

# JIB SHEETS



**JUNE 2017**

MTYC OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



*Wild Honey and Alfie Mac approaching a channel mark in the resail of the Four Points Race in light conditions on May 13*

**Melbourne Trailable Yacht Club Inc**

Registration No A2058

Website: [www.mtyc.yachting.org.au](http://www.mtyc.yachting.org.au)

# Commodore's Report – June 2017

Following the Annual General Meeting I would like to welcome the 2017-18 Committee. As always the committee will work hard to provide a wide variety of Cruising, Racing, & Social events. At the AGM, 32 MTYC members enjoyed dinner and an evening at Rising Sun Hotel with guest speaker Trevor Brown's tales of sailing his Noelex 30 single handed across Bass Strait.

Also at the AGM Gary Sawyer stood down from the committee. I would like to sincerely thank Gary for his dedicated service to the Club. Gary joined the committee in 2010 as a dedicated member of the sailing committee and served as Commodore for 2 years from 2012-2014, and as a most efficient Secretary this last year.

Another successful Four Points Race, despite having to postpone the race 1 week we again attracted a fleet of more than 40 Trailable Yachts, with some really positive feedback from visiting Skippers and crew. Thanks to Ron Parker, for his tireless efforts with all the race documents & race management. And to Colin Forster for his management of the TopYacht online entry system, streamlining the whole entry process. Also a massive thank you to the volunteers on the day, Jan Reeves, Eric Hough, Cameron & Liam Stevens, Christine Phillips, who all helped make the day run smoothly. Thanks to RMYS for their hospitality and to the Trailable Yacht Division at Yachting Victoria for their support. However, the great success of this event comes down to the Boats, Skippers, and crew that compete, and help to make it a great day

Unfortunately the final race of the Summer Long Course Series

was abandoned due to the weather forecast. The Winter Series started with the first 2 races on 18 June, with the opposite problem (a lack of wind). The first race was shortened to just 1 lap, before the second race was postponed, before being abandoned. The Winter Series racing continues on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month for July, August and September.

Also 30+ members & friends enjoyed the hospitality & food at the Rising Sun Hotel for the first of the Winter Series Seminars, featuring Bernard & Valerie Stahn's presentation of their 2010 adventurous sail, up the York Peninsula from Cairns to Princess Charlotte Bay, in their 21ft Sonata "PIZZICATO".

6 MTYC Noelex 25s travelled to Royal Geelong Yacht Club for the National Noelex 25 Championships. 3 races were conducted on the Saturday in light winds, unfortunately no races were held on the Sunday due to a lack of wind. Congratulations to Brad Jones 2<sup>nd</sup> and David Philipps 3<sup>rd</sup> in the championships and to Marg Goddard and crew 1<sup>st</sup> in the handicap results.

Refuge Cove cruise Queens Birthday weekend 10-12 June, was very well attended with 11 trailable yachts making the trip. Read more about their adventure later in this newsletter.

Presentation Night is coming up. Save the date, **Saturday 29 July**. This is a week later than the date listed in the calendar, so be sure to update your diary. This evening is another great social event, so gather your crew together and come along.

Doug Whitby  
Commodore



## MTYC Annual Dinner & Presentation Night

**Saturday 29 July 2017**

**Rising Sun Hotel  
Upstairs Function Room  
2 Raglan Street  
South Melbourne**



*Continued from page 4*

Division 4 ( 11 starters )  
Sunday Antics 4th place  
Overall a terrific result for our boats

Congratulations must go to the Melbourne Trailable Yacht Club organizing committee for conducting such a well run event. The northern end of the bay is full of activity with keel boat clubs conducting their Saturday racing, even saw the 12 metre Kookaburra sailing close by, water taxis and cargo ships moving across the race courses as well as sky diving near by and earlier in the morning the hot air balloons with a vivid sunrise in the background over the city sky scrapers. A great days sailing and I would encourage more of our members to participate in next years 4 points race.

# Four Points Race

Forty-five boats participated in the resail of the event on Saturday 13 May, following abandonment due to weather on the scheduled race day. One multi hull, six sportsboats, 27 boats in Division 3 and 11 boats in Division 4.

Fifteen boats in the fleet were MTYC members boats. The forecast very light winds forced the need to modify the course and delete the legs to Point Cook and the slower Division Four boats had their race shortened not long after rounding Fawkner Beacon. It was great that the other divisions managed to finish at St Kilda.

Special thanks again to Doug Whitby for his great effort leading up to and during the race to ensure the smooth running of the event.

This event now in its sixth year has become well entrenched in the trailable sailing calendar and is second to Marlay Point in the numbers of participants.



**Jaffa—4PR**



**Tarquin—4PR**

Hi Ron,

A huge Thanks to all at MTYC for putting on such a well run fantastic race.

Can't wait for the next one

cheers Greg Quiksilver

Below is our lead story on MMYC webpage

## Four Points Race - Report



On Saturday the MTYC in conjunction with the RMYS conducted the 2017 4 points race which attracted a total of 44 entries including Sunday Antics , Offshore Account and Quiksilver representing MMYC. Quiksilver did the 2 hour trip on Friday and moored at RMYS overnight, Offshore Account and Sunday Antics arrived at St Kilda marina on trailers. All 44 boats were quickly and efficiently directed to vacant pens at StKilda marina in time for the briefing scheduled for 9.00am.

The weather forecast was for a light and variable 4-6 knot westerly wind so the race committee wisely decided to shorten the course. After the briefing it was off to the starting area adjacent to RMYS

10.00 am saw the first start which included divisions 1&2 , division 3 was next away after a short postponement followed by divisions 4&5. It was a short reach to the first mark then keeping it to port it was off to the SYC7 this time a long close haul leg.

Once rounding the SYC7 mark it was tacking all the way out to the Faulkner Beacon with gusts up to 3 knots and once rounded it was a spinnaker run back to RMYS with a 5 knots breeze, then back on the wind to the finish.

Division 4&5 boats were shortened at transit mark T16



### Results CBH

Division 3 ( 27 starters )

Offshore Account 6th place

Quiksilver 10th place

*Continued on page 3*



# Refuge Cove, Wilsons Promontory Cruise

## Queens Birthday Long Weekend 2017

Eight MTYC boats sailed in company with three boats from other clubs including Port Albert YC and Lake Wellington YC. The fleet included:

<i>Mad Mouse</i>	Castle 650	Stephen, Helen
<i>Rampage</i>	Seaway 25	Leo, Buzz
<i>Alfie Mac</i>	Noelex 25	Kevin, Andrew
<i>Night Crossing</i>	Noelex 25	Adrian, Vicki
<i>O'Really II</i>	Noelex 25	Dennis, Sue
<i>Puffin</i>	Noelex 25	Tom, Amanda, Peter, Janet
<i>No Excuses</i>	Noelex 25	Mark, John (Macca)
<i>Tainui</i>	Noelex 25	Ron, Ruth

The other boats were two Farr 750 and a RL28.

A joint briefing of all boats was conducted with introductions to crews, a discussion on the navigation out of Corner Inlet, weather outlook for Monday, discussion re anchoring and some radio communications for the trip. Chart extracts were handed out and we soon had eleven trailable yachts motoring out of Port Welshpool and into Corner Inlet with the cloud hanging onto the Promontory mountains in the background. Winds were light and the tide was against us so it was a few hours motoring to make good progress with the limited daylight at this time of the year. For some of the participants, this was their first trip to Refuge Cove. Various crews have contributed the following accounts of the trip.

### Adventures on Mad Mouse

I was sort of persuaded to go on this trip - by my (still) husband. I couldn't think of anything worse than sailing in the freezing cold, making myself sick with fear for two days and camping in the rain with nothing but a bucket at night (no fluids after 5pm!). All my friends were feeling sorry for me!

The weather was pretty darn nice - I had to admit! The trip down was easy sailing (motoring), and so smooth I actually finished the back of my knitting project. The only fear factor was getting in a tad late, and luckily I didn't get the problem with that - so... ignorant bliss. The Prom itself was beautiful - as everyone saw.

Refuge looked like a pirate's cove and the water so clear and green. Pristine!

Day two.... A walk. A long walk. I thought we were walking to the top of the hill above the cove. Lovely! 20 mins max. But no..... This is where I had a chance to meet and talk with the other (very lovely) sailors. I heard about grandchildren, and books, and Men's Sheds, and plants and birds and map apps.... Ruth and I



had a break near the top (ish) while everyone else embarked on the final climb to Kersop's Peak. After a while, we encountered a steady stream of returning walkers who seemed hell bent on double checking that Ruth (& I) really and truly didn't want to go up to the top! We suspect Ron was behind this... The view from up there turned the Prom into a spectacular three dimensional map.

And it was sunny and warm as well, and with the water looking like jade I couldn't not swim. I thought I'd found a quiet secluded corner for the slow process of getting into an ice bath. But with the audience of youngsters at the other end of the beach I hadn't noticed, and a tourist

from ? staring in disbelief I had no choice but hurry up and plunge in. As my mother would say, it was bracing!

Meanwhile Mark went snorkelling, which looked like great fun! And he checked everyone's anchors... (was this something I ought to be worrying about?)

Ominously, for the trip home my husband (Steve) decided to enlist an extra 'bloke' to get on the Castle (so

he can crank on the sails he says). Not to mention some sailing expertise to help, rather than arguing over whether the 'sheet' (?) I'm meant to pull on is pink or orange (I'm sure he's colour blind). I heard vague whispers about the Singapore Deep, and Five Ways... We set off, with the kindly Peter Nearhos on board.

Peter, as well as generously enlisting to help us on our boat, was Trip Doco photographer, specialising in documenting white knuckles as I clutched the nearest winch. I think I'm reasonable with heeling over, but Steve's preference for 90 degrees is truly white knuckle material!

Thank you everyone for making the weekend happen. As Jenny put it - how spoilt we were to be in such a beautiful place! All my friends were jealous.

Helen



View from walking track overlooking Refuge Cove...

## Refuge Cove 2017 aboard *Puffin*

When Peter and I realised that due to unavoidable and unfortunate circumstances we couldn't bring our Seaway 25 to Port Welshpool for the Refuge Cove cruise, we asked if we might crew for Tom and Amanda on their newly acquired Noelex 25, *Puffin*. None of us had sailed off the Prom previously, so we were the newbies of the fleet. As we also had twice as many crew as all the other boats, we were nominated to manage radio checks en route, and Amanda volunteered her expertise for the job.

For the trip down, Tom took the tiller, Amanda was the forward deck hand and Peter helped her manage the sheets. I had been doing the 6 week Coastal Navigation Course at RMYS, and the final class (including test) was coming up a few days after the cruise, so I was very keen to practise and revise some of the navigation techniques from the course. As we motored for the first half of the way down, I was able to use my Portland Chart Plotter and hand bearing compass to help plan part of our course.

It was a great relief for all of us when we could finally

put up the motor and sail the last part of the trip. I must say that being used to the Seaway with its transom-mounted outboard and lots of clear floor space in the cockpit I found the Noelex both noisy (with the engine on) and cluttered (with the engine off and up) in comparison.

However, the sail was quite beautiful, and the scene in Refuge Cove quite as majestic as we'd been told to expect.

The day spent at Refuge Cove was perfect, so it was with slight disappointment that we heard the sound of rain just before dawn on Monday, our day for sailing back to Port Welshpool. A strong wind was forecast, so on Sunday night Steven Reardon had asked to borrow one of our crew to help stabilise his Castle, *Mad Mouse*, for the voyage. Peter moved across to *Mad Mouse* as we prepared to set sail.

In anticipation of the forecast winds, we put up *Puffin's* small headsail and had 2 reefs in the main. To begin with, however, the winds were quite variable and lighter than we'd been expecting, so first one and then the second reef was shaken out. As the wind picked up Tom and Amanda got to practice their reefing skills again, and we sailed the rest of the way with one reef in, which seemed to suit the boat well. As conditions were too rough to be even thinking of doing any paper chart work, I spent the latter part of the voyage navigating with iSailor. This was an obvious advantage under the conditions, as Tom and Amanda were quite pre-occupied with steering and sail trimming while I was able to concentrate on talking through the course with Tom. We managed to cut down on the number of tacks required as we approached and crossed Singapore Deep because of this division of labour.

The weekend was a memorable and highly enjoyable one for us all, and as Peter and I are hoping to soon take to sea in a keel boat, it was also invaluable as a learning experience.

Janet

## And aboard *Mad Mouse*...

With stronger winds forecast for Monday Stephen wisely asked if he could invite one of our four crew from *Puffin* onto *Mad Mouse* for the return journey. Stephen and partner Helen had a nice leisurely sail along with the rest of the armada on Saturday but had the foresight to bulk up the crew on the way back so I was the obvious conscript.

I had never sailed on a Castle before this but I knew they are about 600kg lighter than a Noelex and close to a ton lighter than our Seaway so I figured it would be an exciting trip back. During races on Port Philip I had heard the term "Castle Weather" for light winds but Stephen's *Mad Mouse* seemed to do pretty well no



matter what the weather and I know how intrepid a sailor he can be having cruised out the Rip and done a lot of solo sailing.

We set a double reef in the main sail and hanked the working jib on and set out from Refuge. Once out in the open we faced some pretty light and fluky winds from the north west, so we would sometimes be floating along with sails limp and in turn knocked by heavy gusts, sometimes backwinding the sails. As the wind settled and became more uniform we decided to shake one reef out and cruised along on a single reef for a while as the wind steadily built to about 15-18 kts.

So we hammered on like this for a bit, knuckles growing white from lack of blood as Helen and I clutched whatever we could in an effort to keep the balance while Stephen steered us into the wind with cries of "get that sail tighter" and "Wow isn't this fun, how fast are we going?". Eventually Helen suggested that maybe it would be an idea to put that second reef back in while I tried to appear non-committal as the discussion ensued. In the end I was quietly relieved when Stephen agreed that in the interests of a more comfortable ride AKA matrimonial harmony we could set the second reef and we continued on with colour returning to our knuckles. As the Castle was now a bit more upright and not acting like a Mad Mouse (apt name I now see, Stephen) Helen went below and navigated from the Navionics on the iPad while Stephen and I stayed up frequently wiping the rain from our glasses.

One tack in the Entrance Point channel keeping pace with No Excuses (one reef +working jib), a dart across Singapore Deep with a tack and we were in the channel and eventually reaching towards Port Welshpool. Navionics tells me that our max speed was 8.0kts and average was 5.8kts.

Great Castle Weather!

Peter



### Alfie Mac

The first photo of Alfie Mac shows crew Andrew (Secretary of Port Albert Yacht Club) helming to Refuge on Sat. while I am busy below. We motor-sailed the

whole way as the winds were fickle, and arrived at Refuge by around 3pm. The great scenery impressed as usual with misty clouds gathered over the mountains in the background.



The second photo shows the return to Port Welshpool on Monday in light winds at first. We soon reefed down again. Eventually we double-reefed to adjust the position of the first reef tie-down to the boom. This had little effect on speed (still around 6.5 knots in at times strong winds with flat water), and was so much more comfortable with a better balanced boat we left her double-reefed and made a nice cup of tea to warm up!

A great trip as usual which Andrew enjoyed (his first sail to Refuge), and has him thinking of getting a trailer-sailer. Thanks to Ron for the photos.

Kevin "Alfie Mac"



No Excuses

### Friday 14 July Winter Series Seminar

The second of our Winter Series Seminars.

Venue: Rising Sun Hotel, Raglan St. South Melb.

6 pm onward for Dinner,

8 pm Presentation. Further details shortly.

# CRUISING THE EAST COAST OF THE CAPE YORK PENINSULA

## SEPT. TO OCT. 2010

I have compiled a summary of facts which went into the planning and conduct of our ambitious cruise. As usual there are lessons learnt, and I trust that the following may be of help to anyone who dreams of going on a similar cruise. I have also added some of Valerie's colour photos in order to do justice to the spectacular scenery we encountered.

### ROAD TRAVEL

Road distance between Melbourne and Cairns is 3500km. As found on previous trips there is little difference in cost whether your towing vehicle burns Diesel at \$1.40/lit or LPG at 80c/lit, as charged at the time.



Road train traffic is particularly heavy on the Newell Hwy. Road trains don't pose much of a problem when on-coming, but when overtaking their suction can be dangerous. We found the following method to work best: Travel at up to 90km/h

and slow down by 10km/h when a road train is about to overtake. Move as far to the left as practicable and accelerate while he overtakes. This keeps your rig in line.

A couple of steep and winding stretches which can be readily avoided are the following:

Newell Hwy south of Coonabarabran – use the alternative road between Brocklehurst, Mendooran and New Mollyann instead.

On the way into Rockhampton (Leichhardt Hwy) avoid Mt.Morgan – go via Wowan and Westwood instead.

The Bruce Hwy north of Ingham is steep and winding, but major road works are about to solve the problem.

### LAUNCHING AND CAR & TRAILER STORAGE

Cairns and the Trinity Inlet are very busy places these days. We received good advice to launch at far more relaxed Yorkeys Knob some 15km north of the Cairns CBD. The public ramp is inside the marina, and a good anchorage just outside the marina in a very protected inlet. We stored our car and trailer with friends in Cairns and got back to Yorkeys on the regular metropolitan bus service. We did not enquire about storage at one of the numerous caravan parks, most of which are connected by the same bus service.



Lighthouse Low Isles

### RETRIEVAL

As to be explained later, sailing north is easy but sailing back south is a torture most of the time. Some 300km north of Cairns by road lies Cooktown, the most northern place with suitable ramps and a decent road to the south. At the end of our cruise, \$60 bought me a ride back to Cairns on the regular coach service, to pick up the rig and to retrieve at Cooktown.

### ITINERARY

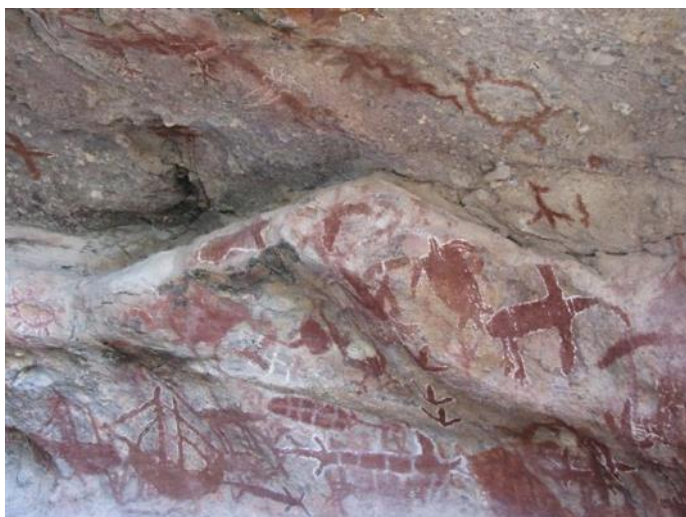
Our initial plan was to sail as far north as Thursday Island and then have Pizzicato transported back to Cairns aboard the regular cargo vessel. Every time we talked to the shipping company the costs rose, despite the fact that they offered all care but refused to be liable for any damages. We tossed the towel in at \$6000, and changed plans.

Allowing two months it is possible to sail from Cairns to Thursday Island and back by covering daily distances of 35nm going north and 10nm going south, with a few



Fresh Water Pump—Watsons Bay





**Stanley Island Cave Paintings**

rest days in between. This assumes moderate to fresh trade winds on the way up with variable winds, occasionally from N-E on the way down. To get this kind of weather we had to pick the right season.

### **CHOICE OF SEASON AND LIKELY WEATHER**

The Bureau of Meteorology compiles statistics of recorded weather, going back several decades. One of the most useful outputs are the wind roses, which cover recording stations all over Australia, and they can be downloaded from the website. These wind roses give the statistical distribution of wind strengths for 8 points of the compass and each month of the year.

For the east coast of the Cape York peninsula they show that trade winds from the S-E dominate all year around. They blow fiercest in winter and ease off during and just before the cyclone season, when they have a northerly component occasionally. That's how we came to pick September to go north and October (and early November) to come back.

### **THE ACTUAL WEATHER WE ENCOUNTERED**

Until mid Sept. we experienced S-E winds 15 to 20kn, thereafter often up to 25kn. By the time we completed our cruising in Princess Charlotte Bay we considered it



**Freshwater spring Cape Melville**

too risky to continue further up north.

From early Oct. frequent Strong Wind Warnings with S-E up to 30kn became the order of the day. Going south we were stuck for 10 days on two occasions. Although the mornings tend to be more moderate, tidal flows shift around the clock and prevented us from making the best of it. The following synoptic conditions have a vital influence:

High pressure in the south of the continent and the Tasman Sea (good weather in the southern States) produces a ridge along the Qld coast, which pushes air at high speed towards the low pressure belt at the equator. (Strong trade winds)

Low pressure (bad weather) in southern Australia and the Tasman Sea reduces the pressure difference and, therefore moderates or even nullifies



**Resident Croc Bathurst Bay**

the S-E trade winds along the tropical Qld coast. We happened to get precious little of this relief. During the whole trip we were blessed with two days on which the wind blew from N-E.

Apart from the diurnal oscillations our barometer stayed constant over 8 weeks.

### **SEA STATE AND SAILING CONDITIONS**

Tidal flows along the Qld coast are northwards on ebb tide and southwards on flood tide. Whilst there is next to no swell inside the Great Barrier Reef, the encountered trade winds whipped up waves in excess of 2m. In conditions of tide against wind these waves become rather steep. We found that the most appropriate sail plan for the conditions was a No.2 reef in the mainsail and the jib furled to suit. Going north we were riding waves at more than 7kn.

Running into such seas on the way south, however, made helming a bit of a challenge. In order to avoid violent slamming after crossing a wave crest, boat speed had to be dropped to 2kn by pointing high, whenever a sequence of high and steep waves was ap-



proaching. No matter how cautious, we were covered in brine all day long. Just as well the water was a pleasant 26deg.

Holding course became secondary to maintaining heel angle and speed. Valerie had the vital job to monitor our progress on the chart plotter and to alert me to tack whenever we came close to reefs. This became rather torturous on the 75nm "Horror Stretch" from Cape Melville to Cape Flattery, where the coast runs S-E straight into the eye of the trades and tacking is the order of the day.



Sea Rescue at Cape Melville

## COMMUNICATIONS & SAFETY EQUIPMENT

We found that the Next-G mobile phone coverage ends just north of Port Douglas and Low Isles. Pockets of service re-appear at Bloomfield, Cooktown and Lizard Island. Owning or leasing a satellite phone service should be considered despite its high costs.

VHF marine radio is monitored in Cooktown and then again on Thursday Isl. Coast Guard Cooktown reaches as far north as Lizard Isl. and the Howick Group. From then on its value lies in Ship-to-Ship communications. In our case a passing cargo ship intercepted our Pan Pan call and acted as a relay station.

Access to weather forecasts is essential. Broadcast radio reception is great if you want to listen to New Guinea in pidgin but Cairns stations fade severely.

The most detailed marine weather forecasts are transmitted every 4hrs by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) on Single Side Band (SSB) shortwave in a number of marine bands. We bought a "Sangean ATS 505" multi-band SSB receiver for \$200 from Dick Smith. At the size of a transistor radio it gives an excellent service, and we would not want to cruise without it.

For a cruise like this it is a legal requirement to carry a 406MHz EPIRB (emergency beacon). The one we borrowed from the Sonata club incorporates a GPS and will transmit its exact co-ordinates when activated in an emergency.

## NAVIGATION

We carried all the 1:150,000 marine charts for our cruise. They are essential for the "big picture".

Cairns based tide tables are handed out freely by marina offices and retailers of boating and fishing gear.

"Cruising the Coral Coast" by Alan Lucas is an essential reference book. It contains detailed sketches of popular anchorages for keel boats. A copy is available for loan from the Sonata Archives.

We investigated other possible anchorages prior to the cruise on Google Earth and printed out those aerial photographs, which looked promising.

The most used navigation tool was our GPS/Chart Plotter, equipped with C-maps of Australian coastal waters. It was rather re-assuring to see our actual location amongst all those submerged coral reefs. A real bonus are the 24hrs tide graphics for the nearest reference point. We made a viewing hood for the chart plotter to cut out sun glare and to magnify the 3.8inch display.

## REFUGES FOR SHALLOW DRAFT VESSELS

As pointed out above, going south into fresh trade winds at a snail's pace is a hard slog. Alan Lucas lists all



Barrow Point—Ninian Bay

the sheltered anchorages for keel boats, but they are too far apart for a slow voyage, limited to daylight hours. This is where trailer sailers and catamarans have the edge.

Looking at the charts we saw long stretches of protected coastline facing north, but separated from deep water by extensive shallows and sand banks. The 1:150,000 charts show the major river entrances but have too little detail to reveal the numerous creeks and lagoons behind the coastline. These became visible on the C-maps of our plotter as we zoomed in. After we tried out one of them and found that the entrance was navigable at all tides, we tried many more, all with the same success. In fact, we discovered some of the most delightful beaches and protected lagoons, where it was a pleasure to be marooned during periods of Strong Wind warnings.

Just to name a few: Saltwater Creek (Bathurst Bay), Ninian Bay and Murdoch Point.

Trust they also show up on Google Earth, providing the photos were taken around low tide.

### **FUEL, WATER AND BATTERY CHARGING**

Cooktown is the last refuelling place. We carried 52lts to fuel our 5HP Four Stroke O/B and came back with 20lts – a reasonable safety margin, considering that we cruised a distance of some 550nm.

Fresh water usage needed to be watched carefully. We had storage for 65lts plus 20lts in a solar shower. Our pump operated saltwater tap supplied the galley with ample pristine seawater and bathing was also restricted to saltwater. Rinsing off with a face washer and a cup of fresh water proved adequate.

Fresh water can be replenished along the way but it needs to be carried over some distances. Sources are as follows:

Spring on the beach north of the Cp Bedford sacred site.

Ground water pump at the NP campsite on Lizard Isl.

Spring under rocks at Cp Melville (low tide access only)

Rain water tanks on Flinders Isl. (Nat Pk shelters)

Our 5HP motor has no charging output, but the solar panel (rated 1 amp) kept the battery topped up to run LED lights, radios, log, depth sounder, chart plotter and saltwater pump.

### **FOOD SUPPLIES**

The well stocked and relatively inexpensive IGA supermarket in Cooktown is the last source going north. It is a fair walk back to the jetty – so take a foldable shopping trolley.

We found the following fresh foods to be long lasting without refrigeration: Potatoes, onions, carrots, apples, oranges, eggs, salamis, smoked raw ham and fruit cakes.

Amongst the non-perishable foods we stuck to tins of fish, meat, vegetables, fruit, cream cheese in jars, dried fruit, pancake mix and heaps of dried biscuits.

“Social” drinks like beer, wine and brandies were strictly rationed. Black Current syrup is a healthy and compact additive to make drinking water more palatable.

Valerie had packed food to suit a weekly menu cycle. In the warm weather we enjoyed mostly cold meals. If we cooked, it was on an open fire on the beach. One of our favourites was dozens of freshly collected oysters and mayonnaise rolled into freshly baked savoury pancakes.

Food which we collected off the land were mangoes, coconuts and Wongai plums, a tasty native bush tucker.

There were no good opportunities for fishing with lures – too fast going north and too busy going south.

### **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CRUISE**

Valerie and I enjoy cruising because we enjoy to explore new places. Here is just a summary.

Green Isl. off Cairns is very touristy, but once the boats leave in mid afternoon you have it all to yourself. Marineland Melanesia has a fantastic collection of crocodiles, saltwater aquariums and Melanesian art.

Cooktown is scenically located on the Endeavour River. Visits to the look-out and the Cook Museum are a must. Coconuts and mangoes are free for the taking.

Lizard Isl. Nat. Pk. has good walking tracks, the most famous being the strenuous climb up to the 360m high Cook's Look-out, from where the openings in the Ribbon Reef can be seen. Snorkelling over the “Garden Patch” in Watson's Bay should not be missed.

Stanley Isl. in the Flinders Group in Princess Charlotte Bay is the site for caves with some of the best indigenous art. Apart from the traditional depiction of animals there are images of sailing ships of the early European explorers – just stunning. There is good rock climbing to explore other caves.

Cape Melville and the rugged Melville Range are an immense pile of gigantic granite boulders. This is the site where in 1899 a cyclone destroyed a whole fishing fleet with the loss of some 300 lives. A path through the Wongai Plum forest leads to the monument which commemorates the sad event.



Noble Island comprises three distinctive peaks of volcanic origin. There are still mine shafts and rusted machinery from a short lived gold rush. Weathering of the soft sandstone has left behind bizarre skeletons of quartz veins.

*Continued on next page*



## LATE NEWS:

In the July edition of Cruising Helmsman the Letter to the Editor which won the monthly award is by Caitlin Philipps – roughly ‘pump it or dump it’. Lovely to see. She has a future as a marine biologist!

There is also an article about Petr Baum’s new Baycruiser 20 ‘TereJ’. That was also lovely to see.

Jan Reeves

## EARLY WARNING

### MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS.

These are not due until 31<sup>st</sup> August – but this year we are introducing on-line memberships – through Australian Sailing – you will up-date your own records and pay through this method.

Fees are not increasing for the 2017/2018 year, and it will still be possible to renew your membership through the present method if you so wish.

More information soon.

Jan Reeves – Treasurer.

*Continued from previous page*

### CONCLUSION

Can anyone take his trailer sailer on such a cruise? Most definitely yes! If your yacht is in a seaworthy condition and you are familiar with its strengths and weaknesses, all you need is the time and an enthusiastic crew.

Things can always go wrong as they did for us, as the result of two unnecessary blunders I committed. Valerie’s resourcefulness and courage made her the hero on both occasions. Remember, if you are doing such a cruise you are doing it as a team.

Happy sailing

Valerie and Bernard (Pizzicato)



O'Really goes to Reuge Cove...



Stainless steel welding,  
Small fabrications and repairs  
Aluminium welding and repairs

Dennis Bromley 0409178193  
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Race Management crews during Vic Trailable Championships at GLYC in Feb... Couldn't do it without them!



# Meander's centreplate restoration

In January 2016 I decided it was time to check the winch cable and shackle attachment to the centreplate of my Explorer 16 *Meander*, prior to competing in the Australia Day Class Association Championships. I supported the stern on a jarrah beam and concrete blocks, secured the boat and withdrew the trailer sufficiently to be able to access the centre plate. Years of neglect presented an ugly scene.



ding, with care taken to ensure fingers didn't get trapped. The heavily corroded leading edge required cold chisel and angle grinder to remove the worst fragments and fair into a more acceptable profile.



The shackle was fine (but the pin was reluctant to budge), however the plate was in serious need of attention. The winch was also somewhat corroded, so I bought a replacement that fitted the existing housing with minimal changes, plus new stainless steel cable. After drifting out the pivot pin I used jacks and stands to progressively lower the plate onto steel pipe rollers and manoeuvred it to a clear work area.



The plate is cast steel and weighs 95kg, so steel capped safety boots and leather gloves were used when han-

I performed this work in mid 30 degree heat, partially shielded from the blazing sun by shade cloth, while wearing full PPE of overalls, safety boots, dust mask, safety glasses, face shield and ear muffs. I removed all the previous epoxy coating back to bare metal in preparation for painting, but exhausted myself and had a relapse of a chest cold, so lost my drive to complete the job. In the meantime the plate was covered with tarps from the summer rains, and when I next looked, the plate had badly flash rusted.

Meanwhile I sated my sailing urges by crewing in the Explorer Association Championships, Marlay Point and



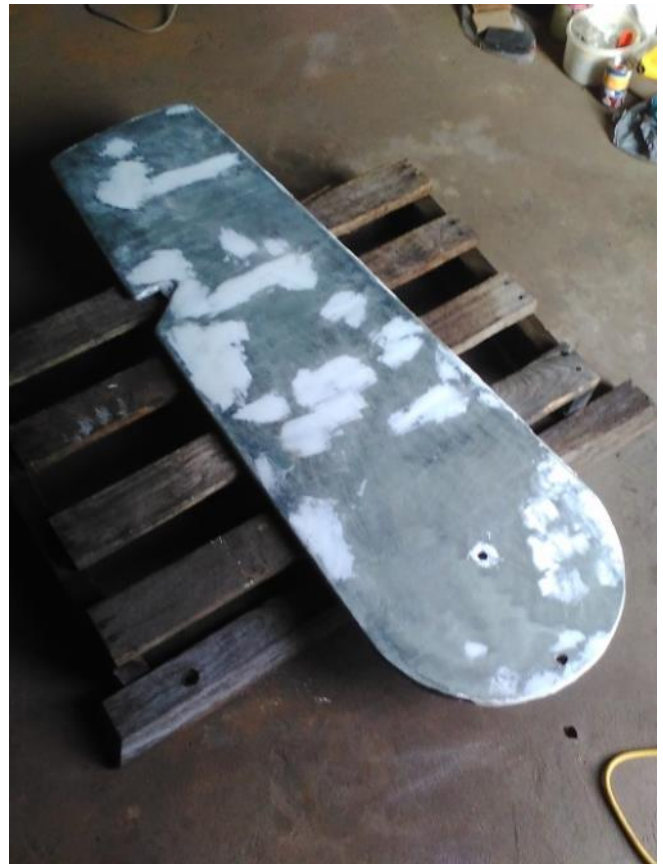
various MTYC races and Thursday night sails. Then came winter and skiing..... For months the plate languished, exposed to the weather and a constant reminder.

Christmas 2016 came and went, with further crewing in the above events deferring the required work. After consulting with other Explorer owners, I decided to first have the plate galvanized before painting. I wire brushed off the surface rust, manhandled the plate into a borrowed trailer using inclined beams and hand winch, and delivered it to GB Galvanizing in Bayswater, together with a couple of anchors. Illness struck again, which wiped my energy for a month. Just before Good Friday I had a resurgence of enthusiasm that I WAS going to complete the job, motivated by the thought that I should have been enjoying Easter sailing the Gippsland Lakes. GB had a lot of trouble with the porous casting, and had to strip and regalanise it, with a couple of spots still refusing to take up the zinc. However, for around \$200 I reckon they did a good job and it was money well spent, including two shiny new anchors. I'd negotiated access to a neighbour's garage (ours is inaccessible!), checked out the roof trusses and bought a 1 tonne chain block, overkill for lifting 95kg, but all part of the evolving plan.



Using slings I initially supported the plate on metal stands (further reinforced with heavier chain than shown to prevent the legs spreading), but I was nervous at the potential for collapse and serious injury, so used a pallet instead. After filing and sanding back a few zinc dags, I filled irregularities in the original casting surface with epoxy bog, noting the warning from others not to overdo it, or the plate may not fit back in the centre case. I bought a set of large inside/

outside calipers to measure the clearances throughout the centre case and ensure that I left a safe margin when building up the profile with several coats of polyester resin mixed with glass microbeads. After the resin had cured I manually "flipped" the plate on the pallet (which was covered with a heavy PVC sheet to aid moving the plate and to prevent subsequent damage to the back surface) and repeated the resin application. The plate



was then mechanically sanded and recoated over several days of warmish weather. The topcoats were two pack polyurethane, brush applied, sanded back and recoated. Not a perfect job, but I'd taken annual leave over the Easter- Anzac Day week to get the job finished, and was over it! After sanding out the final brush strokes, the finish looked good enough and a vast improvement on the old plate.



While I'd had several offers of help to reinstall the plate, I enjoyed the challenge of seeing if I could conduct the whole operation single handed, using safe manual handling techniques. I scrounged around the local hardware stores and scrap metal merchant and built a trolley with right angle brackets to hold the plate vertically and castors for easy manoeuvring under the boat. It worked a treat!



The boat was now backed into the shed, the rear supported as previously, and the chain block used to raise the front of the boat using the towing eye. The trailer was then removed, and the forward keel supported on a steel pipe cross beam and jack stands. Now for the fun bit! The new winch was installed and the vertical plate on the trolley was positioned under the centre case and connected to the winch cable with a new shackle.



A short length of polypipe was inserted in the pivot hole, sized to provide insulation between the stainless steel pivot pin and the plate, thus avoiding galvanic corrosion when the plate is immersed in seawater. Vinyl self adhesive floor tiles were cut into a circular shape and stuck to both sides of the plate with a cutout for the pivot hole. This is to prevent side to side plate

movement in the centre case. Lines were ruled radially to help locate the pivot hole in the plate when sighting through the hole in the centre case. The plate was then progressively raised into the centre case using first the winch and then screw jacks (padded to protect the plate) along the base of the plate. Jack stands were placed in case of slippage. Then followed a sequence of adjusting the jacks, climbing aboard to check the alignment, getting down and adjusting the jacks, climbing aboard....

When the converging lines were visible in the centre case hole, using a padded prybar against the end of the plate in the centre case slot brought the holes into close alignment, and a tapered punch was then used to finally align the holes. The pivot pin was then drifted back in and sealed with silicone before replacing the cover plates. A final check for free movement by lowering the plate, and the photo says it all!

Despite the long delay from start to finish of the refurbishment, it did eventually proceed with surprisingly few hiccups. It's a big advantage to have a clear work area, the right tools and sufficient time for the job. Now I'm keen to get *Meander* back in the water and see how she performs against other Explorers and MTYC boats on handicap. I may even get enthused to fit centre case sealing strips along the keel for that extra fraction of a knot!

**Peter Mart**





## More pics from recent events...

