



CRUISING NEWS



MAY 2021

Cruising to Eastern Indonesia and Northern Borneo—Jo and John Walker Barbara Burns



There was a particularly good turn up of 65 people for the cruising groups monthly forum for April. The attendees were very keen to hear about the fabulous cruises to Indonesia that Jo and John Walker did on their friend's yacht; a Lightwave 45 catamaran, called "Blue Spirit" which John commented that it cruises happily at 8 to 9 knots.

It was a great talk, made all the more pleasant due to the excellent meal of pan fried barramundi fillet with beetroot pumpkin and balsamic glaze, followed by a desert consisting of profiteroles, mascarpone cream and chocolate sauce. Many cruisers turned up early to farewell "Harry" the barman, a fixture of the club who has been doing a remarkable job behind the bar for some 35 years. Harry gave a brief summation of his years in the job and many were fascinated by his incite that in the early days the club had a commissionaire at the door to stop undesirables getting in!

The first cruise that the Walkers participated in was a 2015 trip from Darwin to Kupang where they joined the annual Sail Indonesia rally to various locations in Eastern Indonesia.

The distance from Darwin to Kupang was about 460 nautical miles (900 Km), with no swell and favourable winds which took around 3 days motoring about 60% of the time. On arrival at Kupang, they encountered numerous little bays but no marinas, which meant they had to anchor slightly offshore, because there was a lot of plastic on the sea floor making it difficult for the anchor to hold, thus making provisioning and particularly re-fuelling difficult .. Kupang is the first port of call in the annual Sail Indonesia rally which Blue Spirit joined. The rally is very well received in the islands due to the Indonesian government splashing money around to encourage it. Loading the boat with money, John noted was a very important thing to do, as there are no ATM, or other ways to get cash into Eastern Indonesia.

Kupang (Indonesian: Kota Kupang), Dutch spelling: Koepang, has a population of around 200,00 people and is the capital of the Indonesian province of East Nusa Tenggara. Kupang was an important port and trading point during the Portuguese and Dutch colonial eras, from 1613 onwards. There are ruins and remnant signs of the colonial presence in the city. In the early 20th century, the city was used for landing and refuelling long distance airplane flights between Europe and Australia. It was occupied by the Japanese in 1942-45 and much of the old town was destroyed by allied bombing.

John commented that Kupang has wet markets; but no ice, so fish and other products need to be bought early, otherwise spoiling happens as the climate is extremely hot. The Walkers were a bit bemused by the run down old, probably Portuguese shed which housed a tolerably good museum some of which was devoted to the history of Blue and Minke Whales which come in close to the coast due to upwelling of nutrients from very deep seas just offshore

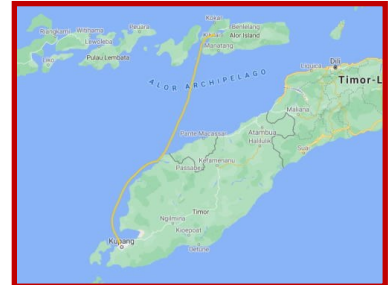
John was intrigued that Kupang was also the final destination of William Bligh's epic ocean voyage in an open boat from Yofua in the Tonga islands, after being set adrift by Fletcher Christian and his lot following the infamous mutiny of the Bounty in 1789.



Cruising to Eastern Indonesia and Northern Borneo—Jo and John Walker Barbara Burns

Alor Was the next stop for Blue Spirit in company with the rally . It was a place which the locals call heaven on earth, but others don't always see why. The adventurers sailed around Alor and engaged a lot with a plethora of somewhat naïve but very happy and amenable kids in outrigger canoes. The anchor would not hold close to the beach due to all the plastic on the sea floor, so Blue Spirit had to anchor further out to sea; no matter the kids were quite happy to paddle out to the boat and continue the engagement. Of note were the bamboo fish traps of Alor, they are made of bamboo and rattan, and are set in corals in waters around 5 metres deep. The fisherman do not use lines and buoys, they just remember where they have dropped them and swim down to retrieve them every 3 days. To preserve the fish, the fisherman take ice out in blocks wrapped in plastic and unfortunately throw the plastic into the water, one of the many reasons why there is so much plastic in the water.

Alor is also famous for the women who weave many unusual products and motives, using natural materials such as flax



The second cruise that the Walkers participated in was a 2019 trip to North Borneo and Miri in Sarawak.

The Walkers flew into Miri, a small city in northern Sarawak on the Malaysian part of the island of Borneo. Miri is a hub for the off-shore oil industry in the area and also, and probably because of this, is an excellent hub for sailing in southeast Asia, with many expensive looking boats and fabulous floating pontoons. The seahorse is now a symbol of Miri, and can be seen on many roundabouts and signs in and around Miri.

There are extensive fish markets where a large variety of fish, including small sharks can be purchased; the fish are kept alive until the consumer buys them.

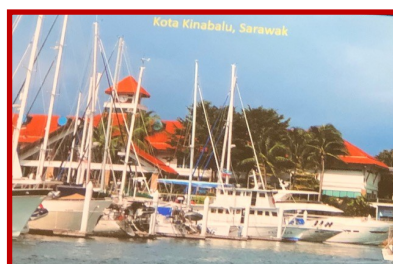
Not far from Miri is the **Niah National Park** renowned for its cave systems and is the site where 40,000 year old human remains were discovered. The park features one of the world's largest cave entrances with 100 metre high ceilings. At sunset, the sky is blackened by the nightly "changing of the guard" with swiftlet's coming home, and bats leaving for their nights foraging.

John and Jo also visited long houses, the traditional houses of the Dayak where everyone eats communally, an encounter with stink horn fungus left lingering memories with the Walkers.

Editors note: Miri is the second largest city in Sarawak and its largest ethnic group is the Dayak, the famous aboriginal head hunters and head shrinkers of Borneo. The major subgroup is the Iban also known as the Sea Dayak.

The sail from Miri to Brunei was interesting, in that most yachts sailed with a reef in the main, and as it all looked very benign, John and Jo inquired why. Almost as it was being explained that squalls happened frequently; one with 35 plus knots hit, causing havoc on the yacht and an inconvenience to John as he was just pulling in a nice fish

Brunei is a country which is ruled by a benevolent dictator (sultan) and has extreme wealth because of its oil fields. Brunei Shell Petroleum is the largest producer in Brunei and is the backbone of the Brunei economy. It contributes around 90% to Brunei's oil and gas, which is mostly offshore.



Cruising to Eastern Indonesia and Northern Borneo—Jo and John Walker Barbara Burns

Hassanal Bolkiah is the 29th and current sultan and prime minister of Brunei. He is one of the last absolute monarchs in the world. The Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque is an extremely opulent mosque, and is a popular tourist destination. Prince Jefri Bolkiah, the sultan's younger brother, and is apparently the most spendthrift person ever, built an amusement park that was free to visitors, purchased hotels around the world, and gained a reputation in western tabloids for mansions and mistresses. Brunei is a no drinking Muslim country, and yet has one of the most generous duty free alcohol allowances of any country in the world. There is a yellow card permit system which permits tourists to drink with limits of two litres of alcohol (spirits or wine) and twelve cans of beer which can be imported every 48 hours.

Jo and John spent a fair amount of time at the Royal Brunei Yacht Club (yes! the **RBYC**) quite a lot of it watching out for crocodiles which seemed to be everywhere. The food at the yacht club was excellent.

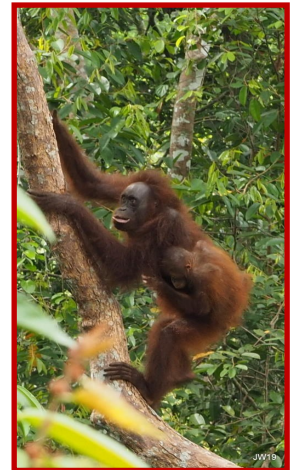
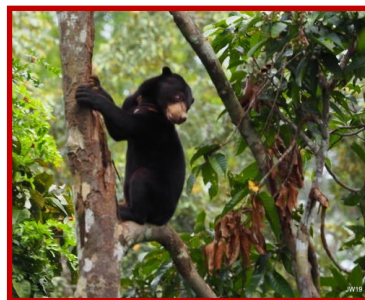
Australian soldiers suffered terribly at the hands of the Japanese in the second world war, and in particular at the infamous Sandakan Camp. The camp was closed by the Japanese prior to the allied invasion, most of its occupants died as a result of forced marches from Sandakan to Ranau. In total the Japanese are believed to have held an estimated 4,660 prisoners and internees at all camps in northern Borneo. With only 1,390 surviving at the end of the war.

Kota Kinabalu is the city capital of **Sabah**, strategically situated in the northwest coast of Borneo, facing the South China Sea and Tunku Abdul Rahman Park on one side, and set against the backdrop of Mt Kinabalu. This beautiful nature resort city stretches for miles along the coast and further inland.

Balancing the destruction of the palm oil industry and trying to preserve the natural world, is a very precarious path to follow. The Borneo Sun Bear, Proboscis monkey and the Orangutan, as well as a range of other wild creatures are in trouble as their natural habitat is disappearing fast.

John and Jo managed to visit Sepilok Orangutan rehabilitation centre, and the Sun Bear Conservation Centre from Sandakan. Although they missed seeing any Orangutans in the rehabilitation centre, they did see some in the rainforest further inland.

Jo and John's talk was very well received, and they were thanked at the end of their presentation by cruising group chair Paul Jenkins.



CRUISING GROUP

Chairperson Paul Jenkins.....0400 946 658
 Secretary Terry Frankham.....0407308988
 Editor Barbara Burns.....0417 035 404
 Email.....barbaraburnstwiss@bigpond.com

COMMITTEE MEM-

Rob Hurrell.....0409 781 477
 Peter Strain0418 530 385
 Will Merritt.....9598 8626
 Pam Merritt.....9598 8626
 Jenny Collins.....95851154
 Peter Gebhardt.....0413 048 997

Caledonia Cruising — Bass Strait Cruise 2021 Immediate Past Commodore, Paul Pascoe

With the cancellation of the planned circumnavigation of Tasmania, the Caledonia crew were left with a big hole in the calendar and a yearning to do a little more cruising and a little less racing around the sticks. So Malcolm and Kirsty Mitchell, co-owners of the boat with Paul and Elizabeth Jenkins (not the other Paul Jenkins) decided to join the Bass Strait Cruise this year. With the Jenkins having a daughter's wedding on the March long weekend, Paul thought it wiser to attend his daughter's wedding than go cruising, so next in line were the Pascoe's who were only too happy to join the Mitchells on the cruise.

The boat has twice done the big trek up to Queensland and a few of the ORCV races to Tasmania, so was already fairly well setup, although a number of things were getting a little tired on the boat (not just the crew) and Malcolm supervised a series of replacement and maintenance jobs including a new anchor and chain which turned out to be a very wise decision.

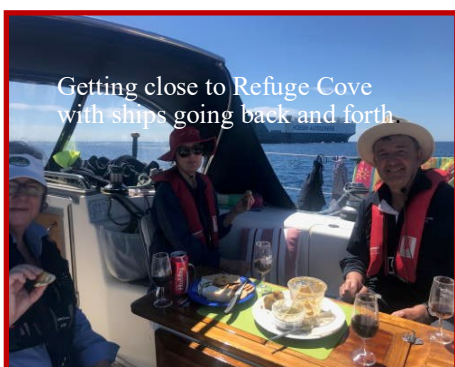
With a COVID lockdown immediately prior to the scheduled departure, things got a bit wobbly right from the start, with most boats arriving at QCYC on the appointed Saturday and the remainder arriving on the Sunday. However, with a narrowing weather window, a few boats decided over dinner that an early Sunday morning departure would be prudent, and four boats departed out the heads with the ship traffic busier than the queue for toilet paper during a Chairman Dan imposed lockdown. Having cleared the heads, the first couple of hours were a bit sloppy with a few squirmy tummies, but as the sun came, so did the wind and the group endured a pleasant days sail to Refuge Cove. Rounding the Prom provided a few good squirts but nothing too stressful.

With the Commodore and his bride as part of this advanced party, the first evening's sundowners were spent on It's a Privilege, getting to know the other members of the group – most faces we had seen around the club, but have never been able to put a name or a boat to the face.

With the umbilical cord of the internet severed we put our Telstra dongle in a bag and ran it up the mast and intermittently were able to get one bar of 3G phone coverage – enough to download daily weather forecasts but not much more. For more reliable coverage though it was a trip to shore in the dinghy and a hike up Telstra Hill to the rock and download our daily dose of civilisation, reading the Age and answering emails.

Prior to setting off, Malcolm had contacted Mary at Smithton Radio with our rough schedule and agreed to check in each evening on HF. Mary is such a wonderful asset to sailors and so reassuring to know that if something goes wrong, there is someone there who will raise the alarm.

After a couple of days at Refuge a perfect weather window opened up to travel south to Deal Island and we had a wonderful sail in shorts and t-shirts accompanied by numerous birds and several pods of dolphins. Arriving and finding good anchorage in Garden Cove at the north end of Deal we had another couple of days of excellent weather and hiked around the island, up through the airstrip (is this the only airstrip in the world with a bend in the middle?) and to the caretakers cottage where we met the current residents – a married couple from Kettering who were busy packing up to leave the next day having completed their three month stay on the island. The way it works is that people volunteer to live on the island for three months at a time and maintain the infrastructure although not the lighthouse which was de-commissioned in 1992. The amazing thing was that they had to take their full three months of provisions with them when they arrived, so if you are thinking of travelling there in the future, contact them in advance and see if there is anything that they would like brought over. Our offering were Anzac biscuits that went down well with a cup of tea on their penultimate day on the island.



Getting close to Refuge Cove with ships going back and forth.



Jennifer and Paul at Garden Cove



Jennifer, Malcolm, Paul and the caretaker couple

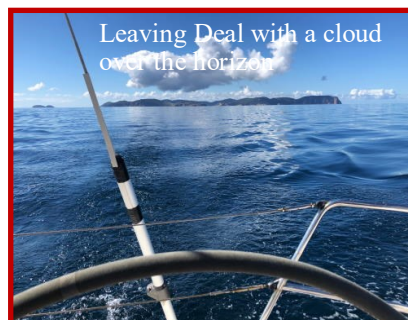
Caledonia Cruising — Bass Strait Cruise 2021 Immediate Past Commodore, Paul Pascoe

With a change in the wind forecast we decide to move over to Erith Island in the West Cove – big mistake! The wind came from a slightly different angle than was forecast and with a lot of sea grass, Caledonia eventually dragged its anchor in a 40kt squirt despite having 54.5 metres of our 55 metres of chain out. After a couple of re-anchoring attempts in horizontal rain, the boat seemed to be holding, but with nervous crew on board we felt it prudent to keep an overnight anchor watch with a very bouncy and uncomfortable night not just for Caledonia but for the other two boats in the cove. As the crew on one of the other boats said the next morning “It’s conditions like this that make you want to pull out the golf clubs”. Very apt.

Back to Garden Cove for another couple of very comfortable nights and more hiking. Deal Island is home to a large mob of very tame wallabies. Walking along tracks, they would just watch you walk past within metres, pretty much ignore you and then get back to whatever they were doing - just fantastic. Cape Barren geese on the other hand were not so congenial and let you know in no uncertain terms if they felt you were invading their personal space. There is also a Telstra Hill on Deal, complete with a bench seat at the perfect spot and a desk to sit your laptop while you surf away. Line of sight to the Telstra tower atop Mount Oberon is provided through a dip in the hills of the intervening Erith Island. The “spot” was easy for us to find – as we walked along the track to the Caretaker’s house, suddenly all four of our phones in our pockets started beeping with a backlog of messages suddenly downloaded – very funny.



Three boats at Garden Cove



Leaving Deal with a cloud over the horizon



Malcolm and Paul on the seat at Telstra Hill

Another pleasant motor sail in completely flat Bass Strait back to Refuge Cove ensued and on arrival found it devoid of other boats having had a couple of days of NE wind which is the only direction where Refuge may not be ideal. Malcolm’s timing was perfect as having claimed the best spot to anchor tucked in at the most southern end of the Cove, an hour after we arrived, the wind swung around to the South West providing us with perfect protection for the next few days of strong winds.

Having run out of gin for our nightly G&T’s it was clearly a sign to come home, and fortunately there was an almost perfect forecast with a messy 20kts almost on the nose for the short stint down to the lighthouse then turn right into a decreasing to 10-15kts beam reach all the way home and a midnight slack water entry through the heads – perfect! Sadly the 10-15kts forecast was more like a 20-30kt close reach, and while we made excellent time, it is just not relaxing in Bass Strait in 20+ knots.

And of course as luck would have it as we approached the heads it was even busier than our departure, with six ships lined up nose to tail on their way in. We slowed the boat down for the last hour and managed to get across the channel in between ship number five and six and sneak up four fingers west with our AIS warning beeping constantly. Dodging the Spirit of Tasmania in the middle of the bay as we crossed the channel again and then home safe and sound and back in the pen after 13 days, a really nice trip. Unfortunately, because of the different departure days and the ensuing weather windows we didn’t get to spend a lot of time with the rest of the group, but a good trip nonetheless.

Thank you to everyone for their advice and comradeship especially in the preparation for the event and I certainly recommend a visit to Deal, but with a little caveat that the West Cove is definitely not on my bumper fun list of places to stay!

A March on Maryborough Grant Collins

The Annual Land Cruise around the end of March saw 26 Landcruisers, (not the 4WD although some members may have used that particular vehicle) but members of the RBYC Cruising Group, "Cruise" to Maryborough around the weekend of the 26-28th of March, 2021. Fortunately COVID did not torpedo our plans this year. Jenny and I opted for the retiree's version of a long weekend arriving on Wed, 24th and departing Tues, 30th. Another 10 arrived on Thursday with the remainder arriving Friday.

The weather turned it on for us with glorious sunny days for the stay apart from Wednesday afternoon with a soggy set up for Jenny & I. The Maryborough Caravan Park's facilities were second to none. The amenities block was the best I have used with individual unisex shower & toilet rooms. There was also a very generous new communal kitchen with undercover Barbeque facilities complete with indoor and outdoor tables & chairs. These facilities made our Saturday night BBQ for 24 of us a very simple straightforward affair indeed, with all manner of delectable delights and drops being consumed.

Like many towns in the region, Gold mining bankrolled many magnificent old buildings in the Victorian Era, but the jewel in the Maryborough crown is its Railway Station. An imposing edifice built in the Anglo-Dutch style in 1890. The scale of this building prompted Mark Twain to describe Maryborough as "A station with a town attached" during his visit to the region.

On Friday night the group dined at the "Bull and Mouth" Hotel, a beautifully restored and extended Victorian era hotel, originally built in 1854. The food was excellent and moderately priced. Unlike many similar establishments, the wine prices, especially for local drops, were very reasonable.

As usual, in good cruising tradition, Sundowners were held in the Caravan Park which fronts Lake Victoria, and was attended by a few uninvited, but very attractive looking ducks that wandered through the camping areas looking for a free feed.

Saturday afternoon the Klop competition was keenly fought with Geoff Brewster taking out the prize.

Like cruising sailors, many of the Landcruisers went their different ways when it came to daytime activities. On Saturday morning a group of women, plus a lone male (former Chairman Will) went to a Quilting exhibition at the old, restored Fire Station which is now an Art Gallery. Perhaps I should have done the same, as I opted to go fishing at the lake, but all offerings of bait or lure were heartily ignored. Jenny & I rode our bikes on numerous forest tracks with attendant mullock heaps and deserted mines, while others drove to places like Avoca or Dunolly or visited other attractions such as local wineries. I didn't hear of anyone fossicking for Gold, which seemed to be a popular past-time in this region.

Saturday afternoon 7 of us rode to nearby Carisbrook. Ironically it wasn't on any of the forest tracks that brought us unstuck, but the local bike path which was 'seeded' with Bindi eye thorns. 3 bikes had punctures when we stopped for refreshments and my puncture repair kit got a real workout as we patched up the tubes. Pam Merritt had another flat on the way back and by the time we returned to our campsite, Rod Watson's electric bike also had 2 flat tyres!

On Sunday many of the group headed for home or further afield with 10 of us staying on. Monday we visited the Craigie Winery. In all, it was a great time and we were very pleasantly surprised at all that Maryborough and surrounds had to offer.



A GETAWAY TO THE GOLDFIELDS

Or Mooching around in Maryborough

By Lyn Bingham

An escape to the country for a few days in late March with some of the cruising group who refer to themselves as "landcruisers" was eagerly agreed upon and Mr Bingham and I booked ourselves into one of the cabins at Maryborough Caravan Park. There were twelve people in cabins and another twelve in tent, camper trailers, caravans and a motorhome.

It was an opportunity to explore the surrounding towns such as Avoca, Castlemaine, Bendigo and of course Maryborough which was a pleasant place and the caravan park was beside a lake making for a spot of fishing, or a walking circuit. A gaggle of geese periodically wandered through the camping grounds.

The days were spent exploring by car, walking, bike riding (one expedition involving six cyclists saw five punctures due to the dreaded bindii). The group then gathered for pre-dinner sundowners and a game of Klop won by Geoff B with a brilliant final throw. The local pub Bull and Mouth had been booked for dinner one night and it was a pleasant stroll along the lake into town to enjoy a pretty good meal with some lively conversation.

On two nights the group made use of the camp kitchen which was well equipped with indoor and outdoor tables and chairs, instant hot water and two barbeques.

Some AFL enthusiasts took to keeping a keen eye on the games on a big screen in the communal kitchen.

After dinner, coffee, tea, more wine, home made cakes, slices and chocolates were shared around amongst the group.

Although our common interest is through a yacht club, yachting activities were put aside as we all delighted in a catch up away from home, the convivial conversation and the many laughs . All in all a very pleasant getaway.



STARS AND COMPASS TROPHY



Hello fellow cruisers,

Once again, it's time to sharpen your pen and paper navigation skills. The 2021 Stars and Compass competition paper is now available at this [link](#). The Stars and Compass Trophy was donated by Richard Hawkins with the aim of encouraging the practice and use of traditional navigation methods. No answers are to include the use of modern computer based devices such as GPS, chartplotter, Navionics etc.

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

This year's question paper has been set by last year's winner, Brenton Smith, and is available electronically at this link: [Stars and Compass 2021 Paper](#). If you are unable to download it and need a hardcopy please contact Terry Frankham (ts.frankham@ozemail.com.au), who will organise a copy for you by alternative means.

All entries must be submitted to the RBYC office by the close of business on Monday, 14th June, 2020 with the winner to be presented with the trophy at Presentation Night on the 10th July

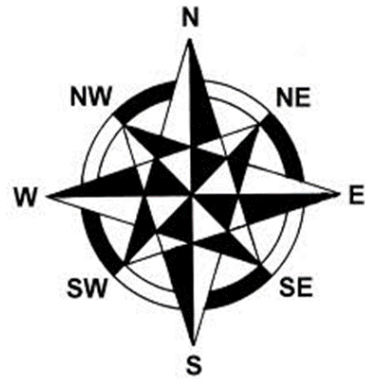
There are a number of ways to submit your paper, which must include a cover sheet with your name, address, email address and phone number:

- Email a digital copy (scanned hardcopy or prepared on computer) to the RBYC Sailing Office - boatingmanager@rbyc.org.au , or
- Post a hardcopy to RBYC – addressed:

Stars and Compass
Royal Brighton Yacht Club
253 Esplanade
Middle Brighton , Vic 3186

- Drop it off, in an envelope addressed to Stars and Compass, at RBYC Reception

Please email Terry Frankham (ts.frankham@ozemail.com.au) once you have submitted a paper, so that we can ensure all papers have been collected for marking.



It is a 'back to basics' paper for coastal navigation with a focus on using various traditional techniques.

There are no questions on celestial navigation.

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

Chakana Cruising with La Niña – Melbourne to Sydney

By Brenton and Robina Smith

In mid-2020 it became apparent that the east coast of Australia was going to be under the influence of a La Niña cycle, which tend to bring more moisture onshore and more wind also. This was to be a strong La Niña and we wondered just how much influence it would have for our cruising plans for 2021.

We plan to sail north with the SE trade winds until the northerlies winds arrive and then head south to Brisbane where we will leave *Chakana* to wait out the cyclone season ready for cruising next year. How far north will depend on our rate of progress but Lizard Island is in our sights either this year or next.

We departed RBYC on Saturday 20th February with several of the RBYC cruising boats who were embarking on the Bass Strait Cruise. We intended to join them for a bit and leave them when we had a weather window for heading further east. *Chakana* departed Queenscliff on the 4:00 am slack water the next day with two other boats heading to Refuge Cove. With favourable westerly winds and knowing the weather windows were short we continued on the following day for an over-night sail to Lakes Entrance.

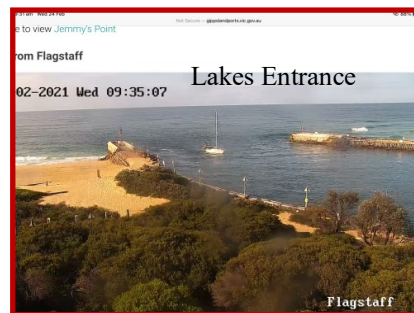
We had not been into Lakes Entrance before but Brenton had studied the pilotage as a part of the previous year's Stars and Compass competition. We arrived close to slack water and had an uneventful crossing of the bar, which is now dredged regularly to maintain a depth of more than 5m. Strong easterlies were forecast in Bass Strait followed by a strong westerly change and the visitor's berths at Lakes Entrance provided a suitable refuge with easy access to delicious fish and chips and interesting walks. A walk to the ocean beach confirmed that the decision to wait before continuing east was a wise move.

Ideally we would have left Lakes Entrance four hours earlier than we did to take advantage of the westerly breeze that we knew would fade, but we had to wait for the right tidal conditions at the entrance. We knew this was the only opportunity to get to Eden before a set of strong easterlies would make it impossible, or more precisely, unattractive, to sail there. This was to prove a recurring theme, the opportunities to sail the next legs were short, with longer periods required at an anchorage waiting for favourable wind and swell conditions, or at least, less unfavourable conditions.

After several days in Eden where we spent two pleasant sundowners with the crews of *Say No More*, a Duncanson 34 from SA, and *Blue Lagoon* from Geelong, both heading north for an extended cruising season, the weather was suitable to head off. The Whaling Museum in Eden was an interesting diversion, along with watching a ship being loaded to well above the gunwales with freshly felled logs.

Robina's must do this trip was to go into Bermagui so we had a day sail there, arriving in time for sundowners at the visitors berth, and in the midst of the marlin season. There were fishing boats of all descriptions heading out each day and providing our entertainment as they returned either flying the flags that indicated the number and type of fish caught along with a T flag that showed if it had been released or coming back empty handed. We did see one marlin brought in for an official weigh-in and photo opportunity!

Another unexpected coincidence occurred at Bermagui when we discovered the annual sculpture festival displayed in the local park. Steel was a popular medium and the winning entry gained the acquisitive prize of \$10,000, which means that it is displayed in perpetuity in one of the parks around Bermagui. That explains the many sculptures we saw around that were previous years' winners.



After waiting for some boisterous weather to pass, we left Bermagui with a 3m swell running outside that gradually subsided during the day as we headed northwards to Batemans Bay. Our actual destination was Broulee Island where we anchored in 4m of water, that was down to 2.5m by the morning when the tide fell and we had moved around on our anchor. It is an open roadstead anchorage and it was restless this night, which combined with the almost full tanks on *Chakana*, provided plenty of sloshing sound effects on board. The anchor alarm sounded about 1am, not because the anchor had dragged, but more about us learning to fine tune the use of the app.

Next morning we moved 10 miles to Chain Bay within Batemans Bay, which provided shelter from the forecast northerlies, walks on the beach and did not trap us behind the Batemans Bay bar. Here, we picked up the new version of the public mooring buoys in NSW, which appear to be a product of a land-bound mariner, or maybe not a mariner at all. Fortunately, the public moorings in Sydney have not copied their follies.

Chakana Cruising with La Niña – Melbourne to Sydney

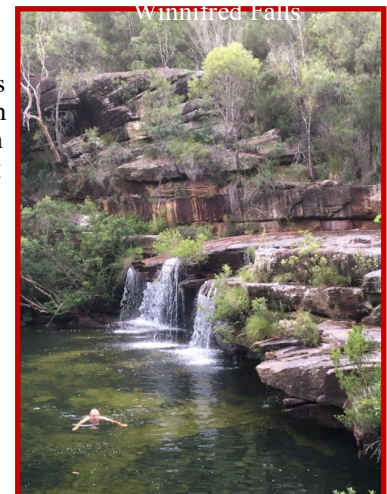
By Brenton and Robina Smith

We appreciated the all-weather entrance into Jervis Bay, where we picked up one of the five moorings at the Hole-in-the-Wall southerly anchorage close to sunset. Northerly winds were forecast yet again the following day so we sailed across the bay to spend a few days at anchor at Long Beach in Jervis Bay. We were confined to the boat for more than a day while the armed forces conducted live firing exercises on the Beecroft Peninsula, but these ceased ready for the locals to be able to spend the weekend at this popular beach.

A strong southerly change was then forecast for around midnight, and so we headed across to the Hole-in-the-Wall once again even though there was still a strong northerly blowing causing short steep waves at the moorings. This would be better than bashing across the bay against the southerly winds in the dark. Life on the foredeck was interesting picking up the mooring, but we used the 'marriage savers' to good effect so that Brenton could direct Robina at the helm with appropriate throttle and helm positions without losing fingers or having an arm pulled out of its socket! Fortunately the northerly quietened earlier than forecast and we were snugly asleep well before midnight when the southerly hit.

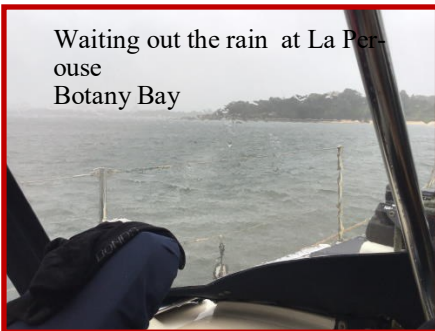
Marriage Savers are dual channel, voice activated headsets so that both of us can talk and listen without using push-to-talk buttons; they are hands-free so that the foredecky can work normally. They are invaluable at night or in challenging conditions when reactions must be quick, hand signals can be misinterpreted and voice messages are blown away instantly. We don't use them in good conditions in daylight; our hand signals work effectively when picking up moorings or anchoring.

In the aftermath of that strong 30kt southerly we headed north in another dying breeze to Jibbon Beach just inside Port Hacking where there are public moorings or easy navigation to anchor. Arriving just after sunset we made good use of the marriage savers once again. Bruce, a Port Hacking local we enjoyed several sundowners with in Jervis Bay, had given us a tip about Winifred Falls at the end of the SW Arm of Port Hacking so we threaded our way through the well-marked shallow waters on a rising tide and picked up one of the five moorings there, with the others remaining unoccupied. This is the Royal National Park and a quick dinghy trip took us to the mouth of the South West Arm Creek. From here it was a 15min walk inland to the waterfall. Be aware that the creek dries out north of the moorings at low tide – we had just enough water to dinghy back to the boat without having to drag it over the shallow parts. With good internet required the following day we headed back to the single public mooring in Gunnamatta Bay and explored ashore in Cronulla.



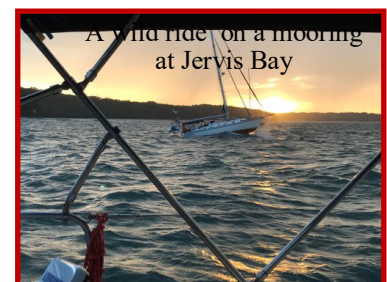
Winifred Falls

Waiting out the rain at La Perouse Botany Bay



The deterioration in the weather with rain and strong northerlies was evident and this pushed us into the decision to head north towards Sydney Harbour. We could see that we would be sitting out an extended period of rubbish weather and Bantry Bay inside Sydney Harbour appealed. We set off with a forecast of easterly winds of 15-20 knots, putting the wind just forward of the beam. The reality followed the forecast for the most part but did not include the very energetic waves of 3m at a period of less than 4 seconds and the swell from a different direction, and nor did it include the rain squalls where the wind went north by 30+ degrees and up in velocity by 10 knots. With the third rain squall being particularly vicious and including

white-out rainfall, valor superseded bravery, and we headed for shelter in Frenchmans Bay at La Perouse, just inside of the heads of Botany Bay. This proved to be a wise decision as we found good shelter for the next six days while Sydney had its wettest time for 50 years. Excursions ashore were necessarily brief, but they were done with sufficient frequency to keep cabin fever to tolerable levels. It was not good to see swathes of orange and red for an extended period of time over our anchorage on Meteye but the bay proved to be a safe haven. We liked La Perouse, it is the second time there for us, but when the skies eventually cleared it was time to head for Sydney Harbour where we needed an extended period of time due to family commitments in Melbourne and South Australia.



A wild ride on a mooring at Jervis Bay

NOTICEBOARD

***FRIDAY 21st May ***

Forum Dinner.

Lt Commander John Hollidge

In his presentation, John will take us on a brisk dash from Turkey, where he set out from, to Australia, where he now resides (at least until Covid eases its grip on the world). After describing his sailing background and reasons for choosing the type of yacht that he owns, John will cover some of the more amusing eventualities that he encountered en-route as well as relating some of the pitfalls to be avoided

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 Mandy in the office (95923092) no later than Wednesday May 19th. Bookings essential. Please let Mandy know at the office if you have any dietary requirements. e.g gluten free, vegetarian, non red meat**

WEEKEND 29th - 30th MAY

END OF MONTH ON WATER ACTIVITY

The May EOM Cruise destination is going to be Yarra's Edge Marina or Marina YE as it used to be known. Make sure you stay to starboard when passing Bolte Bridge. We will be booking restaurant nearby for dinner on Saturday 29th May 2021. In order to do this, we will need to get numbers, so could you please confirm back to Peter Gebhardt peter.gebhardt70@gmail.com if you intend to join us for dinner. If anyone has any inspirations for a restaurant please let me know .

FRIDAY 18TH June

Ian Pope.

How are we looking going into the 2021 Tokyo Olympics. Ian Pope is a former Olympic Swimming Coach for Australia where he served on the 2000 and 2008 Olympic Teams, and will share with us his experiences of being part of the Olympics

*** Weekend 26th 27th June ***

The Annual Frost Bite Cruise

Will be at the Melbourne City Marina on Saturday 26th. Please bring along a winter themed dish. Please let Peter Gebhardt know on [peter gebhardt70@gmail.com](mailto:peter.gebhardt70@gmail.com)

Yarra's Edge Marina: <https://marinaye.com.au/book/> Ph: 9658 8738
Melbourne City Marina: <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/boating-waterways/Pages/melbourne-city-marina.aspx> Ph: 9658 8738



With May upon us we will see the beginning of winter next month and while this conjures up thoughts of colder temperatures and Melbourne winters, I am reminded of some of the best sailing conditions I have experienced in past winters. In fact oddly enough better than some summer months.

These colder climes shouldn't be used as an excuse to stay indoors and not venture out on the water, and as long as we wear sensible clothing to keep warm, sailing should continue to be something we can enjoy.

I am looking forward to a return to End of Month Cruising with plans now in place for the next few months, including the tradition of our Frost Bite Cruise. It is also a great time to begin planning to get some small maintenance jobs done where you can spend time below if it rains.

Following on from last month's Forum Dinner the Committee have plans well in place for the forum dinners to continue with some great guest speakers, and some very interesting topics to cover. So look out for more information on these and make sure you book your seat with reception by no later than the Wednesday prior to the Friday night.

Of interest to me were the results of a recent Australian Sailing Survey regarding Social media use by all Australian Yacht Clubs where RBYC ranked 10th. This reminds me that we need to make better use of our Club Website and Facebook/Instagram by checking in more regularly to keep up to date with what is going on around the club, and also the RBYC Cruising Group Facebook Page. I especially would encourage you to comment on our posts, and share them so we can get more engagement. If you want something you have of interest to your fellow cruisers, drop me a line and we will get it posted for you.