

Scuttlebutt

October 2017



At the last monthly meeting a Projects' in Progress was conducted with much discussion and pictures. Bill Thompson kicked off the session with his Folkboat building story, including pictures of pouring his own keel bolts in the foundry and a chain hoist for feeding large and solid timbers through the bandsaw. It's almost a shame that so much work and lovely timber will be largely unseen in the finished boat, hidden beneath the floorboards.

Photograph supplied by Bill Thompson



President's Report

Jon Bell

September's Scuttlebutt advised that the meeting would include a review of members' current projects and a larger than usual audience started to assemble ahead of time suggesting there was considerable interest in the topic. Of course, Murphy was in the room too and the start was delayed by some unexpected IT issues, but this allowed those people whose dinner was delayed to catch up. The committee can (and has) done something to improve the audio-visual arrangements; but only you can do something about ordering your dinner!

Two interesting visitors were introduced by Tom Hughes; Tom & Kris Carpenter, of Hawaii. They sailed an ex-RNLI Waveney lifeboat* from N.Z. to Sydney, then cruised north to Gt. Keppel Is., then south around Tasmania before heading back through Sydney bound for Brisbane. The vessel will be shipped to Mexico with the intention of cruising to Alaska.

The Waveney lifeboat is a steel hull (Sheffield Oak or Newcastle pine) with aluminium superstructure 44 feet long with twin Caterpillar diesel engines. it is self-righting in 6 seconds! so very uncomfortable in a beam sea! The crew Tom, Kris and 2 Australian shepherd dogs (the "fur crew") Jolly and Narlu.


Chris Goddard needed to repaint *Bimini's* waterline so he unloaded a ton of rope and donated it to the Association to be distributed by auction. Bidding was fast and furious, with enormous sums being offered for 20m batches of surplus braided rope. I think the record bid was \$12!

Bill Thompson kicked off the Projects' Progress session with his Folkboat story, including pictures of pouring his own keel bolts in the foundry and a chain hoist for feeding large and solid timbers through the bandsaw. If we were looking to encourage new starters with stories of "see how simple it all is" this was an epic fail! It's almost a shame that so much work and lovely timber will be largely unseen in the finished boat, hidden beneath the floorboards, but Bill will know it's there, and now so will we. Thanks Bill, and we look forward to the next update.



Michael Coleman continued his theme of floating artwork, where the purpose of the build is not just to get afloat but to explore the juxtaposition of contrasting timbers and other materials.

Whilst trying to prepare mentally for the challenge of completing *Strange*



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Lady, Jamie Snodgrass is building a double-ended Tirrik and for an additional challenge is using "roadkill" timber where possible. Having not heard of this particular Iain Oughtred design I started researching it and about three hours later got back to writing this column. Definitely looking forward to seeing that one on the water.

*roadkill – aka wazza, as in "was a wardrobe ..."

So far, not much encouragement for our would-be first-time builders, so I showed a few slides of my Rocks River Skiff build which I started so long ago the first couple of pictures were in sepia tones. Not for me the neatly arranged lines of nippers holding planks in place; I used anything available to apply pressure at the right angle – string, clamps, levers, Spanish windlasses, wedges, anything (except screws). I didn't mention that my other reference work was by Heath Robinson. I could fill the rest of this edition with "lessons learned (so far)" but suffice it say, to anyone starting out on a lapstrake build, borrow, or take the time to make, a set of nippers; it's much quicker in the long run!

One thing that was common to most of the projects was that they were being constructed in less than ideal conditions. Not quite shaving a tree by hand in a snowstorm surrounded by bears, but certainly with never enough space and often under temporary cover. As I noted in an earlier edition when seeking Hal Harpur entrants, a quality finish may be the goal, but just finishing should be deemed an achievement.

Dave Giddings found an excuse to introduce a new product in his range; a plant-based paint stripper along the lines of Soy Gel at a lower price. The demo can was won in the raffle by Les Cocker, and we look forward to a thorough and independent product review, Les. (PS Great demonstration by Ken Travers on how to get highly discounted prizes for the raffle!)

Other prize winners were George and Michael Coleman.

A bit quiet on the Sydney Classic and Wooden Boat Festival front at the

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Printed by Power Colour Pty Ltd, 106 Grose Street, Parramatta NSW 2150 A.B.N. 58 066 215 021

moment; in accumulation phase whilst Registrations of Interest are sought. If you are even remotely considering entering your boat, please do register as soon as possible and not just at the last minute as it really gives encouragement to the organisers. Remember, we want non-floating boats as well as fully operational ones. Works in Progress as well as finished showpieces. They all add colour and depth to the festival.

No takers so far to form a team (or teams) for the Quick & Dirty Boat-building Contest L. We don't need exact numbers or names at this stage, just one or two people to stand up and be a rallying point plus a few expressions of intent to give it some legs. Talk to any of the committee to register.

Our next meeting is on October 10th, with guest speaker **Ian Smith** talking about his book *The Open Boat*. (Nobody to warn him that the last person who spruiked a product had to give it away as a raffle prize!). Note also that Ian is promoting the Waterman's Race as part of the Balmain Regatta, so if you have any questions about entering or watching that would be a good opportunity to raise them.

Following the success of last month's mini-auction, we might make this a regular session but limited to, say, 5 items. If you wish to offer anything please let me know before you lug it all the way from the car park as there might be 5 ahead of you. If we have a list of lots early enough they'll be included in the eNewsletter, otherwise it's pot-luck. Noting that the Association's auction commission is at least 50%, if you wish to actually retain some money from the sale you may like to reconsider Scuttlebutt's classified section.

Finally, given the upheaval last year when we had to clear out our storage cupboard, it has been decided that we need an asset register. "Asset" maybe too grand a word, but if you are providing a safe home for any WBA stuff, be it a box of books or some accounts archives or a projector or life ring etc etc, or you think you know of someone who is, could you please email myself or Peter Widders or Malcolm Boyd with the details, so the next time someone says "I'm sure we had one of those, I wonder where it is?" we might have an answer.

Happy Building (or stripping, sanding, painting, polishing or even, hopefully, boating!)

* The **Waveney-class lifeboat** was the first class of lifeboats operated by



the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) capable of operating at speeds in excess of 10 knots (18.5 kph).^[1] Based on an American design, 22 saw operational service between 1967 and 1999 at the RNLI's stations around the coast of the United Kingdom and Ireland.

After being superseded by faster boats, many were sold for further use with lifeboat services abroad, notably in Australia and New Zealand.

The 1964 prototype was never given a name although the crews nicknamed it "The Yank".

Tom & Kris say "it is self-righting in 6 seconds so very uncomfortable in a beam sea!"

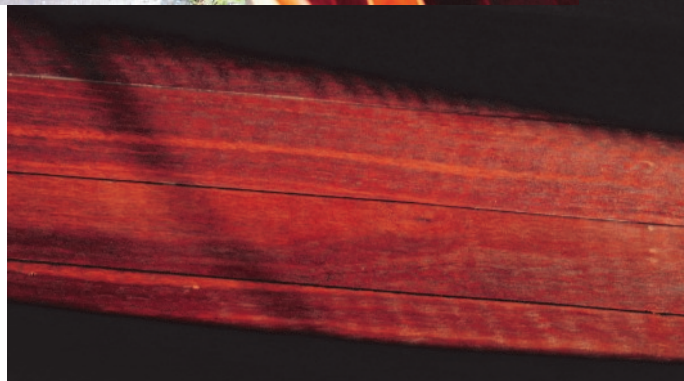
Raffle Winners

George Gear, Michael Coleman with the paint stripper going to Les Cocker.



More pics from our Projects' in Progress

Michael Coleman continued his theme of floating artwork, where the purpose of the build is not just to get afloat but to explore the juxtaposition of contrasting timbers and other materials.



Ryegate Rides Again.

from John Quirk

Quirky meets an old love. The smoldering passions are re-lived. They go off on three holiday cruises.....and he takes his wife along.



On the road from the Thames to Gloucester docks,

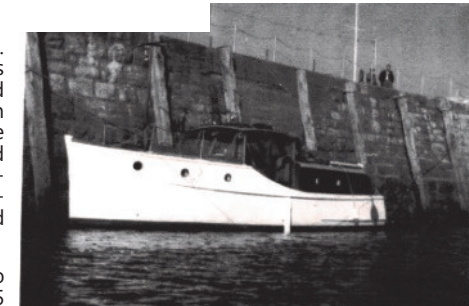
ment for restoring her. We could see ourselves gliding through inland waterways and then pounding down the Bristol Channel and nudging into west country harbours...We convinced him that we could restore her ourselves.

Ryegate was trucked to Gloucester Docks, (25 pounds) unloaded by a gasping steam crane (thirty shillings) and nursed up the Seven to Worcester with an overheating spluttering Graymarine. We pumped until the planks rearranged themselves after the road trip. A team of assorted volunteers scraped paint and varnish until their knuckles bled. I replaced most of a varnished mahogany T&G bulkhead while Jack and two mechanical student mates sorted the engine, an army surplus Tiny Tim generator, the plumbing and wiring. After the DIY refit she gleamed and ran dry and smoothly taking us on those adventures of which we had dreamed. In weekday summer evenings, she provided a picnic and swimming platform in the languid soft twilight, less than an hour from our claustrophobic Woodbine flavoured Midland offices.



After exploring the Severn and Avon, we whit-tled legs from reclaimed 4x4 pine and fitted 'patresses' inside the hull so that Ryegate could take the ground in the drying harbours of the

Bristol Channel. In June 1961, five of us thrilled to the opening of the Sharpness sea lock and headed down channel which began a series of incidents and adventures that ran the full thesaurus of being elated, thrilled, appre-



Readers of my book Foul Bottoms may recall Ryegate, the 28'6" 1937 Gibbs cruiser that was discovered by 'our neighbour, Jack' under a pile of old tarps at Sheperton in 1960. OK, she needed some serious work but we neighbourhood teenagers were buoyed by Jack's enthusiasm for this dainty little ship and our own excite-

hensive, terror stricken, astonished and exhilarated. I caught up with a fellow crew member just a few weeks ago and he confirmed that despite our collective ignorance, we survived and all enjoyed a life changing experience over half a century ago on which we look back as being one of life's greatest highlights.



Ryegate from a photo album. This was about 20 years ago, saved from disintegrating into a wreck.

back in the fore cabin of Ryegate, safe among family and friends, listening to the wood pigeons and little splashes of wild-life on the river, recalling happy irresponsible days of youth.

But Ryegate was also experiencing tough times. After decades of being well maintained, Jack's daughter reported that she suffering from neglect. She said it was like visiting an aged rellie in a nursing home; Ryegate was gradually Dorian Graying into a wreck. Suddenly, my life turned around, the sun came out and was filled with new joy and happiness. Most of you have met Jo-anne. We flew to UK and risked one last visit to Ryegate. Astonishingly, her life had also changed for the better. She looked as good as new; those dainty prewar motor boat lines gleamed in fresh paint and varnish. There was movement aboard and we introduced ourselves to Maureen and Nigel Weir, her new owners. Ryegate had been rescued by two shipwrights, owners of the Grist Mill Boatyard, who felt they could not let her fall to pieces. They bought her and had started some basic re hulling work when Maureen and Nigel spotted her while touring around with half an eye open for an interesting boat. They bought her and completed the refit.



Someone had added timber handrails up forward, a playpen on the aft cabin and davits since our day. You can see the prop for the wing engine and bilge keels. Imagine fitting the 6" X 2" internal stringers for those.

Since Jack's ownership, there had been a few changes. Someone had gone to enormous trouble to bolt on a pair of massive bilge keels through to continuous stringers which must have been a pain to fit, requiring the removal of most of the interior to get them in. It seemed someone had experienced, or had anticipated, the rolling tendencies of these pre War motor cruisers. A wing engine was added, and then removed. A Ford 55hp diesel had replaced the original 36 hp Gray. The original cable steering which was as accurate as the rack and pinion gear on an MG had been replaced by a hydraulic system which gave dodgem car dodginess. Nigel, a mechanical engineer, has since replaced this with a more sensitive one. Most of the deterioration was rotted hull planking caused by deck leaks

The beautiful mahogany interior had been smothered with blue Formica, glued on with black Bostik, which took months to remove and restore. In the forward cabin, the pre War bus seat Rexene coverings were replaced with Maureen's luxuriously soft fabrics and the aft galley upgraded, making it a fine place for the cook to operate with limitless headroom through the open hatch and a view of the scenery.

After a few minutes chat and a cup of the wonderful boat tea for which Ryegate was renowned, "You must come cruising with us." Said Nigel. Classic sailors are like that.

And so we did.

Three times so far.

After dreaming of that snug cabin of my youth, who could have imagined that not only would I be back there but with my lovely new Australian wife who had also been widowed by cancer. She was delighted to be gliding through the heart of England in the comfort of this elegant cruiser. Among the plastic clunkers and steel narrowboats Ryegate drew admiring glances and comments.

My uber sensible elder son was horrified. "You are going away with strangers? Dad's only met them for 20 minutes and you can't rely on his judgment." He told my wife in an apoplectic phone call.

"Don't, worry" she calmed him. "If they turn out to be axe murderers, we will get off."

Ryegate got the chance to dip her forefoot into the Bristol Channel again

THE BOATSHED AT WORONORA

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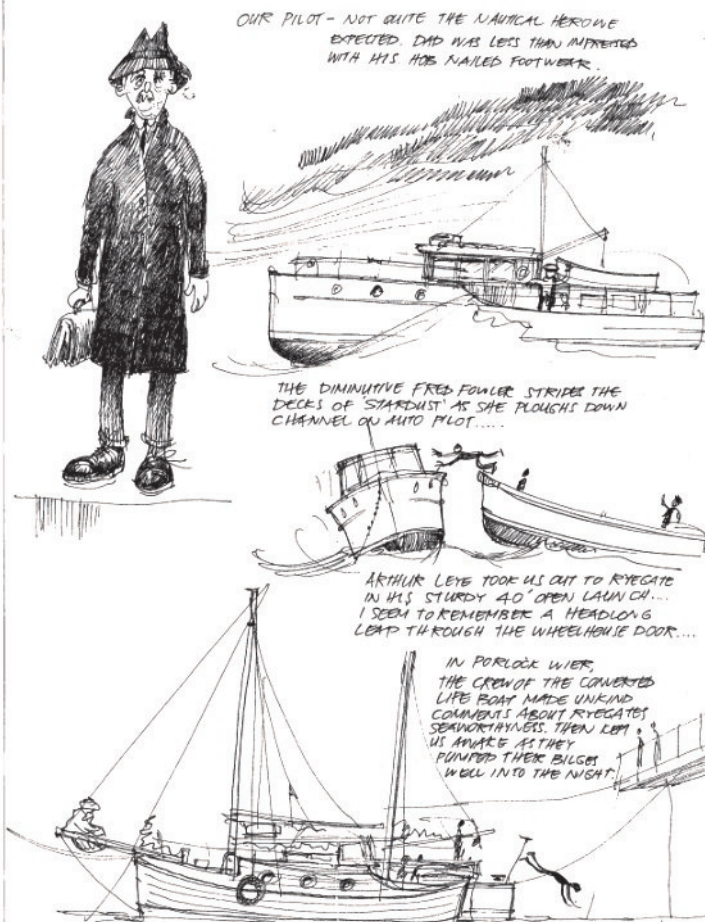
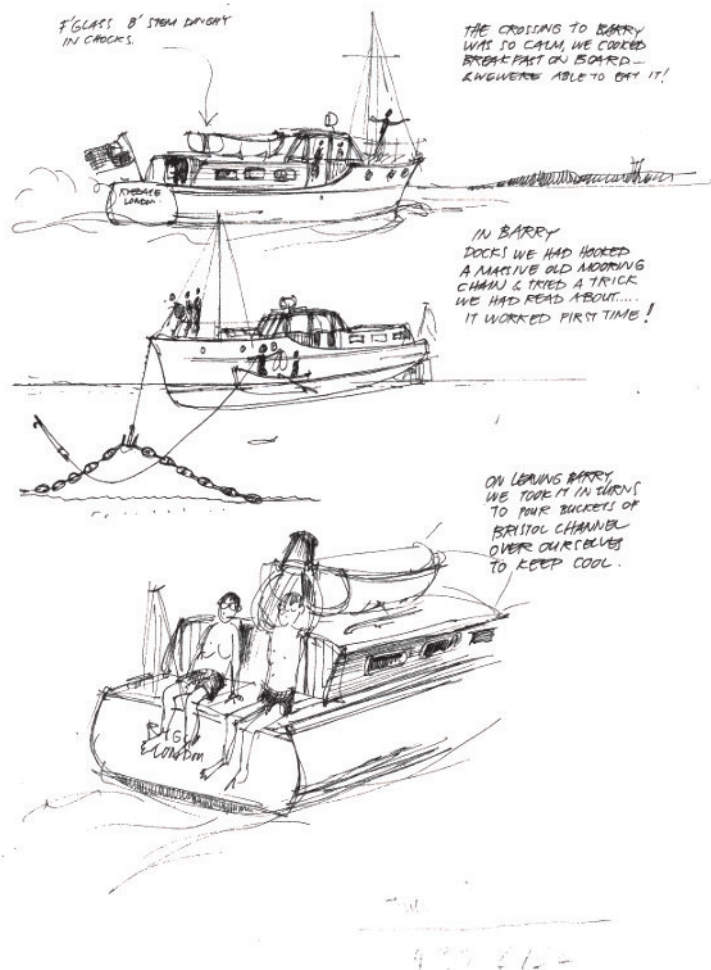
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Jonathan and Jane Bell



when we took her from Sharpness to Portishead and up the Avon through Bristol to Bath.

As we were about to set off at 3.00am to ride the 8 knot ebb, Nigel showed our pilot all the electrical and navigational goodies he had installed since our day.

The pilot cut his explanation short. "This ship got a kettle?"

"Of course."

"That's all you'm need. Milk and two sugars please."

In contrast to our 1961 afternoon passage, when we punched into a lively wind against tide, the waters at night were as smooth as the Severn itself. Two new road bridges had been built since our day and from one, a fast food wrapper, flung from a speeding car, fluttered down onto our deck. It felt like seeing a MacDonald's at Cape Horn. This was down channel from here where in '61, a Bristol Channel uppercut punched the anchor from its lashings and was tossed into the mast. Our return trip up channel was a blowy one and brought the long slow rollers with wind with tide. Wonderful! It seemed to me that the bilge keels had helped to steady her rolling.

Her bunks are just as comfortable as I remember, and the overhead light is perfect for reading although I was then too excited at being afloat to fall asleep. The galley, where we stowed our tins of corned beef, stew, beans, spaghetti, condensed milk and all the staples of 60's cruising life, now hums a discreet refrigerator crammed with Maureen's 'This is one I made earlier' delights of gourmet meals and chilled wine. Our refrigeration in port used to be a wet earthenware pot inverted over the ship's milk bottle.

Ryegate was one of a fleet of between the wars standard motor cruisers built by such firms as Gibbs, Silvers, Stainland and Thorne built to suit a prewar lifestyle. Showers were unheard of but you might get a small bathtub in Silver over 45 footer. All saloons were below decks. Nobody ever thought of putting it in the centre wheelhouse were the passengers could look out while on a passage. You had a choice of a Morris Commodore or Navigator, or an American Graymarine in a Gibbs, diesel engines were only found in larger craft, but these thirty something footers seemed to make their hull speed with the modest outputs of their petrol engines. Construction was usually pitch pine planking with mahogany brightwork. Teak cost an extra 100 pounds on Silver 45 footer!

It seems that boatbuilders today assume that everyone wants to travel at planing speed. These elegant craft of my youth are becoming rarer. *Ryegate's* had two sister ships on the river which were always well maintained but, but they seem to have fallen on hard times. The skilled riverside boatyards have been replaced with blocks of flats.

Nigel and Maureen became distracted; they developed and then sold their oil consulting business and went looking for a little cottage in Felixstowe

where they both grew up and met at primary school. They wound up with a vast Italianate mansion overlooking the sea. It had been a girl's school and accommodated several hundred girls. They just had *Ryegate* brought by road from Bristol to Suffolk Yacht Harbour where she is undergoing another refit. She should be in fine fettle when we are there in May next year. The Bristol Channel maybe off the menu, but it is short hop round to the Thames estuary and London itself. Did you know the Thames is navigable for 128 miles above the tidal limit of Teddington Lock?

Dunkirk. Did she or didn't she?

Was *Ryegate* involved in the evacuation of 339,000 troops from Dunkirk? An astonishing amount when Churchill only expected a tenth of that number could be saved. Sixty one years later, 500,000 were evacuated by boats from lower Manhattan after 9/ 11. But then they did not have the German Army and the Luftwaffe chasing them...

While *Ryegate* was in Shepperton in 1960, near where Kenneth Gibbs was building the last of his 39 footers in Hampton Wick, Teddington, a couple of old shipwrights (Well, about 15 years younger than I am now) were replanking a flat chine Broads type cruiser. This was in a riverside field with maybe a couple of dozen other wooden boats. I asked them how many of these went to Dunkirk, only 20 years before. Just about all of them, they said, including the Broads cruiser they were working on. This was a surprise as she looked a very sheltered water craft and I asked about *Ryegate*. Again, they assured me she was there and at one time ferried 41 troops, with two of them jammed in the heads for the journey. How did they know that? The two sixty something boatbuilders said they were there too. When I questioned that *Ryegate* did not have a plaque nor was she in the Little Ship lists, they laughed and said they were not surprised. The paperwork was a bit hit and miss they said. But every able hulled boat on the Thames was requisitioned.

I read that one owner discovered his boat had been to Dunkirk only when he found a French Army rifle in a locker after the War. *Ryegate's* sister Gibbs cruisers, *Cariad* and *Quest* collected their plaques as did her 39 foot twin engine younger sister, *Ryegate 2*. She was acquired three months after *Ryegate* by the same owner. It seems remarkable that the three year *Ryegate* did not join other older and less suitable craft, like that Broads type cruiser.



THE CAIRNS REPORT

from Chris & Gilli Dicker

Chris and Gilli have purchased a block of land near the Gippsland Lakes in eastern Victoria. He drove down from Cairns with the first trailer load. By next year this will change from the Cairns Report to the Gippsland Lakes Report.

It has been a busy couple of weeks mapping out building sites and seeing surveyors and councils let alone port authorities for a berth for *Westwind*. I have also been cleaning up the block before the council gets on to me. It will just grow again anyway but at least I have made an effort. Our friend down here has a 10 acre block and all the gear to keep it in check and he was very generous in allowing me to use it. A local chap came to slash it for me and he has all the other fittings for his tractor that I am sure I will be calling on. Luckily the block is totally free of any old farm rubbish including stumps etc so he got around it in about three hours.

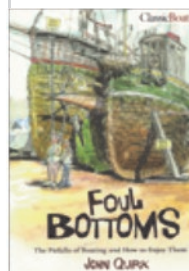
It has been a mixture of weather here, one day a beautiful warm clear day and the next 30 knots and 16 degrees. Today was the first rain and it came in at a 45 angle. The ferryman was having a time of it docking his unwieldy vessel.

I'll be leaving this car here as we can't drive two cars down from Cairns and sail *Westwind* down as well. The trip back is a challenge also.

Raymond Island to Cairns. Walk two kilometres to ferry, taxi to Bairnsdale, bus to Sale, train to Pakenham, bus to Flinders St, hotel for night. Bus to airport, big jet to Cairns then Hyundai limmo to *Westwind*. When you visit we highly recommend you drive!



Based on a series of highly popular articles written for *Classic Boat Magazine*, this witty collection recalls some of the incidents the author has survived in over half a century of messing about in boats.



Most sailors will find something to relate to in these escapades from around the world and they will bring a wry smile to any boaters lips. The author's wonderfully witty cartoons help bring these anecdotes to life.

All these stories are true so WBA member Alan Williams writes under a pen name so that his architectural clients do not think they are entrusting their work to a seagoing Mr Bean. Copies are available from Boat Books in Crows Nest at \$24.95 or less on Amazon. WBA members can get copies from Alan at meetings for \$ 20.



**CLASSIC & WOODEN
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WBA members may place a non-commercial ad free of charge if the member's name and phone no. appear. Non-members are charged \$20 for a text ad (maximum 25 words). \$30 with a picture. Ads will run for two issues, member's ads longer if you ask for an extension. Submissions close on the 21st of each month. NOTE: Items for free, No Charge. Contact the Editor, see page 2 for details.

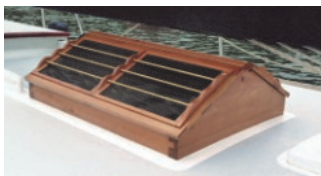
FOR SALE

Thara – 1948 Alan Payne Classic sloop



34' LOA 8' Beam 6' draught Lovingly restored in racing condition. Nanni 3 cylinder diesel Good sail inventory New sheathed deck 2016 plus skylight fitted Raced with SASC in Div 1 – good

record reduced to **\$39,000** Rob Landis 0414 741 725



Peter Gossell was one of the successful purchasers of some rope at the auction last meeting. The particular length, approx. 20metres of 20mm diameter, came with a knot in the centre that appeared to be permanent. Peter, seeking a challenge and determined to gain the maximum length attacked it with a marlin spike, a mallet and a vice. He didn't advise how much time was spent on the exercise!



FOR SALE

Antares a 52 ft wooden Flybridge, Bridgedeck Gentlemans Cruiser



Carvel planked, 9 berths in 3 cabins with separate well equipped galley, dining area, heads & shower. Powered by twin 215 HP V8 Cummins diesels with only 1000 hours on each engine. Built in Mayfield, (Newcastle) to Naval Architect Roux design. **\$285,000**. Well over \$1 million to replace.

Contact Ken 0416 048 600

FOR SALE

3 metre clinker wooden dinghy



Needs finishing touches. \$1250 Ono. Contact Geoff Harland in Newcastle on 0409 125 238. email gandharland@gmail.com

Cock-A-Hoop Regatta - Postponed until early 2018



Some members received a blocked email message mid September advising:

The Rotary Club of Drummoyne has made the decision to postpone the

holding of the inaugural Cock-A-Hoop Regatta from this October to a new date in 2018.

We are liaising with Drummoyne Sailing Club to set a new date....

FOR SALE

RF111 red buoy - \$15 Wavebar Flexible Noise Barrier - Sheeting (heavy). 1m wide by 4m long approx - **Free**



Peter Widders 0481 583 794

JERVIS BAY | MARITIME MUSEUM CLASSIC & WOODEN BOAT FESTIVAL

10 - 12 NOVEMBER 2017

Submissions are now open for a three day festival celebrating wooden, classic and model boats that will be held on November 10-12 at the Jervis Bay Maritime Museum, Huskisson. This event will be an opportunity for the community to admire the beauty of timber vessels and the skills involved to craft them.

The show will feature a display of handsome wooden and classic boats, including some built in the local area. Detailed boat models will be exhibited and radio controlled vessels will be setting sail in the pond on the Museum grounds. A range of historic surf boards and other antique nautical objects relating to early boat building will also be on display.

The Museum is seeking keen hobbyists, collectors and organisations who may have an interesting item or collection to display during the event. Organiser and museum volunteer, Stan Brown says that the festival "will be the next best thing to actually being on the water - but still messing about in boats!"

The three day family friendly event will also include a range of fun activities for the kids. Food and drink will be available for purchase on site.

Individuals and groups wishing to participate or exhibit at the event are invited to complete the registration form and email it back to enquiries@jbmm.asn.au

or post to PO Box 123, Huskisson NSW 2540 as soon as possible.

Payment information will be sent following registration.

Any questions, please email:

enquiries@jbmm.asn.au

or call Ian 0402 715 681, or Stan 0438 952 136 or Gary 0431 772 369

Note: a fee of \$25 is charged to exhibitors to cover the costs of overnight security and insurance.

The fee is charged per exhibitor not on the number of vessels they wish to exhibit.

More pics from our Projects' in Progress

Jamie Snodgrass is building a double-ended Tirrik an Iain Oughtred design.





MERCHANDISE



A



B



C



D



E



F



G



H

A Jacket.....\$75	E Polo (black s/s)\$30
B WBA Cap\$15	F Polo (white l/s)\$38
C Vest.....\$50	G Stubby holder.....\$12
D AWB book.....\$20	H Burgess (sm/lg) ...\$20/\$25



— — ON THE HORIZON — —

THIS YEAR 2017

October 8th	Sydney Amateur Sailing Club - Gaffers Day
October 10 th	WBA Meeting, Ian Smith, the Open Boat
October 13 th	Postponed to 2018 - date tba - Drummoyne Sailing Club, Cock-A-Hoop Regatta
October 16 th	Committee Meeting
October 29	Balmain Regatta
November 4 th & 5 th	Royal Motor Yacht Club Timber Boat Festival
November 10 th - 12 th	Jervis Bay Maritime Museum, Classic-Wooden Boat Festival. Contact: Stan Brown 0438 952 136
November 14 th	WBA Meeting
November 20 th	Committee Meeting
November 26 th	Quarantine Reserve + Wood Workers Association.
December 12 th	Hal Harpur Award Evening

NEXT YEAR 2018

January 9 th	WBA Meeting, Gladesville Bowling & Sports Club,
February 13 th	WBA Meeting, Gladesville Bowling & Sports Club
February 18	Boatfest 2018, Rathmines Memorial Park, Lake Macquarie
April 13 to 15	ANMM Classic & Wooden Boat Festival, Darling Harbour and Cockle Bay