

Scuttlebutt

November 2014



The gorgeous 19th century topsail gaff cutter Kelpie is a regular in the Sunday non-spinnaker Classics; other yachts from left to right are Ariel, Reverie (behind Ariel), Rob Roy (behind Kelpie), Lahara (Mike Warner), Cherub (Mark Pearse). This race was won by the Halvorsen yacht Anitra V.

Photograph by John Jeremy



President's Report

Ross McLean

No report from the President this month as I have been too busy with work and the RMYC Timber Boat Festival.



SASC NON-SPINNAKER SUNDAY CLASSICS

from Mark Pearse
The Sydney Amateur Sailing Club has a new Sunday division & all are welcome to join in. The races are every 3 or 4 weeks & are non-spinnaker for all classics, gaff & bermudan. On Sundays the harbour is blissfully free from most other vessels, especially at the midday start time. You do not need to be an SASC member, but an entry fee would apply & a Cat 7 safety certificate is required.

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from Brian Hunter

THE PITTWATER REPORT

Well it's that time of year again when skippers start discussing their summer plans. The Friday afternoon quite drink at Sydney Wooden Boats revealed that three Pittwater skippers have big plans for trips to Hobart for the Australian Wooden Boat Festival. Owners of the yachts UTEKIAH II, FARE THEE WELL and MARAMA have declared their intentions to sail south for the most significant wooden boat festival in the Southern Hemisphere. The festival continues to grow in international recognition as a result of the dedication initially of a few wooden boat enthusiasts, with the help of the local maritime authorities and businesses, now with the backing of the Tasmanian Government, it has become a major tourist draw card for Tasmania. Last festival in February 2013 two large cruise ships came into port disgorging upwards of 3000 passengers each over the three day weekend, not to mention the thousands of others who arrive by plane and cross strait ferry for this great event in February every two years. Whatever has happened to the Sydney Wooden Boat Festival? Or for that matter other Sydney festivals? Sure there is the New Years fireworks, and the gay and lesbian thing, good on ya Sydney. Maybe those responsible need to take a look at how Hobart does it and learn. Sydney is becoming a cultural and historic backwater.



New Member

One new member this month. We welcome Peter Mathews of Gladesville a proud Halvorsen owner.

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Scan the QR code to go the WBA of NSW Inc. on the web and follow the links to Scuttlebutt, Hal Harpur Award and more useful information



The Wooden Boat Association of NSW inc.

www.wbansw.org.au

Meets at the Gladesville Bowling and Sports Club, the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 7:30 pm

— ON THE HORIZON —

THIS YEAR 2014

November 7th, 8th & 9th
November 8th/9th
November 11
December 6
December 9

Narooma Boats Afloat weekend.
Raft up at Blackwattle Bay
WBA Annual General Meeting
BBQ, Quarantine Reserve, Abbotsford
End of year dinner & Hal Harpur Award presentation

NEXT YEAR 2015

January 13
February 6th to 9th
February 10
February 21st/22nd
March 10
March 11th, 12th & 13th
April 3rd, 4th & 5th
April 14

WBA meeting
Wooden Boat Festival, Hobart, Tasmania
WBA meeting
Raft up @ Bantry Bay
WBA meeting
Repton Run, (dates chosen are mid-week as tides are not favorable for weekends around this time)
Classic Boat Fest on the foreshore of Lake Macquarie at Toronto
WBA meeting



NOT

THE CAIRNS REPORT

from Chris & Gilli Dicker

5/09/2014

We are now at Bwagaioa Harbour, Misima Island PNG which is a large and bustling place. We came here to clear quarantine and buy some fruit and I am ashamed to say 40 litres of fuel. There have been some

situations where we have been bucking a foul tide and a 20 knot headwind and we simply would have got nowhere unless we motorsailed.

It is so wonderfully New Guinean that John, the Quarantine officer should be here at Misima and the Customs at Samarai Island, 120 miles downwind. We really did have a fine overnight sail to Samarai but we knew that the return windward journey would be a hard slog. Every wave we fell off I felt for poor old *Westwind* but we need not have worried, we just hung onto her mane and



she fair galloped along. The trip to Samarai was not on the plan as we thought that we might fluke a customs officer in the Louisiades but it was not to be.

The small islands in the Louisiades

suffered badly when Cyclone Ita went through, it flattened gardens and blew houses away. Except for fish the gardens are their only source of food. Following the cyclone there was 3 months without rain so clean water became a pressing issue. We have had rain every night since we have been here and our water tanks are full and purged of any chemicals. I would never complain about our abundance of fresh water in Australia but the rain water really is nectar. Another consequence of the flattened gardens is that the islanders have nothing to trade. So we are just a gift boat. We had a short overnight stay at a small island called Navani, a fisherman paddled over and asked for some 'sweggles', I decoded that into swivels and gave him a few; for this he was already prepared with four chicken eggs, "they just came from the chicken this morning." They all broke into the mixing bowl with no arms or legs and we had a delicious omelette for supper. It tasted of coconut of course, which is the staple diet of chickens, dogs, pigs, humans and flies. We once saw a three legged pig and a dog have a terrible fight over half a coconut; the pig had the weight but the dog had four legs. I felt so sorry for the pig; he is still with us. Customs and quarantine can't tell the difference, we all look the same they reckon.

Back to Bwagaioa Harbour, Misima; Please spare a thought for our poor editor who is having a geography lesson thrust upon him. They discovered gold here a long time ago and did their normal ravaging, when the gold became unviable to dig out the big companies just left, as they do. Bwagaioa Harbour lived on, in fact it is a thriving centre for inter island trading. We really have enjoyed our day and a half here. Our dinghy was pulled up on the busy shore with lots of idle people sitting around chewing beetle nut and spitting red streams of juice everywhere. We had gone for a long wander coming back before dark. There are many dogs wandering around who have never known a sign of affection, in fact some are streaked with red spittle; the fact that our dinghy was spotless and as we left her showed to me that there was no resentment towards us. We met only warm, polite wonderful people. That same morning I heard shouting from the village square and asked our self appointed guide, Ruben, if someone was angry, no, she is just SDA, he said. We rounded the corner and there she was shooting fire and brimstone in all directions and without missing a beat reverted to English as we walked passed...or at least around. I am sure she was not dangerous but golly she was a fabulous actress.

This is our first trip with the hull fully splined; we have fallen off a couple of big waves and generally given the poor old girl a constant pounding. I am waiting for that really big CRACK as a glued joint lets go. Looking back, the splining does not seem like such a big job. Much of the worry about splining below the waterline at all was caused by passing experts who said the King Billy Pine I was using would blow up like a champagne cork and that generally it all just wasn't right. We used to pump our boat regularly when on passage with a hand pump in the cockpit. No one is more amazed than me that no water at all comes into



the boat now. She'll do me! I can only hope that Mike Warners newly splined *Lahara* is equally astonishing.



14/9/14 We have arrived at Nimoa Island where we had hoped to join the nationals in celebrating Independence Day on the 16th of September. Following the ceremonies there is usually a big soccer match. One might think these people as primitive warriors but that is nonsense.

They are such good sports that following the game the victors offer one of their players for the BBQ. Only kidding, much too tough!! In hindsight it was well that we did not stay in Nimoa as on Independence Day there came an angry machete wielding man from the other side of the island looking for blood; he smashed the store up pretty badly and threw paint everywhere, which put a dampener on things to say the least.

We had decided to sail back over our track to Panatinani island to attend the big celebration at Hobuk but all the teachers had left and locked the PNG flag inside so there was not even a flag raising or the national anthem, then it really poured; enough to have to bail the dinghy while rowing back to the boat so at least we got wet. This story also involves a 9 year old letter, which we finally delivered to a small island on behalf of a Tasmanian yacht, and a ten kg parcel from an unknown (to us) person, which I personally delivered from Australia to an isolated bush hut on Panatinani Island, Papua New Guinea; contents unknown! I always wanted to be a mailman and that is true.

20/09/14 we were bashing up the narrow, 20 mile long Rossel lagoon with little room to tack, two reefs in the main and the storm stays'. Was it raining or do you mean how hard was it raining? Our faithful weather man in Sydney sent us a message on the sat phone to say the wind was going N.E. in the Solomon Sea the following day, which was around about our course. Gilli was below reading, on impulse I threw the tiller hard over and thus ended 5 weeks of climbing up wind, the Solomon Islands disappearing behind us at 7 knots. It was worth it just to see Gilli fall off the settee! We haven't been to Bali either.



13/10/14 It is too late to cut a long story short. We sailed back to the islands and spent a week waiting for the weather to get worse than it already was then we left. Neither of us was thinking rationally. *Westwind* bore the brunt of it by pounding into headwinds for three days before the winds moderated and went south east, which allowed us to point toward Cairns and enjoy the last two days of glorious sailing. We had a grandstand seat for the moons eclipse, which was truly spectacular.

We arrived and cleared Customs and Quarantine on the Friday then sailed back to our little Bluewater marina. On Sunday *Westwind* was out racing around Double Island and did very well; a few days later she is refitted and restocked for a cruise to Lizard Island. We keep telling her we are 60 and finding it hard to keep up, she just snorts and says she is 78, get on and get over it.

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