

# Scuttlebutt

September 2018



This vessel has sailed more than 40,000 miles since the 8 year restoration was completed. It has been to three Australian Wooden Boat Festivals in Hobart a couple of trips to New Guinea and was the winner of the 2007 Hal Harpur Award. The boat is *Westwind* owned by Chris and Gilli Dicker now based in Victoria.





## President's Report

Jon Bell

September 2018

Brrrr ! Did I say something last month about the evenings getting less chilly so evening boat building is more enticing? Not so in August and definitely not so in my little part of the world, especially when the sun departed. So much so that the only boat building activity here all month was the twins putting a coat of paint on their Bellinger Canoe ... and on themselves and everything else within reach!

Our invited speaker for the July Meeting was John Vaughan, who presented an abridged History of Australia as seen through the eyes of a vexillographer, starting with Australia's first official flags of nationality, the First Union Flag and the old Red Ensign current in 1770 and 1788 right through to the most recent iterations. He expertly covered the key principles of effective flag design, how each one developed and why some fell



into disuse whilst others achieved great popularity. Using a model fully-rigged flagstaff he named all the flyable positions and their order of precedence. He noted in passing that the flags flying at the top of the Sydney Harbour Bridge are 9.0m x 4.5m and are made from a special lightweight material to avoid any distortion to the tall flag staffs.




It was a rapid, fact-filled and altogether engrossing presentation from the man considered by many to be Australia's leading authority on the design, etiquette, protocol and history of flags, and we thank John for his time and expertise. For more information, start at <https://au.linkedin.com/in/john-vaughan-a1823a42>.

Thanks also to Alan Stannard who took the trouble to bring many large flags and decorated the room in the theme of the talk, including the series Whisky Bravo Alpha. We shall probably see more of these three .... Alan also brought along the Red Ensign and jackstaff flown on Sydney Heritage Fleet's motor boat *Protex*. At 1½ yards (54 inches or 1.37m) it is slightly longer than the 1" per foot "rule", but Alan says the larger the flag the better it makes the lines of the vessel look!



Alan also suggests, always have the top corner of your ensign hoisted high



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up under the truck. How to achieve this? Just by-pass (or cut off) the top loop that comes with the flag and hand sew a flag clip slightly below the top corner to connect your halyard or lashing to.

Send your own tips and tricks (flags or whatever) to the Editor – maybe we could start a new feature...

Alan Williams made use of the instant auction session to reduce his removalist bill, and several members acquired items they didn't know they needed (up until that point). One item was high-jacked by the auctioneer prior to being offered, and we now have a large metal cabinet to store our meeting paraphernalia in. Many thanks, Alan. We still have some copies of Seacraft magazine from the 1950s, Wooden Boat Magazines from a bit more recent times and a bag of assorted wooden cleats.

I know many of you who can't make it to the meetings eagerly look forward to reading about Nick Cassim or Grant Holmes winning the raffle again, but I'm sorry to tell you they did not. I'm equally sorry to tell you I don't actually know who did!

**Stop Press:** Just in from the Royal Motor Yacht Club on Pittwater – "Due to unforeseen circumstances in the current RMYC marina development, the club has regrettably decided with caution to cancel the 2018 Timber Boat Festival". A shame, always a good event (if a bit windy at times) and many WBA members usually attend.

HOWEVER ..... also just in, the Davistown Putt-Putt regatta is opening its doors to all wooden boats for their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary event on October 21<sup>st</sup>. More details elsewhere and in eNews, or contact Neil Mulcahy at

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Participation in events organized by the Association may involve certain risks which include the possibility of harm or damage to vessels, equipment or persons inherently associated with the perils of the sea or weather. Such risks will require the exercise of the prior judgment of members on behalf of themselves, their guests and invitees whether to commence or continue any particular activity irrespective of information supplied by Association officers.

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puttputt.regatta@gmail.com. Another popular event with WBA members.

Next month's guest speakers are Hal Harpur 2017 Nominees Chris Cleary and John Capaldi, with more in-depth information about the selection and build process for their three projects.

Talking of which ..... Hal Harpur Nominations close September 30<sup>th</sup> – as if you didn't know by now.

Then in October we're having another Members' Projects Review, keeping the pressure on those who should be making progress (did I mention August was a tad chilly??) and hopefully uncovering a few more shy souls that have hitherto kept their projects a secret. If that's You, please give me a call. We all learn best when learning together (but experience starts when you pick up the saw ...)

November is AGM month – time to start thinking about the Tyre Pumpers Collective again.

Hal Harpur Award & Christmas Dinner – enclosed should be a flyer with all the details. Stick it on your fridge. Do something about it. Soon. Thank you.

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

Jon Bell

## The Orkney Report

by Quirky

Jo-anne and I took an extended tour of Scotland and the Western Isles this year and found a couple of items on Orkney that may be of interest to WBA members.

Firstly, in a car park in the middle of the island we found something quite rare in the last 60 years, an attractive lifeboat conversion. Normally, these are ugly clunkers converted by amateur owners who bought the hull because they were cheap and fitted them out with ideas picked up from a caravan exhibition. Full headroom everywhere was a priority.

We saw a lot of these in UK after the war when the hulls were cheap. 70 pounds would get a good one in the fifties and the small supply of pre war motor cruisers fetched exorbitant prices. A 30 foot Osborne aft cockpit cruiser at this time would fetch around 800 pounds.





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Most people will think: lifeboats = seaworthy hulls. Well, yes, up to a point. But ships' lifeboats were designed to just stay afloat with the weight of passengers sitting at 18" (450mm) centres, which was the Board of Trade specification. To bring them down to their designed waterline, they needed the equivalent weight of passengers as ballast. They were double ended, so they would not present flat transoms to breaking seas. Their maneuverability depended on all traumatized shipwrecked passengers being equally competent with an oar. They were strongly built to spend their lives in davits until called upon in emergency. The double diagonal (mahogany usually) ones in particular. Today, the idea of two skins of timber with oiled calico in between would make me slightly apprehensive with the potential for rot blooming between the skins.

In converting a lifeboat, you had no hope of disguising a double ended clinker hull from its origins. But the double diagonal ones could make handsome chunky sea boats like this example. There is full headroom in the fishing boat inspired wheelhouse, but it will be limited in the fore cabin. This has conversion has been designed by a seaman and built by shipwrights. Look at the quality of the work, even a swept teak deck. An attractive colour scheme helps.

And they haven't made the mistake of cutting away the aft deadwood when installing the prop shaft and propeller. The rudder was not with the ship but it would seem to be larger than the standard issue to allow for an opening to be cut in it for the prop.

The hull shows signs of extensive sistered ribs through the aft cockpit which may reinforce the weakness of cracked or broken ones. The none draining cockpit is surprising in these waters off the Western Coast of Scotland, facing the full Atlantic Westerlies. Maybe there is a waterproof hatch fitted when going to sea.

Altogether a very attractive proposition for a fishing cruiser with weekend accommodation. She might even be able to sneak in over the bar at Patonga towards high tide.

Quirky



## INFORMATION GUIDE

### THE "GOOD OIL" ON CLEAR COATINGS

from Norglass

continued from last next month

#### WHAT PRODUCT TO USE?

Selecting the right clear can be confusing so the following guide is presented to assist this choice.

#### MICROSHIELD PREMIUM VARNISH

Microshield Varnish combines the latest values in u/v inhibitors and stabilisers, with the best blend of premium resins to give the user maximum performance in a clear gloss finish. **How does this work?**

The u/v inhibitors soak up the sun's rays, converting them into heat and then provide for their egress, through dissipation within the film. The stabilisers protect the coating by rendering the "free radicals" of u/v inert and neutralising them. Then they regenerate themselves and proceed to continue the protecting process throughout the coating's life. The balance of selected resins offers excellent flexibility (to reduce brittleness) and extends the lifespan of the coating, at the same time maintaining a tough abrasion resistant clear gloss. Microshield is also a low odour coating when used internally on doors and panelling. Application by brush and/or mohair roller provides superb gloss and flow characteristics.

#### WEATHERFAST POLY CLEAR

This is a fast drying tough coating for general timber surfaces and will withstand traffic. Ideal on tables, handrails, floors and walls. Available in gloss (and satin for shaded areas).

#### NORTHANE CLEAR (2 pack polyurethane)

The toughest clear gloss finish. Ideal on bench tops, high traffic floors, racing skiffs, food service areas, fish ponds, terracotta pots and a multitude of other applications. Northane Clear is unlike all other single pot clears oils and varnishes which yellow with u/v exposure. It stays "water clear" for the life of the coating and can be applied over paint coatings to produce a tough "glasslike" waterproof film with graffiti barrier properties. It is waterproof and non-toxic in the cured film making it ideal for food service areas. Northane Clear is available in gloss and satin finishes.

#### WEATHERFAST PREMIUM TIMBER OIL

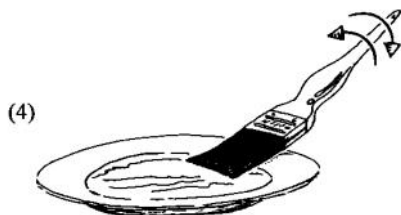
A fast drying urethane oil with U/V inhibitors and stabilisers to feed timber such as Teak, Cedar etc for a natural finish look. Requires regular maintenance.

#### Note:

With the exception of NORTHANE CLEAR, all other clears will have a pale honey-coloured appearance. While this is not a problem when applied to timber, using these clears over a pigmented paint finish will result in patchy discolouration as the film ages. If a clear finish is desired over a painted surface NORTHANE CLEAR, which is water clear should be used. If compatibility is considered an issue, contact NORGLASS TECHNICAL ADVISORY SERVICE on (02) 9708 2200.

#### TIPS FOR A GOOD FINISH

□ Pour out a small quantity of clear into a shallow dish. Place the brush into the clear and then withdraw and tap the excess off both sides against the outer rim, by laying the brush at an angle. (see illustration 4)

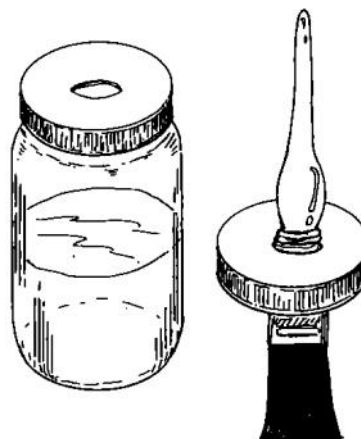


This eliminates the frothy aeration created by wiping the brush against the can rim. It also reduces dust particles being constantly returned to the can contents.

□ Any residue left in the dish upon completion, should be discarded, **NOT**

returned to remaining contents of the can because of contamination.

□ To keep a varnish brush in mint condition, it should not be stored dry because of accumulating dust particles. Follow the 6 step recommendation in (illustration 5).



1. Rinse the brush out 2-3 times in clear solvent. Spin the brush inside a plastic bucket between the palms of your hands to remove solvent.

2. Use a clean plastic (or glass) jar with a large screw top lid.

3. Cut a hole in the lid and push the brush handle through.

4. Roll down a tight rubber band over the handle until it sits on top of the lid.

5. Place the brush into a jar and mark where the top of bristles are with a felt marker. The bristle tips should be clear of the base (suspended).

6. Pour in solvent to the mark and screw lid on tightly. Seal with cling wrap and store, until reuse.

● For re-use, remove and spin out the solvent into a plastic bucket.

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## Shipwrights of Note Ian Smith

by Phil Heaney

For someone whose background had very little to do with boats, or the sea, Ian has really found his true calling in his chosen profession.

Born in 1950 in Mackay, Queensland, Ian's family moved to Maclean on the Clarence in 1955, and then to Sydney with his brother and sister. He was eight. His parents were members of the Salvation army, his father later became a Methodist minister. Although having a very religious childhood Ian now follows a more Humanist doctrine. His primary schooling was varied, from Maclean to Botany, Cronulla, and Hurstville. His high school was at Bulli High.

During his teens he developed a keen interest in woodworking, but at that stage it was just a hobby. He had a part time job as a bookie's clerk and it would not be unusual to handle large sums of money at the weekend race meetings. There were also some extra expenses, and, depending on the political situation, there was a cost keeping the police and polities happy. There were three occasions when his boss was raided for not keeping them sufficiently happy or maybe it was just to make a point.

Ian married Patricia in 1970 and also built his first boat, a sailing dinghy. He also found he was getting more work working on different boats and could see where his future lay, so, in the late seventies he rented a shed at Glebe Point where he took on repair and restoration work that came his way including restoring an 18 ft launch for John Wood. He soon had a reputation for fine work.

In 1988 John Wood asked Ian to move to the newly formed River Quays Marina on the Paramatta river at Mortlake to undertake repair and maintenance work. He was supposed to train the apprentices too. However here was a problem, because Ian had no formal training as a shipwright, was not allowed to train apprentices. At that time there was a provision in the trade act which allowed a person to be issued with a trade certificate if they could prove sufficient experience in a chosen trade. Ian had a very impressive portfolio and in 1989 he became a qualified shipwright. He trained four apprentices at River Quays, and set up the Sydney Wooden Boat School with the backing of John Wood.



In the early nineties Ian moved on and rented the old Mortlake post office building from where continued to run the Sydney Wooden Boat School. Courses were one night a week for three or four months, teaching clinker,

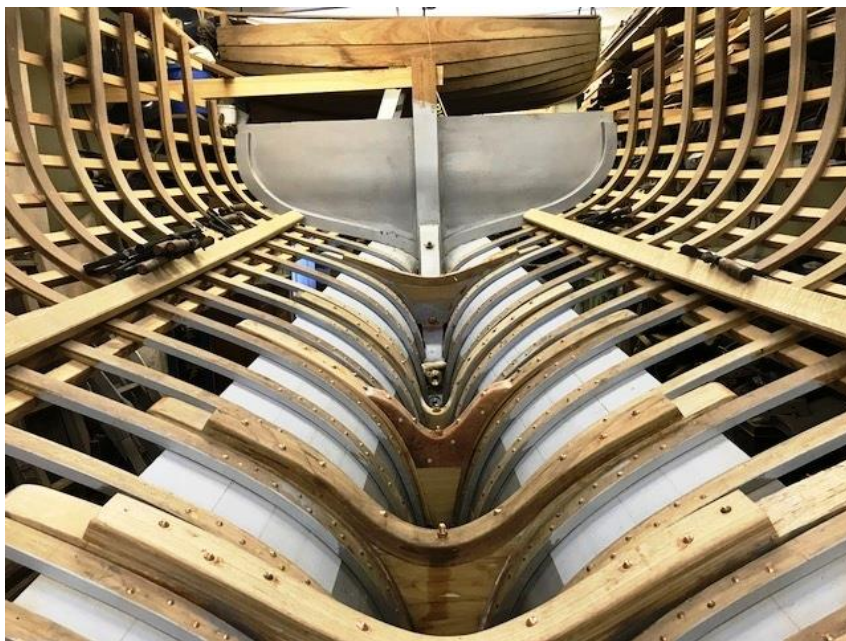
er, strip planking and plywood construction. The school became very popular, but extra work was needed to pay the bills, so Ian continued with his repair and restoration work during the day.

At about this time Ian met Bob Tearne who was very much into 18 ft skiffs and their history and from then on Ian was hooked, recreating and sailing the boats of the past. His first was the 6ft Balmain Bug in 1994, in 1995 he built the 10ft *Republic*, and in 2002 the magnificent *Britannia*. With these classic boats Ian and Patricia have travelled all over Australia and overseas demonstrating their traditional values at regattas and festivals. He is the current President of the Australian Historical Sailing Skiff Association and sails regularly with the replica fleet at the Sydney Flying Squadron. He has written a book tracing the history of sailing skiffs in Australia, called *The Open Boat*.

Around the turn of the 21st Century Ian worked with people who have been on a program of work for the Dole. With them he built

two lifeboats for the James Craig, two boats for Sailability, and restored the Captains launch from the aircraft carrier HMAS 'Sydney'

From 2002 to 2005 Ian was based at the old navy boatshed in Chowder bay where he specialized in restoration and repairs. Although a beautiful setting, it was also a very difficult place to slip boats because of the almost constant swell coming into the bay.



In 2003 Ian was successful in winning the Hal Harpur.

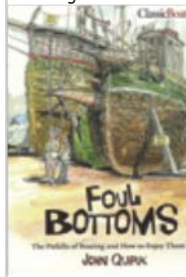
Ian is very well known and respected around the waterfront. He has written 5 manuals on various boatbuilding methods and is working on expanding his Traditional Clinker manual into a book. Over his working ca-



reer he has built over 80 boats from dinghies to yachts. Although he is now retired, he is still building boats for himself, his latest is a 24ft Ranger.

Phil Heaney Shipwright.

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.







## THE PAYNESVILLE REPORT

from Chris & Gilli Dicker

Every month I look forward to this time when I can write any old rubbish and still fill people with wonder.

Today (if you are still reading) I was very naughty and had a day off from my labours on the land. More than anything this was due to pulling a muscle in my back, something many of us have to be ever vigilant of. As luck would have it my old boss was also having a day off and invited myself and several other guests to join him in a cruise in his lovely old wooden work boat to Lakes Entrance for a luncheon. Peter Medling is behind the Paynesville Wooden Boat Rally and a great boatman and host. He was a professional fisherman for years so knows the lakes very well. The old boat has a big Gardner, which drives the 40 foot boat along at an effortless 8



knots. Cocooned inside the wheelhouse the world goes by very quickly without sensation of wind or spray but still very enjoyable. At 25 knots I wonder how different the scenery would look. As far as I can figure out we have done at least 40,000 miles in Westwind and at an average speed of 4.5 knots. I suppose it is all relevant. Reading through one of our logs lately I see we have clocked 170 miles in 24 hours on several occasions so we are no strangers to speed.

Meantime our block of dirt is very stationary and today the clouds were really on the move. They dropped 15 mm on our area, which is just wonderful. Today it blew and rained and never got above 11 degrees but it was still full steam ahead with the building and a host of other jobs.

A very good friend from Cairns arranged to have 6 Huon pine seedlings sent to us from 'down there'. One would have been better. They are about



75 mm tall and are just beautiful. In ideal conditions they will grow about 1.5 metres in ten years. I don't think I will enjoy the shade of these trees as I will be sailing around New Guinea and the Solomon's about then! I am 65 next birthday. If anyone has any ideas what I should do with them please let me know. A couple will go into a tub and placed on the shady side of a building here on our property but their survival is doubtful. In January I am sailing to Hobart, perhaps I should take them with me and plant them somewhere.



21<sup>st</sup> of August and a weather update. Windy and cool but mainly dry. Invigorating. We seem to be about two degrees warmer than Melbourne here. In fact we had a visitor from Melbourne the other day who said they have had atrocious weather. Well it's Melbourne in' it.

A week later and sorry to make this report so disjointed but I cannot stop the march of time. Even if we could, things (our life) would bunch up like a clot and explode like a volcano. Sometimes we have to run fast to keep up, other times we have to sit a spell. In-between is good.

Phew!!!

After quite a few years of a footloose and fancy free life we do seem to have put the anchor down so we have sort of called our property 'Anchor Downs'. Yesterday, which was much later than the 21<sup>st</sup> of August I arrived at 'The Downs' and became conscious of a distant and persistent roar a bit like the cacophony of the noise of a city. It had me baffled for a while but I realised it was the Southern Ocean spending it's force on the 90 mile beach not 7 miles to the south of us. The wind was from the east but other forces are at work to create the swells that reach our shores.

Less than a week ago I finished laying the floor of the house. When I first trod on that new elevation I found that we will actually have water views onto the creek behind our property. Had we built on a concrete slab this would not have been so. This is all something I never considered. Sometimes you can blunder onto a wonderful garden. It is very fulfilling to create things as you go, either by accident or by design. The council is dead against this. They want to know what you intend to do so they can say you cant do that, at least not without paying.

Our life afloat goes on. *Westwind* is still our solid Huon pine home. I still get a thrill when I tread her decks. We wake to the vista of Macmillan Strait, the winter sun streaming through the portholes. We have regular visits from seals, dolphins, pelicans and black swans. Along with Gilli's home made muesli it sets you up for the day.

It is Saturday the 1<sup>st</sup> of September and time for me to finish. I have built as many frames for the house as would fit on the floor. I am hoping the pictures in this article will show at least some of them standing.

Next months article will contain nothing but wooden boats.

Go slow but go far.



Gilli is loading savanna with a pitch fork. When you burn these tussocks the coals are great for roasting spuds or anything

Kindest regards to all,

Chris & Gilli Dicker



## BUY SWAP and SELL

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.

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**Thara – 1948 Alan Payne Classic sloop**



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### FOR SALE

**David Payne Cinema design**

Replica of the first licenced fishing boat in Sydney harbour.

Built by President Shipwright Services,  
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Name JLH



Length 5.8 metres, Beam 2.3 metres, Draft 1 metre

Engine: Sole Diesel 13hp, 3 blade prop

Tiller steering, Battery x 1, boat cover.

**Frankie Minehan Mobile 0415 431 337**

### FOR SALE

**Mid-Century Modern Ketch 9.6m Huon Pine – Swedish design, Australian built**



Sleek ketch custom designed by renowned Swedish boat designer Arvid Laurin and built by local shipwrights expressly for Australian cruising conditions.

This exceptional boat was constructed from Huon Pine and various supporting timbers and has been fastidiously maintained to this day.

Asterisk was commissioned for use by a former ocean racer and his family, being completed for launch on Pittwater, NSW in 1990. The boat won it's inaugural race with the Wooden Boat Association, after which she was given a handicap to ensure the victory would never be repeated! Most of Asterisk's sailing took place in and around Pittwater, including the Hawkesbury, and occasionally down to Sydney Harbour. A regular feature at wooden boat festivals, the ketch has also been the subject of a number of boating magazine articles in Australia and overseas.

The layout of the boat facilitates spirited yet comfortable sailing in a range of weather conditions along with genuine amenity above and below for multi-day trips with evenings at berth or on moorings. Asterisk sails well with just two people on board, and can extend to host up to 5 people in bunks overnight.

Interior includes beautiful Mahogany cabinetry and a living set-up that promotes a comfortable cruising lifestyle with galley kitchen containing stove and twin sinks, stowable dining table, cooling box, ample storage and a discrete 'head'.

The boat features circular profile Finnish fiberglass spars, custom-made stainless fittings topside, Barlow winches and elegant, functional details throughout. The sail kit includes six primaries for mizzen, main and fore, and has provision for the addition of spinnaker. Motor power comes from a Volvo Penta three-cylinder motor. The fastidious nature of the owner is seen in the high-end build, materials, and maintenance.

No immediate work is required – just hoist and sail.

John Frostell **\$59,000** 03 9380 9840

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# Join us on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> October at the Davistown Waterfront for the 20th Anniversary of the Davistown Putt Putt Regatta & Wooden Boat Festival



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When:  
09:00 to 16:00

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Water Activities  
➤ 35+ Putt Putts & Wooden Boats  
➤ Scouts Raft Race  
➤ Dragon Boats  
➤ Sydney Heritage Fleet  
➤ The Putt Putt Challenge  
➤ The Grand Parade

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Remember the closing date for nominations for the Hal Harpur Award is September 30th.

## Three news member joined in the last month.

- ♦ **Nicholas Cocks** of Singapore who owns a Griffin 34ft mast head sloop moored in Elizabeth Bay.
- ♦ **Karen Portch** of Port Macquarie who has a 6.4 metre motor launch, *Iris*, built in 2017.
- ♦ **Graham DeGrabriel** of Bathurst who has a 4 metre moulded ply putt putt.

We look forward to seeing you at our meetings.

## MERCHANDISE

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

## — ON THE HORIZON —

### THIS YEAR 2018

September 11 <sup>th</sup>	WBA Meeting, Gladesville, Chris Cleary & John Capaldi 2017 HHA Nominees
September 17 <sup>th</sup>	Committee Meeting
September 30 <sup>th</sup>	Closing date for 2018 Hal Harpur Award Nominations
October 9 <sup>th</sup>	WBA Meeting, Gladesville Bowling & Sports Club, Member Projects Review
October 15 <sup>th</sup>	Committee Meeting
October 21 <sup>st</sup>	Davistown Putt Putt Regatta & Wooden Boat Festival
November 13 <sup>th</sup>	Annual General Meeting + Film night
November 19 <sup>th</sup>	Committee Meeting
December 11 <sup>th</sup>	HHA Award & Dinner
December 17 <sup>th</sup>	Committee Meeting

### NEXT YEAR 2019

January 8 <sup>th</sup>	WBA Meeting, Gladesville Bowling & Sports Club, - Steve Brompton
January 14 <sup>th</sup>	Committee Meeting
February 12 <sup>th</sup>	WBA Meeting, Gladesville Bowling & Sports Club,
February 8-11 <sup>th</sup>	Australian Wooden Boat Festival, Hobart
February	Raft-up at Bantry Bay