit of a "Queensland" experience to see lots of people sloshing around in the shallows in minimal attire with a great variety of drinks immediately to hand. It must have been a bit surreal for crewman Roger Lloyd, fresh off the plane and the winter cold of the UK. We explored some parts of Teerikoo national park but never did find "the Horseshoe" marked on the chart.

As we are members of Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron, we decided to make use of their facility at Canaipa Point on Russell Island. Having engaged positively with the submarine land mass on a previous occasion, we waited for the high tide and had an uneventful run anchoring in a deep channel off Canaipa Point tucked in against North Stradbroke Island. The afternoon was spent walking on North Stradbroke Island where we noted the effort being put into the rehabilitation of areas which have been sand-mined. We walked little used tracks and ended up high enough to see back down Morton Bay and also to the open Coral Sea to the South East.

A meal and drinks with folks making use of the Canaipa facilities was enjoyed but we did not linger too long into the night due to the squadron of mosquitoes threatening to carry us off.

I decided it would be a good idea to head to Southport via the inland waterways behind the break-out entrance at Jumpinpin. As it turned out I should have stuck to the more conventional route of going further west via Steiglitz and Jacobs Well. The route to Jumpinpin is the channel between Russel Island, then Cobby Island, then Short Island then Crusoe Island and North Stradbroke, it is a bit tricky. We had gone this route before so I knew about the twists and turns and the shallow areas but I figured I could follow the tracks on the chart from the previous trip, and with our draft of only 1.47 m I figured we would be OK. We were OK but I have to admit to removing some barnacles on the propeller with a little polishing on a sand bank opposite the Boat Haven Boat Club on North Stradbroke Island.



From Jumpinpin we motored inside South Stradbroke Island on the waterway to Southport. Amongst the plethora boats in the waterway was a standout Cigarette Class power boat, complete with reclining young women, which I swear went past us at something like 80 miles per hour. At Southport Barbara left us to return to Brisbane and to commence the trip by road back to Melbourne while Saffron with myself and Roger on board headed out through the Gold Coast Seaway to head south.

. It was a false start as bumpy seas and little wind convinced us to turn around and come back. We anchored over-night in the "paddock" and re-commenced our journey south the next morning .

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. We departed at 1030 bound for Coffs Harbour, keeping well out to pick up the Australian East Coast Current and to avoid intermittent reverse streams inshore. As is often the way with sailing, the wind was coming from the direction we were heading so the iron spinnaker got a workout. We arrived at Coffs Harbour at 0930 after a long overnight motor-sail, and organised a berth, showers and fish and chips at the fisherman's wharf for lunch.

We stayed in Coffs until 7th where Roger discovered that a compatriot Captain John Korff (sic), originally from Lowestoft, sheltered from a storm behind the Mutton Bird Island in 1847.

The Mutton Birds were to be a constant companion to us as we tracked south. I am not sure which particular type of Procellariidea the birds were, be they short tailed, or slender-billed (also called yolla or moon birds by aboriginal people) or wedge tailed shearwater, or something else. The Mutton Birds of Coffs / NSW coast are different to the birds we see in Bass Strait, the Coffs birds are endangered, the Bass Strait birds are currently prolific .

. The anchorage at Trail Bay is completely open to wind from the north so it was a bit too rough to get ashore having said that it was reasonably comfortable night except for an occasional vicious pull on the bow by the anchor chain, but the anchor held well.

At 0915 we were off again in a force 5 from the north, bound for **Camden Haven/ Laurieton**.

We did well at 8 knots offshore on port gybe, but the autopilot was making heavy weather of it, so we hand steered most of the time, running a 2-watch system of 3 hours each. By 1500 we were on starboard gybe, the wind and waves had dropped, and the autopilot was coping better. It was a beautiful day. The wind continued to drop and with advice from the Volunteer Marine Rescue (VMR) (who were extremely courteous and helpful all down the NSW coast) we motored over the bar at 1630 travelled the short distance up the estuary and tied up at the RSL jetty, and in the very short time it takes to walk the 200 m or so we were having one or two beers along with very nice meal at the very well-appointed RSL club .



During the overnight trip from Southport we had passed fires burning inland from Byron Bay/Lismore/Balina/Yamba we did not see any glow from the fire and no smoke as it was blown inland and of course it was dark. We were to see the evidence and trauma of the series of fires all the way down the east coast to Lakes Entrance.

We checked with the authorities and confirmed they were OK with us continuing our trip so long as we were self supporting as many communities along the coast such as Bermagui were short of supplies.

After reprovisioning and fuelling at Coffs we set sail at 1300 on 7th January bound for Trail Bay some 35nm down the coast with a northerly pushing us along quite nicely.

The marker buoys were still showing their lights as we departed Camden Haven at 0530 on 9 January, bound for **Nelson Bay**, 85 nm down the coast. We had a light headwind for about half the distance, but it did swing behind us later in the day.

When we were off-shore of Port Macquarie we started to see smoke from bush fires in the hinterland. There was a huge smoke plume behind Port Macquarie which we found out later was a major back-burn conducted to protect the town.

. Fires and smoke from them were a regular feature from then on, all the way down the coast to Lakes Entrance in Victoria .

At **Nelson Bay** I decided to try the new/upgraded "The Anchorage" Marina which was very spiffy and moderately priced. While an excellent marina it is a bit light on for coffee facilities and the casual bookings for meals at "The Anchorage Port Stephens Hotel and Spar" were not available.

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It was a long walk to the Coles at Salamander Bay for re-provisioning.

An enormous cruiser which we believe belonged to Russell Crowe was positioned nicely to shield us from the wind., the great man was apparently off helping fight bush fires while his crew looked after the boat. We departed Nelson Bay on the 13th January and had a pleasant day motoring/sailing saw us pass into the Broken Bay/Hawkesbury River entrance leaving Barrenjoey and its magnificent Lighthouse well to the starboard, so we could attach ourselves to a mooring in American Bay, with the cicadas in full chorus.

The following day we refuelled at the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club in Pittwater and headed out, bound for Jervis Bay. We sailed on past Port Jackson and then Botany Bay arriving in Jervis Bay in the wee small hours and anchored at the Hole in the Wall. Only stopping long enough to brush our teeth we departed the next morning, bound for Bermagui. We were followed out of the Bay by HMAS Adelaide, the ship that had executed a beach rescue from the Gippsland fires at Mallacoota a few days earlier.

The wind filled in from the NW with a following swell so we were hand steering as we did not trust the auto pilot to not accidentally gybe. Eventually the wind backed to SSW and offshore wind ;brought the smoke with it: we had seen smoke from the fires along the coast all blowing on shore now we were right in the smoke. As we approached Bermagui, the swell died down and we were able to cross the bar, just after low tide with not much under the keel. Bermagui had just suffered great damage from the bush fires. (They were to be hit again in a few days) so there was no one about as we came in. A very tight manoeuvre and a fellow yachty appeared on the pontoon at the last minute saw us into a very small berth. .Normally Bermagui is packed, busy and booming in January, with tourists and marlin fishermen, but today there was hardly anybody about, like a ghost town, and the businesses were in difficulty. The fires of the previous week which had burnt

many homes with a number of fatalities were subdued but still smouldering.

When we entered, the visibility was about 1000m, but the smoke was cleared by the overnight rain. Although the rain was not enough to extinguish all the fires. The fires had dumped black soot everywhere, and the locals were clearing up, a few had breathing problems. Later we learnt that, unfortunately, the fires had returned after we had departed. The coast had been burnt from here to Lakes Entrance. A new fuel cap was purchased, as the last one had slipped overboard when we refuelled. Our bow navigation lights had succumbed to repeated immersion in green salty water so stand-by clip-on LED lights were fitted. With the wind direction against us, and "missile" (apparently more common in the UK) we stayed a few enjoyable days in Bermagui before heading out down the coast to Two Fold Bay. We knew there was an on-going bush fire emergency in the Eden environs, so we contacted the authorities and gained permission to enter and anchor in the bay but not visit Eden itself unless we absolutely had to. On arrival at Two Fold Bay we headed to the familiar anchorage behind the jetty in East Boyd Bay and I was horrified to see the smouldering ruins of the wood chip mill and no sign of the usual mountain of woodchips. The fires had burnt to the shoreline right around Fisheries Beach, but the old mansion Edrom Lodge had been saved although the ground severely singed. A strong south- easter was due in the next day or two so we skedaddled early in the morning, just avoiding banging into the end of the jetty in the dark and thick smoke. Bound for Lakes Entrance we made the decision to motor into a 5 to 10 knot breeze until we turned the corner at cape Howe / Gabo island where the wind would swing behind us and so it went as planned. What did not go as planned was a v-belt drive failing off Gabo Island with a near-thing major engine overheat. With much jiggery pokery we were able to fit our spare belt and continue on our way.

CRUISING GROUP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairperson Peter Strain.....0418530385
Secretary Robina Smith.....0403791347
Editor Barbara Burns.....0417035404
Email.....barbaraburnstwiss@bigpond.com

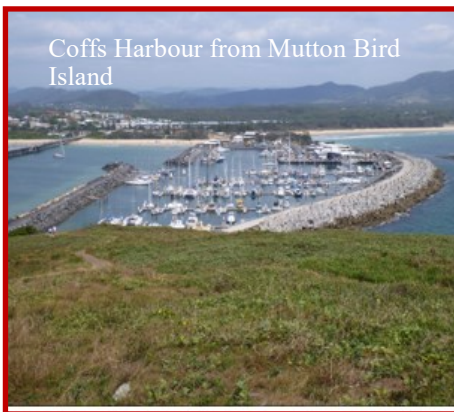
Rob Hurrell..... 0409 781 477
Paul Jenkins0400 946 658
Will Merritt.....9598 8626
Pam Merritt..... 9598 8626
Terry Frankham.....0407308988
Jenny Collins.....95851154
Roger Walker.....0407844992

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This little episode will be the subject of a chapter in my proposed chronical “What I have Learned”, Chapter 2 Yachting & Boats. But suffice to say here that one should check the spare belt actually fits, as it was left over from a the previous owner, and when you do get it jury rigged do not overload it by making celebratory pod coffee by means of the on-board 12v / 240 v inverter.... We (read I) very nearly cooked the spare belt, but it did confirm the smoke alarm systems on the boat worked.

Rounding Gabo Island we started to see a great deal of devastation along the coast line, in fact the vegetation was burnt to the shore line from Mallacoota to Lake Tyres, a very distressing sight. We zipped along with a following wind and swell and were off Lakes Entrance by late afternoon. A straight-forward entrance across the bar saw us tied up in lakes Entrance by early evening. Lakes was in trauma with bush fires approaching, no power on and most of the shops shut so we only stayed one night before motoring up the lakes past Metung to Paynesville where Barbara was waiting to pick us up. The boat stayed in Paynesville for a week or two until weather conditions were suitable for the final leg home to Brighton.



Coffs Harbour from Mutton Bird Island



The coast past Mallacoota—totally burnt to the shore line



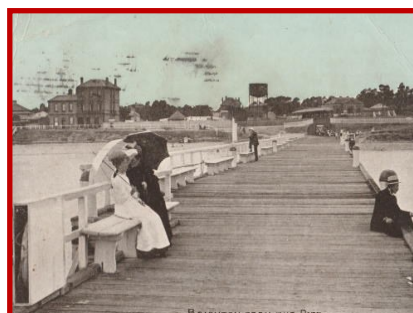
Peel Island



Lyn Bingham with some spare time on her hands came across this old photo, which might be of interest, as the Brighton Pier is/has been controversial right now. It shows the Commodore of Royal Brighton Yacht Club in 1956—Col Patience—who was a close friend of David’s father, David William Bingham (who took the photo). He is walking out to the pier (note it was the old wooden pier) with HRH Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh. The Duke was here to open the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne.

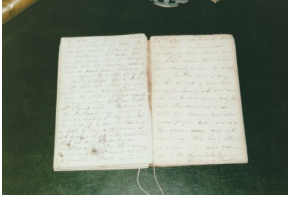
Some lovely old photos that **Lyn Bingham** found while she was compiling a photoshop book on line for her granddaughter.

Brighton From the Pier is a postcard written on 27 January, 1906 to my maternal grandmother in Doncaster from her mother, my great grandmother who was holidaying in the Brighton area. It has a one penny stamp on it. The other postcard showing Beach Road, Sandringham also written to my grandmother from her mother, but has no date on it.....but quite possibly written at the same time during the same holiday. Interesting to see the number of people strolling along Beach Road and how beautifully dressed the ladies were.



EXTRACT FROM THE DIARY OF A SEA VOYAGE ABOARD THE SHIP "MERLIN" DEPARTED LIVERPOOL 1853 BOUND FOR MELBOURNE - A journey of 111 days

Lyn Bingham



The diary was written by my paternal great grandfather Joseph Harvey Sharp aged 15 who travelled with his parents Joseph Sharp and Harriett Harvey Sharp – my great great grandparents. They departed Liverpool on 24 September 1853 and on 16 January 1854 he writes

“Land was seen at 0400 hrs this morning and so Australia laying close upon the larboard side; we have a fair breeze and at 0600 hrs we could see the entrance to Port Phillip Heads – it is very narrow 1 1/4 miles and the current runs very rapidly.”

The diary is quite comprehensive and has been transcribed by my brother from the original handwriting into a more readable form. The route taken saw the ship close to the eastern coast of Brazil in the South Atlantic as it followed the wind and in fact much of the diary records wind strength, wind direction and other comments on the weather. The *Merlin* measured 1030 T and on board were 16 first class passengers and 228 steerage class passengers. She departed Melbourne 30/3/1854 and arrived Calcutta 29/5/1854.

A couple of incidents are interesting and they broke up the monotony of the sea voyage – every day the same thing over and over again and everyday watching for their number to be called for provisions, not to mention the heat whilst in the doldrums and being becalmed for fourteen days and in one week only travelling forty miles on course.

Early on in the voyage the following event is recorded.....

“I shall now give an account of some of the incidents that occurred from the 19th to the 26th (October). On the 22nd I was suddenly aroused out of my sleep very early in the morning by a cry of “A sail in sight – any person having letters to send ashore had better prepare them” which was all a hoax. I jumped out of bed as quick as our limited space would admit and ran on deck, saw the sail which appeared to be homeward bound but not coming in our direction. I turned away disappointed but as many a true word is spoken in jest, so it was in this case for while I was yet on the forecabin, our Captain signalled the ship which immediately bore down upon us and proved to be the *Nestor*, Captain Kyle bound to London from Sydney. When I saw her change her course I immediately went down to the cabin and scratched a bit of a note to Suffolk and a ditto to Dublin. By the time I had finished the ship was alongside, the Captain lowered one of the boats, and the letter bag was safely put aboard the *Nestor*. Our clergyman and two of the passengers who had been sailors went in our small boat to the other ship (we were perfectly becalmed at the time) and we were much surprised to see the boat come back without them and two strange sailors in her. The mystery was cleared up in this way. Captain Kyle wanted us to sell him some tobacco and to give him some English newspapers which our Captain refused to do. Our passengers were detained as hostages and the strange seamen sent to bring it back. The Captain ordered the boat to be hoisted up and said he did not care a carn about the passengers and kicked up a desperate row. You may depend the Minister was in an awful stew when he saw the boat hoisted up and to all appearances he was to be conveyed back to London again. However, the Captain of the *Nestor* turned his ship round and sailed after us, soon caught us as our yards were aback. Captain Laverty lowered the boat again, sent the tobacco, newspapers and seamen and in return received our three passen-

gers safe and sound. Each ship then went on her course, but it spoilt the Skipper’s humour for that day as a short time after he caught hold of a very nice little harmless terrier belonging to the cook and threw it overboard and swore if anyone attempted to rescue him he would throw him over also. The dog was left to his fate and we could see him swimming about for a long time. I should say it was alive for hours but the occurrence of this day lowered the Captain in the opinion of the passengers very much.”

The diary goes on to describe crossing the line. “I shall now endeavour to give some sort of a description of the grotesque ceremony of shaving persons when first crossing the line. I must first inform you that we have a fire engine on board, it consists of a force pump at the head, a long hose with a tube at the end which quirts the water about to a great distance, having filled an immense tub near the main hatch by means of this hose and prepared a mixture of grease and tar and a lot of dirt of all sorts, they were ready to commence operations. About midday Neptune and his wife made their appearance followed by a numerous train of heralds and policemen and commenced operations by shaving the first mate having lathered him with the mixture before described and scraping him with a piece of rusty iron hoop, and given him a finishing off touch with an immense wooden razor, they played the hose well onto him and when he was saturated to their hearts content they declared the operation finished and he then joined their crew and helped to shave the next. The next in rotation was our worthy friend the doctor who stood it like a brick, then came some of the cabin boys who were dipped head and all with the big tub and almost suffocated before they were let go, every person had their eyes bandaged while being shaved, next came the cook and then several miscellaneous individuals. Of course there were great crowds collected to witness the performance which when the boatswain saw he let fly the hose at them and then there was such a rush, some falling down and getting wet through, while peals of laughter arose from all parts of the ship. I was in several of these skirmishes and escaped pretty well although dinner being ready I left them to their sport and went down to my frugal meal. However before I was finished, Neptune and his host came down between decks, visiting every berth, imposing on each passenger a fine of one shilling or in default of payment be shaved. Of course a great many paid the bob, Father and I amongst the number. Having gone through all the berths Neptunes herald announced they had to board another ship at 1400 hrs and they accordingly took their departure. Deeming all the fun to be over now I ventured on deck to get some hot water when some worthy spying my condition, sung out here’s a man not wet yet, he had no sooner said it than one of the sailors rushed at me, caught me in his arms while the man with the hose played on me until I was wet through from head to foot. I then joined in the crowd and there was not a soul on deck we did not wet. I then went down, changed and then washed my trousers and finally turned into bed.” Thus ended the proceedings of “the day we crossed the line.”

**EXTRACT FROM THE DIARY OF A SEA VOYAGE ABOARD THE SHIP "MERLIN" DEPARTED LIVERPOOL 1853 BOUND FOR MELBOURNE - A journey of 111 days
Lyn Bingham**

Another incident took place on 13 December. "Today we had a desperate fight on board, between a man in the next berth to ours of the name of Owen and a tall Irishman. They were part of a party who were playing dominoes, and the dispute arose about a penny. Although it was a desperate fight and the Irishman got Owen down on his back and held him there, neither of them were hurt even to the extent of a black eye. To disperse the crowd which had gathered to witness the sport, the Captain ordered the fire engine to be put on, which did it effectively and in quick time. The Captain then declared he would throw the first man overboard he caught playing cards, but no sooner was dinner over than a couple of parties commenced playing again, supposing themselves to be out of sight of the Captain but he saw them, threw the cards overboard, and put one of the individuals in irons, in the presence of about 230 people, not one of whom attempted to rescue him. However, he was let loose in about a quarter of an hour. Strange to say it was another Owen that was put in irons. After this all went on quietly and thus ended the most eventful day we have had since our departure."

Another interesting snippet was written on 9th January.

"We are totally becalmed, indeed seem to be going back instead of forward, if a bottle is thrown over it seems to stand in the same place for a long time. There are great numbers of birds flying about and settling on the water close to the ship. There are two or three individuals fishing for them but have not caught one yet. After tea time the breeze sprung up a little and we set studding sails but were soon obliged to pull them down again as the breeze became a squall. At 1800 hrs it was blowing the heaviest gale we have had yet. All the royals were soon hauled down and the top gallants furled. The gale still increasing all hands were ordered aloft to double reef the topsails which was soon done, and then a reef taken in the foresail – we were then sailing under double reefed topsails for the second time since we left. We had nine sails set, instead of the usual number nineteen, and I have seen twenty six set. Seeing the gale coming so strong I thought we were in for a regular storm but no sooner was the ship in trim to meet it than the wind decreased and soon after all the reefs were shaken out, and the wind blowing an ordinary breeze, fortunately it was fair for us and I expect will break up the calm."

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NW Victoria Silo Art Trail

Rob and Sue Hurrell

Between lockdowns we took the opportunity to checkout the street and silo art in NW Victoria. First night was at Benalla to view more than 50 pieces of art across various buildings. Enroute to the next overnight stop at Echuca we visted Gooramab, Devenish, St James & Tungamah. The next stopover was Ouyen, near the start of the main trail of Silo art covering 6 locations. The next day we visited Patchewollock, Lascelles, Rosebery, Brim, Sheep Hills & Rupanyup. Our last stop was 2 nights in Bendigo and then 2 more sites of art, Rochester and Colbinabbin. The last site was only completed in March this year. A wonderful trip, you could do it in 2 days but we took a relaxing 6 day cruise! (oops I meant road trip!)



Lock Down Ramblings Alan Sharratt

Here is a quandary! A polite but firm request from the editor for an article would normally be a relatively easy matter to deal with. The latest sailing exploits, how I didn't hit a rock, how we were not run down by a 100,000 tonne tanker, how we got into the Marina at night without any navigation lights. But no nothing has happened.

Some time ago Maree and I bought electric scooters believing they would be good for travelling up and down marinas. In the event most marinas we visited during our cruise last year were made of wooden slats and with a small wheeled scooter were impossible to navigate. Last November I zoomed up to the little yacht in Brighton Marina on my electric scooter. The outward journey was navigated with little difficulty but on the return, at the point where the floating marina joins the hard, I was travelling too fast, maybe 10 kilometres per hour. At the beginning of the ramp the scooter stopped abruptly.... I didn't. The resulting injury to my shoulder has cost quite a few dollars and ten months later I still have a significant weakness. There must be a moral to this story though I cannot quite discern what it is. Maybe some other member of the cruising group could help ?

Many will know that we own a 12.5 metre catamaran moored in a Lake Macquarie Yacht Club marina a few kilometres south of Newcastle. Under normal circumstances we would probably have sailed North in June and would be considering the return voyage about now. Of course, Covid and closed Queensland borders changed all that, so we decided to remove the engine's, return them to Melbourne for reconditioning, and when they were refitted perhaps take a short voyage to the Hawksbury or similar. Because of the closure of the New South Wales border and the travel restrictions in Melbourne we now have catamaran In Newcastle, with engines' in Melbourne. Did you know that marine engines are considered to be hazardous goods and it is very difficult to persuade a commercial carrier to take them?

Before the lockdown and just before the closure of the New South Wales border I was invited by Newcastle son-in-law with my 22 year old grandson to go for a two week sail up the New South Wales coast. The trip North was little short of a disaster. I had planned to travel with grandson (Jeremy) on Tuesday 7th July. When it became apparent that the border would be closed at midnight Monday we decided to cut loose and head off on the Monday night. We got away about 8:30 p.m. and passed through the border with about 50 mins to spare. Jeremy is a night person anyway, so we drove through the night arriving in Lambton in time for breakfast at 7:30. So far so good. The intention had been to set off in Son-in-law's Cole 35 to Port Macquarie and beyond. Queensland was barred to disease ridden Victorians. But it did not happen. The boat had engine mounting problems, meaning that the engine had to come out and have a new mounting plate welded to the bottom of it. To cut a long story short we messed about for 10 days by which time it was clear that the engine would not be fixed for some time and I decided to return home to Maree, locked down in Brighton. I drove back alone on 15 July. Jeremy is still there. Meanwhile the cat was slipped on 13th and the sail drives fitted but the engines remain in Melbourne and we are not allowed into NSW to re-fit them.



EAST COAST CRUISING ——2020

Mooloolaba to Bundaberg
Jo and John Walker

We left Melbourne on the 6th July by road and drove into NSW before the border was shut for Victorians. After spending 15 days in northern NSW we entered Qld, spent a few pleasant days at my sisters in Brisbane then headed to Kirra Kirra, left in the marina at Mooloolaba since last year. All was in fine order aboard, and after several days provisioning we headed off north.



Police patrol, Mooloolaba. The ships coming into Brisbane have pilots aboard that are based in Mooloolaba. This sized cop craft is not for helping fishos who have run out of fuel - I suspect drug smugglers are their target!!



And the birds here like to perch and nest on boats - same as everywhere - bastards.

Besides ospreys and sea eagles, there are Brahminy kites and Whistling kites, and diving terns and noddies. Hard to photograph - so no good photos

3rd August. Left Mooloolaba and at sea at last after the weeks in NSW and getting the boat ready - an easy motor sail from Mooloolaba to the Wide Bay Bar, the entrance to the Sandy Sts. Timed it right at 4pm for the tide and crossed the sometimes dangerous bar. Always plenty to see along the Sandy Sts. When sailing north from Mooloolaba, there are 2 routes around Fraser Is (largest sand island in the world is its claim to fame - wow I hear you say). Go outside the island on the ocean side and up to Bundaberg and Lady Musgrave Is., or inside Fraser Is. and along the sedate waters of the Great Sandy Straits - a 70nm long stretch of protected waters. Here catching the tide is critical for progress and to get over the shallow sand banks. No problem for a catamaran though.



Further up the great Sandy Straits is Big Woodie Island. 2 days of strong westerly winds made this a safe anchorage, enough time to go ashore and explore the restored wooden lighthouse - erected 1880's.

After leaving the mouth of the Mary River, we called into the beach near Kingfisher Resort on Fraser Island and spent a night anchored there. Lots of history - timber industry in the early 1900's, and the commando training school during WW-II.

Unfortunately, the weather was too windy and rough to go whale watching in Hervey Bay. And as the winds became favourable we sailed up Hervey Bay to the Burnett River, the town of Burnett Heads where the marina is located and the provincial town of Bundaberg about 15km away. This is a sugar town, surrounded by sugar cane as far as the eye can see, with the sugar mills right in town. Nice.



NOTICEBOARD

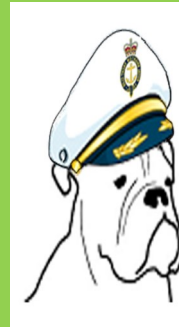
MEMBER NEWS

Chairman Peter Strain welcomes Peter Gebhardt, to the Cruising Committee.



I started sailing after leaving school and headed to the Whitsundays for a gap year. Being a keen diver I worked on several different sailboats as a Divemaster doing day charters out of Shute Harbour. I worked on Gretel II and then at Whitsunday Rent-a Yacht. After a bit of a hiatus away from sailing, I joined RBYC in 2003 where a friend was sailing Chindrina, which he had just bought from Will and Pam. Soon after I bought Chindrina outright and participated in the 2004 Bass Strait cruise. In 2010 we bought Nimrod and spent the first few years starting to renovate her, and eventually doing more racing than cruising. After spending a lot of time in the bay, we decided to head back out into Bass Strait with the Cruising Group in 2019, and again this year. Having been bitten by the cruising bug we hope to take Nimrod north. I look forward to working with the Cruising Group committee and being part of the many activities the Cruising group organises.

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Captain Bully's Blog

Before the current restrictions or more accurately as they were being introduced, Susie and I having booked the Privilege in for a lift out at Queenscliff Harbour, sailed her down the Bay and rafted up to the wharf at QCYC ready for an early morning haul out the next day. Pleasant conditions as we battled the Scrabble board, luxuriating in the freedom of being on board. Queenscliff Harbour staff very efficiently had the boat up on blocks, and our maintenance team of John Khoury and Mike Davidson arrived before lunch to prepare the boat for an antifoul. After 20 years since the boat was built, John and Mike had brought with them replacement through hull fittings. Modern style composite New Zealand built this gives peace of mind, in that corrosion will no longer be a safety concern. Government health restrictions had not actually begun at this stage, but to save travel time I rented a close friends house at Point Lonsdale for John and Mike. Susie and I luckily have friends who have crewed for us at Festival of Sails also at Point Lonsdale. Brilliant cooks they gave us a bed for the week. By Wednesday the restriction came into force for Melbourne Metro area, we were outside the zone and the announcements allowed us to be there, but once we returned that would be it, we would have to stay. All the work went smoothly with a little running around and with a little help from local trades. The plan was to be back in the water by Friday but the antifoul and Propspeed etc. needing to dry properly, the travel lift was now to be booked for Monday lunchtime. John and Mike had returned, but Susie and I had a very pleasant weekend out of lockdown on the beautiful Bellarine.

Monday was looking less than favourable for the return to RBYC and the fact that the pier was closed and the Club's ferry service would be finished by the time we sailed back, we decided to anchor off QCYC and head back Tuesday. Next morning, I dropped Susie ashore to return in our car and I sailed back. Southerlies blowing, I unfurled the jib for an easy run back up the Bay. Not discovered until later, Mike in servicing the rudders and linkages had bumped the transducer connected from the port rudder to the autohelm, which rendered it useless. Bloody cold day, it wasn't much fun having to steer all the way home, but the winds were gentle and in the right direction. Phil was on the marina when I arrived to help me land. Mission accomplished and all within the restrictions. Phew.

